

The Hon Rose Jackson MLC

Minister for Water, Minister for Housing,
Minister for Homelessness
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth
Minister for the North Coast



Our Ref: MF24/3037
Your Ref: D24/5705

Professor Hugh Durrant-Whyte
Commissioner
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

By email: Hugh.Durrant-Whyte@nrc.nsw.gov.au

Dear Professor Durrant-Whyte *Hugh*

Thank you for your letter of 21 November 2024 and the Natural Resources Commission (NRC)'s statutory review of the *Water Sharing Plan for the Murray and Lower Darling Regulated River Water Source 2016* (the plan), in line with Section 43A of the *Water Management Act 2000* (the Act).

The NRC review report for Murray and Lower Darling Regulated water sharing plan recommends the plan is replaced, supported by the completion of the recommendations of this review.

We note the opportunities for improvement identified in the review include:

- Stronger evidence that extraction limits are sustainable
- Improved consideration of climate change
- The plan's outcomes for Aboriginal water users and communities.

In addition, the review recommended immediate actions to address water quality issues and avoid fish deaths leading into the high-risk period for these events, via amendments to the plan.

Other key concerns included:

- The plan should adequately reflect the priorities of the Act, particularly the protection of fundamental ecosystem health
- Improving the flexibility and optimising environmental water provisions to maximise environmental benefits
- Reviewing interjurisdictional agreements to ensure clarity and equity.

The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (NSW DCCEEW) will further consider these recommendations in terms of any immediate amendments that may be required, as well as through the replacement of this plan. The NRC will be engaged as agreed at an officer level throughout this process.

Should you require additional information or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Mr Peter Hyde, Director Inland Planning, NSW DCCEEW via email at peter.hyde@dpie.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Thanks as always for
your assistance + work
High - it is incredibly
useful. We will continue
to work collaboratively
with you in
this area.
R.

Rose Jackson MLC

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Date: 29.1.25