



NSW IRRIGATORS' COUNCIL



NSW Irrigators Council  
*Irrigation in Australia*



# Introduction

NSW Irrigators Council represents around  
12,000 irrigation license holders  
across New South Wales.

We represent:

- Membership Groups; and
- Water Access License Holders





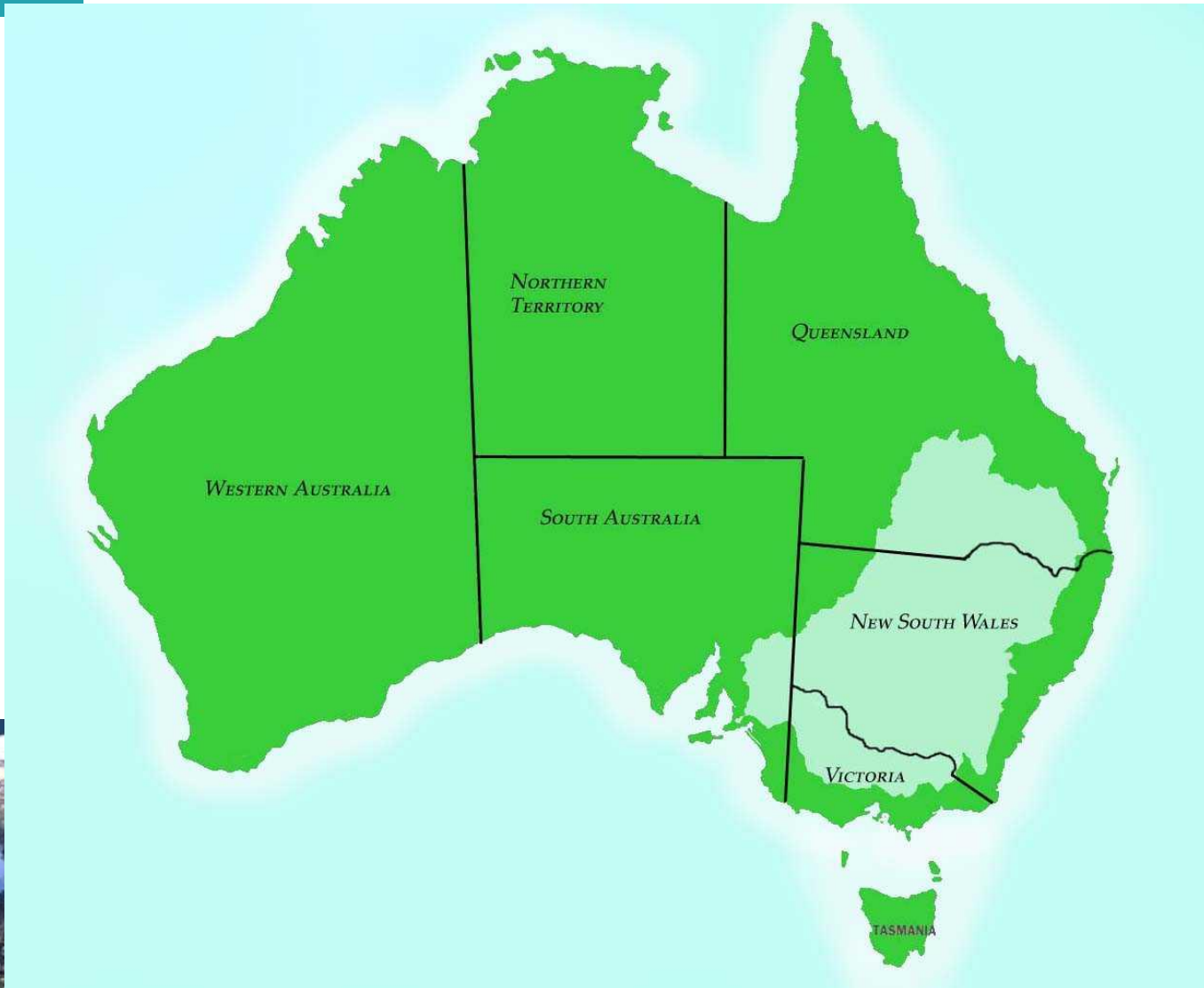
# Overview

1. Geography
2. Irrigation in the Murray-Darling Basin
3. Cross border issues
4. Ownership and trade
5. Basin Plan and Water Politics





# Geography





# Geography



- 23 river valleys;
- 1 million square kilometres;
- 39% national agricultural income;
- 65% of Australia's irrigated land



# Irrigation in the Basin



- Cotton;
- Rice;
- Horticulture;
- Dairy; and
- Annual crops



# Irrigation in the Basin



- North is summer rainfall with small communal storages.
- South is winter snowfall/spring melt with large communal storages.





