
Commonwealth Minister for Environment and water act review committee,

The Commonwealth Water Act, which came into operation in 2008, was a ground-breaking environmental legislation. As an Australian scientist I was proud to see this occur. For the first time it put environmental protection at the centre of water management in the Murray-Darling Basin, and a key objective is that water should be managed holistically, in the national interest, rather than state or partisan interests.

The Act also focused on protecting the environment that underpinned and supports the whole economy and society of the Murray-Darling Basin. Now that the Act is being reviewed I strongly support maintaining the following key environmental objectives.

- managing the water resources of the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB) in the national interest;**
- ensuring the return of water extraction to environmentally sustainable levels,**
- protecting, restoring and providing for the ecological values and ecosystem services of the MDB**
- giving effect to international agreements (such as the Ramsar Convention on wetlands); and**
- managing water resources in a way that optimises economic, social and environmental outcomes.**

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views on this important review. I would be happy to speak further to these comments.

Kind Regards,

Dr Richard Mallaby,