

*Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2008 - EMBARGOED TILL 2PM 24/08/2008*

## **TAKE POLLIES HANDS OFF THE MURRAY**

Australian Democrats candidate for Mayo Andrew Castrique has today announced his plan for the Murray-Darling basin. The plan is controversial and will not please everybody.

“What all river users must realise, is that without a healthy river system all sectors of our community suffer,” said Andrew Castrique, Democrats candidate for Mayo.

“I have developed a 5 point plan that will assist in reducing over-allocation of water, putting the Murray in the hands of an independent board of water experts, upgrading rural and urban water infrastructure as well as a plan to reduce Adelaide’s reliance on the Murray.”

“A key plank of my platform is to push for the Federal Government to compulsorily acquire all the water resources in the Murray-Darling system and provide generous compensation packages.”

“The water acquired will be used for environmental purposes as an absolute top priority with enough reserved for critical human needs and the remainder to be auctioned off for irrigation.”

“This move will upset quite a few people, but the reality is, we need drastic action now to prevent even further pain caused by a river that will end at Wellington, then possibly at Blanchetown and then the Victorian border if we let over-allocation continue.”

“The Liberals’ plan to throw \$50million at the Coorong and lower lakes communities simply does not address the root cause of the Murray crisis.”

“At this Mayo by-election the Democrats are the only party offering a plan that addresses over-allocation and has the courage to once and for all tackle the root cause of the Murray crisis,” concluded Mr Castrique.

***See the Democrats 5 point Murray plan on the next page >>***

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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# Inaction = Destruction

## 5 steps to Save the Murray

### 1. GET THE POLLIES OUT

Put the Murray-Darling system in the hands of a board of independent experts. Their priority being to keep the system healthy.

### 2. STOP OVERALLOCATION

Compulsory acquisition of all water resources and large water wasters in the system with generous compensation. Also a re-ordering of water priorities to keep the system healthy.

### 3. PUT THE ENVIRONMENT FIRST

Re-allocate water with the environment as the ABSOLUTE TOP PRIORITY, followed by critical human needs and the remainder auctioned off for agricultural use.

### 4. UPGRADE EXISTING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Replace open irrigation channels with piping to prevent evaporation and seepage losses in rural areas and replace ageing urban infrastructure as well.

### 5. PLAN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

We have to prepare for reduced run-off and lower inflows by reducing South Australia's reliance on the Murray-Darling system through water recycling, stormwater capture schemes (including rainwater tanks), more realistic water restrictions and water pricing settings.