

What organisation (if relevant) are you from?

████████████████████

Please enter your first name:

██

Please enter your email address:

████████████████████

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.

It is difficult to agree with the Panel's recommendations as, in their current form, they are a collection of vague statements which are virtually unactionable, incorrect or misrepresent things which are already happening as being new initiatives to be pursued (and mostly by governments). The following are some examples which would make it quite difficult for governments, industry or communities to address these draft recommendations in any meaningful way: Recommendation 1 refers to the role of governments in building trust and the first dot point of this section states "Governments must rebuild trust.....". Trust is something all parties must be responsible for delivering - not just government. It cannot be supplied/delivered by just one party. The initiatives listed under Recommendation 1 do not appear to be correct. Examples such as Basin governments and relevant authorities adapting to changing circumstances and new information in order to deliver the Basin Plan (this process has been continuing by all agencies since the preparation of the Basin Plan); "Basin governments should invest in the on-going development of effective water markets...." - no evidence is presented to support the contention that water markets are not currently effective. While improvements could be made to improve their effectiveness, a detailed examination of all the trade data from the inception of the various state water registers indicates the existing markets are extremely effective at trading water. Even with a reasonable period of involvement in water policy it is difficult to understand what most of draft recommendation 1 is asking government to do. Can this (and the other recommendations) clearly articulate what they are asking government to support or deliver? What does draft recommendation 2 actually mean? It's current wording doesn't make sense. Draft recommendation 3 refers to the extension of the Murray Darling Basin Economic Development program being extended from 2023 to 2030 to empower communities to make longer term investments in their future. Where is the evidence to support this draft recommendation (that by extending the program alone the communities would make these longer term investments)? Draft recommendation 4 presents nothing new. The contents of this draft recommendation summarise the findings of the community-level analysis conducted by the MDBA as released in 2018. Draft recommendation 5 refers to a community-led process. There is no clear announcement of what such a process would be or how it would operate. There is also considerable difficulty in understanding how the recommendations relate to the findings presented in the draft report. Importantly, if the draft recommendations (such as recommendations 3 and 4) rely on information underpinning Finding 1, the recommendations are

unreliable. In particular, some of the details leading to Finding 1 on page 22 of the report are not correct. The first dot point of page 22 refers to the ABS data; the second dot point talks about the availability of data for towns and the need for relying on information at an LGA level. The statements made in this dot point are not correct. Using the draft report's example of the Balonne LGA area, there is considerable social and economic data available for at least the last four census across the Balonne Shire and for the towns of St George, Dirranbandi, Thallon, Bollon and the smaller settlement of Hebel. That information on the towns and the shire as a whole makes it possible to examine the pace and scale of change in the individual towns/settlements, the whole shire and by subtraction, the farming community. Using that information and an understanding of where irrigated and dryland production occurs in the shire, it is possible to draw out the effects of irrigation and of water recovery in the different parts of the Balonne LGA. In relation to the third dot point, the reference to their being insufficient data to understand the social and economic conditions of First Nations people in the Basin is not correct. While there could be improvements to the collection of this data (and there has been increasing participation of First Nations people in the last four census) a lot of data does exist. Information is available for a broad range of social and economic parameters in for all localities in Australia, not just the Basin and is available for the purposes proposed in this section. Can there be some improvement to link the findings and recommendations in the report? In the very least, where incorrect statements are presented and underpin findings (and therefore possibly draft recommendations), as indicated above, can they be addressed in finalising the report?

Are there any significant gaps? What are we missing?

Clear and precise recommendations which can be addressed in a meaningful way by governments, industries and communities would address a significant gap with the current draft report. Removing incorrect statements, as indicated above, would be similarly helpful as would clear linkages between the findings and the recommendations.

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

It is difficult to see how the draft recommendations in their current form (and if they could be actioned) would create any additional benefit for the Basin communities.

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.

What does draft recommendation 9 seek to do? The reference is to delivering improved outcomes? What are the outcomes? What is improvement? Without clear articulation of these matters, the proposal is set to fail. Why can't the Panel from its discussions articulate these outcomes and improvements?

Are there any significant gaps? What are we missing?

see above

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

see above

If you would like to upload a submission, please upload it here