

**Submission
No 16**

**IMPACTS OF THE WATER AMENDMENT (RESTORING OUR RIVERS) ACT
2023 ON NSW REGIONAL COMMUNITIES**

Name: Ms Gen Campbell

Date Received: 6 March 2025

From 2019. What's changed? Suicide a leading cause of death in our country, a nation not ravaged by war or famine, but from bureaucratic bungling and indifference. Government water policies have decimated what was once a rich and prosperous nation. Our water storages, originally designed to provide flood mitigation and safeguard communities, have been repurposed, not for the public good, but as reservoirs for private investors to hoard what has become liquid gold.

The consequences are catastrophic. Towns and villages that were once protected by these flood storage reservoirs now find themselves living in a newly created floodplain. Flooding once managed through responsible water storage and release is now an increasing threat as man-made dams are no longer for community protection but for financial speculation.

All this in plain sight, yet successive governments have chosen to ignore the devastation being inflicted on rural communities. The prioritisation of water trading over flood mitigation and food production is a betrayal of the people who rely on this vital resource for their livelihoods and security.

Water must be managed as an ESSENTIAL PUBLIC ASSET, not as a commodity to be controlled by investors at the expense of communities.

On 28 Jan 2019, at 7:25 pm, Gen Campbell

[REDACTED] > wrote:

I would like to see the basin plan ripped up. It is not serving our communities or our environment.

If you brought a car that kept breaking down “a lemon” there are laws that protect the consumer. We have a lemon plan.

The MDBA is a rooted plan that delivers misery and heartache to the rural sector and financial windfalls to a few.

Mental health, financial ruin, environmental carnageI could go on....and we talk of pausing the plan. Our rivers have served the environs for millions of years, yet greed has changed the landscape for ever.

The Murray Darling Basin the breadbasket of Australia that once accounted for 71% of all our irrigated crops and fed 61% of all Australians and gave the nation security of our food supply is no more.

The social and economic viability of regional Australia has been wiped out.

The collapse of the rural sector with the deregulation of the dairy industry, water privatisation, energy privatisation, all our essential services given freely in back room deals. We should be outraged.

No cure for stupidity. 13 Billion of public monies.

~Gen

information gleaned from the following article..

The real story behind Howard's Murray-Darling Water Legislation.

The Prime Minister John Howard presented legislation to the Parliament, authorising the Federal Government to seize control of all the water of the Murray Darling Basin from the states, and to put it under a new Federal agency with dictatorial powers...

Prime Minister Paul Keating initiated it in 1994 through an agreement of the Council of Australian Government (COAG) and as part of the same National Competition Policy which led to the other privatisations in gas, electricity, transport, and telecommunication. (Has any of these got a success story to tell?).

It picked up steam when the Murray-Darling Basin Commission started interstate water trading in 1998 and accelerated rapidly when Howard created his National Water Initiative (NWI) in 2003, then the National Water Commission (NWC) in December 2004, to implement the NWI. Its final phase was the legislation passed by Parliament led by John Howard and water Minister Malcom Turnbull with the full backing of Kevin Rudd's ALP.