



Senator the Hon Penny Wong
Minister for Climate Change and Water

Hon Paul Caica
Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Media Release

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\$110 MILLION TO IMPROVE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE EFFICIENCY

South Australian irrigation infrastructure operators are invited to apply for a share in \$110 million of Australian Government funding to improve efficiency and return water to rivers and wetlands.

Federal Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, and South Australian Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Paul Caica, today released guidelines for the Private Irrigation Infrastructure Program – South Australia.

“Funding of up to \$110 million will help South Australian irrigation businesses drawing on water from the Murray-Darling Basin to adjust to a future with less water due to climate change,” Senator Wong said.

Senator Wong said the investment was part of more than \$1 billion committed by the Rudd Government to water projects in South Australia.

“This program is unique to South Australia and provides an opportunity for South Australian irrigators to access funding for irrigation infrastructure efficiency upgrades,” Senator Wong said.

“Water savings generated through efficiency measures will be shared between the project proponents and the Australian Government.

“Key to the Rudd Government’s long-term plan for the Murray-Darling Basin is a strong and vibrant future for irrigation communities, as demonstrated by our commitment to this program.”

Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Paul Caica, said South Australia has a large number of direct diverters – irrigators who draw water directly onto their properties without going through an irrigation trust.

“The program has been designed to encourage the participation of direct diverters either individually – in the case of larger water entitlement holders – or as parties to a joint application through delivery partners,” Minister Caica said.

“The program is also open to applications from irrigation trusts.”

The \$110 million in funding comes from the \$5.8 billion *Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure* program, a key part of the Australian Government's 10-year, \$12.9 billion *Water for the Future* plan.

More information on this program and *Water for the Future* can found at www.environment.gov.au/water