MEDIA RELEASE
20/02/2018

Basin Plan the best option for communities, the environment and regional economies

Murray Darling Association National President Cr David Thurley and Member for Farrer Sussan Ley met in Albury yesterday to discuss the electorate's position on the future of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

The two elected members found common ground during the meeting, after being reported to be at odds over responses to the Senate vote to disallow the Northern Basin Amendment, which would reduce the water recovery target in the Northern Bain from 390GL to 320GL.

While both staunchly supported the Northern Basin Amendment, Ms Ley responded to the Senate vote by urging the New South Wales Government to withdraw from the Plan, while Cr Thurley and the MDA councils across the Basin have called on all governments to stay the course and reach agreement on a way forward.

In their meeting, Cr Thurley said local government in the electorate of Farrer was outraged by the Senate vote but didn't want to see the Plan fall apart as a result.

All 13 local government areas within Farrer are members of the Murray Darling Association, from Wentworth in the west to Greater Hume in the east.

"The councils we represent across the electorate have told us their communities have already given too much and come too far to walk away from the Plan now," Cr Thurley said.

Ms Ley said a reliable, working Basin Plan was "the first best option" but she could not abide a "political exercise" that created further uncertainty in the communities she represents, particularly given the threat of a second disallowance motion against the 605GL of Sustainable Diversion Limit projects.

"I can't stand by while my communities in the Murray and Murrumbidgee valleys are threatened by more buybacks after already losing so much water," Ms Ley said.

Cr Thurley agreed that the Senate had shown a disappointing lack of regard for the principle of adaptiveness that underpins the Basin Plan, and in doing so had created grave uncertainty, and put at risk millions of dollars' worth of project investments for the region.

"The best way to restore confidence in the plan is for Basin governments to stay the course and work together on implementing the Plan, which at the moment means reaching agreement on the Northern Basin Amendment and the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism.

Both leaders agreed that the Murray-Darling Basin Plan is the best option for achieving positive and balanced outcomes for communities, the environment and regional economies, and that it must be reliable and accountable in its implementation.

[END]

For more information, contact MDA CEO Emma Bradbury on 0429 905 017 or Cr David Thurley on 0419 510 274. All Region Chairs are also available for comment.

Contact information for the Chairs of the Murray Darling Association

Region	Name	Organisation	Mobile Phone	Email Address/ Chair
Region 1	Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council	0419 510 274	DThurley@alburycity.nsw.gov.au
Region 2	Cr Peter Mansfield	Moira Shire Council	0428 574 433	pmansfield@moira.vic.gov.au
Region 3	Cr Leigh Byron	Balranald Shire Council	0428 201 301	mayor@balranald.nsw.gov.au
Region 4	Cr Darriea Turley	Broken Hill City Council	0429 848 480	Darriea.Turley@health.nsw.gov.au
Region 5	Cr Peter Hunter	Renmark Paringa Council	0447 177 341	crhunter@renmarkparinga.sa.gov.au
Region 6	Cr Barry Featherston	Alexandrina Council	0417 808 565	barry.featherston@alexandrina.sa.gov.au
Region 7	Cr David Shetliffe	Town of Walkerville	0414 631 442	DShetliffe@walkerville.sa.gov.au
Region 8	Cr Denis Clark	Northern Areas Council	0408 148 725	shock56@bigpond.net.au
Region 9	Cr Paul Maytom	Leeton Shire Council	0447 293 829	paulm@leeton.nsw.gov.au
Region 10	Vacant			
Region 11	Cr John Campbell (guest)	Gunnedah Shire Council	0408 421 065	johncampbell@infogunnedah.com.au
Region 12	Cr Richard Marsh	Balonne Shire Council	0409 692 299	richard.marsh@balonne.qld.gov.au