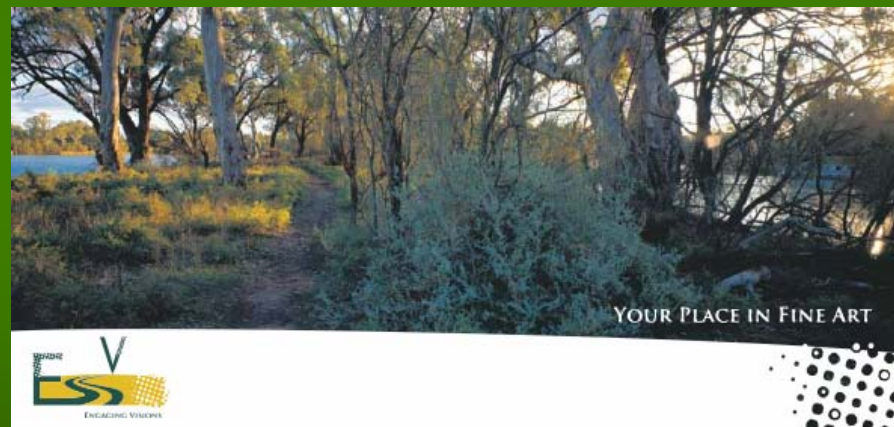


# *Engaging Visions*

Science communication, art and natural resource management in Australia's Murray-Darling River Basin



Dr Rod Lamberts  
*Deputy Director*

The Centre for Public Awareness of Science  
The Australian National University



# Overview

The Murray-Darling River Basin

ANU School of Art Field Studies

What is *Engaging Visions*?

The research project

A few results





# ANU School of Art - Field Studies







# *Engaging Visions - the research*

Determine the best way to engage visual artists and Basin catchment communities to:

visually / aesthetically express natural resource management issues relevant to the community

provide opportunities for visual artists



# *Engaging visions - goals/objectives*

Develop a model procedure ... involve, communicate and motivate!

