**RE: ILLEGAL FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING**

I am a business owner in the Murray Darling Basin who believed the concept of the Basin Plan was to restore the environment without severe socio and economic consequences.

Instead of achieving these admirable objectives, I have watched my community and environment suffer enormously and I firmly believe since the implementation of the Basin Plan, we are significantly worse off today than we ever were.

In my community business after business has closed and family after family has departed from my region never to return. Generations and history evaporating before my eyes.

I understand agriculture is the backbone of my community and farmers are suffering due to changes in laws, policies and rules around water.

I am also aware the practice of floodplain harvesting in northern NSW is occurring via outdated works approvals under the Water Act 1912 (NSW). With the disallowance of the Water Management (General) Amendment (Exemptions for Floodplain Harvesting) Regulation 2020, these works can no longer legally facilitate the take and use of water without a licence.

I am also aware the Southern Riverina Irrigators (**SRI**) have written to NRAR asking for legal clarity around the next large rainfall event.

Will NRAR enforce compliance of the Water Management Act 2000 (NSW) or explain why it is not necessary for action?

Like everyone else in the basin, I want to know if the rules that apply to those in the southern basin will be applied equally to those in the northern basin.

We know the NRAR board has met and discussed the disallowance and determined they won’t be making a public statement on this issue and yet this is very much in the public interest.

I have been strictly following the laws and regulations around water and I am impacted by the lack of water reaching Menindee Lakes.

There are currently no floodplain harvesting licences in NSW and whilst I have heard statements by NSW DPIE they will be finalised by July 2021, I have no confidence this will be the case.

Can you confirm if there will be enforcement of the Water Management Act 2000 requirements for the take and use of water via a licence and meter, until floodplain harvesting licences are implemented?

Thank you