



# MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP**

*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

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## **Endangered fish, wetlands protected by Lake Crescent decision**

Environment Minister, Peter Garrett today said a plan to release 3,300 million litres of water from Lake Crescent in Tasmania for downstream irrigation, would not be allowed to proceed.

Mr Garrett said in making a decision whether to approve the plan under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, he was required to ensure that matters of national environmental significance, such as threatened species and internationally significant wetlands, were protected.

“In my view, the release of water from Lake Crescent could have had a serious long-term impact on the endangered golden galaxias fish and the Interlaken Lakeside Reserve Ramsar site.

“This decision will help protect those species and that important habitat.”

Mr Garrett said he had also decided not to allow this water to be moved from Lake Sorell into Lake Crescent as a compensatory transfer.

“The golden galaxias fish only occurs in Lake Crescent and the connected Lake Sorell and without above-average autumn and winter rainfall, water levels in Lakes Crescent and Sorell are likely to remain at unprecedented low levels, making it difficult for the fish to spawn.

“Allowing water levels to drop to dangerously low levels would have caused problems for the lake system, which the lakes may take many years to recover.”

Mr Garrett said in making his decision he had given serious consideration to the drought conditions facing local farmers but believed the potential impacts on endangered species were too significant to ignore.

The Rudd Labor Government is committed to supporting more sustainable irrigation in Tasmania and will invest up to \$140 million to ensure this is implemented. This is a key part of the Government’s nationwide *Water for the Future* plan.

The Minister’s decision and supporting documents are available at [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au)