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Submission

Draft Landholder Negotiation Scheme Regulation

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Executive Summary

Submission

NSWIC welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission on the Draft Landholder Negotiation Scheme Framework (LNS) that will support the Reconnecting River Country Program (RRC) and the Gwydir Reconnecting Watercourse Country Program (GRWC). NSWIC sees it as vital that a pathway is mapped out for the successful delivery of constraints relaxation projects and we support efforts that seek to deliver these goals in a fair and transparent manner.

This submission draws attention to some issues of concern for NSWIC and its members. These points are outlined and summarised below, before being explored in depth in the submission. We hope that this feedback can assist the Government in the LNS regulation and the delivery of connected constraints projects.

1. NSWIC does not support the inclusion of compulsory acquisition powers.
2. NSWIC is concerned by proposed wording which gives the Minister scope to act without proper consideration of landholder needs, including the ability to not fully consider the impact on landholders.
3. Concerns surrounding the proposed timelines for negotiations.
4. Concerns that the use of compulsory acquisition will create ill feeling and destroy trust between the Government and Basin Communities.
5. Concerns surrounding a lack of liability on the Government if constraints easements lead to negative impacts on landholders.
6. Communication with landholders on the ground has been imperfect.
7. There is confusion as to how this program interacts with Reconnecting River Country, SDLAM 605, the MDBA Constraints Roadmap and the Floodplain Management Program.
8. The Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) is too narrow for landholders to fully understand impacts on their properties.
9. Concerns that the RRC negotiations on the Murray could be stalled on the Victorian side of the river.

NSWIC preferred path forward

NSWIC supports the use of water to improve environmental objectives and has long been calling for the Government to more effectively use its water for ecosystem improvement. NSWIC members also hope for certainty and clarity in the rollout of the RRC and GRWC programs and we hope that the LNS can positively underpin negotiations.



However, we have some concerns that its proposed approach may create mistrust in communities. This mistrust may undermine long-term efforts at constraints easement and environmental water delivery, ultimately stalling progress.

Given this, NSWIC proposes the Government adopt a more realistic and conciliatory approach to landholder negotiations. We instead put forward the following.

1. The NSW Government proceeds with the RRC and GRWC programs without the threat of compulsory acquisition, but instead through negotiations that are voluntarily negotiated by two parties on equal footing.
2. Accreditation of SDLAM offsets to date and timeline extension beyond 2026.
3. All environmental releases that may have third-party impacts must be disclosed by the minister, and the Government must be liable for impacts, including on commercial operations, property access and private assets.
4. A comprehensive RIS that properly articulates the cost/benefits of the three approach options, compares the costs of a program that includes compulsory acquisition and one that does not, and that considers impacts beyond only those on the Department.
5. Remove the 28-day and 12-month deadlines for negotiation. A slower roll out to give more certainty to the Government on its modelling and lower the risk of accidental damage from flooding.
6. Improve collaboration and communication between the Constraints Roadmap, SDLAM projects, RRC and GRWC, Floodplain Management Program and the LNS.

Background

In a regulated river system, flow levels are managed to optimise a balance of environmental, communal and industry benefits. As a result of development near rivers, wetlands and floodplains surrounding regulated river systems have become less likely to receive water from high river flows due to constraints such as infrastructure and rules against intentional inundation of private property in river operations.

Under the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, Basin Governments aim to promote environmental outcomes by relaxing constraints on water flow. For NSW, the Reconnecting River Country Program (RRC) and the Gwydir Reconnecting Watercourse Country Program (GWRC) aim to achieve a balance of economic, social, cultural, and environmental outcomes within NSW by relaxing constraints and improving wetland and floodplain connectivity.¹

Managing constraints under the program enables higher flow levels and minor inundation of areas of private land. As is integral to the rights and safety of those landholders, these

¹ [Reconnecting River Country Program | Water \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)



inundation events will require extensive negotiations with all affected landholders, as well as appropriately mitigating the impacts of these flow events.

The Draft Landholder Negotiation Scheme Consultation Paper outlines how negotiations with effected parties will transpire. NSWIC agrees that having clear procedures and timelines for how negotiations will take place is desirable, although we believe the process could be improved. NSWIC has reviewed this discussion paper and provides this feedback to assist in the development of this program in the interests of our members.

