

To: GAB Secretariat
Subject: GAB draft Strategic Management Plan [SEC=PUBLIC]

Organisation name (if applicable) Marla Oodnadatta NRM Group

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We live in the basin and we want it well managed. We think it is critical that the SMP reflects that the GAB is a finite resource and that all users of the basin water have a grave responsibility to manage it wisely into the future.

- The plan must establish how the system for basin wide governance will be set up. This will only work if those who live in and use the basin have a voice in decision making beyond this SMP consultation, in the policy, regulation and investment decisions that affect their use. There is nothing in the plan that allows for us to have representation at the table going forward.
- The GAB underpins our businesses, livelihoods and culture. Without GAB water the pastoral industry and local communities in the region would not exist. The pastoral industry is of critical importance to the region and contributes billions of dollars to state and national economy. Therefore it is imperative that we have an ongoing say in the development and implementation of regulation that is representative of our stake in it.
- It is important that users comprehend they have a critical role in understanding their rights and responsibilities in the judicious use of GAB water. Currently rights and responsibilities are not clearly defined and understood. The plan needs to spell out in more detail the role of users and government in managing these responsibilities. The plan should also establish an ongoing commitment to educate and encourage users to reduce water usage, including suitable incentives for complying.
- We would like to see in the plan a formal monitoring program across the whole basin and investment in technology and resources to improve monitoring and managing use.
- If everybody did the right thing pastoral and mining water usage would be significantly reduced. We think it is very important to close the delivery systems on pastoral stations and that it is equally important for mining companies to change their methods of gas and mineral extraction to eliminate water waste. We would like to see in the plan a requirement for future mining applications to include a portion contribution for research and development into water efficient operations.
- The Government have a responsibility to enforce user responsibilities but to date there has not been a body that has been able to enforce compliance with real consequences. We want such a body with genuine powers put in place, with an authentic review process that is actually followed.
- Working towards a closed delivery system and the cost of maintaining infrastructure is a huge financial burden on pastoralists. So much so that when bores fail land managers often don't have the money to repair them resulting in unnecessary water wastage. We would like to see the plan set out long term planning for maintenance and managing infrastructure with shared responsibility and between government and users.

Regards
The Marla Oodnadatta NRM Group

Sarah Stevens

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