

Wednesday 27 October 2010

PR/199/10

Basin Plan Guide should be scrapped

The NSW Farmers' Association Executive Council is demanding the Murray Darling Basin Authority retract its Guide to the proposed Basin Plan, following a meeting in Sydney.

NSW Farmers' Association President Charles Armstrong says more than 70 farmers from across the State voted unanimously in support of the motion.

"The MDBA has been crisscrossing Basin States, telling communities it had an obligation to produce a Guide focused on environmental outcomes," Mr Armstrong said.

"We now know Federal Water Minister Tony Burke has received legal advice to the contrary," Mr Armstrong said.

The Association has repeatedly called for a balanced; triple bottom line approach in developing the Plan.

"That would require social, economic and environmental factors be given equal weighting under the Plan," Mr Armstrong said.

"The only way it can meet its objectives under the National Water Initiative is by considering these three key areas equally.

"Minister Burke has said he wants a Basin Plan that delivers the best outcomes for the environment, rural communities and food production.

"But at the moment we have a Guide recommending Sustainable Diversion Limits (or the amount of water farmers can take from the river system to produce food and fibre) be cut by an average 37 percent in NSW," Mr Armstrong said.

The Association is now calling on the MDBA to withdraw the Guide and recalculate Sustainable Diversion Limits on a valley-by-valley case basis, drawing on their social; economic and environmental impacts in each region.

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