



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NEED TO PROTECT BUY BACK OF WATER FOR OUR RIVERS**

The Inland Rivers Network has congratulated the NSW Government on the announcement this week that it would use the Riverbank initiative to buy back much needed water for the Lachlan River and its wetlands.

“It is great to see the NSW Government making good its commitment to start returning water to our rivers – they have been left to run dry for too long”, said Amy Hankinson, Coordinator of the Inland Rivers Network.

The NSW Government has secured an agreement to buy six and a half billion litres of environmental water in the Lachlan valley.

“Much more water is needed if our rivers and wetlands are to survive, but this is definitely a step in the right direction,” Ms Hankinson said.

However Ms Hankinson warned if the Government did not clamp down on people illegally taking environmental water it would be throwing good money after bad.

“There are a few landholders who are funnelling water off the floodplain – without permission or payment – and keeping it for themselves. It is simply not fair, especially when public money is being invested in getting water back into our rivers,” Ms Hankinson said.

“These people are stealing from the people of New South Wales, and Government inaction has enabled this practice to continue.

“The Government must clamp down on illegal water harvesting, otherwise taxpayers money and our priceless rivers and wetlands will go down the gurgler.”

The Inland Rivers Network is calling for a moratorium on all further floodplain harvesting and works, and for all existing practices to be assessed, regulated and, if necessary, removed.

**A one-page fact sheet on floodplain harvesting is attached.**

**For more information, contact Amy Hankinson, Inland Rivers Network Coordinator**

**Phone: 02 8270 9904 or 0407 279 088**

**Email: [coordinator@irnsw.org.au](mailto:coordinator@irnsw.org.au)**