

Wetlands in the Murray-Darling Basin – Priorities for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

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General messages



- **Priority for wetland management - need to deal with biodiversity and an equal/greater emphasis on ecosystem services (benefits for people from wetlands, river).**
- **Higher volumes of water (7,600 GL?) needed to maintain ecological character; use social approaches to determine future condition of wetlands; establish socially-pertinent futures and references for measuring change; outline the value of healthy wetlands, or loss of values from unhealthy wetlands.**

Maintain the ecological character of wetlands - including ecosystem services



Ecological character includes ecosystem services - benefits for people – as well as ecological assets and functions; the services illustrate the benefits for people.

If we want to maintain (restore) the ecological character of a wetland/river we need to maintain (restore) the ecosystem services what are these? what value?

We have had targets for maintaining ecological assets along the Murray – the targets were set low and we did not reach them; and did not include eco-services.

How to measure wetland health or set a reference condition....

Done by comparing changes in species against a historical reference condition; what is an appropriate reference – land use from the past and climate change for the future. Revisit this approach.

and treat as a social construction based on ecological edge - establish the best possible condition based system services (benefits for humans) derived the wetland ecosystem services includes diversity conservation.



Apply integrated frameworks to support environ management – promote conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way; examine the trade-offs to both human well-being and ecosystem services – based on best available data, or get more!

Base decisions on societal choice – are we getting this; decentralized management, within an economic context; accept that change is inevitable – economic, social and ecological.

Openly explore and develop these choices and identify/develop policies /institutions to support such approaches.





We have an ecological problem – the solution is a social construction.

We have a chance to reset the future – a future with a health river and healthy sustainable communities



Thank-you