

The Democrats-initiated inquiry into urban water in 2000 called for a national approach to urban water policy and in 2004 the Howard Government set up a National Water Commission and National Water Initiative. Progress has been made in planning and management however the NWC report in 2009 found:

- *Further significant investments will be needed over the next 5–25 years to meet growth in demand for water as a result of population and economic growth*
- *A variety of approaches are being used and there is no common national methodology or even best practice guidance*
- *More rigorous evaluation of supply and demand side options is needed*
- *Water plans did not always have strategies to deal with the impact of climate change or consider wider options*
- *Most jurisdictions have embraced greater integration of the urban water cycle and have made substantial progress since 2004 in terms of policy development and implementation of demonstration projects*
- *While demonstration projects have been successful, achieving broader adoption of water sensitive urban design will require the removal of obstacles, including further regulatory and institutional reform, investment in capacity building and development of tools and standards that provide a more positive environment for investment.*

..... more effort on **Urban Water**

## Our Plan

- Build into the NWI nationally consistent accounting systems for water resources and use and underpinned by **agreed targets** for delivering short and long term water sustainability, taking into account climate change, population and environment needs.
- Work with all levels of government to **overcome the jurisdictional barriers** in developing nationally consistent standards, guidelines and targets for water saving measures.
- Encourage the states to **reform urban water pricing** to fund, over the next 20 years, a major public investment in water infrastructure, replacing outdated plant and pipework, progressively installing 3rd pipe networks for effluent reuse, and building small scale stormwater capture and sewage treatment works.
- Fund more generous **rebate programs** to retrofit plumbing devices for all sectors to reduce water use and losses and install rainwater tanks and grey water systems connected to cisterns and laundries
- Extend the Democrats-initiated Water Efficiency & Labeling Scheme for showerheads, washing machines, dishwashers and toilets, to mandatory **minimum water efficiency standards** set at 5 star by 2011 and 10 star by 2020 for new products
- **Consumption targets** in water service provider licences and/or revenue caps for retail water distributors
- A national water use **information** campaign
- A National Business Water Program **auditing all large water users** and mandatory targets for reducing, reusing and substituting water.
- Tighten standards for the **industrial discharge** of heavy metals, salt and other pollutants that hinder treatment for effluent reuse.