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Irrigator Lake Meran.

Irrigation Extraction Critical to Maintaining Low Salinity in Lake Meran.

In the past authorities have attempted to impose restrictions on irrigation access at Lake Meran. It is now clear that these attempts were outside of these authorities' jurisdiction. This includes an irrigation restriction trigger level and also an attempt to impose a permit requirement on an existing license to operate works.

Current management plans that authorities have proposed for Lake Meran are once again, non statutory plans.

Past plans and current management plans have not adequately considered salinity. This was apparent following examination of the Lake Meran Salt and Water Balance Modelling that informs the current proposed Lake Meran Complex Environmental Watering Management Plan. This examination has revealed modelling with flood spill events that never happened and also excessive spill volumes with floods that would last between 150 to 300 days.

False assumptions that irrigators will irrigate with salinity levels well in excess of 1300EC is misleading.

With rising salinity levels, irrigation diversions will cease thus removing the prime salinity mitigation option (irrigation extraction LMCEWMP). This then exacerbates lake salinity.

Flora and Fauna salinity risk assessments reveal a lack of knowledge regarding some flora and fauna groups tolerance to salinity while other groups such as frogs are totally absent from the document.

Lake Meran's future health is dependent on the ongoing viability of these diversion licences. As conceded by authorities these irrigation licences have been historically very reliable. It is clear that water recovery is at conflict with achieving great environmental outcomes.

With acceptable salinity levels, I will continue to irrigate to my volumetric limit. With production of high value seed crops and other valued production I regard this irrigation division licence as a very valuable asset.

When considering proposed plans authorities must address circumstances where mitigation operations regarding salinity are at conflict. Authorities must consider ongoing viability of diversion licences necessary to maintain Lake Meran's health. Authorities must consider the highly valued production achieved through using this water.

I write this short submission in anticipation of further advice from appointed examination of the above said material.

It is my current position to ignore any attempts by authorities to restrict my access to irrigate from Lake Meran other than the volumetric limit that already exists.

I am open to mediation that would consider volumes delivered as a percentage providing these volumes are delivered via Lake Meran thus assisting with lowering salinity levels.

Yours Faithfully

Stephen English