

# MEDIA RELEASE



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"Working together – healthy landscapes, viable communities"

## QMDC holds member meeting in St George

Natural resource management work ranging from tackling pest and weed issues through to improving on-farm water efficiency are all part of the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee's operations in the St George area.

Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC) Chief Executive Officer Geoff Penton said the organisation held one of its annual member meetings at the St George Skill Centre on Friday, April 3.

"We hold several of these meetings each year to give our member organisations a chance to have direct contact with our executive and the local community to help build our policies and direction for the future," Mr Penton said.

"On Friday's agenda was a run down on our Sub-Catchment Planning activities in the Maranoa-Balonne, our work with landholders to fund private Parthenium wash-down facilities, the excellent start to the Carp Buster 2009 Series at Thallon and the imminent release of a salinity technical report for community consultation."

Mr Penton said the salinity report, based in part on the technical assessments funded by the Bureau of Resource Sciences in 2006-07 of the lower Balonne, would be released to the public in a few months.

"The report identifies key areas at risk of salinity and possible management options to avoid salinity developing," he said.

Mr Penton said another major focus for QMDC into the future would be water use efficiency.

"On March 2, QMDC released an independent technical report outlining the wins for agriculture, regional communities and the environment available through large scale water use efficiency measures," he said.

"There is a massive potential for water use efficiency programs to minimise the social and economic impacts as irrigators are faced with reduced access to water in future.

"Up to 200 gigalitres of water can be saved through \$200 million worth of investment in best management practice across the Queensland Murray-Darling's irrigation areas as part of a proposed six-year plan."

Mr Penton said QMDC's aim was to support continued productive agriculture within the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin while also meeting environmental outcomes and increasing the social and economic viability of the region's communities.

He said the project proposed by QMDC had the potential to enhance food production, increase environmental flows and downstream river benefits, sustain rural communities, generate real jobs in the region and reduce salinity risks in priority areas.

Mr Penton said through specific projects targeted at the control of aquatic pests and weeds, protecting riparian areas and promoting fish, river health could also be boosted.

### **Media contacts**

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