

INSTANT ACTIVISM LETTER PACK

Just add signatures!

The next few weeks of the campaign are crucial, so contact Peter Garrett in a few different ways... feel free to use more than one method... and encourage others to do the same!

Instant letters:

Print the letters on the following pages, sign & post. Give copies to your friends, distribute them at work, your clubs, your local neighbourhood... spread the word, time is running out!

Online contact form:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/members/memfeedback.asp?id=HV4>

Postal - write your own letter:

Hon Peter Garrett
Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Phone:

(02) 6277 7640

Fax:

(02) 6273 6101

Online letter generator:

www.stoppress.com.au

It's time to ramp up the pressure... the campaign is certainly not over yet!

www.stoppress.com.au

activism in pictures... & now in words!

Mr. Peter Garrett
Minister for the Environment
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA 2601

Dear Mr. Garrett,

RE: TRAVESTON CROSSING DAM.

It is now up to you. You have been provided with all the information to make a wise decision on the Proposed Traveston Crossing Dam.

You are the Minister for the Environment. Your reputation and that of Australia is in your hands.

No Minister of the Environment could possibly want to go down in history, in the 21st Century, as the one who condemned to death the entire ecosystem of an Australian River.

Therefore do not approve the Traveston Crossing Dam with conditions. It must be rejected outright.

Do not make a decision before the Paradise Court case has concluded.

DON'T MURRAY THE MARY - THE WORLD IS WATCHING!

Yours faithfully,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

Postcode: _____

Date: _____

Mr Peter Garrett
Minister for the Environment
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA 2601

Dear Mr Garrett,

May I commend you on your decision not to vary the conditions imposed on Paradise Dam.

Your decision will allow the very important court case to proceed.

It will be vital in understanding how the Queensland government (through its agent BWPL) lived up to its environmental responsibilities to protect lungfish and to abide by conditions agreed to at the time of the dam's approval.

This willingness to abide by conditions is a very key point to be tested in this case.

It represents an important landmark case for environmental protection in this country.

This case has highlighted glaring problems with the enforcement of conditions imposed under the EPBC Act and should be sounding warning bells for the Traveston Dam proposal which now awaits your deliberation.

Yours,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

Postcode: _____

Date: _____

Mr Peter Garrett
Minister for the Environment
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA 2601

Dear Mr Garrett,

RE: PROPOSED TRAVESTON CROSSING DAM ON THE MARY RIVER

Several events this year have only served to heighten my concerns about the environmental impacts of the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam on the Mary River.

The death of many lungfish in releases from North Pine Dam has been well documented. Despite video evidence to the contrary, SEQWater insists only thirty lungfish were killed. At Somerset Dam, SEQWater advise that 60 lungfish were similarly killed.

Plainly being swept over the top of dams represents a major threat to survival, not only of lungfish but also endangered turtles. The scale of the kill at Paradise Dam when it eventually overtops, would be anticipated to be considerably greater given its increased height and stepped spillway design while that at Traveston would be higher again.

The other trend that concerns me greatly lies in the nature of claims made by both the Queensland Premier and Deputy Premier in relation to the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam that have little scientific basis.

Associate Professor Keith Walker, in a report prepared for your department, recognises that: "The inundation area (36.5 km) would destroy existing habitats and would be unlikely to sustain breeding and/or juveniles. It is imperative to know whether lungfish spawn, and juveniles can survive, in the conditions likely to prevail in Traveston reservoir (comparisons with smaller impoundments are spurious).

Habitats in the tailwater (35 km) may be degraded or lost, and may not support breeding and juveniles. The inundation area and tailwater combined represent 29% of the length of the Mary River above the tidal barrage."

Despite this, the Premier in her "green light" media statement (Sept 13) claims that conditions attached to the dam "include a massive increase in suitable habitat for endangered species such as the Lungfish and the Mary River Turtle."

She claims that "farming practices ... have resulted in their endangered status" and goes as far as saying that "without this project proceeding, the sad fact is that these species could become extinct."

