

INQUIRY INTO FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING

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The effects downstream of the Murray-Darling are disastrous and some possibly irreversible. Flood plain harvesting has destroyed environments, infrastructure and families in and around South West NSW. Age expectancies are as low as 37 years old. I can't imagine having all of my aunts, uncles, parents, and grandparents being dead, because if they lived in Wilcannia, they would be, as they are all older than 37. My friends mother died a debilitating death from Motor Neuron Disease. MND has risen to 7 times the national rate in regional NSW due to flood plain harvesting. People are deserting country towns as they can't support their farms without the water that is all being held upstream. They can't afford water or are sent broke when those who own it, including foreign companies who don't pay any capital gains tax on it, sell it back to them for exorbitant prices in a drought. Suicide has increased drastically in the Murrumbidgee and this is directly attributable to the lack of water caused by flood plain harvesting.

To continue flood plain harvesting simply isn't feasible, morally, nor financially. The cost to people, towns, education, infrastructure, and the environment probably already outweighs any possible benefit to "flood plain harvesting". Sure the idea of capturing flood waters sounds great, but it has been royally stuffed up to the detriment of those in regional Southern NSW. Until adequate flow is returned to the Murray-Darling, farms in the north should not be allowed to hold tens of gigalitres of water. Scott Morrison said "If you have a go, you'll get a go". Well the towns and families of southern NSW have had a go, and are getting zilch. Farms in the north and foreign owners of water have shown that they can't be trusted and something must be done immediately. The less water there is down south, the more blood there is on your hands, the NSW Government.