

Integrating First Nation & Western Sciences
for better Basin outcomes:

Evaluating Environmental Flows

Mr Geoff Reid
First Nations Engagement Lead



Who am I?

Geoff Reid (Gomeri: **First Nations Engagement Lead**) lives and works in Toowoomba, Queensland, for Southern Queensland Landscapes as Natural Resource Manager; however, my country is just over the border in NSW along the Barwon River at Collarenebri. When I was younger I grew up in South Australia and spent plenty of time at Goolwa and Lake Alexandrina which is the bottom of the basin; I now live near Killarney, the headwater of the Condamine River that flows into the top of the basin. So I have spent time at both ends.



One Basin CRC



Vision

- Australia's irrigation regions are the most productive, resilient and sustainable in the world.


Purpose


- We work together to grow value from water in a changing world.


Impact to Country since Colonisation


The Murray-Darling Basin




Covers an area of more than a million square kilometres 


Agriculture output worth more than \$22 billion each year 


Spans 4 states and one territory 


120 species of native and migratory birds 


7,300 irrigated agriculture businesses 


The Murray-Darling Basin is one of Australia's largest and most complex river systems

Tourism industry worth \$11 billion each year 

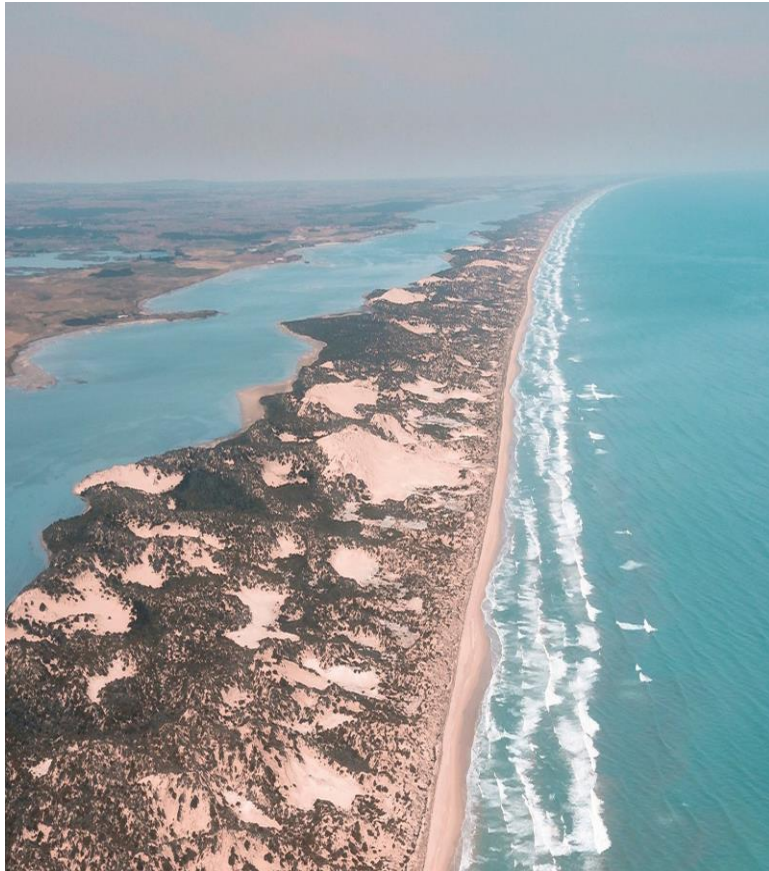
Home to 2.3 million Australians 

More than 50 First Nations 

16 internationally recognised and protected wetlands 

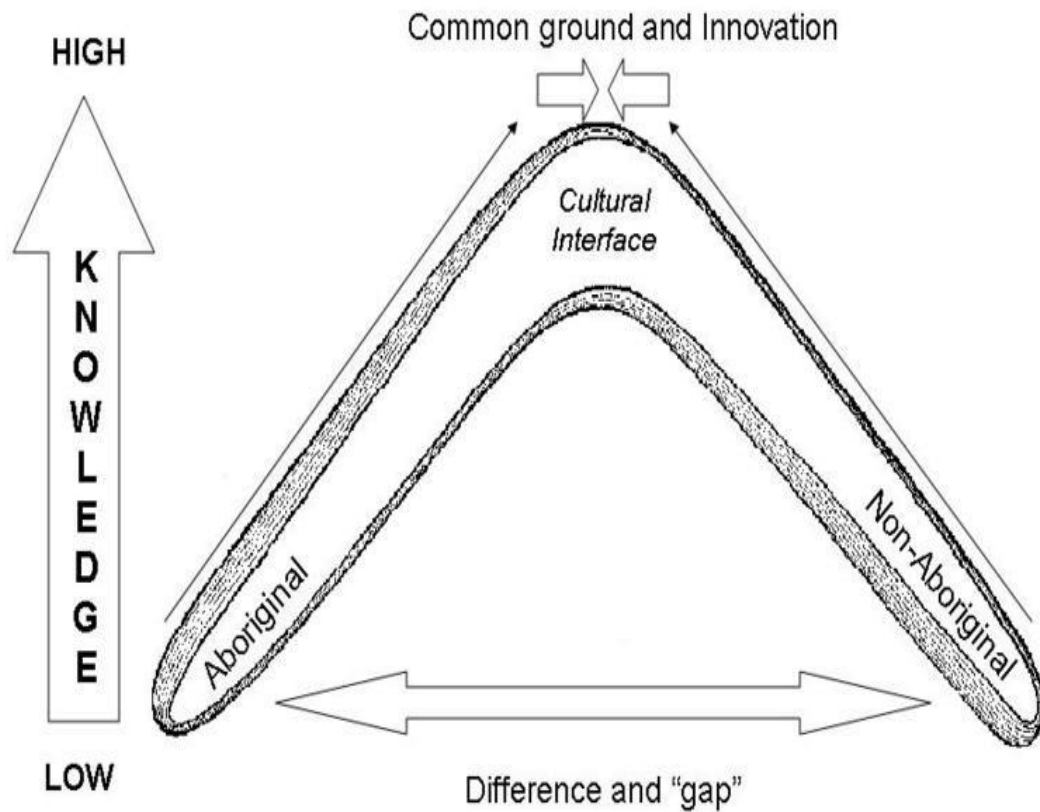
More than 50 species of native fish 

Impact: Coorong Case Study



First Nations Involvement in Research

