

# Statement from Barkandji native title holders on Darling River

This statement was passed unanimously at a meeting of the Barkandji Traditional Owners native title claim group held at a meeting in Broken Hill on 26 July 2017

## **Wentworth to Broken Hill Water Pipeline**

We call on New South Wales Public Works to stop all work on the Pipeline from Broken Hill to Wentworth immediately. The old pipeline coming from Menindee should be restored, which would let the Baaka River (Darling River) flow, and allow the Menindee Lakes to hold water. Water in the Lakes are essential for tourism and employment for our people. How can our Barkandji women teach our children how to weave baskets, when they have no reed to weave with? How can we teach our children survival when there is no water in our river?

We stand by all the station people, and all the local people in the townships downstream from Bourke to Wentworth, and the people of Broken Hill. We support the Darling River Action Group, and all people in Broken Hill who are against the Broken Hill-Wentworth Pipeline from going ahead.

## **Murray Darling Basin Mismanagement**

We, the Barkandji native title holders are disgusted at the way the Murray Darling Basin has been managed. Our people downstream from Bourke are not getting their fair share of the water.

Our elders are passing away because of the desecration and damage of our River. The crime rate is going up, and our young people are turning to drugs and alcohol because of their sorrow for what has happened to our river. We know the crime rate goes up when the river goes down. We can't teach culture without our Darling River flowing. The Darling River is our life blood, it is our mother, just like the land. We, the Barkandji People, feel that when you take the water from the River, we have nothing. We are the baaka wimpajas (the Darling River Black people), we have to protect the ngatji (Rainbow Serpent), who is the creator of the land and the rivers.

We call on the New South Wales Government to immediately begin works to reinstate the weir at Wilcannia.

We feel the Minister in charge should be stood down, and that Kevin Humphries should be prosecuted. We call on ICAC to step in and investigate.

**Moved: William Charles Bates**

**Seconded: William Brian Bates**

**Passed Unanimously**