

From: [REDACTED]
To: [NRC](#)
Subject: Submission to NRC re The Water Sharing Plan for Gwydir Unregulated River Water Sources, 2012
Date: Sunday, 6 February 2022 [REDACTED]

Dear Sir

This is a submission to the Natural Resources Commission re The Water Sharing Plan for Gwydir Unregulated River Water Sources 2012.

Environmental Outcomes

As both an irrigator and landholder with significant country that is wetted from environmental water, we have a very healthy area that changes with the seasons and the environmental water. It appears to us, for a majority of time, there is an excess of water in the Commission's account. Such is the case at the moment and our land is inundated for long periods of time so the water can be used. A more normal event to mimic nature would be high flow levels for a shorter period of time. The long inundations do not mimic nature.

Social Outcomes

The Water Sharing Plan has had a dramatic impact our community , seventy kilometres west of Moree. Fifteen years ago our local school, Mallowa Primary, which is the centre of our community, with regular functions and social activities had 25 -30 children and two teachers. Today, it struggles to stay open with 5-8 children, one teacher and few to no social activities. Employment rates have fallen off the cliff and today, with better seasons, attracting families to the area is that much harder.

Economic Success

Similar impact economically as socially, to our community. Most of the smaller, family owned farms are being swallowed up and I am now surrounded by bigger operations and multinational foreign-owned companies.

Meeting Its Objectives

I am not actually sure what these objectives may have been. However, if it was the intention to tear up smaller communities and decimate surrounding towns which support agriculture – I would give it an A+.

Improve Outcomes

To improve outcomes, I would start by listening to local people who live in the area. I consider too much decision making is by city centric people who see their environment of concrete and steel, they feel they should improve the environment, somewhere else, preferably a rural area, so long as it does not affect their lives and communities. To improve water outcomes there needs to be more ability to adjust. We live in an environment where some seasons water is plentiful and other seasons where water is scarce or non-existent. The environment has adapted over the years and despite what some experts say, when it stops raining for extended periods – rivers do stop flowing and dry up. When the rains arrive, Mother Nature responds magnificently. I have lived on the Mehi River all my life. Until the arrival of irrigation it was mostly dry. Since the arrival of irrigation in the late 1970's it has never been dry. Only twice, in 2010 and 2018 it came close.

I hope this helps to improve your Water Sharing Plan.

Regards

Bernie Boland