



## KEYNOTE SPEAKER



### PHIL DUNCAN

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#### FIRST PEOPLES WATER ENGAGEMENT COUNCIL: CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES IN RIVERS

There is currently limited recognition of Indigenous peoples' needs, rights, interests and contributions in relation to Australia's rivers and fresh waters. However, through the National Water Initiative, all Australian governments have committed to improving this situation. The First Peoples Water Engagement Council (FPWEC) is a new body that has been established to provide advice to the National Water Commission on Indigenous water issues. This group is committed to building Indigenous engagement in water planning, allocation of cultural water flows, and Indigenous access to the consumptive water pool for economic purposes. This keynote presentation introduces the work of the FPWEC, and explores broader issues around the recognition of Indigenous spiritual and cultural values in rivers. It also introduces the key concept of cultural flows, which will be taken up in conference discussions.