



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Senator the Hon Penny Wong

*Minister for Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Water*

PW BUDGET 10

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### **FURTHER \$100 MILLION FOR WATER PURCHASING**

An additional \$100 million in funding for water purchasing has been brought forward in the 2010-11 Federal Budget to help return the Murray Darling Basin's rivers and wetlands to health.

The Minister for Water, Senator Penny Wong, said that purchasing water is a key element of the Rudd Government's long-term *Water for the Future* plan.

"For too long we have taken too much water out of the Basin's rivers, and this funding will ensure we continue to reduce our take on the rivers," Senator Wong said.

"We must address the challenges of drought and the emerging effects of climate change, while reversing decades of over-allocation and mismanagement in the Basin."

Water entitlements secured through this funding will add to the more than 800 billion litres of water entitlements that have already been secured for the environment.

To date, the Rudd Government's \$3.1 billion water purchase program has resulted in the delivery of around 110 billion litres of water to environmental sites across South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales.

Senator Wong said the water purchase program is being complemented by significant investment in new and more efficient irrigation infrastructure that helps irrigators do more with less.

"By purchasing water and investing in irrigation infrastructure upgrades, the Rudd Government is ensuring the long-term viability of our irrigation communities in a future with less water," Senator Wong said.

In addition to supporting rural and regional communities, the Rudd Government is also helping secure water supplies for Australia's cities and towns through *Water for the Future*.

"We know we are facing a future with reduced water availability which is why we are investing in alternative water supplies that meet the demands of our growing population," Senator Wong said.

"More than \$1 billion has been allocated to help cities and towns to reduce their reliance on rainfall through wastewater recycling, stormwater harvesting and desalination."

Achievements under *Water for the Future* also include:

- The roll out of nearly \$400 million so far this year for irrigation infrastructure upgrades that help Basin communities become more efficient and productive in their use of water;
- Over \$39 million in grants to assist local councils in the Basin in planning for a future with less water and implementing water saving initiatives, and;
- \$328 million committed for a desalination plant to help secure Adelaide's water supplies.

For more information on *Water for the Future* visit [www.environment.gov.au/water](http://www.environment.gov.au/water)