

Deb Foskey MLA

Member for Molonglo
Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory
GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601 Australia
Phone 61 (02) 6205 0161 Fax 6205 0007
www.debfoskey.com



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Big picture needed for the Murray Darling

Deb Foskey, ACT Greens MLA, today expressed her hope that ACT Chief Minister Jon Stanhope will fight for the big picture when he joins State and Commonwealth leaders at COAG today to discuss the Murray Darling Basin.

"The Murray Darling is in a dire state and State and Commonwealth leaders have been sitting on their hands in the pretence of looking after state interests," said Dr Foskey.

"Trouble is, they have been doing this at the expense of the Basin's health."

"Mr Stanhope said this morning that he will be looking out for the ACT's interests - I hope he realises that a healthy river system is in the ACT's interests, since it provides much of our food."

"We are the largest city in the Basin and that gives us a special role; the Murrumbidgee corridor is in the poorest health of all the system's rivers and needs a rescue plan."

"But the real disaster in the making is our iconic River Murray. Ramsar wetlands and the wildlife haven, the Coorong, will die unless more water goes all the way down the system to the sea."

"I hope that our leaders are prepared to put aside their state politics today and develop an emergency rescue package for the Murray so that the river and the communities which depend upon it can survive."

"In this election year, I ask Jon Stanhope to understand that the little chunk of the Murray Darling Basin, which is the ACT, can make a difference," said Deb Foskey.

MEDIA CONTACT Roland Manderson 62050551 or 0412241379

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