Evaluation to make evidence-based decisions

Inform a 10 year Investment Plan between the ANU and the MDBC



# Engaging visions - project design

Evaluation in 4 catchment communities - 4 states, 4 different geographies

Wangaratta, VIC



Tumut, NSW

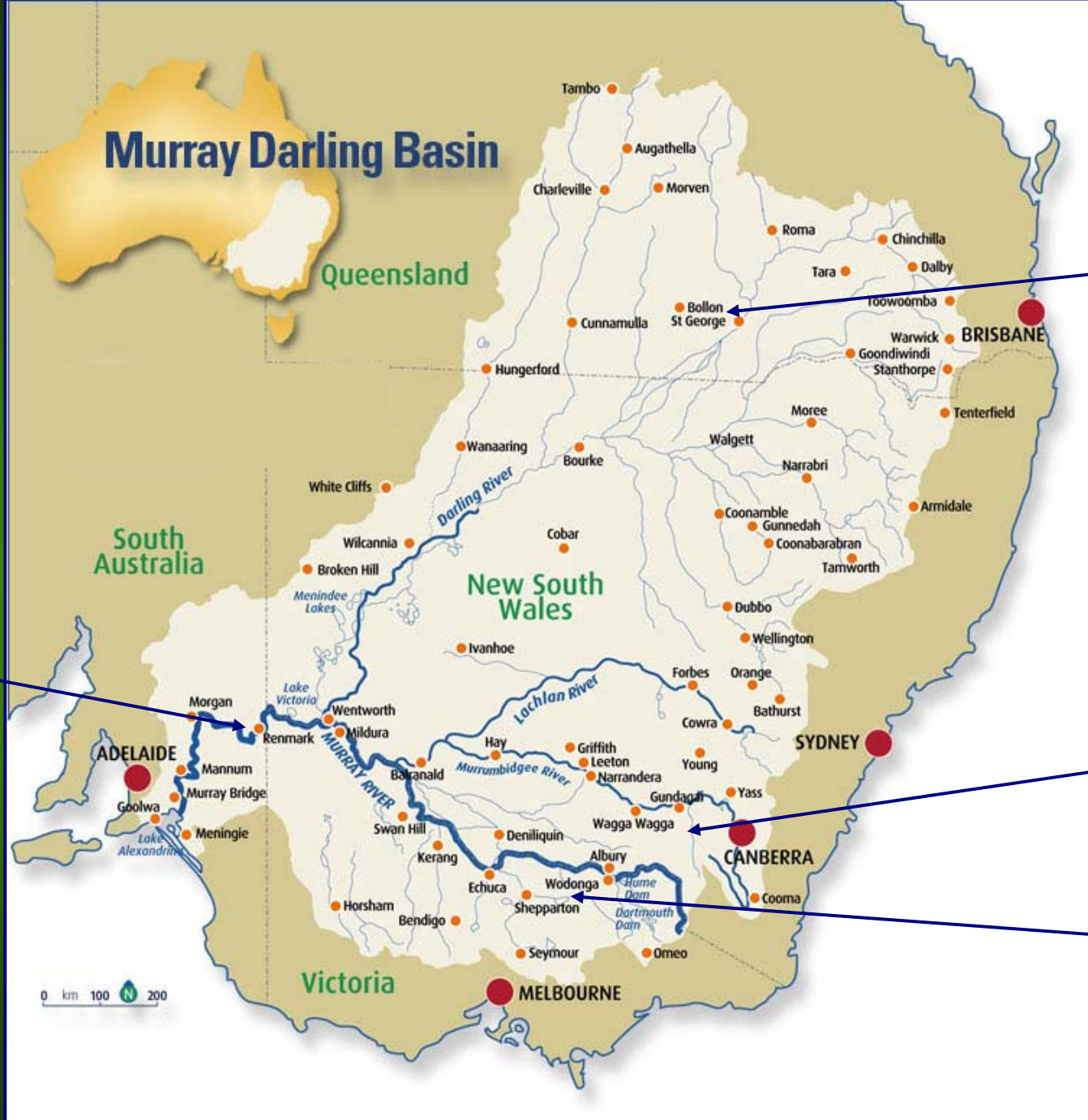


St George, QLD



Renmark, SA





1  
St George  
(QLD)

2  
Tumut  
(NSW)

4  
Wangaratta  
(VIC)

3  
Renmark  
(SA)



# *Field procedure structure*

## In each location

1. Survey/ reconnaissance trip & showcase exhibition
2. Artist field trips (2 or 3)
3. Exhibition in the following semester



