



# MEDIA RELEASE

**Senator the Hon Penny Wong**

***Minister for Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water***

PW 79/10

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## **WATER MINISTER TO VISIT MURRAY DARLING BASIN**

The Minister for Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water, Senator Penny Wong, will be visiting communities in the Murray Darling Basin this week to meet with key water stakeholders including irrigators, farmers, peak industry growers groups, community groups and local government.

Senator Wong will visit St George and Dubbo on Tuesday, and Coleambally and Swan Hill on Wednesday and will make a number of announcements on infrastructure and river health.

“Across the Murray Darling Basin, many communities are feeling the impacts of extended drought and the effects of climate change,” Senator Wong said.

“The Rudd Government’s ten-year, \$12.9 billion *Water for the Future* program is helping to secure a viable future for agriculture and irrigation communities in the Basin, while also returning water to rivers and wetlands.”

Senator Wong said discussions during the tour will focus on the progress that has been made under *Water for the Future*, and how best to continue to deliver on the Rudd Government’s vision of strong and vibrant future for the Basin’s farmers and irrigators, and the communities they support.

“As we move the Murray Darling Basin to a more sustainable footing, it’s important that we learn from the experiences of local communities,” Senator Wong said.

Under *Water for the Future*, the Rudd Government has so far committed \$4.4 billion for new and more efficient irrigation infrastructure across the Murray Darling Basin, and \$3.1 billion for purchasing water from willing sellers to restore the Basin’s rivers and wetlands to health.