

Urgent provision of water to the Coorong and Lower Lakes Senators Hanson-Young, Brown, Siewert, Xenophon, Birmingham and Fisher

- 1) That the Rural and Regional Committee report to the Senate, urgently, but no later than 30 September 2008 on the following:
 - A. The volume of water which could be provided into the Murray-Darling system to replenish the lower lakes and Coorong;
 - B. Options for sourcing and delivering this water, including:
 - i) Possible incentive and compensation schemes for current water holders who participate in a once-off voluntary contribution of water to this national emergency;
 - ii) Alternative options for the acquisition of sufficient water;
 - iii) Likely transmission losses and the most efficient and effective strategies to manage the delivery of this water;
 - iv) Commonwealth powers to obtain and deliver water and possible legislative or regulative impediments;
 - v) Assessment of the potential contribution of bringing forward irrigation infrastructure spending under the COAG agreement to deliver water to save the Coorong and lower lakes;
 - C. The impact of any water buybacks on rural and regional communities and Adelaide including compensation and structural adjustment; and
 - D. Any other related matters.
- 2) That the Rural and Regional Committee report to the Senate no later than 4 December 2008 on implications for the long-term sustainable management of the Murray Darling Basin system of the following:
 - A. The adequacy of current whole-of-basin governance arrangements under the Intergovernmental Agreement;
 - B. The adequacy of current arrangements in relation to the [implementation of] the Basin Plan and water sharing arrangements;
 - C. Long-term prospects for the management of RAMSAR wetlands including the supply of adequate environmental flows;
 - D. The risks to the basin posed by unregulated water interception activities and water theft;
 - E. The ability of the Commonwealth to bind State and Territory Governments to meet their obligations [under the National Water Initiative];
 - F. The adequacy of existing State and Territory water and natural resource management legislation and enforcement arrangements; and
 - G. The impacts of climate change on the likely future availability of water.