



**AUSTRALIAN RECREATIONAL
FISHING FOUNDATION**

Fisher Outrage over Darling River Disaster

The Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation, the national peak body for recreational fishing, is appalled at the ecological disaster in the Darling River, NSW and is calling on an urgent independent inquiry to expose negligent and irresponsible water management.

The extent of the fish kills are horrific and will have long-term consequences to the river ecosystem and the quality of fishing for many years to come.

Recreational fishers across Australia are angry it has taken a disaster of this scale to expose water mismanagement but hope it can finally lead to sweeping reforms that protects our rivers and fish.

ARFF completely refutes NSW and Federal government's claims that that drought is to blame.

ARFF's position is supported by a Murray-Darling Basin Authority report in 2018 that concluded man-made impacts since 2000 were impacting on low flow areas of the Darling river system, not climate.

The heartbreaking death of scores of large Murray cod, which can live to well over 50 years in age, is further proof these fish have been able to survive many droughts in the past, including the recent millennial drought.

The Menindee Lakes system, a critical fish nursery area, has been abused as a water storage site to send water to downstream irrigators rather than be recognised as the 'lifeblood' of the lower Darling River.

Questions need to be asked about water allocation, extraction and collection of runoff across the basin.

Australian taxpayers are funding more than \$13 billion to restore the health of the Murray-Darling Basin and are justifiably outraged by this catastrophic disaster.

John Burgess
Director

