

Friday, 1 April 2011

Words are nice, actions speak louder

The National Irrigators' Council is encouraged by the Communiqué issued by Murray Darling Basin Water Ministers after their meeting today but says it's time their words were translated into action.

NIC CEO Danny O'Brien said an increased focus on getting water use efficiency money out the door and on the ground was welcome, but now it needed to happen.

"There were similar words in the Communiqué from Ministers in December, but not a lot of action since. For instance stage two funding for Victoria's Food Bowl Modernisation project was announced in early November – it's now April but there's still not been a contract signed between the Commonwealth and Victoria.

"We welcome the words of the Ministers today – everything they have said is positive. But it means nothing unless they get their bureaucracies to act on their directives and start to deliver meaningful outcomes that ensure water is saved for the environment without damaging rural communities and Australia's food and fibre production heartland.

"This will mean Minister's taking an active interest and cracking the whip to get action. It appears that's what they intend to do and more power to them.

"Tony Burke has made a good start by calling today's meeting and we're pleased that Ministers will now be meeting regularly to drive the process. We look forward to more action to back the words."

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