

From: Chris
To: [Murray Darling Basin Royal Commission](#)
Subject: Post Hearing Thoughts
Date: Thursday, 24 May 2018 2:43:15 PM
Attachments: [Submission to SA copy.pdf](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[PastedGraphic-4.tiff](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)

To
The South Australian Royal Commission into the Murray Darling Basin Plan

Dear Mr Commissioner Walker, Mr Beasley and Assisting Staff,

I attended the Broken Hill hearing on 23rd May and thank you for travelling to Broken Hill to hear our thoughts.

Prior to the Royal Commission starting I made a Submission to the South Australian Government on the Issues with the Murray Darling Basin Plan.
I have attached it below.

In the submission I asked you to look into the Constitution points 99 and 100.

Could I please make a few points in regards to that submission.

1. Constitution and the plan.

We must have a strict plan in place at all times.

If the Trading of water is deemed to break the Constitution, we need safe guards in place to maintain control over the extraction of water by both the States and Irrigators.

Halting the plan without safeguards would allow the States and Irrigators to plunder the rivers even more than now.

This may then create a precedent which cannot be controlled.

2. Flood Plain Harvesting

This illegal capturing of water by use of Channels and Levee banks should be stopped and the culprits found culpable and punished.

It has been alleged that some Commonwealth funds were used to build Levee Banks and dams to prevent water from entering rivers.

In this point one must consider Cubbie Station's diversion of the Culgoa River to stop water entering the flood plains.

3. River Systems

The Murray Darling Basin consists of two main River Systems which the MDBA class as one in regard to water available for extraction.

These two System are totally different in that the Murray River gets its main water supply from Melting Snow but the Darling River relies on Flooding rains in it's catchments.

I do not believe that they should be classed as one system.

4. The Broken Hill pipeline

This pipeline would be good for Broken Hill but will Kill the Darling River as we know it from Bourke to past Pooncarie.

The MDBA and NSW Government are sacrificing this section of the Darling River in order to save water for the plan.

It is criminal not to save flood waters for droughts.

The arguments that the water will evaporate are against nature.

The water in the Lower Lakes and Cotton Farm dams will evaporate the same.

By draining the lakes The MDBA and NSW are using false assumptions that it may evaporate.

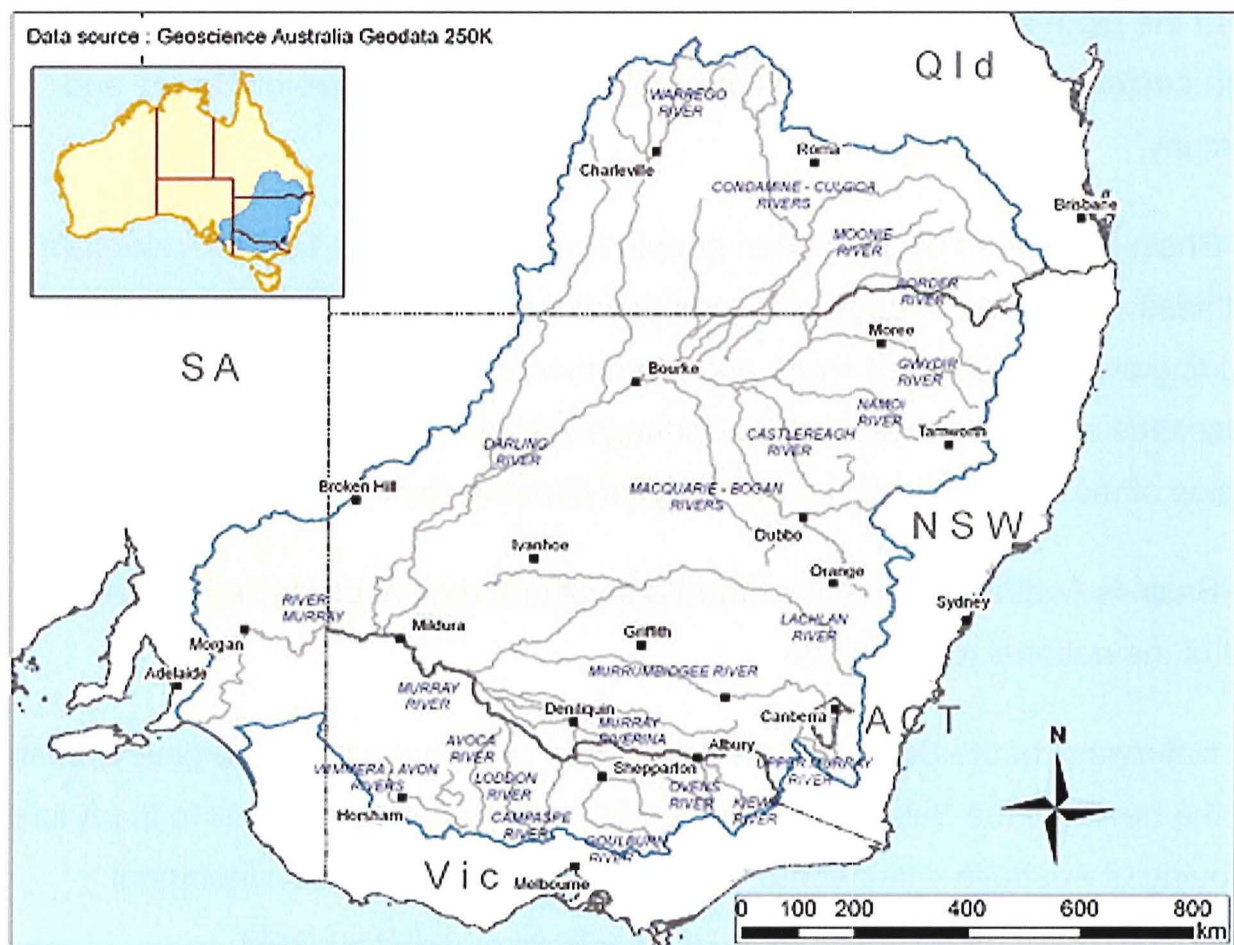
The Darling River is valuable in Cultural, Historical, Economical, Environmental and Social ways to the Far west Region.

