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Subject: SUBMISSION - FNC Water Strategy

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Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback on the Far North Coast Water Strategy. As a resident within the Rous County Council (RCC) area, I am confining my feedback to the Rous Council's submission to you concerning the Dunoon Dam.

Based on the documentation that the RCC has made publicly available, it seems clear that there are too many unknowns and unsettled risks in their analysis to justify the approval of the Dunoon Dam project at this time.

Their primary argument for going with the ahead Dunoon Dam at this point is a sense of urgency generated by the RCC's projections of a substantial increase in residential water demand. However, a detailed analysis of the demand projections is difficult, since the public (as far as I'm aware) has not been provided direct access to the data underlying the projections. That said, it appears the projections assume current demand levels, and extrapolate it by expected population increases. Water efficiency measures are not accounted for, aside from reducing leaks in delivery infrastructure. Additionally, the baseline against which the cost benefit of the dam has been calculated is "unrestricted dry year demand". Clearly, with climate change risks mounting dramatically in recent years, it would be prudent to prioritise non-climate dependent solutions, including efficiency measures (restrictions being the last resort) and water recycling (both potable and not). I find it disappointing that the only option RCC has seriously put forward is this high-risk, very expensive and irreversible dam.

Compare RCC's approach to that of the city of Los Angeles' which, over last 40 years, primarily through conservation measures, has kept water demand constant. Over this period, the city's population grew by approximately 33%, or 1 million residents (compare to NSW's regional projection for Northern Rivers of 10% over 20 years) [<https://betterbuildingsolutioncenter.energy.gov/partners/los-angeles-department-water-and-power>]. In the last 20 years, the state of California has seen an actual reduction in demand of both urban and agricultural water, while the total value agricultural outputs have increased [<https://www.ppic.org/publication/water-use-in-california/>]. Clearly the path forward of global leaders is to focus on efficiency first and foremost. NSW and the Northern Rivers Region can and should aspire to world-class solutions to our water security.

Thank you for your attention,

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Please share my submission but keep my personal details private