

The Grand Water Scheme 5-Point Plan: A Summary



In order for Australia to improve water usage, we need to move forward on a number of fronts. The Grand Water Scheme 5-Point Plan from the Talking Water report outlines the strategies and water schemes to make this happen.

If the Farmhand 5-Point Plan, outlined below, is adopted and there are good water agencies to manage infrastructure, then the plan will see us looking forward to a sustainable water future.

1. National Water Audit

The Federal and State governments need to undertake a National Water Audit of water and infrastructure - where it is, where it is needed and how the current infrastructure meets those needs.

2. Fixing and rebuilding our rural water infrastructure

Rebuilding some of our infrastructure in rural areas is one of the best ways we can save the billions of litres of water that are lost or unaccounted for every year. These include improving basic water measurement, urgently fixing the Great Artesian Basin that is leaking 200 billion litres of water every year and pipe open channels to eliminate water loss.

3. Develop the world's best irrigation industry

Giving farmers the right incentives to invest in water efficient irrigation systems is the key to the future of irrigated agriculture. We need to develop sustainable farming systems, and to specialise and diversify into a range of farm produce. Governments need to provide the financial backing and support if the leap towards world class irrigation practices is to be made.

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4. Recycling and reuse of water in our towns and cities

Building infrastructure enabling Australian towns and cities to recycle wastewater and stormwater makes sense and will bring us in line with the world's best practices in urban areas. Rural areas of Australia such as Dubbo, Narrabi and East Gippsland are already achieving up to 100% recycling rates.

5. Planning and funding the future water grid

During the next 100 years, a water grid will emerge to service most of the growing population centres in Australia. The investment in the tens of thousands of kilometres of pipes, pumps, treatment plants and harvesting capacities will be massive. Governments need to adequately plan for population growth and the link needed to create the emerging water grid and examine new and innovative ways to fund national water infrastructure.

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