

INQUIRY INTO FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 13 August 2021

Partially
Confidential

I am an irrigator who is considered an eligible floodplain harvester in the Namoi Valley in north-west NSW.

I support the need to regulate floodplain harvesting, not because I want it, but because I consider it is the right thing to do to allow Government to manage this form of water like all others, to enable we can still access the small amount we take when available, and the environment and others get their share as well.

Flood plain harvesting only happens when it floods, when rivers are already overflowing and this only happens one in 5-7 years on average.

The storing of floodwater is a very small proportion of a total flood across the landscape but it does allow farmers to collect and hold water for use in drier times to grow food and fibre.

I understand that there is need to regulate flood plain harvesting but do not agree that rainfall runoff should be part of this. All irrigators are required by rules to keep all the runoff from rainfall on their farm so no potential contamination can flow into rivers and cause damage to the environment.

All other farmers who catch rainfall runoff on their farms are not required to have meters and have no restrictions on how much rainfall they can take. There are plenty of farmers and graziers for that matter, that have huge storages that they use to collect rainfall runoff to provide water for their stock and produce.

We are all farmers trying to make a living by providing food and fibre for the world and should be able to at least have the same rules when it comes to the rainfall that falls on our land.

As an irrigator who has struggled to keep farming with the continual loss of water taken from us by the government with no compensation, I really think to take more water from any farm and it would seem in particular, irrigation farms, by way of rainfall is not by any means fair.

I do support licencing of floodplain harvesting so those that think all irrigators are not doing the right thing, can be seen to be doing the right thing and that the environment does get its fair share as well.

Continuing to take more water from irrigators by various means does not help, towns and communities, all who rely on irrigators to keep the businesses afloat when droughts are restricting many non irrigator farmers cashflow. When water is plentiful we all do well, and towns and communities thrive when there is plenty of cashflow to support these areas.