



NATIVE FISH AUSTRALIA (Vic) Inc.

www.nativefish.asn.au

PO Box 162 Doncaster 3108

Hon David Littleproud MP
Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Drought Preparation and Response
T40-42, Dalby Shopping World
17-67 Cunningham Street
Dalby, QLD, 4405

Dear David,

Darling Fish Kill

Native Fish Australia was formed in the early 1980s as a wholly volunteer representative organisation, with the main aims to promote and protect native fish species for future recreational angling. Since inception we have advocated for native fish by organising numerous public live fish displays, regular talks to community and angling groups and participation at countless meetings and workshops on the future of native fish particularly in the Murray Darling basin.

Since the development of the Native Fish Strategy in 2003, we have strongly supported the main aim of the strategy, which was to rehabilitate native fish communities in the Murray-Darling Basin. The strategy led directly to healthy waterways by the various rehabilitation processes and rectification of some flows as documented in the plan.

The termination of the Native Fish Strategy in 2013 by powerful vested interests has directly led to the devastating fish kills unfolding in the Darling River. The apparent over allocation and theft of water as showcased in recent ABC programs, highlights the need for the Native Fish Strategy to be reinstated ASAP.

Water quality for healthy native fish populations is not only good for fish; it leads to a healthy aquatic ecosystem that is good for all who inhabit the waterway and all the users of the water. Inland towns were founded on rivers which were the life blood of an arid region. Today many of these towns are devastated by the lack of water such that even basic activities like swimming in the local river are impossible. This is during a time when they are experiencing lengthy periods

of extreme temperatures. Especially hard hit are aboriginal communities for which the river serves as a meeting place with deep cultural significance.

Healthy water, Healthy fish, Healthy people!

Native Fish Australia believes the Native Fish Strategy needs to be reinstated and funded in full to ensure future healthy waterways throughout the Murray Darling Basin. Further we strongly believe the strategy needs to be administrated by an external independent scientific agency rather than with the Murray Darling Basin Authority. Such an organisation could be the CSIRO or the newly formed Centre for Freshwater Ecosystems based in Wodonga.

We are keen to be involved in the discussions around the reformation of the Native Fish Strategy and in the drafting of the new aims and objectives of the strategy so that the strategy is inclusive and works for all.

Native Fish Australia remains available to participate and support any forum to resolve the issues confronting our greatest inland river system that will benefit all the aquatic life, people, towns and water users within the Murray Darling Basin

Your support would be appreciated

Yours faithfully,

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