



# Australian Citizens Party

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Fascist policies smash Murray-Darling Basin

Sky-high water pricing and ecofascist water allocations in the Murray-Darling Basin threatens not only the existence of farmers and rural communities, but our entire nation and millions of people worldwide who depend upon our food and fibre exports. Temporary water now costs around \$300 per megalitre (ML) and a significant El Niño event is under way which is expected to cause severe drought in Australia—under the current disastrous Basin Plan—that will see water prices escalate much further. Yet in California, despite the state's four-year drought and record low water levels, irrigators are paying less than \$20 per ML. When normal rainfall returns, they expect to pay \$13 to \$14.50 per ML.

Dairy cows sold by desperate farmers dominated last week's "chopper" or abattoir cattle sales in Shepparton. Rice growers planting this October are looking at a much-reduced crop with a number of farmers not planting at all given the exorbitant water prices. Many fruit growers across the Basin will not be able to afford the water to keep their trees alive.

Senator John Madigan in parliament on 14 October made the point: "There is a water market in Australia that is out of control and is being manipulated. You can buy and sell water like stocks on the share market. Water trading has become an insider's market of corruption and back-room deals, and farmers cannot compete. ... People are walking off farms. People are committing suicide. This is the early death throes of one of our most important farming regions. And our Prime Minister, the former Minister for Water, seems to us to be unaware."

Liberal Senator Richard Colbeck justified the fact that water has previously even reached \$700 per ML by saying "that is the way the market works", insisting the Basin Plan was bipartisan.

This is true. Both the ALP and Liberal parties, despite a few dissenting voices in their ranks, rammed through this ruinous Basin Plan and Prime Minister Malcom Turnbull is *very* aware, being one of the key architects of the *Water Act 2007* as former Environment and Water Minister. [Former Goldman Sachs investment banker Turnbull](#) is perhaps the biggest champion of water trading and "environmental flows", which ensure the water scarcity that creates profits for water speculators. The CEC [in the September/October 2007 New Citizen](#) documented the bipartisan plot to privatise the Murray-Darling Basin that has led to such a speculative water market, including Turnbull's role as Environment Minister. At that time his friends at Goldman Sachs were leading a global charge of investment banks into water speculation, declaring water to be "the petroleum for the next century".

Huge volumes of water from three years of higher than average rainfall in 2010-12 (2010, with almost double the average, was the Basin's wettest year on record) were not stored in dams to prepare for the now-looming El Niño event, but flushed out to sea or to swamps, otherwise known as Ramsar wetlands. Much of this water should have been stored in the Basin's large reservoirs, including Lake Eucumbene, the Snowy Mountains Scheme's largest storage; with a massive capacity equivalent to nine Sydney Harbours, it was designed to fill over several wet years to cover drought years, but it is now only 58 per cent full. The three next biggest Basin water storages, Dartmouth Dam, Lake Eildon and Hume Dam, with capacities of 3,856, 3,390 and 3,005 gigalitres (GL) respectively, are now at 63, 55 and 45 per cent of full capacity.

The CEC [reported in a media release on 14 December 2010](#) that Snowy Hydro, in government mandated "environmental flows", *was releasing 4,000-5,000 ML/day into the already flooded Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers*, risking increased flood damage. And the following month our [media release on 7 January 2011 reported](#) that South Australia's irrigators were limited to just 67 per cent of their allocation, forcing them to spend millions each month buying water from interstate, as the river rushed by in full volume out to sea.

The Murray-Darling Basin has seen lower than average rainfall in 2013-14 and so far this year (January to September) rainfall is six per cent below average. Despite this lower rainfall and a forecast strong El Niño event, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) has continued "environmental flows" throughout this year with no care to the plight of agriculture.

