



MEDIA RELEASE

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RGA welcomes NSW and VIC Governments, Murray Darling Basin Plan review panel announcement.

The Ricegrowers' Association of Australia (RGA) has welcomed the NSW Minister for Regional Water, Niall Blair and Victorian Minister for Water, Lisa Neville review into the offsets mechanism in the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

An expert panel has been set up to allow both the NSW and Victorian Governments to make sure the Plan delivers real environmental benefits without negatively impacting on Basin communities, by providing advice on the technical foundations of the Basin Plan's Sustainable Diversion Limit (SDL) adjustment mechanism.

The Basin Plan allows for the 2,750 GL recovery target to be offset by 650 GL through projects that deliver equivalent environmental outcomes with less water. However, there is a concern that there is currently a lack of transparency around the assumptions that sit within the adjustment mechanism, and going forward a more localised consultative approach is needed.

RGA President Jeremy Morton congratulated the NSW and Victorian Governments on their announcement.

"The RGA strongly supports this announcement as we believe maximising environmental benefits while limiting entitlement recovery through the offset mechanism, are the most important component of the basin plan. It would be negligent to apply the mechanism without being as certain as we can be that the offset projects are being fairly scored. We will not be short changed on these projects".

"The evidence continues to mount that the entitlement recovery to date is having a profound and permanent impact on our communities and recovering just one megalitre more than necessary is simply unacceptable."

"The fact that these two governments have chosen to work together to undertake this project, despite being opposition parties, should be applauded." said Mr Morton.

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