



PO Box 528, PYRMONT NSW 2009 **ph** 0428 817 282
email inlanddriversnetwork@gmail.com
web inlanddriversnetwork.org **ABN** 34 373 750 383

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Major Projects Team
Attention: Anthony Ko

6 November 2019

Submission on the Snowy 2.0 Main Works EIS

The Inland Rivers Network (“IRN”) is a coalition of environment groups and individuals that has been advocating for healthy rivers, wetlands and groundwaters since 1991.

Over the years IRN has run workshops, conferences and forums to highlight the importance of our inland river systems for the wellbeing of all Australians. Most recently the focus has been on the Murray Darling Basin catchment.

Overall, IRN concludes – based on the EIS and researched appraisals in the public arena - that the Snowy 2.00 pumped hydro project on the publicly owned and protected Kosciuszko National Park should be rejected as not in the public interest.

IRN is specifically concerned that the Snowy 2.00 project carries a number of serious risks to the integrity and viability of river, wetland and groundwater systems in the upper reaches of the Murrumbidgee River catchment and potentially beyond.

Given that the EIS process provides the formal statutory opportunity to comment, IRN raises the following points regarding water and the integrity of wetland integrity and viability.

- IRN is mostly specifically concerned that while it is suggested that any impacts on water volumes will be insignificant, variations in water flow and volume may nevertheless have significant local implications, particularly in dry periods, on the integrity and viability of both surface and subsurface water systems. This affects both water dependent ecosystems in situ and potentially downstream water users.
- Water pollution, both physical and biological, will/is likely to occur both during the construction phase and during ongoing operation. These impacts range from increased water turbidity; chemical pollution including asbestos; and through to contamination and cross-water source mixing that allows for transfer of water-borne algae, pest and other aquatic species.
- The risk of extinction to the newly described stocky galaxia *Galaxias tantangara* is of particular note.
- IRN particularly questions whether the mitigation provisions as set out in the EIS adequately address how, if at all, the broader Australian community interest can be compensated for the inherent risks and costs of the project, now and into the future, both during the construction phase and during the ongoing operation.

IRN requests that the above be taken into consideration.

Anne Reeves
Hon. Secretary
Inland Rivers Network