Submission

1. NSWIC does not support the Government's inclusion of compulsory acquisition powers

NSWIC does not believe that the threat of compulsory acquisition of land (or an interest in land) is consistent with 'encouraging productive and resilient water-dependent industries' nor does it 'promote communities' confidence in their long-term future', as outlined in s 5.02 of the *Basin Plan 2012*. The inclusion of compulsory acquisition seems to have caught many landholders off guard (as this was not mentioned in the Landholder Negotiation Framework discussions under the previous Government in 2022-23).

Among the aims of the draft LNS Regulation is to 'facilitate good faith consultation and negotiation' and aim to support 'a fair and transparent process for consultations'.² NSWIC does not see negotiations with the looming threat of compulsory acquisition as 'fair and transparent'. We also view that this violates RRC Principle 2 'Landholders' interests and property rights will be respected', as was mentioned to in discussions in 2022 and 2023.³

The existence of clauses that allow for the Government to proceed without the landholders consent mean negotiations are ultimately not entirely 'voluntary', as is stated by the Draft Consultation Paper. We believe that the program could be more fairly implemented if this clause was removed. Use of this power will only add to the already strong regional perception that the Basin Plan is a punitive reform being done *to* Basin communities, not *with* them.

2. Proposed wording which gives the Minister scope to act without proper consideration of landholder needs, including the ability to not fully consider the impact on landholders

NSWIC is concerned that the *Water Management (General) Amendment (Landholder Negotiation Scheme) Regulation 2024* contains a number of clauses that could allow the Minister to pursue environmental water releases without proper consideration of landholder needs. We fear that these could be used to rush through environmental water delivery without proper consultation and compensation.

Section 247C(4)

Section 247C(4) states that 'in making declarations, the Minister **may** consider' (a) 'the effect of the proposed environmental water release on affected landholder and other persons' and (b) 'the negotiation guidelines'. Among the effects are things like 'the likely nature extent

² [Draft Landholder Negotiation Scheme Regulation Consultation Paper | NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#)

³ [Program measures | NSW Department of Planning and Environment](#)



of adverse impacts on landholders' commercial operations' and 'the likely future impact on access to and within the affected landholdings, and on existing on-property assets'.

NSWIC queries why the Minister **may** consider the impacts on landholders and negotiation guidelines, but not **must** consider. We believe that the Minister should be obliged to consider the impacts on landholders commercial operations and on-property assets. The proposed wording appears to give the Minister room to not fully consider these impacts. NSWIC believes that considering the effects of environmental watering on landholder assets should be mandatory, not optional.

Section 247C(1)

Section 247C of the *Water Management (General) Amendment (Landholder Negotiation Scheme)* says that the Minister may 'declare that a proposed environmental water release is a release to which this part applies'. NSWIC thinks it more appropriate if the Minister is to oversee an environmental water release under these parts, it should again be mandatory, not optional. This section opens the door for the Minister to not publicise a water release if it is deemed to only impact 'a small number of landholders' and to be 'relatively minor and/or immaterial'. NSWIC questions the inclusion of this clause and believes that any environmental release that may have third-party impacts **must** be disclosed.

The Minister may exercise discretion on whether a declaration under Clause 247C(1) of the LNS Regulation is warranted in cases where:

- only a small number of landholders are likely to be affected by the proposed environmental water releases and/or
- the scale of adverse impacts arising from a proposed environmental water releases is relatively minor or immaterial and/or

Section 247E

The proposed timeline for a person to accept an invitation to negotiate is 28 days. If no response is received within 28 days, the negotiations are said to be terminated. NSWIC questions whether this an appropriate timeframe and course of action. We ask what contingencies are in place to ensure that the landholder does not miss this 28-day deadline, through no fault of their own and then face potential compulsory acquisition of an interest in their land.

3. Concerns surrounding the proposed timelines for negotiations

Under the proposed LNS process, there is hoped to be 'streamlined negotiations which can be completed within reasonable timeframes' that provide 'certainty' for affected landholders. Based on previous experiences, NSWIC does not see that a 12-month timeframe is 'reasonable', and we again stress that the looming possibility of compulsory acquisition does not provide 'certainty'. We acknowledge that timelines under the LNS can be extended past the 12-month timeframe if required and we ask that the Government is open to this possibility.

