

MEDIA ALERT

13 December 2009



Forums tackle progress and process of developing new Basin Plan

Two forums being conducted over four days this week by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority in Canberra will engage stakeholders on the progress and process of the developing new Basin Plan.

The Authority's centrepiece task is to develop a major Basin-wide plan to sustainably manage the water resources across the entire Basin. A draft plan will be issued for public comment and consultation in mid 2010 and the final will go to the Commonwealth Minister in 2011.

The first forum will be held on 14 and 15 December and will be aimed at representatives of farming, conservation, irrigation and other water management peak bodies. The second forum to be held on 16 and 17 December will engage departmental representatives of all tiers of government, science bodies and researchers.

Media interview/photo/TV opportunities will be available at:

- **Peak Bodies Forum** – 10 am, Monday 14 December
- **Government and Science Forum** – 10 am Wednesday 16 December

Location: National Convention Centre, 31 Constitution Avenue, Canberra ACT 2601

Each forum will include opening presentations from Authority Chair Mike Taylor, Basin Community Committee Chair Joan Burns and Authority Chief Executive Rob Freeman.

The forums will focus on the recently released discussion paper on the issues involved in developing sustainable diversion limits and other Basin Plan issues.

A copy of the discussion paper is available at www.mdba.gov.au/files/publications/sustainable-diversion-limits-issues-paper-12-11-09.pdf

Authority Chair Mike Taylor said the forums will increase stakeholders' understanding of the Basin planning process and give stakeholders an opportunity to interact with Authority staff.

"Participants will also be able to provide the Authority with feedback on Basin community issues which might affect the development of the Basin Plan," he said.

"We now have a comprehensive picture of the water and environmental issues that confront Basin communities and this will be a very useful opportunity to get more input and to check that we have identified the highest priority issues."

Media contact: Sam Leone, phone (02) 6279 0141

Trim ref: D09/24049