

Media Release



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Our plan to fix the Murray Darling Basin

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) has launched its 10 point plan to help restore the balance between irrigated agriculture and the environment in the Murray Darling Basin.

VFF President David Jochinke said the Murray Darling Basin Plan is hurting farmers across Basin Communities.

“As our farming communities endure another year of drought it is clear the Murray Darling Basin Plan is failing to respond to the needs of irrigated agriculture and the environment.”

“Now is the time for all farmers to work together in fixing the Basin Plan to restore the balance between water for our farms, our communities and our environment.”

VFF Water Council Chair Richard Anderson said the new 10 point plan provided solutions to major problems with the Basin Plan.

“Current laws mean the Basin Plan and government cannot respond to what we have learned since its inception. We have been left with a complex and rigid legal instrument that no politician is game to touch.”

“The focus of fixing the Murray Darling Basin must be simplifying the legislation to give the whole community certainty.”

“Farmers also need certainty over when the Basin Plan will end. Currently the legislation allows for a review in 2024 and more water recovery could start all over again. This simply has to change”.

“We need a plan that will take into account the impact of water recovery on our farming communities as well as taking into account new science - like that of salinity in the Lower Lakes.”

“We need a Basin Plan that promotes innovative projects to help restore the balance. New environmental projects that do not require more water should be implemented, especially if the 605GL in environmental offsets cannot be achieved,” Mr Anderson said.

Mr Jochinke concluded saying the forthcoming Ministerial Council meeting in December presents an opportunity for the Basin States and the Federal Government to show leadership.

“The message to government from the farming community has been made loud and clear. It’s time to show leadership and fix the Basin Plan by making it adaptable to our community’s needs.”

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