A recent five-year assessment of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan (MDBP) found that:

'Negotiations in the 2000s to secure the right to release 25 000 ML/day from Hume Dam involved negotiating legal easements with 103 landholders from Hume to Yarrawonga took almost eight years to complete.'



This report also suggests that ‘*to enable worthwhile projects to be implemented in realistic timeframes, Basin Governments should be open to the possibility of extending the 30 June 2024 deadline*’.⁴ NSWIC agrees with the recent decision to extend the deadline past 30 June 2024, but we would appreciate more clarity on management plans for the RRC. While the RRC aims to secure ‘the initial flow corridor in the Murrumbidgee that aligns with the Murrumbidgee Water Sharing Plan’⁵ NSWIC would like more information on the number of landholders that will be consulted as part of this process. If the timeline laid out for this program is realistic, it will help assure landholders that the government does not intend to move ahead with easements without proper consultation.

There are up to 4000 private landholders that could be involved in this program⁶ and the deadline for SDLAM projects is 31 December 2026. NSWIC understands that the Government needs to ‘demonstrate progress’ towards the constraints’ programs before the 31 December 2026 deadline. Given this, we ask for more clarity on how the negotiations will be undertaken, in order to ensure members that these reforms will not be rushed through.

NSWIC seeks to know how many landholders will be contacted concurrently and how the Government will the Government take a staged approach to negotiations. NSWIC asks that the Government moves forward in a way that builds trust and consent with affected landholders.

4. Concerns that the use of compulsory acquisition will create ill feeling and destroy trust between the Government and Basin Communities

NSWIC believes that the inclusion of compulsory acquisition is not compatible with the concept of a voluntary agreement between two parties. While the Draft Consultation Paper states that ‘participations in negotiations under the LNS is voluntary’, we do not see this as entirely accurate, given that if a landholder does not participate, they may be inundated regardless of their consent.

As previously mentioned, there is already a trust deficit between the Government and many Basin communities, who have shouldered the burden of reforms in recent years. We believe if the Government was serious about voluntary negotiations, it would not need to include the possibility of compulsory acquisition but would instead plan out a considered consultation process that ensures all landholder concerns are properly addressed. Although this approach may be slower, we view it is as important in keeping trust between the two parties involved.

This was evident in the 2020 report *Independent assessment of the social and economic conditions in the Basin*, which showed a trust deficit between Basin communities and the Government. Many of these communities have been negatively impacted by water recovery and NSWIC fears that if the Government proceeds without the consent of landholders, there could be even more ill-feeling created between the two parties. Similar sentiments were expressed in the 2019 report *Murray-Darling Basin constraints modelling*, which stated that ‘using State or Commonwealth powers to compulsorily acquire easements’ would

⁴ [Inquiry Report – Murray-Darling Basin Plan: Five-year assessment | Productivity Commission](#)

⁵ [Reconnecting River Country Program | NSW DPIE](#)

⁶ <https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/our-work/water-infrastructure-nsw/sdlam/reconnecting-river-country-program/information-hub/faqs>



‘generate very strong opposition’.⁷ We urge the Government to consider this before proceeding, as buy-in from local communities is vital in ensuring long-lasting reforms.

5. Concerns surrounding a lack of liability on the Government if constraints easements lead to negative impacts on landholders

Under s398(2)(b) of the *Water Act Management 2000* (NSW) ‘neither the Crown nor any other person is subject to any action, liability, claim or demand arising as a consequence of ‘the release in good faith of water from any water management work’ provided the release was made in good faith. The *Water Management Amendment Act* adds that this exclusion also applies to ‘the release of water for environmental purposes’, again assuming the act was done in good faith.⁸ This amendment states that ‘some, but not all, of the provisions displayed in this version of the legislation have commenced’. NSWIC would appreciate clarity on whether this clause currently applies.

NSWIC believes that if the Government is to proceed with a rushed negotiation process and in some instances, resorts to compulsory acquisition, this does not constitute ‘good faith’. If so, the Government would not be excluded from statutory liability.

It is also important for us to understand what the potential impacts on members may be. NSWIC wishes to better understand how the Government will adopt a precautionary approach to flood easements, such that landholders can be confident that inundation will have no unforeseen negative impacts. If there are unforeseen negative impacts, landholders also wish to be sure that they will be compensated for them.

