



Media Release

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Basin Authority “cooks the books” on community consultation

The Murray Darling Basin Authority’s summary of feedback on their controversial ‘Guide to the Murray Darling Basin Plan’ ignores and censors the vast majority of submissions which support stronger action to revive the ailing river system, say environment groups.

“The MDBA is cooking the books on its community consultation” Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) spokesperson Nick Roberts said today.

The summary of submissions, published earlier this week, shows that 1440 people supported stronger targets for returning water to the river as environmental flows, more than three times the number of people supporting business as usual. However, the MDBA has given so-called ‘campaign’ based submission second-class status.

“At no point in the consultation process were the Australian public informed that their submissions may be relegated to a second-class status” said Mr Roberts.

“Many hundreds of Australians who took the time and effort to be involved in the process following broad encouragement by the MDBA will now feel let down and ignored” said Emma Hollows, spokesperson for the Inland Rivers Network NSW (IRN).

“The vast majority of submissions came from outside of the Basin, confirming the national interest in the issue, yet the MDBA only focuses on the minority of submissions from within the Basin” she said.

“There is overwhelming support for a stronger basin plan, however, they have discounted hundreds of submissions from the community in support of returning more water to the rivers” said Nick Roberts.

“This stinks of a fit up by the MDBA, and the Minister must caution his Authority against taking a one sided stance in the new draft Basin Plan” he concluded.

For comment:

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Background information:

The MDBA's overview of feedback on the Guide is available at -

<http://www.mdba.gov.au/communities/having-your-say/feedback-overview>