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## **WATER POLICY REFORMS TO PLUG UP THE HOLES**

Independent MLC Ann Bressington has prepared amendments to the *Water Corporations Act* to ensure that water conservation, storm water harvest and effective restrictions will ease the current mismanagement of water in South Australia

The amendments will ensure community stakeholders and experts are utilised to form water policy based on science and evidence rather than knee jerk reactions in a crisis. Restrictions or initiatives will then be debated based on the cooperative reporting of the "Stakeholder's Advisory Committee" (SAC)

Ms Bressington said the recent bucket debacle was a clear example of government knee-jerk reactions to bureaucratic recommendations that were not supported by major stakeholders.

"This State has a number of water specialists coming from the Flinders University, Nursery and Garden Industry and City of Salisbury Technicians who have designed developed and implemented an effective water harvesting and recycling initiative that services not only Salisbury but Mawson Lakes and further," Ms Bressington said.

"SA. Water is responsible for both making profit and also for water provision and as a result the outcomes for South Australians are very poor indeed. We face tough restrictions with no benefits or payoffs for the water conscious as a result of the conflict of interest within SA. water itself. This is reflected with the most recent announcement that water will be pumped from Glenelg to the city with the saline measurements of that water being 1200 parts per million. This high salinity level means that the water is of poor quality and would be detrimental to plants unless more water was used to dilute the salt levels. Or the alternative is irreparable damage to the parklands of Adelaide."

Ann Bressington took a tour with Salisbury Mayor Tony Zappia and Mr Colin Pitman, Project Manager for the Wet Lands project 10 months ago and is baffled why the State Government has not required local councils to meet specific targets of water harvesting as part of the solution to our water management problem.

The Victorian Premier Steve Bracks took this initiative in Victoria to encourage local government to get involved in a proactive manner in water conservation. To harvest water local councils would need to start planning for the future. No such steps have been taken in S.A. the driest state of the driest continent.

"We simply cannot afford to wait for a desalination plant or for the flood to break. We have farmers walking off their land and we have a situation where within months we will be out of water," Ms Bressington said.

"This government needs to utilise all the knowledge we have in this state and implement water management policies to deal with this crisis."