



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## MDBA eyes opened to importance of water to region

Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) took the opportunity to demonstrate to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) the importance of water to the MIA when they visited the region last week.

MDBA Chairman, Neil Andrew, CEO, Phillip Glyde, and new National Irrigators' Council CEO, Steve Whan, were taken on a tour around local farms, and MI Chairman Frank Sergi said it opened their eyes up to just how productive and diverse the area was.

"We were able to show them firsthand that water is the lifeblood of the MIA, and a critical input for agriculture," he said.

"Neil commented that he was not expecting to see such diversity in crops being grown, and so many new types of irrigation being used."

The MDBA is currently conducting an evaluation of the social, economic and environmental outcomes of the Basin Plan to assess its effectiveness across the Southern Basin. The evaluation will also identify if anything else needs to be done to achieve the Basin Plan's aims.

"We will be active participants in this process," Mr Sergi said.

"The area is still forging ahead despite the Plan but our customers need certainty.

"Even resilience has its limits."

MI CEO Brett Jones added that MI was continuing to work with the MDBA to ensure the ongoing implementation of the Basin Plan does not harm local irrigators' and the community.

"We have always been intent on protecting, promoting and enhancing the natural assets of this region," he said.

"We absolutely support a balanced plan for the Basin.

"A plan that focuses on achieving social, economic and environmental outcomes. Not a plan that focuses on numbers and water recovery at all costs.

"The Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism process that is currently underway is about getting environmental outcomes with less water and less community impact.

"This process should reduce the likelihood of further water being taken from our region."

**Photo:** Pictured on a tour of local farms last week were MI Chairman Frank Sergi, NIC CEO Steve Whan, MDBA Chairman Neil Andrew, MDBA CEO Phillip Glyde, MIARA Stakeholder Engagement Officer Craig Tilston and MI CEO Brett Jones.

**Media Contact:** Peter Duncan, Communications Officer, phone 0427 235 646 (02) 6962 0200.