

**Submission  
No 90**

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

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Parliament of New South Wales  
Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development  
Parliament House  
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Dear Chair

**Response to inquiry - Impacts of the Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Act 2023 on NSW regional communities**

This submission is provided in response to the inquiry by the Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development (**Committee**) into the impacts of the *Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Act 2023* on NSW regional communities

I believe as a result of the Water Acts implementation by the Commonwealth, regional communities have suffered financially from the environmental policies of water reform that the Commonwealth is managing.

The Commonwealth should make provisions in their funding to compensate communities for lost rate income when areas are declared conservation areas primarily through the application of environmental water.

Communities should not suffer rate loss through application of environmental water when the same community has already lost agriculturally productive water from its economic activity through buybacks and efficiency programs. Conservation Areas are exempt from rates. When the application of environmental water triggers the categorisation to “conservation area”, the land becomes non-rateable. The local shire then loses rate income and this is burdened on other ratepayers of that community.

The Commonwealth is providing the water and funding environmental water delivery. Conservation outcomes are meant to be for the whole of the nation, it should not be for a few in a local community to wearing the shortfall in rates and potential services. Regional communities could view the declaration of “conservation areas” in a better light if they are not as financially impacted as currently happens

It is unfair that regional communities should suffer this continuing financial impost.

Thanking you for the ability to highlight my concern

Geoff Chapman

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