I understand that the Queensland government has prepared a Lungfish Recovery Plan and plainly the science in that document is critical, both in this debate and in the long-term survival of lungfish. I understand that the Recovery Plan identifies the major threatening process to lungfish survival as being dams and impoundments (as this year's events attest).

I call on you to have the Queensland Government release its Lungfish Recovery Plan. I call on you not to approve the Traveston Dam with conditions that are untested and unproven. I ask that you call for a submission period as there is much new information in the Coordinator General's report that requires public scrutiny.

Your government is keen to be seen to be a leader on the world stage, as an environmentally responsible government. To accept the Queensland Government's assertions that fly in the face of accepted science would destroy not only much of the Mary River's unique ecosystems, but would impact seriously on the environmental credibility of your government.

Yours,

Name: _____
Address: _____
Suburb: _____
Postcode: _____
Date: _____

The Hon Kevin Rudd
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA 2600

Dear Mr Rudd,

Your government is keen to be seen to be a leader on the world stage, as an environmentally responsible government.

For almost three and a half years since it was first announced, the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam on the Mary River has drawn both criticism and warning from national and international experts.

“Dams don’t work. This thoughtless tampering with nature has left a terrible legacy, not least of all in my own region of the world where thousands of acres of fertile land has been lost.” Mikhail Gorbachev, Chair, International Green Cross

“This is the sort of thing we have come to expect from undemocratic and third world countries, not from a place like this. This is obviously a river of great value for its biodiversity, and yet you appear to have a government with so little regard for considering other options.” Patrick McCully, International Rivers Network.

“The Mary Catchment is the most significant unregulated coastal river system in south-east Queensland from a biodiversity and conservation perspective” Bunn and Arthington, Australian Rivers Institute.

“The Mary River Dam would almost certainly push the lungfish to “critically endangered”, and in the long term will lead to its extinction in the wild” Professor Jean Joss, Macquarie University.

“If we lose the Mary River turtle, the world will lose not only a species but a whole genus. It would be a tragedy if the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam resulted in the world losing a species which has only been known to science for such a short period”. Dr Peter Pritchard, former Time magazine “Hero of the Planet”.

“Any new dam warrants careful analysis, given our national legacy of degraded rivers and declining biodiversity, but the present proposal deserves the closest scrutiny because it could decide the fate of a number of imperiled species. We have often taken refuge in the belief that there are many steps on the road to extinction, and no single action could be held responsible. For some of these species, including the turtle and lungfish, we are near the end of that road.” Associate Professor Keith Walker

Your National plan to Solve the Water Crisis showed an enlightened way to rely less on dams and rainfall- dependent sources of water and the protect the biodiversity of our waterways.

Your Environment Minister Peter Garrett is now in receipt of the Queensland Government’s proposal to build its controversial Traveston Crossing Dam. No previous project has generated as much public opposition.

To accept the Queensland Government’s assertions that environmental impacts can be minimized the imposition of some 1200 conditions would not only condemn the Mary River’s unique ecosystems, but would impact seriously on the environmental credibility of your government.

In dry times it will not supply the water security the Queensland government seeks and is a twentieth century solution to a twenty-first century problem.

The sorry plight of the Murray River should make us cautious rather than cavalier - Don’t Murray the Mary!

Yours,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

Postcode: _____

Date: _____

Ms Kate Jones
Minister for Sustainability
PO Box 15155
City East
BRISBANE QLD 4002

Dear Ms Jones,

RE: PROPOSED TRAVESTON CROSSING DAM ON THE MARY RIVER

Several events this year have only served to heighten my concerns about the environmental impacts of the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam on the Mary River.

The death of many lungfish in releases from North Pine Dam has been well documented. Despite video evidence to the contrary, SEQWater insists only thirty lungfish were killed. At Somerset Dam, SEQWater advise that 60 lungfish were similarly killed.

Plainly being swept over the top of dams represents a major threat to survival, not only of lungfish but also endangered turtles. The scale of the kill at Paradise Dam when it eventually overtops, would be anticipated to be considerably greater given its increased height and stepped spillway design while that at Traveston would be higher again.

The other trend that concerns me greatly lies in the nature of claims made by both the Queensland Premier and Deputy Premier in relation to the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam that have little scientific basis.

