



# The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

## Minister for Primary Industries Minister for Small Business

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Friday, 2 December 2011

#### **FACE-TO-FACE FEEDBACK ON MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN**

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson is meeting community representatives today in the NSW Riverina heartland centre of Griffith to seek direct feedback on the Commonwealth's draft Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

Ms Hodgkinson said this is the vital first step in developing the NSW Government's position on the Plan.

"The NSW Government is committed to supporting our Basin communities and this will be an absolute priority in the NSW Government's submission to the Commonwealth.

"My visit to Griffith is all about gathering information on the impact the Plan will have in both the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"I want to encourage full and frank discussion from a wide range of stakeholders to best inform the NSW submission to the Plan."

Ms Hodgkinson is meeting the Member for Murrumbidgee, Adrian Piccoli and a range of community leaders and industry groups, including Riverina Mayors, small and large business operators, representative bodies and farmers.

"The NSW Government will work with communities to best understand their needs and will play a key role in the 20-week consultation process," Ms Hodgkinson said.

Key issues that will be discussed during Ms Hodgkinson's include:

- The stark similarities between the draft Plan of 2011 and the discredited Guide of 2010
- The inability of the MDBA to 'prove the case' for the 2750 gicalitre figure
- The absence of an environmental watering plan in the draft Plan
- The lack of detail on the long-term socio-economic impacts, costs and adjustment requirements
- The lack of special provisions for implementing environmental water recovery and managing socio-economic programs in-parallel

"I look forward to meeting with more Basin communities over the coming weeks to ensure the NSW position is water-tight and reflects the needs of our primary producers, irrigators, businesses and community groups.

"I am leaving the politics to the Commonwealth and Craig Knowles.

"I want to meet face-to-face with the people to ensure the final Murray-Darling Basin Plan provides true triple-bottom line outcomes, equity between the States and commits to protecting the nation's food security," Ms Hodgkinson said.