



Australian Dairy Industry Council Inc.

Media Release

No gain, only pain in playing politics on Basin Plan

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For Immediate Release

Basin States must adopt a more flexible approach to water recovery for the sake of all communities in the Murray Darling Basin, the Australian Dairy Industry Council (ADIC) said today.

Daryl Hoey, chair of the ADIC Basin Water Taskforce, urged the States to come back to the table to consider all options for achieving the Plan, including the 450 GL 'upwater'.

"The Basin Plan is flexible – water should be able to come from a range of projects and alternative arrangements agreed by the States. It does not have to be recovered solely from irrigators through on-farm projects. The key is that the 'upwater' is found without negative social or economic impacts to communities along the river," Mr Hoey said.

Mr Hoey also warned that threats to derail the 605 GL in environmental offsets could lead to more buybacks.

"All States agreed to the offsets as a mechanism for achieving the goals of the plan when projects were submitted to the MDBA back in June," he said. "No State should be walking away from that agreed process now."

"The offsets will deliver better environmental outcomes than merely sending more water down the river and hoping for the best.

"If the offsets are derailed, the Commonwealth may revert to buybacks to meet even the Basin Plan's 2750 GL target. The volume involved would be the equivalent of closing down a significant part of the Basin's Riverland and Sunraysia irrigation districts.

"We are worried about the viability of the dairy industry along the length of the Southern Connected Basin if any water recovery targets on-farm works before fully considering off-farm mechanisms. There needs to be a holistic approach taken and it need to be led by all the State Ministers."

"Through its commitment to adopt a standardised method of reporting compliance, with the aim of publishing a standardised set of compliance data, Murray-Darling Basin state ministers demonstrated that they can act collectively in the best interests of the Basin.

"We need our political leaders to come back to the table in good faith with a vision to act on behalf of the whole community."

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For further information, contact:

David Inall
Australian Dairy Farmers
Tel: 0427 495 266
Email: dinall@australiandairyfarmers.com.au
Twitter: [@AusDairyFarmers](https://twitter.com/AusDairyFarmers)

The Australian Dairy Industry Council (ADIC) is the dairy industry's peak policy body. It co-ordinates industry's policy and represents all sectors of the industry on national and international issues through its two constituent bodies, Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd (ADF) and the Australian Dairy Products Federation (ADPF). It aims to foster, promote and protect the interests of the Australian dairy industry by driving a whole of industry approach to dairy policy and the development of the dairy industry.