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Subject: SUBMISSION - FNC Water Strategy

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To the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment,

My name is [REDACTED], I am an Arrernte woman living on Widjabal-Waiabal Land, and also a Dunoon local. I am a post-graduate ecological researcher at Southern Cross University and my background is in social and environmental sciences and education.

The Draft version of the FNC Regional Water strategy is an enormous task and I can see a lot of commendable hard work has gone into it. I congratulate you on your courage to realise the need for innovation in water security in the future through the implementation of multiple water supply, not only managed catchments and dams. Given the fact that we are heading into an uncertain future with likely extended drought and flood periods it would be irresponsible to rely only on direct centralised rain dependent water supply sources such as dams. I note your draft strategy fails to address the effects of floods on water supply despite floods being frequent major impact events on the FNC NSW.

The primary criticism of the draft FNC Water strategy is its inclusion of the highly contentious Dunoon Dam. It should be excluded from the strategy entirely for a multitude of reasons:

- Rous and Lismore County Council have to been open with DPIE about the community opposition and detrimental impacts of the Dunoon Dam. Rous community consultation resulted in 91% of submissions directly opposing the Dunoon Dam (VAXA, FWP2060 Outcomes from Public Exhibition - 2020, 2020)
- Recent (2011) studies have been conducted assessing the impacts of the dam on the terrestrial ecology of the site. These studies concluded that the regionally significant and unique Warm Temperate Rainforest on Sandstone community which makes up part of the Endangered Ecological Community of Lowland Rainforest would be destroyed. There is no 'offsetting' the destruction of this unique community assemblage that is known to occur on sandstone only at this site which also account for 6.66% of the remaining 1% left of the 'Big Scrub'. The report identifies nine threatened flora and 17 threatened fauna species which would all be impacted significantly by the dam (2013 Terrestrial Ecology Impact Assessment Report). The dam would also sever koala corridors and destroy critical breeding platypus habitat.
- Recent Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments (2011) have concluded that the cultural importance of the sites and artefacts in the site to the Widjabal-Waiabal people is incredibly significant. The 2011 report states that it is likely that the project would be knocked back by the Office of Environment and Heritage for this reason. These sites are IRREPLACEABLE. Let us not have a repeat of Rio Tinto's genocide attack at the Jukkan Gorge, or VicRoads genocide attack on Sacred Women's Trees on Djab Wurrung Country. Very few Widjabal-Waiabal stakeholders have been consulted in the CHIA and the strongly worded 2011 report was withdrawn by Rous (Keith

Williams, Green Genius Podcast 2020) and replaced with a 2013 report that openly talks about manipulating Traditional Owners into ceding their land.

• Rous have failed to show leadership in serious and innovative water management in the face of climate change. With a number of dams already existing the region Rous have failed to transparently and properly explore options such as water efficiency (Stuart White, 2020), potable and non-potable recycled water (~2% Rous supply is used for drinking the rest is used in the garden, toilet, etc), green desalination, and proper investment into rainwater tanks. Because of this is it clear that Rous Future Water Project 2060 is highly bias towards the Dunoon Dam despite its inefficiency, insecurity and destructive impacts.

For these reasons the Dunoon Dam must be removed from the NSW FNC Regional Water Strategy.

Respect for country, respect for each other

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