

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

2.15 The committee recommends that the signatories to the National Water Initiative (NWI) adopt a better risk assignment framework within the NWI implementation plans and speed up the establishment of a publicly-accessible nationally compatible register of water entitlements.

Recommendation 2

2.29 The committee recommends the adoption of standardised terminology and a simplified, nationally consistent approach to water property entitlements.

Recommendation 3

2.60 The committee recommends that the National Water Commission assume responsibility for making all the data currently available about water nationally accessible through integrated databases linked to its website.

Recommendation 4

2.61 The committee recommends that the National Water Commission develop a communications programme aimed at facilitating access to new research and new sources of online information about water resources and adapting to climate change for specific rural and regional client groups.

Recommendation 5

3.26 The committee recommends that all state jurisdictions in the Murray-Darling Basin undertake a review of the current water allocations with a view to reducing diversion from the river.

Recommendation 6

3.44 The committee recommends that state governments take whatever steps necessary to ensure the removal of privately-built levees and interceptor banks from the flood plains to allow environmental water to flow to the wetlands for which it is intended.

Recommendation 7

3.72 The Committee recommends that all state and territory jurisdictions review the levels of water diversion from the flood plains and only grant licences to extract overland water after an independent scientific review of current levels of extraction has been completed.

Recommendation 8

3.78 The committee recommends that the Australian government consider putting in place incentives and initiatives to encourage growers and irrigators to move into alternate crops that allow for a substantial amount of water to be returned to the rivers and flood plains of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Recommendation 9

3.85 The committee recommends that all state and territory government signatories to the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement undertake a review of groundwater allocations in the basin with a view to bringing back allocations to a sustainable level.

Recommendation 10

3.91 The committee recommends that Commonwealth, State and Territory governments should identify and protect all high conservation value aquatic ecosystems by 2010.

Recommendation 11

3.92 The committee recommends that water plans be developed in line with the National Water Initiative to prevent the over-allocation of water in rivers that are in a natural or largely natural condition.

Recommendation 12

3.98 The committee recommends that an audit of the freshwater resources and of the land available for agriculture in Northern Australia be carried out as part of the Northern Australia Irrigation Futures project.

Recommendation 13

3.99 The committee recommends the creation of a federal Ministry for the Future that would bring together the areas of climate change and water resources.

Recommendation 14

4.12 The committee recommends that, at its next meeting, COAG come to an agreement about data sharing and the development of protocols relating to climate forecasting, water measurement and water extraction information, and the need to support and resource the development of more accurate monitoring and forecasting systems such as WRON, POAMA and ACCESS.

Recommendation 15

4.17 The committee recommends that the government allocate to the CSIRO's Water Resources Observation Network (WRON) project an additional \$10 million over three years from the National Climate Change Adaptation Programme.

Recommendation 16

4.48 The committee recommends that the federal government should commit to the construction of one or more advanced water recycling plants to produce water for a range of both potable and non-potable uses in order to raise public awareness about the safety of recycled water.

