

*Announcing a national conference on*

# **CATCHMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT 2006: LEARNING TO BETTER MANAGE OUR CATCHMENTS**

**Thursday February 23 and Friday February 24, 2006**

Albury Conference Centre, Albury NSW



*A two-day national conference looking at the most recent developments in catchment and natural-resource management*

## **Focus on four themes**

- Developments in policy and their implications for strategic direction and funding
- Ways to better manage water for improved environmental and social outcomes
- Improving our understanding and management of terrestrial vegetation
- How to use new and emerging technologies, maximise community engagement and ensure return on investment at the regional scale

## **Topics include**

- Overviews of the most recent policy developments at the Federal and State level and their implications for strategic planning and investment
- Environmental water allocations in a hydrologically variable country: ecological factors, modelling approaches, measuring effectiveness, and managing social and technical challenges
- Long-term shifts in terrestrial vegetation and forecasting likely changes over the coming decades
- Maximising environmental and economic returns while effectively managing terrestrial vegetation in agricultural landscapes
- Critical decisions for providing the knowledge to underpin regional natural-resource management
- Opportunities for design practitioners and managers to achieve sustainable project outcomes
- Approaches for ensuring triple-bottom-line outcomes
- Integrating different disciplinary findings, taking the 'technical' and making it understandable by a wide range of audiences
- Identifying target groups to develop appropriate strategies and extension courses to engage landholders
- Extensive use of case studies from Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia

## **Conference organisation**

This conference is brought to you by Hallmark Conferences + Events, publishers of the *Australian Journal of Environmental Management* (Journal of the EIANZ), *Water* (Journal of the Australian Water Association), *Land & Water News*, *The Environmental Engineer* (Journal of the Society for Sustainability and Environmental Engineering) and *Environment Business*. The Conference Director is *Professor Paul I Boon* (Institute for Sustainability and Innovation at Victoria University) who is well known for his research work on aquatic and riparian environments.

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# CATCHMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT 2006: LEARNING TO BETTER MANAGE OUR CATCHMENTS

DAY I: Thursday 23 February 2006

## LEARNING ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN POLICY AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND FUNDING

8.30 **Registration**

9.05 **Welcome**

- 9.15 **Keynote address: Policy - Federal level** Policy developments at the Federal level: the National Water Initiative, the National Water Commission and the Australian Government Water Fund
- ▶ Overview of the three significant national developments in water: the National Water Initiative, the National Water Commission and the Australian Government Water Fund
  - ▶ Impact of these elements on catchment management arrangements and on-ground practices

**Virginia Hart**, *General Manager, Water Programmes Group, National Water Commission, Canberra*

- 10.00 **Policy - New South Wales** Policy developments in New South Wales: the role of the Natural Resources Commission
- ▶ New institutional developments in New South Wales
  - ▶ The role and aims of the Natural Resources Commission
  - ▶ State-wide standard and targets
  - ▶ Challenges faced by the Natural Resources Commission

**Di Bentley**, *Assistant Commissioner, Natural Resources Commission, Sydney*

10.30 **Morning tea**

- 11.05 **Policy - Victoria** Our Water Our Future, Our Environment Our Future, and other strategic developments in catchment management in Victoria
- ▶ Key river health aspects of Our Water Our Future, the Victorian Government's 50 year plan for water: Environmental Water Reserve, Victorian River Health Framework, role of Catchment Management Authorities and key components of Our Environment Our Future, the Victorian Government's environmental sustainability framework

**Dr Jane Doolan**, *Executive Director, Environmental Water Reserve and River Health, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne*

- 11.40 **Policy - South Australia** Policy developments in South Australia: *Natural Resources Management Act*, Integrated Natural Resource Management Organisations and ways to help filling in the gaps in Regional Resource Condition Targets using research
- ▶ The *NRM Act, 2004* - what has it meant in South Australia
  - ▶ Guiding principles, the State NRM plan and Regional Plans
  - ▶ Challenges created by the new NRM process
  - ▶ Developing regional plans, identifying gaps and brokering research to fill the gaps - a possible model for improving the science of decision making.