We cannot let it die.

Submission to the South Australian Government

Murray Darling Basin Royal Commission.

By Christopher Rawlins
[REDACTED] NSW.



The Murray Darling Basin

Thanks

I thank the South Australian Government for its stance in calling a desperately needed Royal Commission into the MurrayDarling Basin plan.

Being at the bottom of the river will always have challenges but we do not need the current greed & corruption upstream.

I also thank you for the chance to state my case and try to inform you of happenings in the basin.

About me

Born in Waikerie SA in 1952, I spent my early Childhood on the River Murray at Cadell.

Now living in Broken Hill I have become involved in the movement to save our Rivers from the Over extraction, Greed and Corruption that is Cotton.

In this Submission I will highlight things I see as wrong with the Murray Darling Basin plan and its management.

Did you know?

The Murray–Darling Basin is Australia's largest and most iconic river system, and is one of the biggest systems in the world. It covers over a million square kilometres in south-eastern Australia - an area larger than the combined size of France and Germany.

The Basin is home to over 2 million people and covers about 14% of Australia's landmass. It includes a range of diverse landscapes and complex ecosystems, including over 77,000km of rivers and more than 25,000 wetlands. These landscapes are home to at least 35 endangered species of birds, 16 endangered species of mammals and 46 known species of native fish.

The Basin is Australia's most important agricultural region, producing around one-third of the national food supply.

The waterways of the Basin have a long history of management and development, and the health of the Basin and its dependant ecosystems is integral to the future wellbeing of Australia – its people, its economy and its natural environment.

From <https://www.mdba.gov.au/education/kids-all-ages/basin-facts>

The Murray Darling Basin is in four states and is of vital importance to Australia.
We cannot let it degenerate further.

Why we need a Basin Plan?

The Murray–Darling Basin is a complex, diverse and dynamic system. Its characteristics are constantly changing in response to the influences of people, the climate and the way water is used — for production, communities and the environment.

The aim of the Basin Plan is to ensure that water is shared between all users, including the environment, in a sustainable way. It does this by managing the basin as one system. This will enable the river systems to continue to support communities and industries in the long term as they adapt to changes, including a changing climate.

To see our work in delivering the Plan, visit [the Basin Plan roll-out section](#).

What is the Basin Plan?

The Basin Plan is [legislation](#) which guides governments, regional authorities and communities to sustainably manage and use the waters of the Murray–Darling Basin. The Plan came into effect in November 2012, and it will be reviewed and revised throughout a seven year implementation phase.

From :

<https://www.mdba.gov.au/basin-plan>

So what is going on ?

Queensland

We have rivers and waterways being blocked for irrigation.

Only when in major flood events does any water flow down past these weirs.



Cubbie Station Wier at Dirrinbandi

- Recently Police raided a Norman Farming operation [REDACTED]

Norman Farming were paid \$25,000,000 for works under the headwaters program to facilitate water return to the rivers.

New South Wales

The NSW Government are pushing cotton above all else

We have water theft go untouched

Non Compliance

Water Meters being disabled

Meters not being used

Compliance investigation teams disbanded

Illegal earthworks in dams and levee banks to trap flood plains water
Cotton Lobby forcing a pipeline on Broken Hill
Three Water Ministers have changed rules to suit cotton growers
Possible corruption of politicians
Corrupt Bureaucrats in DPI Water
Towns being forced onto bore water
Irrigators on Lower Darling being forced to bulldoze plantings because of no water
or very poor water quality in Darling River.

Broken Hill Pipeline

The Cotton Lobby requested the NSW Government build a pipeline from Wentworth to Broken Hill for a secure supply of water.
This pipeline will cost \$500,000,000 so that Cotton upstream of Bourke can remove more water from the river.

