

# MEDIA RELEASE

---

September 29, 2010

QUEENSLAND  
MURRAY-  
DARLING  
COMMITTEE



## Food security, competing land uses – QMDC discusses issues impacting on the future of the Basin

The end result of land use conversion from primary production to other development is top of the agenda at the next Queensland Murray-Darling Committee annual general meeting and member meeting in Toowoomba on Thursday, October 7.

QMDC Chief Executive Officer Geoff Penton said, given the current debate surrounding changing land use because of the expansion of both Queensland's population and resource sector activity, the organisation had invited well-known author and science communicator Julian Cribb to outline his concerns for the future of global food security.

"The global population is currently at 6.8 billion and although Australia's population growth is steadier by comparison, we are a food exporting nation and as such, have a major role to play in continuing to provide basic foodstuffs to our international customers in a sustainable manner," Mr Penton said.

The QMDC annual general meeting and member meeting are open to everyone in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin with an interest in natural resource management. The meeting starts at 10am on Thursday, October 7 at Platform Nine (Toowoomba Railway Station). A full agenda, including RSVP details, is available at [www.qmdc.org.au](http://www.qmdc.org.au).

In his new book *The Coming Famine*, author Julian Cribb lays out a vivid picture of impending planetary crisis — major food shortages that threaten to hit by mid-century with primary producers asked to double global food production, using less water, less land, less energy, less fertiliser and less technology than they have today.

"This book is a wake-up call, intended for anyone who eats or plans to in future," Mr Cribb said.

"The abundance of food in the past generation has created a false sense of security and we have taken our eye off what is possibly the most critical issue to the human future of all – certainly the most pressing: how we feed our vast population sustainably.

"And while well-off consumers enjoy the cheapest food in history - they are throwing half of it away and paying farmers for it at rates that destroy large parts of global agriculture and its resource base."

Mr Cribb said because most people no longer grow their own food, tomorrow's huge cities of 20, 30 or even 40 million people risked catastrophe if there was any disruption in their food supplies.

"There is also mounting evidence that modern conflicts and refugee crisis are often inflamed, at root, by arguments between groups over food, land and water as well as other differences. If we aim to increase the prospects of world peace, we need to ensure everyone is well fed," he said.

The Queensland Murray-Darling Committee is a natural resource management organisation that supports communities in within the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin to sustainably manage their natural resources.

### Media contact/s

**More information: QMDC CEO Geoff Penton, ph 0408 871 978**

Released by: QMDC Regional Communications Officer Lisa Yorkston, ph: 4637 6234