

Friday 26th October, 2012

Still Plenty of Questions to be answered on Basin Plan

The National Irrigators' Council (NIC) has sceptically welcomed today's announcement of additional funding for infrastructure within the Murray Darling Basin.

"The commitment to additional funding, and the achievement of water through infrastructure is welcome, but we are far from convinced that the government will be able to effectively remove the capacity constraints," NIC CEO, Tom Chesson said today.

"This decision by the government to increase the SDL reduction by up to 450GI, to 3200GI is clearly about appeasing the South Australian Government," Mr Chesson said.

"We will do all we can to ensure that this is achieved without adding to the already high toll the Basin Plan is having on jobs, food prices and the viability of family businesses."

"We are pleased that the Government has recognised that infrastructure is the lesser of two evils when it comes to ensuring that we have a 'healthy working river' system in the Murray Darling Basin."

"However, until we see the final Basin Plan, the Intergovernmental Agreement underpinning and the Regulatory Impact Statement, today's announcement is just but one of the pieces of an increasingly complicated jigsaw.

Mr Chesson said NIC Members remained to be convinced by the Government that the latest announcement is achievable and will actually occur given the long time-frames involved.

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