6. Communication with landholders on the ground has been imperfect

Given that there has already been confusion and opposition to the consultation process, NSWIC feels that coordination needs to be improved if the LNS is to be successful. While we understand the LNS is a separate program to RRC, one cannot be achieved without the other. We appreciate the work that has been done by the LNS hosting webinars and seminars within communities, although it seems that prior communication (in 2022-23) was lacking and that many landholders have been caught off guard by the LNS.

Our understanding is that between 12-16 landholders and one Aboriginal group were consulted as part of the RRC consultations in 2022-23. Those who were part of the landholder reference groups were to ‘act as a conduit for sharing approved program information with their declared stakeholder networks’. It is not apparent whether those stakeholders then communicated this information widely within communities.

NSWIC had several representatives along the Murrumbidgee who were well placed to act as conduits but were ineligible, as they did not hold land that may be inundated. NSWIC and its members have well developed and widespread communication with licence holders and would have been a logical choice for the program. This poor communication, the sheer number of different similar programs being implemented by the MDBA and State and Federal Governments and the stop-start nature of consultation for the RRC program mean

⁷ [Murray-Darling Basin constraints modelling | NSW and Victorian Governments](#)

⁸ [Water Management Act 2000 | NSW Government](#)



that property holders are struggling to keep up. These issues will need to be properly addressed by the RRC and LNS before its implementation.

7. There is confusion as to how this program interacts with Reconnecting River Country, SDLAM 605, the Constraints Roadmap and the Floodplain Management Program

Many Basin communities are feeling overwhelmed and confused by the numerous programs being simultaneously undertaken in the constraints easement space. NSWIC understands that although the LNS will be used as part of the RRC program it ‘may also be used for future environmental water programs in NSW’. There are also several other concurrent programs, namely the constraints easement projects as part of the [SDLAM 605 recovery](#), the [Floodplain Management Program](#) and the [Constraints Relaxation Implementation Roadmap](#) (set to be released by the MDBA). There is some confusion as to how these programs all interact and how they are being managed.

It is clear that Basin communities do not feel properly consulted, as evidenced by [the recent boycott of LNS webinars](#). The interaction of these programs can also have negative effects, as is evidenced by a NSWIC members in the Gwydir valley.

Case Study: Gwydir Valley

As a landholder whose property lies close to the Gwydir River, this member’s property will be negatively impacted by the LNS. Large parts of this property have been inundated for years due to excess water moving through the system and from the ‘3T’ rule in the Gwydir Valley water sharing plan.

As part of the floodplain management plan, on-farm structures have since been modified and removed. His floodplain harvesting licence was then significantly reduced and he has been unable to yet become FPH compliant, due to a lack of available meters. On top of this, there is little visibility for what is being proposed in the GRWC program and he is largely in the dark on the negotiation process.

This climate of uncertainty is making the prospect of farming ever more uncertain. Despite producing consistently high yields on this land, the effect of these reforms has given no certainty to irrigators and many feel the burdens are becoming too much. This case study re-affirms that there are real costs to these reforms if they are not managed correctly. NSWIC re-affirms a consensual approach is needed to win community support.

8. Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) is too narrow for landholders to fully understand impacts

NSWIC believes the RIS does not properly account for third-party impacts or the potential costs of compulsory acquisition. The RIS considers three different approaches to negotiation, which are 1) negotiations with no regulation 2) negotiations with the proposed LNS regulation and 3) a more prescriptive approach to negotiations. While this identifies the proposed approach (option 2) as the most cost-effective, we feel it does not capture the full potential costs of the program nor does it explain *why* Option 2 is considered the most cost-effective beyond being the easiest process for the Department.

The RIS does not for example, consider the costs of comparing a program that includes compulsory acquisition and one that does not. There is no certainty on the potential costs of



payouts to landholders that can be expected in this program and whether there is a difference in cost between programs that include compulsory acquisition and programs that do not. It would be useful to have a clear comparison, so that the public can understand the full cost-benefit of the proposed approach.

9. Concerns that the LNS consultation on the Murray could be stalled on the Victorian side of the river

While NSWIC understands that the RRC will not be implemented on the Murray until the Constraints Relaxation Roadmap is in place, we query what measures are in place to ensure proper coordination between NSW and Victoria. Given that Victoria has stated it does not plan on using compulsory acquisition, this could become a significant roadblock on programs that cross state borders. If negotiations stall on the Victorian side, it could become very costly for NSW as the process drags on.

