

Question time - MURRAY FUTURES program – 15 July 09

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:12): My question is to the Minister for Water Security. Will all river communities from the border to the Murray Mouth, including those around lakes Alexandrina and Albert, benefit from the River Industry Renewal and Riverine Recovery programs? In the performance commentary for DWLBC's water security in the recent budget, it is stated that under the Murray Futures program the \$110 million River Industry Renewal to reinvigorate irrigation communities, including the uptake of newer and smarter irrigation technology, and the \$100 million Riverine Recovery to improve our river wetlands and floodplains are managed from the South Australian border to Wellington.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security) (15:13): The answer to that question is yes, and you also need to include the third project, which is the long-term plan for the Lower Lakes and Coorong, which is a further \$200 million.

The Industry Renewal component of the Murray Futures program is \$110 million towards industry renewal programs. We are still continuing to negotiate with the federal government on how that funding will be invested to support industry to deal with climate change and to be able to adjust to a future with a more variable supply of water in the future.

The other program, the Riverine program, will have benefits below Lock 1 and above Lock 1. It includes the removal of pumps off wetlands so that we can better manage wetland complexes and ensure that we can have better biodiversity outcomes on our floodplain as a consequence of managing river levels behind our locks and weirs, and also through structures on the floodplain to allow water to enter at certain times and introduce wetting and drying programs to the floodplain to increase the health of the floodplain. So, that program is from Wellington to the border.

Below Wellington there is also a \$200 million program for the long-term planning measures that will need to be undertaken to manage the Lower Lakes and the Coorong in the future. That program is well and truly underway with extensive consultation occurring at this stage.