

MEDIA RELEASE

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Monday January 18, 2010

SA dairy industry up to its armpits with Murray crisis

The image of a Mypolonga dairy farmer swallowed up to his armpits in a huge earth crack is a striking image of the decline of Australia's greatest river system says local MP Adrian Pederick.

Mr Pederick, who is also Opposition River Murray spokesman, said government inaction had left many farmers with nowhere to go.

'The cracking of soils near the river channel has been apparent for two years yet governments – state and federal – did nothing and are still arguing over the details,' he said.

'Dairies along the lower river corridor and down around the lower lakes have felt the full force of this catastrophe.

'The once vibrant and highly productive dairy industry around Meningie and Narrung is now almost non-existent.

'Dairies along the Murray below Lock 1 are struggling with lack of water for the swamps and images like the one from Mypolonga come as no surprise to irrigators down here.

'This is not just about helping farmers; this is about preserving the very land on which we all live and depend.

'We cannot have healthy industry without a healthy environment. State and federal governments must do more immediately to solve the real problem – fair and equitable sharing of finite natural resources.

'The Murray is a very long, slow-flowing river system. Preventative action should have begun years ago. Actions taken now will take weeks or months to have effect but the government has to get on with it, for the future's sake.

'SA can wait no longer.'