NSWIC preferred path forward

As already stated, NSWIC supports projects which improve environmental outcomes including improving environmental outcomes from the delivery of existing held environmental water. We believe the best way to achieve long-lasting changes to flow corridors, is by working to find consensus and without the threat of compulsory acquisition. We also believe that coordination between the numerous programs working on constraints easements should be improved before the NSW Government proceeds.

1. NSW Government proceeds with the RRC and GRWC without the use of compulsory acquisition, but instead through negotiations that are voluntarily negotiated by two parties on equal footing

The inclusion of voluntary acquisition represents a change in approach to constraints easement that NSWIC does not support. As highlighted, its use may create more distrust in communities that are already unhappy about many of the measures in the Basin Plan and the Restoring our Rivers Act 2023. It is crucial that the Department work constructively alongside willing landholders first, while exercising patience and respecting landholders that harbour concerns about inundation. This approach means the Government can demonstrate to landholders the effects of inundation and dispel any unwarranted fears. This 'adaptive management' approach was seen by the Independent Panel Review of Constraints Modelling to have the 'best chance of achieving the lasting environmental benefits specified in the Basin Plan'.⁹ Members do not wish to see moves away from consensus-based reforms, towards top-down and prescriptive rules.

2. Accreditation of SDLAM offsets to date and timeline extension beyond 2026

NSWIC supports the delivery of SDLAM projects (of which RRC is a part) as a means to improve environmental outcomes for Basin communities. While we understand that there will be up to a 315GL shortfall¹⁰, we believe that these programs should be continued with

⁹ [Murray-Darling Basin constraints modelling | NSW and Victorian Governments](#)

¹⁰ [Independent Assessment of the Murray-Darling Basin's Supply and Constraints Measures | DCCEEW](#)



past the recently extended deadline. It is clear that the initial timelines given for implementation constraints projects were unrealistic and we believe that the Government should acknowledge this and move forward with patience.

If constraints easement is to be done in a way that maintains community trust, a staged approach will need to be adopted. While this may be slower in the short term, it will help build trust with landholders and lead to more enduring change. Too much time and resources have been put into these schemes for them to be abandoned if deadlines are not met.

3. All environmental releases that may have third-party impacts must be disclosed by the Minister, and the Government must be liable for impacts, including on commercial operations, property access and private assets.

NSWIC does not view the clauses in Section 247C as fair to landholders and we ask that the Government is obliged to disclose third party impacts and compensate landholders for damage regardless. The wording of Section 247C appears to shield the Government from conducting proper consultation if they deem it unimportant and to not fully consider the negative impact on landholder assets.

4. A comprehensive RIS that properly articulates the cost/benefits of the three approach options, compares the costs of a program that includes compulsory acquisition and one that does not, and that considers impacts beyond only those on the Department.

A more comprehensive RIS that includes the potential compensation costs to landholders will give a clearer understanding of costs and benefits of each approach. NSWIC believes that impacts to landholders are a regulatory impact and that they may differ from each of three scenarios outlined in the RIS. For one, the costs of the LNS implementation have not been factored in and these would not be necessary if the existing pathways were used (JTA).

Additionally, we believe a more comprehensive RIS should outline how the three different approaches will change the costs of compensation to landholders. While the RIS states that 'none of the costs associated with these matters are likely to vary in response to differences between the 3 options under consideration in this RIS', NSWIC sees that the LNS may have material impacts on negotiations and in turn, compensation costs. A RIS that does consider these impacts would give a fuller picture of program costings.

5. A slower roll out to give more certainty to the Government on its modelling and will lower risk of accidental damage from flooding

There is a need to move cautiously, due to the risk of accidental damage arising from environmental water deliveries that have not yet been ground truthed. There are limitations to modelling and any move to rush the process may lead to unintended flooding and damage to properties. Any move to rush through flood easements coupled with untested water deliveries could destroy confidence in the Government and stall the project delivery indefinitely.

