

ONLINE ARTICLE

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NFF president Jock Laurie.

THE latest version of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan fails to balance the needs of food producers and the communities that rely on them, according to the National Farmers' Federation (NFF).

NFF president Jock Laurie says the Murray-Darling Basin Authority has ignored direction from Water Ministers to apply greater balance to the plan.

"The Ministers called for an adjustment mechanism that would reduce the amount of water needed for the environment through improving the efficient use of water already in the system," Mr Laurie said.

"Investing in infrastructure, environmental works and measures and efficient river operations would make the water in the system work harder, and, as a result, the sustainable diversion limit would decrease.

"We can only conclude that this adjustment mechanism has been turned into an opportunity to take more water from the system, claiming that infrastructure would increase the sustainable diversion limit.

"To date, including the proposed new sustainable limits to water, agriculture has already committed over 4000 GL of water to the environment over the past two decades. We are already playing our part: further environmental gains should not be at the cost of regional communities."