

Media Release



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Leadership, consistency and certainty needed to fix the Basin Plan

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is opposing moves that would see the Murray Darling Basin Interim Inspector General provided with expanded powers to examine water sharing arrangements between the States.

VFF Water Council Chair Richard Anderson said changing the way water is shared between the states will create uncertainty and risks Victoria's water security.

"There is a finite amount of water available. This means increasing one state's share is only possible by reducing the amount of water available to another."

"Re-carving the way water is shared between the states will only lead to greater uncertainty and puts Victoria's conservative policy towards allocating water in jeopardy," Mr Anderson said.

"Rather than wasting time on yet another review, Minister Littleproud needs to provide leadership that will restore balance and fairness to the Basin Plan debate."

"That includes bringing excessive floodplain harvesting in the Northern Basin under control and exploring the opportunity to build Lock Zero to stop 800GL of water evaporating in the Lower Lakes every year," Mr Anderson said.

"The Commonwealth must provide certainty to farmers about what happens when the Basin Plan concludes. Currently the legislation allows for a review in 2026 and more water recovery could start all over again. That must not happen."

"Certainty must also be given around the proposed 450GL of 'upwater'. This water cannot be delivered without causing disastrous economic impacts on our communities and significant damage to our rivers."

"Just as New South Wales have said they are unable to contribute towards the 450GL, neither can Victoria. It must therefore be scrapped," Mr Anderson said.

Mr Anderson concluded saying "farmers are suffering because of the Basin Plan. The Commonwealth Government cannot continue to distract from the problems of the Plan by having another review.

"Enough is enough, establishing more reviews does not substitute the necessity for the strong leadership required to fix the Basin Plan."

"The Interim Inspector General role should focus on the very challenging job of ensuring Basin Plan compliance issues are addressed, particularly in the over-allocated Northern Basin. The Commonwealth must get on with the job of fixing the Basin Plan".

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