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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Date Thursday, 17 September 2015

[Murray Darling Association welcomes opportunity to work with new ministry]

With the events of the past week likely to bring about changes in the federal cabinet and the minister responsible for the Basin Plan, the Murray Darling Association has affirmed their support for the changes in responsibility for water to move from the Department of Environment to Agriculture.

The Murray Darling Association looks forward to continuing their strong working relationship with the Australian National Party and particularly Minister Barnaby Joyce to ensure that balanced implementation of the Basin Plan continues to be a priority.

CEO Emma Bradbury said “the Murray Darling Association has worked closely with successive Parliamentary Secretaries Simon Birmingham and Bob Baldwin, to advocate for the interests of basin communities and the health of our river system”.

“We are proud of the achievements and the strong working relationship we have with the parliament. Our role is to ensure that local government and communities maintain a voice at the table where the decisions are being made that affect our local communities”.

National President, Greg Toll said the Murray Darling Association supported the move. Mr Toll emphasised the point, saying “Farmers are the most committed and responsible custodians of the land today. Through advanced farming practices, their commitment to ensuring the land is left in better shape for future generations is evidenced time and again. It is timely for water responsibilities to move back to Agriculture to provide our farming and rural communities with the certainty they need to produce the food and fibre required to keep our nation fed.”

For conservation and sustainable development

A primary object of the Basin Plan is to promote the use and management of basin water resources in a way that optimises economic, social and environmental outcomes. It makes sense to move water from environment to agriculture after the terrific results achieved for the basin under the Department of Environment.

Recognising this government's commitment to delivering the triple bottom line of the Basin Plan, the Murray Darling Association supports actions to manage the portfolio balancing agricultural and environmental priorities.

[End]