



CLIMATE AND
HEALTH
ALLIANCE

MEDIA RELEASE

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Health groups join call for healthy Murray Darling

The national coalition of health groups, the Climate and Health Alliance has today joined with other groups in calling for the restoration of environmental flows to the Murray Darling to restore health to the failing river system.

"We recognise that the health of the population ultimately depends on a healthy ecosystem. We cannot continue to degrade our ecosystems and expect no adverse consequences for human health and wellbeing," CAHA Convenor Fiona Armstrong said.

Together with other non government organisations and charities, the Climate and Health Alliance is part of the campaign "Voices for the Murray-Darling" which is calling for the development of a plan for the Murray Darling Basin to revive the wetlands and rivers, with environmental flows based on credible science.

"We acknowledge there will be changes in the use of the water. Communities must be assisted to adapt to sustainable water use, and a process undertaken to support the establishment of secure economic futures for affected communities.

"But we cannot continue to delay in developing these solutions, and we must move away from the rhetoric that the restoration of environmental flows is damaging. The health of the community (and the economy) is entirely dependent on the ecosystem, not the other way round."

"The long term health of the Murray Darling has important implications for human health. This must be considered in the development of a sustainable national plan for water use."

Voices for the Murray-Darling can be found at www.lifeblood.org.au

The Climate and Health Alliance is a coalition of health care stakeholders established in 2010 to advocate for policy action to reduce the risks to human health from climate change and environmental degradation.

CAHA members include: Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW); Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM); Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS); Australian Hospitals and Healthcare Association (AHHA); Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA); Australian Institute of Health Innovation (AIHI); Australian Women's Health Network (AWHN); Australian Nursing Federation (ANF); Australian Psychological Society; Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN); CRANApplus; Doctors for the Environment Australia (DEA); Doctors Reform Society; Friends of CAHA; Health Consumers' Network (Qld); Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA); Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP); North Yarra Community Health (NYCH); Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health (SARRAH); Women's Health in the North; World Vision.

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www.caha.org.au