So-called "environmental flows" are also environmentally destructive. Numerous reports identify that some of these flows are so damaging that several metres of river frontage are lost to erosion. Riverside trees collapse under these man-made floods and silt has been clogging up pumps and tanks

at rates never seen before. Additionally, hundreds of gigawatt hours of hydroelectricity generation are lost as Snowy Hydro is mandated to flush water down the Snowy River out to Bass Strait rather than pump it to Murray 1 and Murray 2 Power Stations as the architects of the Snowy Mountains Scheme designed.

Last month Albury City Mayor Kevin Mack questioned the sense of releasing 8,700 ML of water daily from a half-empty Hume Dam: "It doesn't make sense. All for what benefit? To keep the river fresh and alive? Well there won't be any water left in the river at our end when they're finished," Cr Mack said. The answer to these questions is that this is ecofascism and has nothing to do with helping the environment, but is run top down from the British financial oligarchy and the British Crown for the purpose of population control as the [CEC documented in the December 2010/January 2011 New Citizen](#).

This entire scam has been run from top to bottom by the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip's World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) through the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists. In 1961 Prince Philip co-founded the WWF with former Nazi Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands along with British Eugenics Society President Sir Julian Huxley. The WWF organised the Ramsar Wetlands treaty and in 1971 former secretary to the Lord President of the Queen's Privy Council Max Nicholson keynoted the Ramsar conference, a year after publishing his book with the revealing title, *The Environmental Revolution: A Guide for the New Masters of the World*. Nicholson crowed that the Ramsar Wetlands treaty would be used to smash national sovereignty and that, given the migratory patterns of the world's birds, "ducks unlimited means sovereignty superseded". [The WWF's 1001 Club](#), made up of 1001 individuals hand-picked by Prince Philip, is dominated by billionaires and members of the oligarchical families in Europe, but represents a large chunk of the aristocracy of the world along with industry leaders, bankers and members intertwined with the military industrial complex. The WWF organised and funded the Wentworth Group, the main lobby group for ending irrigation in the Basin, which was led by pop star "scientist" and WWF Trustee Tim Flannery, of "Two Men in a Tinnie" fame, who shares Prince Philip's obsession with "overpopulation" and advocates the reduction of Australia's population to just 6-7 million people. It was, ironically, the faux republican Turnbull who turned this royalist agenda into law when as Environment Minister he legislated the *Water Act 2007* based on the WWF's Ramsar treaty.

Then Environment Minister Tony Burke signed the Basin Plan into law on 22 November 2012 and under the Abbott Government as at 30 June 2015, 1950.5 GL of water was "recovered for the environment" or 70.9 per cent of the way towards meeting the 2,750 GL surface water recovery target outlined in the Basin Plan. Under the Restoring the Balance in the Murray-Darling Basin program, the Australian Government has committed \$3.2 billion to purchase "water for the environment".

Prior to this ecofascist regime, an average of 13,680 GL of surface water was used for agriculture, which was 42 per cent of the total water inflows in the Basin. Therefore, 58 per cent of total surface water in the Basin was untouched. Before the Hume Dam was complete in 1936 the Murray River was subject to damaging floods, but during drought years the mighty river became a series of disconnected waterholes; for hundreds of kilometres one could walk from Victoria to NSW across the dry river bed. Native fish, flora and fauna survived severe floods and droughts in the Murray-Darling Basin for millions of years. The claim that modern agriculture is upsetting some delicate balance of nature is just an excuse for population control and [based on the fraudulent science of ecosystems](#).

Australians must fight this water-trading casino and the ecofascism pushed by the ALP/Coalition duopoly, and dump the Basin Plan. The following points are essential to support Australian agriculture:

1. End private water trading and institute a federal government authority to allocate water in a manner that best serves the nation for the common good;
2. Stop all "water buybacks" immediately;
3. Cancel the Ramsar treaty and the fraudulent 2,750 GL "recovery target" and make all of this water available for agriculture;
4. Build major infrastructure on the scale of the Snowy Mountains Scheme. Professor Lance Endersbee's proposed Clarence River Scheme would add a similar volume of water to the Murray-Darling Basin as the Snowy Mountains Scheme and must be built.