

MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

25 August 2008

Riversymposium Highlights

Australia's largest river management forum, the 11th International *Riversymposium: A Future of Extremes*, will take place in Brisbane from Monday 1 to Thursday 4 September 2008 as part of *Riverfestival*.

The 11th International *Riversymposium* will address a range of topical water issues – some currently on the national agenda and other lesser-known but equally important issues which require urgent attention.

Australia's Water Buyback Scheme: Government Vs Industry

Four experts will discuss their views on the contentious Federal Government Murray-Darling Basin water buyback scheme in a not-to-be missed session.

- Laurie Arthur, National Farmers Federation Water Taskforce, Australia
- James Horne and Rob Wooding from the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
- Mary Annand, MacIntyre Brook Irrigators Association, Australia

This Feature Session will be held on Monday 1 September at 13:30pm (Room A3A).

Death of the Reef

Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, University of Queensland Professor and Director Centre for Marine Studies

Ove Hoegh-Guldberg's presentation will focus on the biggest threat to the Great Barrier Reef and other reefs around the world - the pH balance of ocean waters. When water becomes too acidic, coral is unable to grow a skeleton and become a substantial size. When this occurs the young coral grows limp like a jellyfish and is more vulnerable to attack and being eaten by fish.

Projected changes in water temperature due to climate change and ocean acidity will pose a major threat for coral reefs in coming years. Ove will outline ways to support the resilience of reefs.

Ove Hoegh-Guldberg will speak at the Feature Session on "The impacts of river activities on reefs" on Monday 1 September at 10:30am (Room P1).

Don't Weep for the Willow: a Loved but Dangerous River Weed

Sarah Holland Clift, National Willows Coordinator – Department of Primary Industries Victoria

Sarah Holland Clift will discuss ways to manage the threat posed by the iconic Weeping Willow tree to Australian rivers, following consultation with 650 people across Australia.

There are more than 100 types of Weeping Willow trees in Australia, some of which are extremely invasive and have negative impacts on rivers. This resulted in the willow being listed as one of Australia's 20 Weeds of National Significance.

Sarah Holland Clift will speak at the Session on "The Trials of transboundary rivers – particular aspects of ecosystems" on Monday 1 September at 10:30am (Room M2).

Australia Provides Global Findings on Water & Climate Change to Turkey's World Water Forum

The findings from this pivotal Feature Session about water, energy and climate change will be provided to the 5th World Water Forum in Turkey next year. This is the first year *Riversymposium* will provide feedback to the World Water Forum. The following five experts will speak at the session:

- Torkil-Jonch Clausen from the European Water Partnership, DHI Denmark
- Ger Bergkamp, World Water Council, France
- David Barnes, Australian Water Association, Australia
- Louise Korsgaard, DHI Water Policy Singapore
- Ken Matthews, National Water Commission, Australia

This feature session will be held on Tuesday 2 September at 13:30pm (Room PTR)

Establishing an Australian Water Forum

Riversymposium will host a session about the possibility of establishing Australia's first water forum to help export Australia's expertise in water. This follows the establishment of successful water forums in Europe, Japan and Denmark. This session will draw out which learnings from the Danish Water Forum can be applied to Australia.

The session will be facilitated by Torkil-Jonch Clausen from the European Water Partnership, DHI Denmark and Mark Pascoe from International WaterCentre (Australia).

This session will be held on Wednesday 3 September at 12:00 (room to be confirmed).

A Future Without Irrigation?

Riversymposium will host a Feature Session called "The future of irrigation" which will canvass a range of big ideas including the following:

- How to put aspiration into practice (Professor John Langford, Head of Water Research Centre)
- Is irrigation ecologically sustainable and if not what do we do? (Richard Kingsford, Professor of Environmental Science UNSW)
- Climate implications for the future of irrigation (Dr Danielle Verdon)
- Managing the risks moving forward (Dr Ian Prosser, Science Director for Water for a Healthy Country Flagship)

This session will be held on Tuesday 2 September at 15:00pm (room M1)

Lessons from the UK: if they Can Clean up the Mersey, there is Hope for any River **Natalie Baker, the Mersey River Team - First Winners of the International Thiers Riverprize (1999)**

Natalie Baker will present a case study on the progress of the UK Mersey Basin campaign over the last decade. It's ten years since the CEO of the Mersey Basin campaign Walter Menzies accepted the International Thiers Riverprize for the outstanding restoration work in the heavily polluted Mersey Basin in the North-West of England.

Natalie Baker will speak at the Feature Session on Water, NRM and the 'people issues' on Tuesday 2 September at 10:30am (Room P1).

Shining the Light on the Environmental Impact of Acid Mine Draining



RIVERSYMPIUM

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

Ian Campbell, Former Scientific Adviser to the OK Tedi Mine in Papua New Guinea

Ian Campbell will use his experience at the OK Tedi Mine to shed light on the issue of acid mine draining, the outflow of acidic water from abandoned metal or coal mines.

Mr Campbell will speak about acid mine draining in Australia which has impacted the Rum Jungle in the Northern Territory, Queenstown in Tasmania, Cape Flattery and Horne Island in Queensland, and how it can impact the environment many years after a mine has closed down.

Ian Campbell will speak at the Session on "Responsible Mining" (Room M2) on Tuesday at 13:30pm.

ENDS

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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Riverfestival is an initiative of Brisbane City Council
and the Queensland Government