# Evaluation



## The Artists

*What's a field procedure do for them?*



## People in the Community

*Are they involved/ represented?*



## Key Community Informants

*Community 'big picture'?*

# *Project elements*

Charles Tambiah & Rod Lamberts

Focus on community  
relevance/ impact

Questionnaire/ interviews

Media monitoring

Exit surveys at exhibitions



# Project elements

## Charles Tambiah & Rod Lamberts

Focus on community  
relevance/ impact

Questionnaire/ interviews

Media monitoring

Exit surveys at exhibitions

## PhD Project - Carolyn Young

Focus on artist experiences

In-depth interviews with  
participating artists

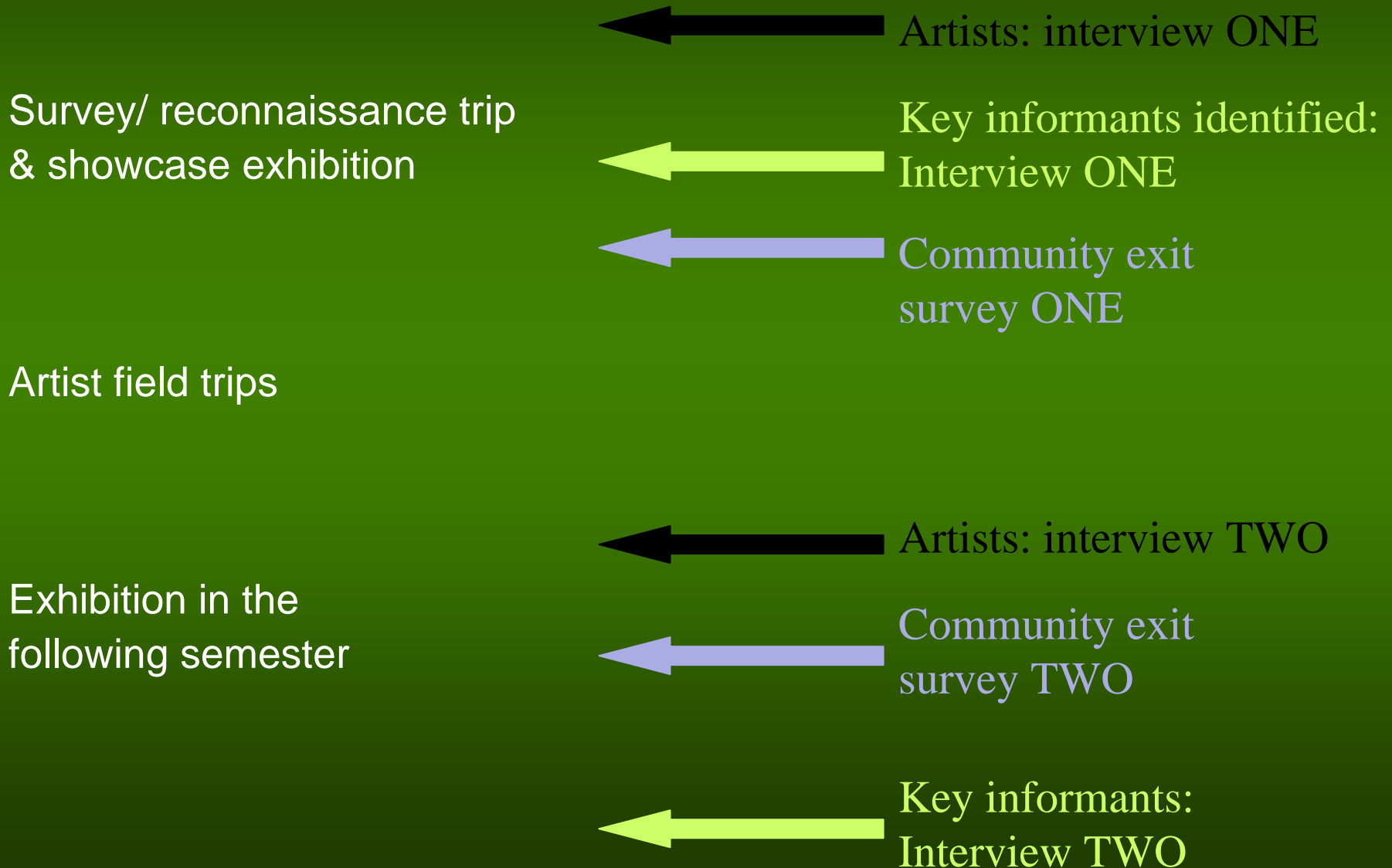
Creative works inspired by all  
4 field trips

MDBC scholarship





# *Evaluation structure - each site*



*Also...*

Media monitoring



A final set of follow-up focus groups at the very end of the 4 case sites



Researcher and head of Field  
Procedure field notes



Website evaluation



<http://www.engagingvisions.com.au/>

# *Where are we up to?*

St George pilot data and final exhibition complete

Tumut full program finished in the last month

Riverland first trip done, next about to start

Preliminary interview results coming through

Community questionnaire results starting to be processed



# Results so far - communities

High community profile is important

Long term involvement desirable (artists in residence)

Linkages with local groups at exhibitions tested in Tumut (engagement and indicators)

Commissioning of public art (sculpture?) to be pursued



IMAGES

<http://clicks.robertgenn.com/images/2007/100907/street-art-five.jpg>

<http://www.travelvictoria.com.au/images/mildura/photos/13.jpg>



# *Results so far - communities*

Activities with children/parents/artists (at sites of stress or beauty)

Engage all “parties” (loggers, environmentalists, indigenous communities, local artists, schools, etc)

Inspire communities to “talk to themselves” (recognize and share what’s important/compelling about their regions)



IMAGES

<http://clicks.robertgenn.com/images/2007/100907/street-art-five.jpg>

<http://www.travelvictoria.com.au/images/mildura/photos/13.jpg>

# Results so far - artists

Generally field studies enrich art practice (many have attended more than one)

Reinforcing the need to engage people in the process of art production

Variable results on the strength of artists/art and environment links. For example - most expressed interest in environment BUT ~1/3 create art directly inspired by environmental matters

Charismatic and approachable convener is critical



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Viv Martin - MDBC communications



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