

**Submission  
No 65**

**INQUIRY INTO RATIONALE FOR, AND IMPACTS OF,  
NEW DAMS AND OTHER WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IN  
NSW**

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## DAMS IN THE MURRAY DARLING CATCHMENT

Please consider carefully the problem that needs to be solved, and different ways to solve the problem, with large scale engineered dams excluded from consideration. Dispersed systems are more sustainable and more environmentally sensitive.

Water is also urgently needed for environmental flows and wetland recharge in the natural systems, rather than for capture to water lawns in towns or to irrigate cotton fields for industrial scale export.

Demand management: require development approvals to be water efficient and to collect roof run off, including all commercial and business as well as residential projects ie expand BASIX as a more comprehensive tool for water efficiency for all development categories including roads

Retrofits: identify potential to retrofit rainwater tanks throughout urban areas, commercial and industrial precincts. Large areas of roof can generate significant rainwater runoff as well as condensation run off; remote homesteads collect and use all their own water - this model should apply in urban areas where there is often space in private property for tanks.

Introduce a programme of re-plumbing to recycle water;

Stormwater: run off can be channelled into swales and wetlands to improve biodiversity and increase infiltration into groundwater; this will help to recharge rivers; Council depots and buildings can collect roof run off and be used to water street trees and parks using a water tanker. Trickle irrigation can also be investigated and supported for parks and gardens Vegetable gardens can be watered using clean tank water Types of commercial and industrial activities locating in the areas with known water supply shortages can be regulated; for example, if washing vehicle fleets, this activity must be with use of water collected on-site. The Murray Darling basin is not an endless source of water. Some activities should be withdrawn altogether and drilling for bores prohibited.

Agriculture: any farming should be regenerative, and sustainable without applied public dam water need. Government can assist with education, training and soil science, so that carbon is replaced in the soils for better productivity and emissions reductions.

Regulation: vastly improve regulation is essential. Any illicit use of River water must be prosecuted and infrastructure demolished. Good backup is essential for Regulatory officers.