

Turnbull Targets Wrong Water

A scheme put forward by Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Water, Malcolm Turnbull, to buy water via a tender process from farmers, is targeting the ‘wrong water’ according to a candidate contesting this month’s state election.

Country Alliance’s Danny Lee says that farmers water is productive water, earning income for the farmer, regions, States and the Nation. He described the water which the Federal Government should be investing in, as unproductive water as it is lost from Government water infrastructure.

“My concern is that Mr. Turnbull is thinking as a merchant banker, not as a Politician with the long term interests of Australia as his main goal. It makes no sense to remove productivity from the Australian economy, while ignoring wasted water which could be put to better use,” he said.

“There are over seven hundred thousand megalitres lost annually from Victorian Government irrigation delivery systems, this is where the Federal Government should be spending their money. The water saved, could then be used for such things as the environment and urban supplies.”

Mr Lee said Federal and State Governments had spent very little on increasing water supplies, and have ignored major water savings projects for over twenty years. He said they are now targeting the one productive sector involved in water use, farmers.

“Buying farmers water is the easy and cheap option, it is far harder and more expensive to fix Government systems, but both Federal and State Government’s have already begun that process by starting the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline project. They should be congratulated for that move, which will save huge amounts of water.”

“To assist in funding these projects, Governments should invite investment such as dams and recycling systems from the private sector, offering a fair and reasonable return with a Government guarantee on that investment, while retaining water and water infrastructures in public hands.”

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