

MEDIA RELEASE

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Agriculture, Food and Fisheries – Forests

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Nothing new in Lakes' strategy

The government's actions to avoid acidification of the Lower Lakes will not avert the risk of their ecological destruction says Shadow Minister for the River Murray, Adrian Pederick.

Mr Pederick was responding to today's announcement by River Murray Minister Karlene Maywald that a \$10 million management strategy for the Lower Lakes had been approved at today's Murray Darling Basin Ministerial Council meeting.

'This plan offers nothing new in terms of strategy,' Mr Pederick said.

'What is needed is a strategy to secure water to avert an ecological disaster. What we have is a plan to monitor its deterioration up to a point where seawater has to be let in. This in itself threatens the long term survival of the lakes.

'We believe the environment is entitled to the same support and assistance as the state government has provided for permanent plantings. We know water can be purchased and the amount required is not hundreds of gigalitres.

'Maintaining the lakes with freshwater above acidification levels is critical to the survival of the whole system, not just the lakes.

'On the matter of the Goolwa Channel Water Level Management Project, government must consult closely with river communities at Clayton and Goolwa before proceeding with any action in the area.

'The minister must explain how she proposes to maintain freshwater levels in the lakes if a bund is placed in the river in the Clayton-Goolwa area.'