

**REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF THE CAP
MURRAY DARLING BASIN COMMISSION**
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SUBMISSION FROM:

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Please find enclosed my submission to the Review. Thankyou for the opportunity to comment.

I would agree with the majority of the comments in the Discussion Paper, and have only commented specifically where I believe it has been necessary to do so.

Ecological Sustainability of Rivers

- The Cap is an essential step in providing for the environmental sustainability of the river system of the Basin, and makes some effort towards reducing degradation of land and water resources.
- Progressive changes and reviews of sustainable levels will be necessary for the advancement of key outcomes which can only be achieved by constant review, monitoring and modification.
- There is some suggestion that the Cap has already been lowered in some areas, however this should not be encouraged until assessment and review work has been undertaken and due consideration given to any necessary or needed changes. These should not merely occur because of intended development or new demands made by irrigators, but upon satisfactory review of sustainable levels .

Economic and Social Impacts

- The Cap has already delivered significant economic and social benefits to the Basin community , and must continue to remain in place for the longer term, positive and progressive outcomes. The Cap however must operate with factual information reaching the community, not challenged by individual catchments on the fallacy or whim of developers. Water is a critical issue in Australia.
- The Cap has provided a mechanism of restraint, with its controllers conducting business in an orderly fashion, while enabling growth and economic development to proceed.
- The security of supply, and the environment created for water trading and related reforms have been a positive move, and should remain priorities.

Equity

- A total catchment management approach is vital to water management, and this must include both surface and groundwater
- The total protection of that water supply may necessitate actions which prevent contaminants and radioactive waste entering the system.
- Cap arrangements for Queensland and New South Wales require urgent resolution.

Implementation and Compliance

- Effective compliance , monitoring tools and performance evaluation equipment need to be given a higher priority by the Board, as the long term outcomes will rest on monitoring and evaluation.
- The Cap must be enforced in all states to prevent ongoing breaches in water consumption and storage issues. It obviously must be spelt out as being a uniform situation. After all, it is the one Murray Darling Basin system and the issues do not stop at State boundaries.

Schedule F to the Murray Darling Basin Agreement

- Arrangements for remedial actions in the case of Cap exceedance needs to be included.

Sustainable Rivers Audit

- The suggestion is sensible and will be good value.