



# MEDIA RELEASE

**Senator the Hon Penny Wong**

*Minister for Climate Change and Water*

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## **NEW WEBSITE TO DETAIL WATER PURCHASES**

A new website to go live on 10 July will provide information on the Australian Government's water entitlement purchases, Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, announced today.

“The new Water Entitlement Website will contain information on purchases made as part of the Government's \$50 million water entitlement buy-back to help return Murray-Darling Basin rivers to health,” Senator Wong said.

The Water Entitlement Website will include aggregated data about each purchase, including volumes, entitlement type, amount spent and water source. The confidentiality and privacy of sellers will be protected.

Aggregated data on current purchases will be available when the site goes live, and this will be progressively refined and updated over time.

The Government's initial \$50 million buy-back has secured entitlements to 35 billion extra litres of water for Murray-Darling Basin rivers from willing sellers. This was the first ever direct purchase of water by the Federal Government for the Murray-Darling Basin.

“Purchasing water from willing sellers is a crucial step in supporting healthy rivers and tackling the effects of climate change – priorities under the Government's *Water for the Future* plan.

“A Stakeholder Consultative Committee has been appointed to assist in evaluating the success of \$50 million purchase, and to provide feedback on the design and implementation of the Government's water purchase program into the future.

“Our water purchase program will mean that rivers in the Basin will get a greater share of water as it becomes available.”

Under *Water for the Future*, the Rudd Government has set aside \$3.1 billion to purchase water to put back in Murray-Darling Basin rivers.

In addition, the Government is investing \$5.8 billion in sustainable irrigation infrastructure and initiatives to help communities make early adjustments in anticipation of the new Murray-Darling Basin cap on water extractions.

A link to the new website will be available from 10 July 2008 at: [www.environment.gov.au/water](http://www.environment.gov.au/water).