

WINRAP Forum and Information Night  
15<sup>th</sup> November 2006

**Questions and Comments from the Public**

**Inlet condition**

- How does the bar opening effect algal blooms?
- What is the frequency of sampling (water quality) over the past 5 years? Is it the same all year round?
- Are the sampling sites random? (A: no, they are fixed sites)
- All the money spent on the catchment, is their work that will be done around poddyshot with the excess plant growth?
- What are the speed limits and areas on the inlet for Jet Skis?
- I am concerned that on the sandy areas of the inlet the seagrass is expanding. What is the solution to this?
- When the bar is opened we drain the fresh water then get stratification. This is bound to happen when there is a small channel at the western end. So where the channel is placed is most important for stratification and causes most of the problems. (Malcolm Robb responded that the issue of marine exchange has been examined for many estuaries and stratification is not just a matter of the location and size of the channel. Rain (input), sea levels and weather patterns (effect sea levels) is the main pump for exchange. The problem of algae wont change unless we stop nutrient input as the placement of the channel is a small factor)
- The trend in river flow is flat so is it too soon to be sure of nutrient trends (Yes, we need more time to measure and see the effect of landuse change)
- Testing has been reduced at critical times
- What is the chemistry of Phosphorus release from the sediment? (Iron is very important as is the oxygen level of the water. In anoxic conditions you get reduction and P released)
- Are we accumulating phosphorus in the sediment? (Yes)
- Water levels in the inlet, they need to take into account the health of the floodplain
- Has anyone done any studies on the inlet silting up?
- What effect will using water for drinking have on its volume?

**Fisheries**

- What process did WI Seafood need to grow a new species in the inlet (response: it is not a new species but disappeared from the inlet for a number of years).
- Kim, how much is the cobbler catch graph influenced by what fish people want to catch/take?
- What strategies are in place to make cobbler survive, as they are currently 'threatened'?
- What input does the Dept of Fisheries have in the management of the inlet (via WIMAG)
- Is the biological indicators data being used (it is still early days but it will be used when more is gathered)
- Kim, who studies the effect of climate change and sea levels on fish?

- Kim, based on current knowledge do we have the knowledge to make decisions on fish management taking into account climate change (A: we have some knowledge at the community level but not at the species level) (response to A: gone are the days when we cant input into management because we only know part of the story)

## **Catchment management**

- How is stormwater being addressed?
- Rainwater Collection – how is this being promoted by the LGAs?
- Should the authorities be looking at the effect of septics and expanding deep sewerage? (Pascoe gave some information on when reticulated sewerage will expand)
- Has work been done to look at/improve the sewerage overflow from the town scheme? What is its impact on the inlet?
- Is sewerage a major input compared to fertiliser? What is the impact of septics?
- As the water levels in the inlet are being influenced by rainfall decrease and possibly by the amount of dams on private properties are there steps in place to manage (or educate people on) the dams? (There is a DoW study on environmental water requirements. However, WI isn't gazetted so harder to enforce. But if the study sees damage 'we?' can still act)
- How many bluegums are there in the catchment?
- Craig, as a farmer with lots of bush there should be incentives to help manage this public resource eg tax or rates relief
- It could be good to trial 'payments' for ecosystem services, this has been done overseas and in the eastern states
- You can lobby the LGAs to have rate reductions if your whole farm is classed as agricultural (as this land isn't productive)
- CALM has bought some land in the wheatbelt that is next to other reserves to use for seed (?)
- Have audits been done on what fertiliser is being used in the catchment? We should try and get this info from the fertiliser companies. (Malcolm mentioned that the government is looking at what types of fertilisers should be allowed for different areas)

## **Other**

- Will there be a group established to represent the Cuppup sub-catchment?
- Can we expect further updates on news and events?
- Will these questions and comments be recorded and reported on?