

Task force head pledges to protect northern Australia

Mon Apr 21, 2008 3:11pm AEST

The new head of the federal task force examining the development of northern Australia says there will not be a Murray-Darling "catastrophe" in the north.

The Federal Government has announced that it will restructure the task force previously headed by Liberal Senator Bill Heffernan.

The Northern Land and Water Task Force will become part of the Office of Northern Australia, created by the Rudd Government.

The new task force will have different personnel and a wider scope, and will be headed by the parliamentary secretary for Regional Development and Northern Australia, Gary Gray.

Mr Gray says the task force will not allow the north to degrade like the Murray-Darling river system.

"We will avoid it. There is absolute intention to ensure that the best advice is brought forward and the opportunity is not lost to get it right," he said.