



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Media statement

November 10, 2016

Maranoa MP calls on Qld Labor Government Water Minister Lynham to stand up for St George and Dirranbandi

WITH the Ministerial Council Meeting on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan set to occur next week, Maranoa MP David Littleproud believes the Queensland Labor Government has hung the St George and Dirranbandi communities out to dry by not advocating for our state.

The complex and unique Murray-Darling Basin Plan is managed by the MDBA and overseen by a Ministerial Council, comprising of all State Water Ministers and the Commonwealth Water Minister.

Over the past two years, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) has carried out a review of Basin Plan targets in the northern Basin to examine changes that may help improve triple-bottom line outcomes. Next Friday, the Ministerial Council will meet in Canberra to make recommendations, which will build the framework for subsequent community consultation.

Mr Littleproud said Queensland's Natural Resources Minister Dr Anthony Lynham was putting the western border region of his electorate on the brink of collapse.

"Minister Lynham has not outlined his position on proposals that could potentially go a long way to improve triple-bottom line outcomes of the Basin Plan in Queensland," he said.

"I look across the border and see the New South Wales Water Minister Niall Blair consistently advocating against further pain to his communities, insisting that no more water be taken out of production. He's arguing that the MDBA should use industry and environmentalist-backed complementary measures to achieve environmental outcomes.

"The Federal Agriculture and Water Resources Minister Barnaby Joyce has brought an end to the non-strategic open tender buyback approach of the previous Federal Labor Government and has made it clear he would prefer to invest in toolkit measures and more efficient infrastructure if the MDBA approves.

"The southern ministers are out advocating for their own states, but we've heard nothing from Minister Lynham, despite the fact Queensland has a much larger remaining water recovery gap than NSW.

"The Queensland Labor Government's inaction will effectively give the southern states a benefit to our detriment, particularly at the expense of St George and Dirranbandi.

“Minister Lynham needs to make it clear the State Government is backing our communities of the lower Balonne and Queensland.

“He needs to publically declare now what outcome he will be advocating for, ahead of next week’s Ministerial Council meeting. Anything less would be a complete and utter sell-out of not only those communities, but our state.

“If Minister Lynham believes that selling out Queensland will somehow magically improve the environment, appease his party’s green faction and save his seat then he is not only delusional, but also acting recklessly and in his own self-interest.

“Economic uncertainty is already rife with children being pulled out of local schools as their parents move away in search of work as the workforce participation rates in these regions are decreasing at an alarming rate.

“Water is a precious resource and we need sustainable management of our rivers, but not at the expense of these communities, which have done their fair share in the heavy lifting and contributed greatly towards our nation’s economy.”

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FACT BOX: Background

- The Murray-Darling Basin Authority will present its recommendations from the Northern Basin Review to the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council next Friday, November 18.
- The recommendations will be announced publicly on Tuesday, November 22, marking the beginning on a period of community consultation.
- In the current version of the Basin Plan, the Condamine-Balonne has an overall recovery target of 140 GL – 100 GL of instream recovery, and a 40 GL share of downstream recovery. Around 65 GL has been recovered to date.

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