Associate Professor Keith Walker, in a report prepared for Peter Garrett, recognises that

The inundation area (36.5 km) would destroy existing habitats and would be unlikely to sustain breeding and/or juveniles. It is imperative to know whether lungfish spawn, and juveniles can survive, in the conditions likely to prevail in Traveston reservoir (comparisons with smaller impoundments are spurious). Habitats in the tailwater (35 km) may be degraded or lost, and may not support breeding and juveniles. The inundation area and tailwater combined represent 29% of the length of the Mary River above the tidal barrage.

Despite this, the Premier in her “green light” media statement (Sept 13) claims that conditions attached to the dam “include a massive increase in suitable habitat for endangered species such as the Lungfish and the Mary River Turtle.”

She claims that “farming practices..... have resulted in their endangered status” and goes as far as saying that “without this project proceeding the sad fact is that these species could become extinct.”

I understand that your department has prepared a Lungfish Recovery Plan and plainly the science in that document is critical, both in this debate and in the long-term survival of lungfish. I understand that the Recovery Plan identifies the prime threat to lungfish survival as being dams and impoundments (as this year’s events attest).

I call on you to release the Lungfish Recovery Plan.

What we have in the lungfish is a creature that has rightly earned enormous international attention since it was revealed to science in 1870. It is essential that our decisions that will affect its survival are based on sound and credible science.

If you had the chance to save the last thylacines, would you have taken the best advice on how to do it?

Yours,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

Postcode: _____

Date: _____

Senator Penny Wong
Minister for Climate Change and Water
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA 2601

Dear Senator Wong,

RE: TRAVESTON CROSSING DAM, MARY RIVER QUEENSLAND.

The Queensland Government's controversial proposal to dam the Mary River in south-east Queensland has recently been forwarded to Peter Garrett for approval. The Queensland Coordinator General's report that accompanies it details some 1200 conditions proposed to mitigate negative impacts.

This large number of conditions is indicative of the numerous cracks in the proposal, a proposal that is more at home in the twentieth century than the twenty-first. I've been impressed with statements made by both you and the Prime Minister about the need to be less reliant on rainfall-dependent sources of water.

The days of providing water for an expanding population by just damming another river should be well and truly over. The sad irony of the Traveston proposal is that it was announced at a time when dams all round the country were at record low levels. To announce another one as the solution is scarcely the pinnacle of "smart state" logic.

Senator, it concerns me that the Queensland Government axed rebates on Waterwise initiatives at the start of the year. When Traveston dam was announced, we were told that water consumption in Brisbane was 350 litres per person per day and that it could possibly be taken as low as 230 litres. Brisbane people have responded incredibly to the water situation over the past few years. Not only have their water habits changed taking the daily consumption to less than 150 litres per person per day, but their uptake of incentives for rainwater tanks and Waterwise devices has exceeded all expectations.

People are ready to make better and more efficient use of water. A Griffith University Survey recently found that 74% of respondents were against damming a river if it impacted on endangered species while 59% expressed doubts that damming a river in the face of climate change was the most reliable way to secure water.

Sadly their government is stuck in a twentieth century paradigm that more people means more water means more dams needed. There has been national and international warning and condemnation of the Traveston proposal and the focus now shifts to the federal government as it ponders whether to accept the word of the Queensland Premier that Traveston will be the "greenest dam in Australian history".

The warnings are salutary.

"Dams don't work. This thoughtless tampering with nature has left a terrible legacy, not least of all in my own region of the world where thousands of acres of fertile land has been lost." Mikhail Gorbachev, Chair, International Green Cross

"This is the sort of thing we have come to expect from undemocratic and third world countries, not from a place like this. This is obviously a river of great value for its biodiversity, and yet you appear to have a government with so little regard for considering other options." Patrick McCully, International Rivers Network.

Senator, can I ask that you work with both the Prime Minister and the Environment Minister in this approval stage to help bring the Queensland government more in line with your visionary National Plans that seek to provide real water security and that help to ensure better chances of survival for species in the Mary River and Great Sandy Strait.

Yours,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

Postcode: _____

Date: _____