



MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

Member for Hammond
Parliamentary Secretary to the Liberal Leader for
- The River Murray
- Sustainability and Climate Change

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Labor's attitude to lower lakes is 'Wong' – Pederick

Local MP Adrian Pederick has lashed out at Federal Minister Penny Wong on state radio and in state Parliament over lack of activity and priority for the dire situation of the Lower Murray and Lakes.

'I don't think Penny Wong – like her state Labor colleagues – fully understands the extreme and critical predicament of the lower river and lakes,' Mr Pederick said. 'If she did, she would be showing a great deal more interest in the region and getting on with the job of saving one of Australia's most iconic and economically valuable treasures.'

'The public are sick of committees and working groups and expert opinions. The evidence is plain for all to see – those that bother to go and look at it that is.'

'By the sound of it, Minister Wong wants to start all over again with investigations into the plight of the region, which is primarily a product of decades of mismanagement exacerbated by drought.'

'I invited her to tour the region with me and the response I got from her office was she was unlikely to get there before the end of the year – if at all!'

'No doubt some of the 'swinging voters' out there who went with Labor's promises of fixing the nation's disgraceful water problems are having second thoughts about their choice.'

'Our own state Premier Mike Rann sneaked off down there only recently – unannounced and unexpected – to see the damage and hardship. I wonder how his 'great friend' Dr Suzuki would view his environment credentials now.'

'He defends Minister Wong because of her actions on Kyoto. That's no help to the people of the lower lakes now, and anyway, the Bali conference was months ago.'

In his radio interview, Mr Pederick described the desperate actions of lower lakes farmers who were forced to crawl hundreds of metres on their bellies across newly exposed mudflats in an effort to get their pipelines to reach the rapidly receding lake.

'They even have ropes tied to them to help them get back to solid ground if the lakebed becomes too boggy,' said Mr Pederick. 'Yet the Federal Minister, a South Australian, can't find time to get in a car and show some interest and leadership.'

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