



Media Release

FROM THE OFFICE OF VRFISH - VICTORIA'S
RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY

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DYING DARLING RIVER DISGRACE

VRFish, the peak body representing Victoria's 838,000 recreational fishers, is appalled to witness the current plight of the Darling River in NSW where tens of thousands of native fish, including iconic Murray Cod, are perishing.

Recreational fishers have been contacting VRFish and voicing their disgust with the current situation and are calling for immediate action to recognise the Darling River is being starved of water due to potential over extraction in NSW and Queensland.

VRFish Chairman, Mr. Rob Loats, said "We need to speak up on behalf of the thousands of fishers that are extremely concerned with this ongoing ecological disaster. This is not a one-off incident as the Darling River has previously had kills of Murray Cod and other native fish."

"This current disaster is further proof the water management of the Darling River is failing the community."

The Darling River and the iconic Menindee Lakes in NSW are a significant breeding and juvenile rearing area for native fish such as golden perch and silver perch. They then migrate and disperse across the Murray-Darling Basin, including Victorian waters during large flood events.

"Seeing dead Murray cod in excess of 1 metre and the river littered with thousands of dead fish of all species is extremely distressing for recreational fishers across Australia."

"It's our understanding that there may be no water available in the system to help flush the river despite the Menindee Lakes flourishing with water just 12 months ago."

Questions must be asked as to why the Federal, Queensland and NSW Governments and the Murray Darling Basin water managers have not addressed this issue to prevent thousands of Australia's iconic native fish from choking to death in the putrid, blue green algae affected water.

VRFish believes an urgent inquiry must examine and address the upstream water storages preventing run-off into the river, water allocation and extraction, and ensure adequate drought reserves and environmental watering allocations is maintained.



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