

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2013

## **The Coalition's draft Water Plan is a Dam Good Idea**

The National Irrigators' Council (NIC) today welcomed the Coalition's draft Water Plan and said if we are to meet future food security challenges both here and abroad it is time we had a sensible discussion on what our future needs are and how they can be delivered in a sustainable way.

NIC CEO, Tom Chesson said whilst the irony that the Coalition's draft water plan was 'leaked' wouldn't be lost on many; it would be a disaster for the Nation's future if the policy intent of the draft plan was glossed over and ignored.

"We believe that with the predictions of more extreme weather events, conserving water for times of drought and protecting lives and property during major flooding events is both a necessity and a logical climate change mitigation tool."

"Our food and fibre producers are always at the mercy of the climate."

"Irrigation is the Nation's insurance against weather extremes impacting on food security and without a comprehensive Water Plan which includes improving existing water infrastructure and building new dams Australia's food supplies could be in jeopardy."

"As a Nation we have dropped the ball on major water infrastructure and we paid a high price during the last drought when expensive emergency measures had to be enacted."

"Coupled with the loss of life and damage to infrastructure from flooding it is extremely irresponsible not to have a major discussion on building new water conservation infrastructure."

Mr Chesson said Mr Chesson said NIC's members we would be disappointed if the other major Parties lacked the courage to move beyond ideological naivety and avoided the need to arrive at pragmatic solutions to what will become an increasingly significant challenge.

"We look forward to being fully brief by the Coalition, the Government, Greens, other Parties and Candidates on their final policies in the lead up to the election," Mr Chesson said.

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