

Thursday, 25 March 2010

National Irrigators' Council welcomes new members

The National Irrigators' Council (NIC) welcomed two new members to the fold at its meeting this week, including its first direct representative group from Victoria.

Northern Victorian Irrigators' Inc and Macquarie River Food and Fibre from NSW are the latest organisations to join the NIC, Australia's peak national body for irrigators.

The NIC was formed in 2008 in part at least in response to the growing Commonwealth involvement in water policy and the desire among irrigators to have a permanent presence in Canberra and united policy influence on government decisions. Its objective is to develop projects and policies to ensure the efficiency, viability and sustainability of Australian irrigated agriculture and the security and reliability of water entitlements.

NIC CEO, Danny O'Brien, said the two new members added to the 21 existing organisations on the Council representing national bodies and local irrigator groups in Queensland, NSW and South Australia.

"The addition of these two members is further recognition of the need for a strong, united organisation representing the interests of irrigators across the country.

"We are particularly pleased to welcome Northern Victorian Irrigators as our first direct membership organisation from that state. Victoria is critical in irrigation terms generally and more particularly as part of the Murray Darling Basin. We now have members in all Basin states which strengthens the position of all irrigators as we prepare to deal with the fall-out from the forthcoming Basin Plan.

"Macquarie River Food and Fibre is another organisation with great interest in the Basin Plan and its membership adds to NIC's coverage of major river systems in NSW.

"We look forward to the input of both organisations in our policy deliberations going forward."

Mr O'Brien said the NIC continued to have discussions with other potential members and looked forward to more membership announcements in the near future.

"The NIC's agenda is the protection of the interests of all irrigators, no matter where they are or what they grow. We recognise that irrigators need to work together and that collectively we face a far greater threat than each other.

"We have already achieved recognition among the key decision-makers in Canberra and we will continue to work with them to advance the interests of irrigators across the country," Mr O'Brien said.

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