

MEDIA RELEASE

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Agriculture, Food and Fisheries – Forests

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Action now on Lakes

Penny Wong's insistence that buying temporary water will not help the plight of the Lower Lakes proves she has given up on the Lakes.

State Shadow River Murray Minister Adrian Pederick said he was astounded that Federal Water Minister Wong had dismissed even the possibility of the Federal Government buying water for the Lower Lakes as opposed to waiting for permanent water allocations to be acquired.

"The Rudd Government continues to stall on any action on the Lower Lakes," Mr Pederick said.

"Its excuse is there needs to be a permanent solution - that's obvious but what is the Rudd Government doing about developing one?"

"We know the Federal Government has allocated \$200 million for the Rann Government to help the Lower Lakes and nothing has been done about spending this money."

"In the meantime the Lower Lakes are getting closer to death with everyday they go without fresh water."

"Ms Wong tries to differentiate between temporary and permanent water – as if one evaporates and the other doesn't! What does she take the public for?"

"Net evaporation losses from the lakes have been calculated at more like 400gl a year. The annual evaporation rate is less on the lakes than anywhere else upstream at least as far as Lake Victoria and the Menindee Lakes."

"The Lakes are in a dire situation – they need a government that is serious about saving this internationally recognised, environmentally critical wetland."

"South Australians were sold a dud – we were told having Penny Wong as Federal Water Minister would mean the state would be looked after."

"What a joke."

"There is water available on the temporary market – it needs to be purchased now to buy the Lower Lakes some more time."