This was again noted by the Expert Panel Review of Constraints Modelling, who noted:



‘The Panel has been advised that operating the rivers once the constraints measures have been implemented will not be a simple process. River operators have expressed concern to the Panel about the residual risks of unintentionally exceeding the agreed notified flow rates’¹¹

NSWIC agrees with this assessment and urges the NSW Government to move slowly with its negotiations, test its models and build confidence within Basin communities. The Productivity Commission echoed this sentiment in its 2023 *Implementation Review*, stating that high flows should be managed ‘in a gradual, iterative way, within the available funding, instead of retaining the ‘all-or-nothing’ mindset implicit in the 2013 strategy’¹². As stated by the Independent Expert Panel Review of Constraints Modelling, ‘the suggested way forward may take 10 to 20 years or more to implement’¹³. Despite the slower roll-out, NSWIC sees that the only way forward that will see long-term and lasting results is through proper consultation.

6. Improve collaboration and communication between the Constraints Roadmap, SDLAM projects, RRC and GRWC, Floodplain Management Program and the LNS

It has been challenging to properly understand and keep track of the numerous projects that are currently working on constraints relaxation and environmental water delivery. Basin communities are understandably confused by the number of programs and some do not feel that communication has been adequate for the LNS. NSWIC believes that there needs to be far better communication and coordination between the RRC/GRWC, Floodplain Management Program, the Constraints Roadmap and the LNS.W

It is also possible that the intersection of all these programs running concurrently could create problems in environmental water delivery. NSWIC knows of instances where as part of the Floodplain Management plan, the removal of structures led to inundation of private land and the destruction of crops. We would like certainty that the ongoing work for the Floodplain Management plan will not affect the mapping used for the RRC/GRWC. NSWIC understands that the [Improving Floodplain Connections](#) program is being rolled out in parts of the southern Basin.

Conclusion

NSWIC expects the full 605GL target can be met to ensure healthy ecosystems and productive agriculture within the Murray-Darling Basin. Despite the challenges in constraints projects, we believe the Government should persist with SDLAM measures but with a more realistic timeframe allowed for negotiations.

Having a clear framework for negotiations is desirable for landholders and the Government alike. Members have however expressed concerns about some aspects of the LNS, as we have outlined above. NSWIC does not see that adopting more top-down and forced measures will instil confidence in communities. The inclusion of compulsory acquisition and the high

¹¹ [Murray-Darling Basin constraints modelling | NSW and Victorian Governments](#)

¹² [Murray-Darling Basin Plan: Implementation Review 2023, Inquiry Report | Australian Government, Productivity Commission](#)

¹³ [Murray-Darling Basin constraints modelling | NSW and Victorian Governments](#)



number of ongoing programs has not instilled confidence in our members. We instead advocate for a slower but ultimately more long-lasting approach.

Kind regards,

NSW Irrigators' Council.



NSW Irrigators' Council

The NSW Irrigators' Council (NSWIC) is the peak body representing irrigation farmers and the irrigation farming industry in NSW. NSWIC has member organisations in every inland valley of NSW, and several coastal valleys. Through our members, NSWIC represents over 12,000 water access licence holders in NSW who access regulated, unregulated and groundwater systems.

NSWIC members include valley water user associations, food and fibre groups, irrigation corporations and commodity groups from the rice, cotton and horticultural industries. NSWIC engages in advocacy and policy development on behalf of the irrigation farming sector. As an apolitical entity, the Council provides advice to all stakeholders and decision makers.

Irrigation Farming

Irrigation provides more than 90% of Australia's fruit, nuts and grapes; more than 76% of vegetables; 100% of rice and more than 50% of dairy and sugar (2018-19).

Irrigation farmers in Australia are recognised as world leaders in water efficiency. For example, according to the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment:

“Australian cotton growers are now recognised as the most water-use efficient in the world and three times more efficient than the global average”¹⁴

“The Australian rice industry leads the world in water use efficiency. From paddock to plate, Australian grown rice uses 50% less water than the global average.”¹⁵

Our water management legislation prioritises all other users before agriculture (critical human needs, stock and domestic, and the environment with water to keep rivers flowing), meaning our industry only has water access when all other needs are satisfied. Our industry supports this order of prioritisation. Many common crops we produce are annual/seasonal crops that can be grown in wet years, and not grown in dry periods, in tune with Australia's variable climate.

Irrigation farming in Australia is also subject to strict regulations to ensure sustainable and responsible water use. This includes all extractions being capped at a sustainable level, a hierarchy of water access priorities, and strict measurement requirements.

¹⁴ <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/crops/cotton>

¹⁵ <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/crops/rice>