# Water License Regime 101

- Interstate Water Sharing Agreement
  - Private ownership
- Entitlements to a share in the Available Resource
- Separation of Water from Land – a Property Right
  - License types – General and High Security
  - Water Sharing Plans and Allocations





# Ownership and Trade

- Trade in both permanent and temporary water in connected systems.





# The Water Act

- A Federal Act
  - Based on External Affairs power
- Key output is the Basin Plan (SDLs)
- Was to deliver a triple bottom line
- Is now about environment only...





# Basin Plan

- Proposes reductions of between 3 and 4k gigalitres
  - That's around 40% of water
  - To be removed by purchase
- Little consideration of socio/eco impacts





# Community Reaction

- NSWIC proposed a collective response
- Encouraged (and achieved) wide attendance at public meetings
- Conducted significant research (over...)
  - Utilised social media to respond





# Research

- We start behind in many areas
- Wanted to reframe the debate using areas where we were already ahead
- Tested food security (no), food safety (no), greens are bad (no).





# There are times when food and fibre self sufficiency is vital



Australia is blessed with land that yields enough food and fibre for all of us to use and even export, creating jobs and income. This really matters in times of war.

Thousands of family farms and hundreds of rural communities provide this bounty. But under the latest scheme from Canberra many will be closed and our self-sufficiency will end. What kind of legacy will that leave our kids?

Please help us stop this nonsense.

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# 6 dead children, 820 hospitalised and 300,000 victims. Why are we increasing unregulated imports?



If the proposed Government plan for the Murray Darling goes ahead farming communities will be ruined. That means food and fibre exports from far less regulated Countries must increase.

That means that there will be more risk of disasters like the China milk scandal two years ago.

Is that what Australian families deserve?

All it takes to stop it is a simple change to the Water Act. Visit [www.enoughisenough.com.au](http://www.enoughisenough.com.au) to find out more and register your concern.

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**Enough is enough. Change the Water Act Prime Minister.**



# Which environmentalist do you believe has the best interests of the Australian bush at heart?



Most of us agree that keeping Australia sustainable is important; but we sometimes differ on what needs to happen.

Under the latest supposedly 'environmentalist' plan from Canberra, thousands of responsible, highly regulated and sustainable family farms will be denied sufficient water to operate, thus forced to close.

Please help us stop this nonsense.



# Messages that Worked

- Food Prices
- Macroeconomic Issues
- Micro-social Issues





# June \$28.40



# July \$36.92

Under the latest scheme from Canberra, hundreds of Australian family farms will be forced to close.

Quite apart from the unnecessary impact on farm families and their communities, it will force the price of fresh food up by around 30%.

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# **15,000 jobs lost, exports down 5%, 100+ communities closed and a technical recession with the benefits going overseas...**



## **...is their plan good for Australia?**

Under the latest scheme from Canberra, hundreds of Australian family farms will be forced to close, 15000 jobs will be lost unnecessarily and food and fibre imports from less water efficient and less regulated Countries will increase.

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# Who suffers when a family farm is forced to close?



Under the latest scheme from Canberra, hundreds of Australian family farms will be forced to close,. The flow on impacts are massive. 15000 jobs will be lost unnecessarily, including shops, offices, agents, doctors, truck drivers, machine manufacturers, seed merchants, water brokers and, of course, fresh food buyers.

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# Government Reaction

- Immediately called an Inquiry
- Made the right noises about balance
  - MDBA Chairman gone
- The challenge still lies ahead...





# What happens next?

- Government will attempt to look balanced
  - We must hold our community together
  - Our aim must be to change legislation to require balance
  - It is a place for professional campaign operatives – not well meaning amateurs.





# Key Messages

- Water is politics.
- The issue is now key on the political agenda.
  - Political questions are not answered in agricultural regions.
  - It is vital to engage where it counts.





Q and A

# Questions and Discussion

