



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Minister for Climate Change and Water

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\$8.6 MILLION FOR RESEARCH ON ‘WIN-WIN’ WATER USE

The Rudd Government has provided \$8.6 million for a new research project into how changed farming practices can simultaneously improve water use and productivity, while delivering better environmental outcomes.

“The Farms, Rivers and Markets Project will develop a ‘how to’ guide for farmers to integrate their farm water needs with broader environmental needs,” Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, said.

“This project will involve farm-scale demonstrations exploring how the latest technology in water measurement and management, combined with better use of water markets, can boost farm profits and productivity, improve delivery of water to the farm gate, reduce leakage, and improve water use efficiency.”

Under the project, researchers in engineering, agriculture and economics will work in close partnership with farmers and water managers to help them choose the best mix of production opportunities according to their individual circumstances.

The project will provide farmers with practical ways to make the most of available irrigation water supplies – including rainfall and recycled water – through better planning, technology and predictive tools.

The project will also provide spin-off environmental benefits including improved salinity and water quality management.

It will consider how water markets can be used to provide ‘win-win’ outcomes for both farmers and the environment.

“The aim is to find ways to make much better use of the water we have, creating benefits for both farmers and the environment,” Senator Wong said.

The project will run out of the University of Melbourne’s Dookie research farm and the surrounding Goulburn-Broken River catchment. The project, to run over three years, will be managed by Uniwater (a joint initiative of the University of Melbourne and Monash University).

“The project is in line with the Rudd Government’s long-term plan *Water for the Future*, which has as key priorities using water wisely and supporting healthy rivers and wetlands.”