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ADF urges the Murray-Darling Basin plan review to include the south

For Immediate Release

Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) believes there is an urgent need for the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) to conduct a socio-economic analysis on the impacts of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan for the Southern Basin communities.

This is needed to provide an understanding of any proposed changes to the northern Basin plan as a result of the recently released socio-economic analysis of the impacts on the north.

“The MDBA should not be reviewing water recovery targets in the northern end of the Basin without understanding the impacts in the south,” said the chair of the ADIC Water Taskforce, Daryl Hoey.

“The authority can’t ask government to change the northern Basin target without also reviewing what different water recovery levels mean for southern communities and the environment,” said Mr Hoey.

As a response, the dairy industry has and continues to invest in a number of reports to track the Basin Plan’s socio-economic effects, and the implications of attempting to recover more water from the irrigation pool.

In March 2016, Dairy Australia commissioned Aither consultants to model the effects on the temporary water price of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan buybacks for the environment, and changing water demand from different industries.

It concludes that removing any more water from the collective pool, i.e. north and south, will inevitably make water more expensive, with serious implications for the dairy industry.

The positive stride taken by government toward improving the Murray-Darling Basin Plan must now extend to the southern basin communities as a matter of urgency.

The ADF is committed to working with Government to improve the management of water in the Basin, achieve the necessary community buy-in, and achieve socio-economic outcomes while meeting environmental targets.

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