

MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

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The River Murray - Forests

Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

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Lakes report reflects Pederick's long held views

A report released this week backs the line taken by Opposition River Murray spokesman Adrian Pederick since the River Murray and Lower Lakes crisis first made the headlines in November 2006.

The long term Murray Futures plan for the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth entitled "Lower Lakes and Coorong Recovery" has been released for public comment by the Department of Environment and Heritage.

Mr Pederick, whose electorate covers most of the river and lakes below Swan Reach, said he was pleased to see the general thrust of the report reflected his own views, which he had stated repeatedly over the past three years.

'I have always believed in and fought for a freshwater solution for the Lower Lakes. Weirs and seawater symbolise defeat and the Liberals weren't prepared to accept that.

'This eco-system has been subjected to reckless and total abuse for decades. Many of our upstream neighbours were keen to sacrifice it believing that will solve their problems too.

'This report shows the folly of that approach. I accept that at some point those actions may become unavoidable but by giving up too early we risk killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

'It also puts into perspective the undesirability of numerous other water supply schemes – none of which addressed the real and unnatural causes of the problem and all of which compounded and cemented it.

'I pay tribute to the people of the Lakes region and many other South Australians who saw this disaster for what it was. They used their local knowledge and expertise to find inexpensive, low-impact solutions that worked towards recovery, rather than complicate it.

'It is pleasing to see many of their proposals now being implemented.

'I urge all South Australians to get behind this plan for recovery of the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth and make sure we save one of our greatest natural assets ... and our international reputation.'