If this pipeline goes ahead, there will be no water stored in the Menindee Lakes and it will affect South Australia twice.
The Darling River below the Bourke Weir will die along with the Menindee lakes only used to mitigate flooding.

The Government has been draining the lakes to prove a point that the pipeline is needed.

No Water in Menindee Lakes means no water saved for South Australia
Water from Wentworth is lost to South Australia.

South Australia

I understand that the Murray River must be flushed to remove salts.
I do question the method used.

Would it be better to build a pipeline from Lake Alexandrina to the lower Coorong ?

By pumping water into the Lower Coorong you are reducing river salts and also flushing the Coorong which is extremely salty.
This water will then flow out the Murray mouth keeping it open and restore health to the Ramsar Listed Coorong.
Once the Mouth is open the fish will return with tidal movement.

Sea water could also be used to supplement this cause.

I ask you to look at the Murray Darling Basin Authority with a view to dismiss current management and start again.

It is obvious that the Murray Darling Basin Authority is a toothless misguided organisation that has lost it's way on many fronts and the plan is being rorted. A total waste of money and time which we don't have.

The fact that it is controlled by a Federal Water Minister means it was meant to become a political play ground.

The Management of Water across four states is too important a matter to be used for political gain by states.

We need to replace it with a better structured authority.
My Suggestion Follows:

Water Management Overhaul

A Completely Independent Management Authority controlled by a panel of Senators from all political parties.

This Authority would have across border powers.

States to have meeting and planning input only and any expansion of irrigation must be presented to Management Panel for investigation and research before permission is granted.

Current Water Managers would be banned from positions on New Authority.

Roles of Authority

- * Manage all water in Murray Darling Basin
- * Manage water rights, permissions and pumping
- * Manage environmental water
- * Manage and Enforce Compliance
- * Manage water storage and draw downs
- * Manage planning and irrigation expansion
- * Manage pest control with state bodies
- * Do bird, fish and animal counts
- * Conduct ongoing satellite observations
- * Conduct ground water measuring and quality
- * Conduct community consultations with relevant state bodies.
- * Conduct community education with schools etc.
- * Conduct research for scientific purposes

The Murray Darling Basin Plan must be redrawn with a view to sustaining river health as foremost aim.

Extraction must be controlled to this goal.

This is not meant to cut out irrigation but it must be done within available flows at that time and not planned to include flood flows as this is a bonus.

Storage of water must be managed for longest duration for droughts.

Please read Submissions to the Senate inquiry by those appearing in Broken Hill.



THE SENATE

RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT REFERENCES COMMITTEE

The integrity of the water market in the Murray-Darling Basin

**PUBLIC HEARING
Wednesday 1 November 2017**

**The Demo Club
218 Argent Street, Broken Hill**

Time	Witness
9.30 am	Mr Robert McBride (<i>Submission 14</i>) Owner, Tolarno Station
10.00 am	Brewarrina Shire Council Mayor Phillip O'Connor Mr Jeff Sowiak, General Manager
10.45 am	Morning Tea
11.00 am	Broken Hill City Council (<i>Submission 25</i>) Mayor Darriea Turley Deputy Mayor Marion Browne
11.45 am	Australian Floodplain Association (<i>Submission 44</i>) Ms Julie McClure, Kallara Station Mr Justin McClure, Kallara Station Mr Stuart LeLievre, Yathonga Station Mr Leon Zanker
12.30 pm	Lunch
1.30 pm	Pastoralists' Association of West Darling (<i>Submission 40</i>) Mr Lachlan Gall, President Mr Terry Smith Mr Brendan Cullen
2.15 pm	Mr Bill Johnson
3.00 pm	Adjournment

Committee Chair: Senator Glenn Sterle
Committee Secretary: Jane Thomson
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www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Rural_and_Regional_Affairs_and_Transport

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport/MurrayDarlingPlan/Submissions](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Rural_and_Regional_Affairs_and_Transport/MurrayDarlingPlan/Submissions)

The Constitution of Australia states

99. Commonwealth not to give preference

The Commonwealth shall not, by any law or regulation of trade, commerce, or revenue, give preference to one State or any part thereof over another State or any part thereof.

100. Nor abridge right to use water

The Commonwealth shall not, by any law or regulation of trade or commerce, abridge the right of a State or of the residents therein to the reasonable use of the waters of rivers for conservation or irrigation.

I ask you to investigate whether the Federal Government is breaking the Constitution by Trading in water.
even though NSW government is going to withhold water from the Lower Darling, the MDBA being a Federal authority manages the rivers and so is complicit in this.

Can your Royal Commission stop the Broken Hill pipeline going ahead until all this has been investigated.
Once it is built you will suffer.

In Closing I suggest approaches to all states in The Murray Darling Basin requesting assistance with the Royal Commission.
Even if only Victoria join in you have more power and sharing costs.

Thanking you.

Christopher Rawlins