

HEADS UP FOR MINISTERS WATER FORUM

ON-FARM ISSUES RELATED TO INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

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WHAT IS THE ON FARM SITUATION?

Farmers feeling the pressure from regional actions and urban community attitudes related to realisation of Government objectives – which are largely accepted by farmers:

- improvements to quality and efficient use of water and new partnerships
- **improved management of undesirable effects of land use on water quality**
- improved water allocation processes especially in over-allocated catchments



FARMER CONCERNS?

- Reduction in security of supply during dry seasons as allocations are reviewed
- Reluctance to enter export contracts and adopt more intensive systems because of high entry costs and risks of failure.
- Pressure to reduce water use in schemes and on farm at 100% their cost and no access to water saved.
- Uncertainty as to future changes – consent reviews and land use controls



WHY INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT - OLD?

- Much infrastructure degraded and old fashioned – modernisation needed
- Some at risk of failure and then system collapse
- Public benefits not recognised – cost sharing not on agenda
- Significant water savings possible



INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT – NEW

- Reached allocation limits under run of river and available groundwater access
- Need to harness alpine river flow excesses
- Need to augment groundwater
- On farm investment considerable – up to \$5,000 per ha – fully farmer responsibility
- Off farm investment for multiple purpose developments needs to be shared with community



THE VALUE OF ALPINE WATER

- High quality
- Very large resource in total
- Dilution of poorer quality downland and plains waters
- Adds to recharge water balance and augments groundwater
- Needs infrastructure investment to realise potential



REDUCING IMPACTS – FARMER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Reduce surface and subsurface drainage – better water management in every season
- Adopting good land use practice – fertiliser, husbandry, land management
- Measurement and monitoring of key environmental parameters
- Adaptive management



WHAT IS STATE OF PLAY ON FARM?

- Primary Sector Water Partnership Leadership Document under action
- SLUF (Sustainable Land Use Forum) involvement
- Farmers investing heavily both on farm and off farm – not well known in town
- Increasing use of measurement – support for metering – new tools coming in stream
- Audited self management moving

