

Author name: Name suppressed

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Your submission for this review:

I am writing on behalf of myself and my Family. We own a small irrigation farm in the Coleambally Irrigation Area (CIA). My grandfather was one of the founding families and have been involved in the irrigation area since its beginning. I moved my family back to the home farm when my grandfather passed away and have since been running this farm. In the last 5 years I have seen many changes across farming. The largest of these have been high input costs. Fertiliser, Fuel and labour costs have all increased while commodity prices have remained stable. This cuts into the profitability of the farm. Add this to the price rises across supermarkets and electricity/gas and it's not hard to see how families in the area are doing it tough. Our farm relies on general security water to grow rice. It is hard to plan for a season when your water availability is reliant on the rainfall in catchment areas. We have been blessed with high water allocations for the last few years however allocation at time of planting is often low with farmers forced to gamble on if there will be enough for the season. We currently have only 34% of our general security allocation and we are outside the sowing window. At the end of the year, we will pay for all 100% of our DE even if we only receive 34% allocation. The farmers bear these costs that help maintain the system but asking us to pay more than double over the next 5 years plus CPI is like kicking a bloke in the teeth while he is still down. How can you justify this increase? What will we be getting for all this extra money we are paying. Will we get more water earlier? Will this create system savings that allow us to have more available water? At every chance government regulation and policy tries to take from the farmers. Reduced irrigation through buybacks, more environmental flows, ■ water reforms. You're driving out families off farms and making communities smaller your taking peoples livelihoods for your own profits.