



National Farmers'
FEDERATION

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Windsor report reinforces need for balanced Basin Plan

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) has welcomed the release of the Inquiry into the impact of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan in Regional Australia, saying it provides a common-sense approach to implementing a balanced Basin Plan.

NFF President Jock Laurie said the Report is a positive step in acknowledging the importance of balance, and called for the recommendations made by Tony Windsor and the Standing Committee on Regional Australia to be adopted by the Federal Government and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA).

“This report provides a sensible approach to the implementation of the Plan. We are particularly pleased with the recommendations that encourage investment in water saving projects, infrastructure, and research to improve irrigation efficiencies,” Mr Laurie said.

“We also fully support the concerns raised by the Committee into the impact of mining on water resources, and support the recommendation that no mining activities be approved until the impact of their activities are fully understood and able to be mitigated.

“At the same time, we are disappointed that the Committee didn't take this opportunity to include their suggestions as to what a balanced Basin Plan should look like. The Committee met with residents in the affected communities and heard their concerns, and is in an ideal position to advise the MDBA on what the balance should be.

“Nevertheless, we welcome the efforts of the Committee and their recommendations,” Mr Laurie said.

“Basin communities in particular will be very relieved to hear that the Report recommends an open and transparent consultation process with affected communities, with opportunities for contributions by all, including those who have local knowledge and expertise,” Mr Laurie said.

“The crucial element now is for the Government and the MDBA to deliver a balanced Murray-Darling Basin Plan and adopt the recommendations made by the Committee, to ensure a fair and equitable outcome for all.

“We eagerly await responses from both the Federal Government and the MDBA to today's Report,” Mr Laurie said.

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