

The Secretary,
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Conservation and the Arts,
Canberra.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have resided on the Lower Darling River for nearly all of my 80 years and have been a small scale irrigator for three quarters of them. For water management purposes, the lower Darling is considered part of the Murray River and within the Wentworth weir pool we have had more Murray water than Darling water in recent years.

I was involved in endeavouring to stop the over allocation of water in N.S.W. twenty five years ago, but the experts, who do not reside in rural areas, claimed they knew best.

The recent purchases or buy backs of water to save the rivers appear to have been a glorious waste of taxpayers' money. The purchase of "phantom" water from Tandou probably sounded good to urban based people, but must be the craziest investment when water is wanted now. This high flow allocation is only available when all other allocations are at 100% and storages full. It's present value is nil, but thirty four million dollars of taxpayers money saved Tandou, but does not save any rivers.

We have the other extreme where Goulburn River water is likely to go to Melbourne. This is "real" water which is urgently needed in the inland rivers. Melbourne has other options, the inland rivers do not. It would have been much better for our stressed inland rivers if the inefficient irrigation works were fixed with Commonwealth money and the saved water kept in the river system, rather than spending large sums of money buying water that does not exist, particularly from Toorale at Bourke and Tandou at Menindee.

Yours faithfully,
J. V. Whyte,