

Socio-Economic Assessment of Murray-Darling Basin Submission Template

Submission Number 019

1. What organisation (if relevant) are you from?

████████████████████

2. Please enter your first name

██████████

3. Please enter your email

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Bring communities back to the heart of conversations and action that decide their future

This section encompasses the following categories:

- Governments must rebuild community trust in water reform, and lead from the front
- Current funding is not enough to support community led transitions for Basin communities impacted by water reform
- Socioeconomic neutrality criteria should be accompanied by a process to provide flexibility for communities to move to less water dependent futures where communities request this

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Panel's key findings and recommendations, and why? Please provide as much detail as possible.

The definition of reform is to make better. The Wentworth group and the MDBA have led us to believe that this is so. There are very few if any irrigation farmers who would agree, however they are the ones who have to pay to save the world from climate change.

5. Are there any significant gaps? What are we missing?

Current funding is not enough to support community led transitions for basin communities impacted by loss of water. I don't know if affected communities want to make the transition or even if they know what you are talking about.

6. If implemented, do you think our recommendations would make a difference or have a benefit to you and/or your community?

I am not sure if the community I live in would request to have less water dependence, however it does raise the question, Could we go back to having full dependency on water if we so wish?

Meet the pressing needs of First Nations

This section encompasses the following categories:

- More needs to be done to improve social, cultural and economic outcomes for First Nations communities

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Panel's key findings and recommendations, and why? Please provide as much detail as possible.

I cannot agree that more needs to be done to improve social, cultural and economic outcomes for our indigenous communities. A quick look at how the numbers claiming indigenous descent have risen in the last two years would make it seem obvious that having an indigenous relative is a good investment.

8. Are there any significant gaps? What are we missing?

I don't believe anything is missing.

9. If implemented, do you think our recommendations would make a difference or have a benefit to you and/or your community?

I can't see your recommendations making any difference to our community

Implement water reform with greater care so potential harms are minimised

This section encompasses the following categories:

- From this point on, governments should match the pace of all further water recovery to the capacity of systems and communities to absorb and adjust change
- Basin communities need greater clarity around river operations
- The quality, timeliness and awareness of indicators related to wellbeing and the environment need to be better
- Research and innovation need more focus on helping farm businesses transition to flexible farming systems
- Moving towards more sustainable irrigation infrastructure

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Panel's key findings and recommendations, and why? Please provide as much detail as possible.

To speak of further water recovery is very strange given the current level of dissatisfaction with the MDBA, so no further water recovery should be even considered. As for the quality, timeliness and awareness of indicators related to wellbeing and the environment, there is no doubt in my mind that every release of environmental water should be accompanied with a cost benefit statement. Is there a better way?

11. Are there any significant gaps? What are we missing?

I have heard that the majority of Australian irrigation farmers rank high on ability and method of operating, perhaps some acknowledgement of this could be made.

12. If implemented, do you think our recommendations would make a difference or have a benefit to you and/or your community?

Research and innovation are always desirable provided that what is being researched is necessary.

Support the capacity of communities to adapt to change

This section encompasses the following categories:

- Basin communities need greater clarity around river operations
- The quality, timeliness and awareness of indicators related to wellbeing and the environment need to be better
- The Australia Government needs to further invest in regional connectivity in the Basin

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Panel's key findings and recommendations, and why? Please provide as much detail as possible.

Yes basin communities do need greater clarity around river operations. I have heard that there was tremendous anger when NSW irrigation farmers were given a nil allocation while Lake Alexandrina and the Coorong together with the Pacific Ocean and SA irrigation farmers received their full allocation.

14. Are there any significant gaps? What are we missing?

Yes with this quality, timeliness and awareness need to be better this dovetails in with my insistence that environmental releases must be accompanied with a cost benefit analysis.

15. If implemented, do you think our recommendations would make a difference or have a benefit to you and/or your community?

Not sure that the Australian government needs to further invest in regional connectivity in the Basin. I do know that they should be investing in more water security especially when there are well researched and viable plans that could be achieved if the government had the will.

Address critical and urgent gaps in wellbeing, infrastructure and services

This section encompasses the following categories:

- The Australian Government needs to further invest in regional connectivity in the Basin
- Basin regions and towns facing acute social and economic issues needs immediate support

16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Panel's key findings and recommendations, and why? Please provide as much detail as possible.

I reiterate that if the Australian government has money to invest there are better ways to do this as outlined in Paragraph 15.

17. Are there any significant gaps? What are we missing?

I don't know of any.

18. If implemented, do you think our recommendations would make a difference or have a benefit to you and/or your community?

Yes basin regions and towns need support same as all the drought affected regions, whether they will get it is another matter.