



The Hon Sussan Ley MP
Federal Member for Farrer
Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories

Statement

20 May 2019

After visiting and talking to people through the length and breadth of Farrer's irrigation areas over the last 12 months, there is a common element of the Murray Darling Basin Plan nearly all agree on; it needs to be more **responsive** and **flexible** to the needs of water-dependent communities.

I pushed my government for an independent review of the rules around water allocations and entitlements – this is happening and will be delivered over coming months.

Last year I also proposed we should have short-term access to environmental water, which would have allowed farmers to finish their winter crops. There is also a need to address the unfairness of conveyancing allocations, with upstream users wearing the cost of downstream delivery.

To restore confidence in the water markets, the federal Minister has requested the Auditor-General examine all Basin water buybacks since 2008, and we've also announced the ACCC to undertake a review specific to the Southern Basin.

On this, the first day back after the election, I met with the new NSW Water Minister for talks on the way forward. My focus is to protect the value of irrigator's assets and work with the state to ensure irrigators receive an allocation for this coming season.

We can then build flexibility into the management of environmental water over the long term.

I remain committed to representing and providing the best outcomes for our water communities.

Sussan Ley
Member for Farrer
