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Murray Basin Plan promise should be honoured

The NSW Farmers' Association says today's announcement that a plain English version of the draft Basin Plan won't be released until after the election is ridiculous.

NSW Farmers' Association President Charles Armstrong says a plain English version of the draft Basin Plan was promised by the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA), an independent, statutory body established to draft the Basin Plan according to the terms of the Water Act 2007.

"The Association believes the MDBA must show that it is truly independent of Government and release the plain English Version of the draft Basin Plan in early August as planned," Mr Armstrong said.

"The Basin Plan is the most significant Federal Policy issue affecting rural and regional communities within the Murray Darling Basin," he said.

Farmers voted unanimously at *2010 Annual Conference: Value of Agriculture* for the plain - English version of the Murray Darling Plan to be released as planned in early August.

"It is unconscionable that an election could extend the doubt and uncertainty of irrigators and farmers within the Murray Darling Basin.

"The present threats we are hearing regarding major cut backs to irrigation water have placed a black cloud over our community's future.

"It is critical that potential impacts of the Basin Plan are known prior to the election to allow this issue to be debated during the election campaign.

"Our concern is that the focus of the Basin planning process has been solely on environmental outcomes. Farmers value the environment but we need to ensure balanced outcomes on this critical national issue," Mr Armstrong concluded.

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