First Nations Research Partnerships



Flow-MER: Environmental Flows

Context



1. Flow-MER is the primary means by which the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH) monitors and evaluates the delivery of Commonwealth environmental water in the Murray–Darling Basin.
2. The Flow-MER program is a continuation of the Long-Term Intervention Monitoring (LTIM) project, which started in 2014.
3. The Murray Darling Basin is broken down into 10 project areas.
4. Evaluation and research is focused around six Basin Themes – Hydrology, Biodiversity of species and ecosystems, Fish, Vegetation and Food webs & water quality.



First Nation Principles



Objectives for First Nations involvement in Flow-MER

Build long-term relationships and partnerships between First Nations people and Flow-MER practitioners.

Recognise, value, and protect the use of First Nations people's knowledges in Flow-MER

Within Flow-MER, strengthen First Nations people's leadership and decision making

- (1) Uphold the right of **self-determination**, recognising that communities are the experts in their own affairs.
- (2) Recognise the importance of building and maintaining **long term relationships** based on trust and respect.
- (3) Allow **diverse voices** to be heard in planning, decision-making and delivery.
- (4) Provide a **culturally safe space** and respect for cultural protocols.
- (5) Be **open** and **realistic** about what is achievable.

'Looking Back to Move Forward'



Know what was here before.

Understand how we got to this point.

Learn from this journey.

Come together respectfully and walk together at the speed of trust for a better future.

