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MEDIA RELEASE

Recycled Water Business Case Finally Released With Predictable Outcomes

Minister Tim Holding has finally released the Recycled Water Business Case, after months of pressure from Environmental Groups.

“As was forecast by the Clean Ocean Foundation last year, the two big reuse options researched in the report came up too expensive for the State Government to invest in, largely because of the current overpriced water plan.” Said CEO Anton Vigenser.

Despite stakeholder meetings conducted by the DSE and Melbourne Water last year suggesting preference to invest in one large project to use all available wastewater, Tim Holding has instead chosen smaller localised options. This comes after years of stakeholders such as Local Government expressing interest in smaller localised projects before the business case was started. “It really shows how out of touch the State Government are toward Victoria’s water needs.” Said Mr Vigenser.

Another out of touch perception both Tim Holding and Melbourne Water managing Director Rob Skinner wrongly believe is the benefit of marine life at Gunnamatta from the upgrade.

“The main pollutant to marine life at Gunnamatta is fresh water,” explains Anton. “The upgrade alone mainly reduces the health risk to beach users. The upgrade also means the outfall will actually meet EPA licence guidelines it has been breaching since 1974.”

The Clean Ocean Foundation are pleased with the upgrade but will continue to push hard, ensuring the upgrade and smaller recycling schemes do not mean a prolonged use of the outfall at Gunnamatta. The Foundation is also relieved that after years of campaigning, the government is realistically looking at recycling options after fraudulently meeting the reuse 20% by 2010 target back in 2006.

“While in the grand scheme of water plans, upgrade to Purified Recycled Water first, desalination lower on the list and no North South Pipeline would have been cheaper, smarter and sustainable for Victoria, we still have to think of the glass being half full with this recycling plan.” Concluded Mr Vigenser.

“But we are not *holding* our breath on any of these smaller options being delivered any time soon and in any great reuse scale given these figures”.