

# Senator Scott Ludlam

Australian Greens Senator for WA

## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 4th December 2009

### **Fed Govt must intervene to stop mining on prime farmland: Greens**

The Commonwealth Government must have the power to intervene directly to prevent mining on prime food growing lands, the Australian Greens say.

"We welcome today's report on the impacts of mining in the Murray Darling Basin, but it falls short of making the obvious recommendation," Greens Mining Spokesperson, Senator Scott Ludlam said today.

"The report clearly validates many of the concerns raised by Darling Downs and Surat Basin communities at the epicentre of the conflict between resource extraction and farming.

"The inquiry learned that tightening the regulations on a case by case basis – while essential – does not address the question of whether the short term benefits of coal mining on productive farmland outweigh the long-term costs.

"These costs can be great indeed: compromised land, damaged aquifers and reduced food security.

"The Australian Greens believe that leaving this for State Governments to determine is unacceptable and will inevitably lead to the irreversible destruction of some of Australia's prime farming country.

"The Commonwealth reserves the right to assess and, if necessary, block development projects if they breach matters of national environmental significance.

"We think similar tests should apply in the case of irreversible damage to water resources or destruction of prime farmland.

"We want to see the Water Act 2007 amended to ban mining and extractive industries where they will have adverse impacts on groundwater resources and the environment," Senator Ludlam concluded.

**Media Contact: Fernando de Freitas 0417 174 302**