**Neil Collins**, *Manager, Centre for Natural Resource Management, Adelaide*

- 12.15 **Case study: Regional experience - Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority** How regional catchment management agencies in Victoria have responded to policy developments, with particular focus on strategic planning
- ▶ NRM policy changes
  - ▶ Current business context
  - ▶ Identifying environmental assets, key drivers and willing partners
  - ▶ Decision making, balancing stakeholders needs and achieving necessary outcomes

**Colin Dunkley**, *CEO, Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Hamilton, Victoria*

12.45 **Lunch**

## LEARNING HOW TO BETTER MANAGE WATER FOR IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL OUTCOMES

- 1.50 **Keynote address: Australian streams - hydrology and ecology** Droughts and floods: ecological implications of hydrological variability for aquatic ecosystems

- ▶ Floods and droughts in the Australian context
- ▶ Floods as events essential for ecologically sustainable river management
- ▶ Effects of droughts on biota and ecological processes
- ▶ River health and the effect of human activities
- ▶ Ecological requirements for the recovery from floods and droughts

**Professor Sam Lake**, *Monash University, Melbourne*

- 2.35 **Environmental flows and river geomorphology** Good water after bad: releasing enough environmental water to make a difference to river morphology

- ▶ Examples of flow projects with deliberate morphological targets
- ▶ Designing flows to achieve specific geomorphic targets
- ▶ Examples inadvertent channel changes produced by environmental flow releases
- ▶ Designing 'optimal' flows for natural riverine and floodplain systems

**Associate Professor Ian Rutherford and Dr Mike Stewardson**, *CRC for Catchment Hydrology, Melbourne*

3.05 **Afternoon tea**

- 3.40 **Environmental flows - learning from past experience** Some lessons from environmental flow studies in Victoria
- ▶ Need for clear processes in water-allocation decision making
  - ▶ Composition of scientific panels and community advisory groups
  - ▶ Understanding relationships between flows and ecosystem processes
  - ▶ Assessing environmental outcomes and improving predictive ability

**Peter Cottingham**, *eWater CRC, University of Canberra*

- 4.15 **Modelling tools to manage water at the catchment scale** Can models really help us as part of catchment decision making?
- ▶ Overview of available models and how they can be used
  - ▶ Methods for defining key questions
  - ▶ Examples of relevant case studies: what has worked and what has not

**Tony Weber**, *WBM Pty Ltd and eWater CRC, Brisbane*

- 4.50 **Case study: The Living Murray Initiative** Managing water to achieve environmental outcomes: the challenges facing implementation of The Living Murray
- ▶ Aims of the Living Murray Initiative
  - ▶ Challenges faced during policy development and implementation
  - ▶ Future of environmental flow approaches

**Dr Mark Siebentritt**, *Manager Environmental Delivery, Murray-Darling Basin Commission, Canberra*

5.20 **Close of Day 1 sessions**

5.30 **Conference wine tasting**

A tasting of Morris wines from Rutherglen, sponsored by the Orlando-Wyndham Group. Morris Wines was founded in 1859 and received a 5-star rating in James Halliday's most recent *Australian Wine Compendium*.

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DAY 2: Friday 24 February 2006

## LEARNING TO BETTER MANAGE TERRESTRIAL VEGETATION

### 9.05 Welcome

#### 9.15 **Keynote address: Possible futures for the Australian landscape**

- Learning about the future - obvious and not so obvious forces driving change in Australian landscapes in the next 20+ years
- ▶ Multiple plausible futures for the future of Australian landscapes
  - ▶ Predictable and unpredictable factors influencing the range of possible futures
  - ▶ Review of thinking needed to best manage a range of possible futures

**Dr Steven Cork**, *CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Canberra*

#### 10.00 **Long-term vegetation changes - importance to catchment management**

Long-term vegetation changes in Australia's agricultural woodlands: what do we know and why does it matter?

- ▶ How have woodlands changed since settlement?
- ▶ Why is this relevant to current catchment management?
- ▶ Benchmarking approaches
- ▶ Case study - densities of woodland trees
- ▶ How can people use this information in better managing catchments?

