

## INQUIRY INTO FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

As an irrigator who doesn't floodplain harvest, I find the current situation inequitable. As a water user I have followed the rules, however, there is a group of irrigators out there who, through no fault of their own, don't have rules to follow. That is a failure of government and not of the water user community. If floodplain harvesting is illegal, as some people claim, why isn't NRAR prosecuting irrigators? Why also then is the Minister reducing supplementary water? Why is it represented in the Murray Darling Ministerial Cap on diversion?

Clearly, there is evidence to support it as a historical form of take which I do not have an issue with. It is an important source of water for some and is only available during times of excessive rainfall for catchment systems to cope. I do not access water from the floodplain, but I am an irrigator, and because of the way the Water Management Act is written, to continue to operate my farm as I have historically, I can be called a floodplain harvester when I capture rainfall runoff from my property.

To make a point, I am required by a condition on my work approval for the land to not allow water from within my development to leave my farm. I must keep this water on farm to the best of my ability. The rainfall runoff regulation meant that I could continue to operate my farm as designed for best practice, to meet these largely environmental obligations without the need to be a floodplain harvester. I do not consider myself a floodplain harvester, but I am an irrigator with expertly designed and precision developed irrigated land, which, captures my excess irrigation water and rainfall runoff within my farm to avoid releasing potentially contaminated water back into our water courses.

The rainfall runoff regulation clearly enabled me to continue that historical practice without the need for excessive regulation or cost. The rainfall runoff regulation would provide me the ongoing certainty around how to operate my farm without impacting legal limits as it is generally a small volume of water.

I support that all major water take for irrigation should be licensed, metered, and reported to Government and our community. This obviously must include floodplain harvesting where it genuinely occurs. It's a logical and simple solution, license, limit and meter floodplain harvesting, so other water users with supplementary licences aren't impacted in the meantime and so must be initiated now, and not years in the future!!!