Government must show faith in river and lakes communities

The state government's call for public help in its quest to secure federal funding for the Lower Lakes and Coorong's future has been criticised as a hollow cry.

'This is adding insult to injury for river and lakes communities that for over two years have been very active and vocal in their endeavours to save this vital eco-system,' says Shadow River Murray Minister Adrian Pederick.

'It seems the government is only interested in ideas and suggestions that fit its pre-determined course of action.

'There have been numerous proposals put forward by sensible and knowledgeable local groups that have been politely ignored.

'Others have been discounted in favour of more money for more meetings and consultations, of which the public is getting very tired and sceptical.

'A very well prepared and presented submission put recently by a group at Milang was passed over in favour of more department-based plans to be run from offices in the city.

'And a highly intelligent, low cost and low risk proposal presented in February to deal less invasively with low river levels and acid sulphate threats was not even acknowledged by the department.

'Bureaucrats and butcher's paper appears to come before common sense and community.

'I don't like to be cynical about a very difficult situation but if the government is genuine in its request for public contributions it should blow the dust off these sensible and innovative suggestions and earn the community's support.

'River and lakes communities are rapidly losing faith in this government's ability to really listen to them and show real faith in local knowledge and expertise.

"I call on Premier Rann and River Murray Minister Maywald to match their hollow words with solid action and earn the community's respect and involvement.'

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