

14-4-2018

NSW Government Water Reform Action Plan Submission Floodplain Harvesting Policy

Dear Department of Industry Lands and Water,

Introduction

Cotton Australia is the key representative body for Australia's cotton growing industry. We welcome the opportunity to speak on behalf of NSW cotton growers in regards to the overall NSW Government Water Reform Package and in particular the Floodplain Harvesting Policy.

Cotton Australia is an active member of NSW Irrigators Council and endorses its submission. Further, in developing this response, Cotton Australia engaged extensively with irrigator representatives from across the Northern Inland Valleys of NSW, and is aware that they will be submitting on this very important issue.

Given a number of very important, valley specific issues, this submission will be very brief, and Cotton Australia urges the NSW Government to pay very close attention to the submissions lodged by the individual organisations representing the interests of entitlement holders across the various valleys of northern inland NSW.

General Comments

Cotton Australia accepts that the take of floodplain harvesting water should be subject to a licence, as required under the Water Management Act 2000.

It is also aware that the development of a compliant floodplain harvesting policy has been an ongoing work of government since at least 2008.

For a range of reasons, the transition from the policy development phase to the implementation phase has been taking place on different timetables from valley to valley.

In recent years Cotton Australia has not been closely involved in the development and implementation of NSW floodplain harvesting policy.

It needs to be recognised that there are a whole range of valley specific issues. Differences in available data, and differences in resourcing and importantly differences in opinions.

Cotton Australia urges the NSW Government to continue to work with the valley based groups towards a policy that balances a desire for consistency, with recognition that each valley is different.

It is Cotton Australia's view that the timing around the issues explored in the Floodplain Harvesting Policy Paper, is different to the timing and response required to the Transparency, Water Take Measurement and Metering, and Better Management of Environmental Water papers.

Therefore Cotton Australia requests that you respectfully work your way through the issues as raised by the valley based groups in a manner that allows all irrigators the opportunity to be genuinely heard.

For further information on the submission, or the Cotton Australia's view on water reform in general, please contact Cotton Australia General Manager Michael Murray – 0427 707868 or michaelm@cotton.org.au .

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Murray', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Murray,
General Manager
Cotton Australia

