Rainfall Hits 100 Year High
Why a Basin Plan for Drought?

The NSW Irrigators Council says that recent rainfall events across the Murray-Darling Basin show clearly the foolishness of assuming that droughts last forever.

Noting that 2010 calendar year rainfall was 163% of the long term average (and a new 110 year rainfall record), Council Chief Executive Officer Andrew Gregson says that the Basin Plans’ inherent assumption of ongoing drought is shown up as incorrect.

“The Basin generally exists in one of two states – flood or drought. This isn’t new. It has been happening across recorded history and quite likely well before that.

“We’ve suffered through the worst drought on record and now we’re seeing flooding that threatens to break records as well.

“What we’re seeing is a clear indication that water availability moves in cycles. It would be foolhardy to assume that water availability this year is normal – but it is equally foolhardy to assume that low availability during those drought years was normal either.

“The planning process for the Murray-Darling Basin Plan is hopelessly flawed. Its foundation – the Water Act – has its genesis in policy reaction to drought. Just like drought, the Basin Plan under the Act will drive up food prices, cost thousands of jobs and close family farms – but on a permanent and unnecessary basis.

“We need a process that is sensible, reasonable and rational. Only a change to the Water Act can bring that about.”

ENDS

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