**Dr Ian Lunt**, *The Johnstone Centre, Charles Sturt University, Albury*

### 10.30 Morning tea

#### 11.05 **Tools for better managing terrestrial vegetation**

Making better native-vegetation management decisions in a catchment context

- ▶ Narrow versus modern views of native vegetation and its management
- ▶ Importance of connections and tensions in managing vegetation
- ▶ Victorian experience in developing practical information tools
- ▶ Case study - EcoTender, a multiple-outcome auction trial under the National Market-based Instruments initiative
- ▶ Optimising triple-bottom-line outcomes

**David Parkes**, *Department of Sustainability & Environment, Melbourne*

#### 11.40 **Partnerships, community involvement and NGOs - The Trust for Nature**

Trust for Nature: making the most of conservation partnerships

- ▶ Trust for Nature's mission to protect biodiversity on private land in Victoria
- ▶ Importance of organisation partnerships as the basis of Trust for Nature's work
- ▶ Case study of Ned's Corner Station (30,000 hectares)

**Dr Chris Williams**, *Conservation Manager, Trust for Nature, Melbourne*

#### 12.15 **Case study: Talaheni - maximising environmental and economic returns in an agricultural setting**

Capturing multiple production and environmental benefits from revegetation management in a salinised agricultural landscape: Talaheni, Yass, NSW

- ▶ Understanding the dominant processes responsible for salinity problems
- ▶ Matching vegetation types to landscape characteristics
- ▶ Risks associated with low-productive land
- ▶ Use of best-available knowledge
- ▶ Monitoring significant components of the ecosystem

**John Ive**, *Talaheni, Yass*

### 12.45 Lunch

## LEARNING TO USE EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AT A REGIONAL SCALE BY ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

#### 1.50 **Keynote address: Maximising returns from R&D investment and communicating outcomes**

Strategy development, information acquisition and dissemination in Land & Water Australia's National Riparian Lands R&D Program

- ▶ Setting up a Program of R&D
- ▶ Getting the right person mix of people and skills
- ▶ Integrating the knowledge that is generated
- ▶ Learning from the 'D' to make the 'R' relevant
- ▶ Connecting communities

**Dr Siwan Lovett**, *Program Co-ordinator, Riparian Lands R&D, Land & Water Australia, Canberra*

#### 2.35 **Ensuring desirable management outcomes**

Planning and design for sustainability in the catchment: protocols for practitioners and managers

- ▶ Concept of sustainability within a NRM context
- ▶ Statutory, community and technical frameworks
- ▶ Spatial and temporal hierarchy for planning and design
- ▶ Integrating stakeholder ideals with policy and technological developments
- ▶ Science, management and design inputs to sustainable projects
- ▶ Illustrations of multipurpose planning and design projects in water planning, stream rehabilitation and fish passage remediation

**Ross Kapitzke**, *James Cook University, Townsville*

### 3.05 Afternoon tea

#### 3.40 **Engaging the community**

Encouraging behaviour change in landholders through effective engagement

- ▶ Achieving regional level NRM outcomes with changes in landholder behaviour
- ▶ Understanding who to engage: importance of different aspirations, capacities and social and institutional contexts
- ▶ Use of regional-level social data to identify target groups
- ▶ Options where detailed regional level data are not available

**Drs Trevor Webb and Ian Byron**, *Bureau of Rural Sciences, Canberra*

#### 4.15 **Socio-economic structures and capacity building**

Providing the knowledge to underpin regional NRM: how are we doing and what should we be doing?

- ▶ Regional delivery: some assumptions about what is needed
- ▶ Knowledge management, capacity building and regional engagement: how well are we performing?
- ▶ What should we be doing to improve the situation?
- ▶ Holistic approaches to NRM when engaging landholders

**Professor Allan Curtis**, *Charles Sturt University, Albury*

#### 4.50 **Case study: LANDSCAN - an extension course for landholders**

A landscape-management extension course for landholders: LANDSCAN

- ▶ Appropriate focuses for delivering extension courses
- ▶ Integration at whole-property and landscape scales
- ▶ Features of LANDSCAN: skills to read landscapes and determine land capability, provide a process and objective framework ranking actions, allow landholders to quantify landscape characteristics and determine solutions

**Dr Peter Orchard**, *NSW Department of Primary Industries, Wagga Wagga Agricultural Institute*

### 5.20 Conference closes

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