



We must stop our water resources being wasted by poor Government policy

The NSW Government released the August Water Allocation Statement on Monday and it clearly demonstrates that current rules and the water policy framework lack common sense and do not suit farming communities across the Murray Valley.

Chair of Murray Irrigation, Phil Snowden said “in the last month since the July Water Allocation Statement, NSW Murray water balance has increased by 834GL, but less than half of this has been allocated”.

“Farmers across the Murray Valley cannot understand why our allocations are so low when the Menindee Lakes and Lake Victoria are expected to fill, and Hume dam is being pre-released for flood mitigation yet none of these are factored into allocations.”

“With the recent rainfall South Australia is currently receiving up to five times their entitlement flow on a daily basis”, Mr Snowden said.

“Murray Irrigation believe there is over two million ML of environmental water entitlements in the Southern connected system. There could be up to 1.5 million ML of environmental water in the dams now contributing to this flooding and pre-releases out of our storages. What is frustrating is that there is no credit to environmental water accounts, such as the Barmah-Millewa Account, from all this water flowing down the system.

Mr Snowden said, “approximately 900,000ML has gone through Tocumwal in the last two months flooding the Barmah-Millewa forest at the right time of year and there is no credit for this against the Barmah-Millewa account or environmental water accounts”.

“This is wrong and completely undermines the credibility of water resource management in this country in the face of climate change and reduced inflows. Environmental water and poor Government policy are now managing our water resources to the detriment of irrigators allocations”, Mr Snowden said.

“Murray Irrigation is calling on the State Water Ministers to work with Minister for Water, Keith Pitt, to step in and sort this out. Now that the new Inspector-General for Water Compliance has legislated powers he should also be involved, and I will be speaking to him today at the National Irrigators Council meeting on this very issue.”

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