



Committee Secretariat  
Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Inquiry into Melbourne's Future Water Supply  
Parliament House  
Spring Street, East Melbourne VIC 3002

26 August 2008

Congratulations to the ENRC for initiating this very important Public Inquiry into Melbourne's Future Water Supply.

This Inquiry is particularly opportune given the high degree of community concern about recent, unduly rushed major infrastructure projects that lack adequate environmental, economic and social assessment (direct, indirect, cumulative and long-term impacts), justification and community consultation. Specifically, these include the North-South pipeline, the Wonthaggi desalination plant and the mooted pipeline grid across Victoria.

I submit this response to the Inquiry for consideration and thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

Yours sincerely,

## **Recommendation 1 (TOR 4 and 6)**

The Committee reviews and considers the DSE information series about *Biodiversity Management Issues for Freshwater Ecosystems*, in particular, the impacts of dams on rivers and the wide-ranging impacts of extracting ground water:

### **Biodiversity Management Issues for Freshwater Ecosystems**

*Freshwater ecosystems - rivers and streams and wetlands - are complex and dynamic. They are in a continual process of change and adjustment.*

*They support a rich variety of animals and plants which require specific environmental conditions for their survival. The effects of human activities on these systems are equally complex and often interrelated.*

*The series of **ten brochures** below describes major biodiversity management issues for rivers and streams. Each brochure outlines the source of the issue, its effect on the ecosystem and what can be done to reverse and avoid potential impacts.*

*DSE Home > Plants and Animals > Native Plants and Animals > Freshwater Ecosystems > Biodiversi.*

Overview of the top ten issues

1. Changes to Natural Flow Patterns
2. Changes to Temperature Patterns
3. Changes to Riparian Vegetation
4. Sedimentation of rivers and streams
5. Toxic materials
6. Increased salinity
7. Removal of woody debris
8. Changes to river channels
9. Instream barriers
10. Introducing fish outside their natural range

## **Recommendation 2 (TOR 1-6)**

The Committee reviews and considers the outcomes of the *Watering Victoria* Symposium organised by Melbourne University's Centre for Public Policy on 24 September 2008, and if possible, participates in this symposium:

[http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/events/watering\\_symposium.html](http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/events/watering_symposium.html)

*This symposium will focus on current issues and challenges for Victorian water policy, ranging from broader contextual to more specific technical and policy issues and proposals.*

### **Recommendation 3 (TOR 4 and 6)**

The Committee reviews and considers the results of the following recent research by CSIRO on the current state of key Victorian rivers and the potential impacts of climate change on water availability.

CSIRO (2008a) *Water Availability in the Murray. Summary of a report to the Australian Government from the CSIRO Murray-Darling Basin Sustainable Yields Project.* July 2008, [www.csiro.au/mdbsy](http://www.csiro.au/mdbsy)

CSIRO (2008 b) *Water Availability in the Goulburn-Broken. Summary of a report to the Australian Government from the CSIRO Murray-Darling Basin Sustainable Yields Project.* May 2008, [www.csiro.au/mdbsy](http://www.csiro.au/mdbsy)

### **Recommendation 4 (TOR 1, 2, 3)**

The Committee reviews and considers the results of the following recent research (particularly in relation to the effectiveness of rainwater tanks) by Dr Peter Coombes, Director of the Bonacci Water Pty Ltd and others in the Bonacci Group at <http://www.Bonacciwater.com/dev/Research.php>

## **Research Papers Index**

### **Stormwater Management**

[Stormwater Management Strategy for Armstrong Creek](#)

[Deterioration, Depreciation and Serviceability of Stormwater Pipes](#)

[Innovative Water Cycle Design at Heritage Mews](#)

[Design Strategy for the Reuse of Stormwater](#)

### **Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)**

[Tank Paddock: A Comparison Between Traditional and Water Sensitive Urban Design](#)

[Urban Water Harvesting and Reuse](#)

[An Introduction to Water Sensitive Urban Design](#)

[Cost Benefits of Source Control Measures](#)

### **Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM)**

[Integrated Water Cycle Management: Analysis of Resource Security](#)

[Moving Towards an Integrated Urban Water Cycle](#)

[Integrated Water and Energy Management at Newcastle "Nobby's" Lighthouse](#)

[South East Queensland Developments Going Beyond WSUD](#)

### **Subdivisions / Land Development**

[Figtree Place: A Water Sensitive Urban Development](#)

[South East Queensland Developments Going Beyond WSUD](#)

### **Rainwater Tank Design**

Performance of Rainwater Tanks in Carrington NSW

Performance of Rainwater Tanks in Australian Capital Cities

Rainwater Tank Options for Stormwater Management in the Upper Parramatta River Catchment

Rainwater Tanks in Inner City: Economic, Water Quantity and Quality Impacts

Economic Benefits of Rainwater Tanks: An Investment Model

Cost Effectiveness of Rainwater Tanks in Urban Australia

### **Systems Analysis**

Development of Stochastic Multisite Rainfall and Urban Water Demand Models for the Central Coast Region of New South

Integrated Water Cycle Management: Analysis of Resource Security

Responsible Water Use at Armstrong Creek

## **Recommendation 5 (TOR 4, 5, 6)**

In its evaluation of future sources of water for Melbourne, the Committee recommend that environmental, social and economic impacts of any proposed water infrastructure projects are thoroughly assessed through the Environmental Effects Statement process and subject to thorough community consultation processes.

For example, the North-South Pipeline, including its associated facilities (pump stations, high voltage power lines, power stations), is a major infrastructure project in terms of scale and intensity that has not been subject to an EES.

This project is proposed for an area with identified, significant environmental (aquatic and terrestrial), cultural heritage (indigenous and non-indigenous), scenic, social, tourism, farming and other important values.

Yet, throughout the extremely brief public consultation processes to date, the North-South pipeline project assessments have been superficial, substantially incomplete in terms of environmental, social and economic assessment, and importantly, they have lacked analyses of alternative options for Melbourne's future water supply. Also, the biodiversity impact implications of the project conflict with Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy, the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment and Regional River Health strategies, and the Victorian River Health Strategy.