

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE WATER MANAGEMENT (GENERAL) AMENDMENT
(EXEMPTIONS FOR FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING)
REGULATION 2020**

Organisation: Dubbo Environment Group

Date Received: 22 May 2020

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What is your view on the way the Water Management (General) Amendment (Exemptions for Floodplain Harvesting) Regulation 2020 was implemented?

The fact that the embargo was lifted suddenly when downstream of the northern basin of NSW was expecting the first flush of flood water, without consultation and without accountability, to me lacks integrity and smacks of favours for a select few. Dubbo Environment Group has asked for answers about this water harvesting of Gladys Berejiklian who passed the request on to Melinda Pavey, and of our local MP, Dugald Saunders. No answers have been forthcoming. Why is this? We, the taxpayers of NSW deserve to have answers. We care about our rivers, wetlands, flora and fauna, but our concerns are met with silence.

What is your view on the impact of the Water Management (General) Amendment (Exemptions for Floodplain Harvesting) Regulation 2020?

Our view is that unlicensed floodplain harvesting should be considered illegal. The Murray Darling Basin river system is suffering. Too much water is being taken by irrigators now. The evidence from Conservation groups and university research is clear. NSW needs to be regulated by the MDB Authority if we are to have faith in any management of this great system. They are not adhering to the MDBA and appear to be hell-bent on supplying as much water as they can to their lobbyists, regardless of their responsibility to the environment, to river communities and to other states. The impact upon Aboriginal communities has been unconscionable. White settlement has left these first nations people very little and now we take their rivers and even their drinking water. What type of person manages a river system which extract a community's complete water supply and then allows a charity to provide them with bottled drinking water? We should all be ashamed.

Do you have any other comments on this regulation?

If Gladys Berejiklian, Dugald Saunders and Melinda Pavey cannot answer an Environment Group's questions about the lifting of the floodplain harvesting embargo in February, it is obvious that the questions cannot be answered honourably. It is clear to everyone who looks, that Water NSW will continue to extract every drop of water they can find to satisfy there irrigators. At the moment they are mouthing weasel words about "transpiration" (as for Menindee Lakes- not very original!) to justify building a 13m weir at Gin Gin near Warren for further extraction to cotton farmers. They will not care when the whole river system and its ecology is extinct. They will retire on the only thing that will look very healthy - their superannuation.