

Submission on
Draft Lake Eyre Basin
Strategic Plan

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Table of Contents

A. Expertise and qualifications.....	3
B. Approach to this submission.....	3
C. General comments.....	3
1. Scale.....	3
2. Governance.....	4
3. Values.....	4
4. Threats.....	5
5. Resourcing.....	6
D. Specific comments.....	7
Vision- Healthy and valued river systems sustaining unique, resilient and diverse communities and landscapes.....	7
1. Goal1-Healthy river systems supporting resilient landscapes.....	7
2. Goal2-Celebrated aboriginal culture and knowledge.....	8
3. Goal3-An informed, engaged and resilient.....	9
4. Goal4-A diverse and adaptable economy.....	10.
Appendix 1 -Increases in number of oil and gas wells on the floodplains of the Lake Eyre Basin floodplains.....	13.....
Appendix 2 -Photographs and other images of floodplain development by the Oil and Gas Industry in the Lake Eyre Basin.....	14.....

helpful to provide a map of the significant extent of floodplains and nationally important wetlands (Kingsford and Walburn 2022).

It would also have been useful to have more about the importance of the free-flowing status of the rivers of the Lake Eyre Basin. This needs to be

currently limited referencing, a general concern in relation to the document. It should be taking an evidence based approach, supported by the scientific evidence, including peer reviewed information.

5. Resourcing

There is currently no reference to any human or financial resources in relation to implementation of this plan. This may not yet be clear yet but there are a number of objectives in this Strategic Plan which will require resourcing for implementation. Often the pathway is not clear. Referencing the current human and financial resources already in place would be useful for implementation.

Recommendation1: There should be more clarity for the focus of this Lake Eyre Basin Strategic Plan. It should be called the Lake Eyre Basin Strategic Plan but then adding a description: Lake Eyre Basin Strategic Plan – rivers and their catchments

Recommendation2. In the context or description section there should be at least a paragraph or more on governance, lg

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D. Specific comments

processes and also the need to understand the ecology better. It also does not adequately reference the need for knowledge needs monitoring and reporting even though the MERI framework was presented.

Recommendation 10: A suggested change for this objective would be Knowledge and state of the basin's unique free-flowing rivers and effects of threatening processes such as invasive species, floodplain and water resource development, pollution and climate change and dependence of plants, animals and their relationships needs to be monitored and reported

- iii. Objective 3- Available water is managed to meet community needs and support resilient landscapes and river systems

This objective is ambiguous and organised so that it does not adequately represent some of the key intentions for managing the Lake Eyre Basin Rivers. It does not currently link well to the background information. For example, there has been no discussion above about 'available water' Assuming this refers to accessing water and so should be clear.

Recommendation 11: A suggested rephrasing could be Water from the rivers will be used for community needs, governed under current State and Territory legislation, to avoid major impacts on the free-flowing flow and flooding regimes

- 2. Goal 2-Celebrated aboriginal culture and knowledge

This section is clearer than all the sections in the Draft Lake Eyre Basin Strategic Plan. The objectives are generally unambiguous although there is a need for more collaboration and ownership opportunities in relation to water. Reference to the importance of water for First Nations peoples is lacking. The background and objectives may benefit from reviewing the Tibooburra resolutions (Gorringer 2017). The goal also reflects some tokenism and insufficient integration into core business, which are better incorporated in the objectives

Recommendation 12: A suggested rephrasing which is more inclusive and participatory clearer-

dreaming for future generations

There could be a measure of support added.

Recommendation 13: A suggested rephrasing might be Aboriginal people are supported in maintaining their languages, songs, storylines and dreaming for future generations

- iv. Objective 4 - Aboriginal peoples cultural sites are protected and maintained and connections to sites are enhanced

This objective reads well.

- v. Objective 5 - Improved two-way understanding of the cultural impacts of climate change

This objective appears idiosyncratic and restrictive. It could be better phrased to adequately represent improved interactions.

Recommendation 14: A suggested rephrasing improved two-way learning and understanding between traditional knowledge and science for the protection and management of the free-flowing rivers

3. Goal 3 - An informed, engaged and resilient

The Lake Eyre Basin Agreement has also been very successful (s)7 (10 Tc 0 (e)-1 (d)1 (r)4 (i)3 (on)0

Recommendation 16: A suggested rephrasing – Improve current dialogue among governments and communities, driving informed, engaged and empowered communities actively stewarding the basin's unique natural and cultural assets

- iii. Objective 3 - Aboriginal cultural and spiritual connections to water and land are recognised and respected

This objective seems somewhat tokenistic, as it is currently written without actually involving these communities in the decision-making.

Recommendation 17: A suggested rephrasing – Ensure Aboriginal communities are part of the decision-making related to land and water reflecting their cultural and spiritual connections

4. Goal 4 - A diverse and adaptable economy

Currently this objective is extremely broad and probably beyond the capacity of this Strategic Plan as it currently stands. It is important to link this goal more to the values of the system, such as its flowing status which support significant environmental and cultural values. A key aspect which is missing is the importance of sustainability and avoiding threats to the values. There is a little discussion of the current economy and its trajectories, particularly in relation to mining (see Mudd 2017, Kingsford and Walburn 2021) and tourism (Wright 2017). These need more coverage in the brief description so there is more context.

Recommendation 18: A suggested rephrasing – A diverse and adaptable economy which environmentally sustainable

- i. Objective 1 - A basin economy that is adaptable to the effects of climate variability and change

Again this objective could be in any Strategic Plan, anywhere in the world. It lacks specificity or a link to the need for sustainability and protection of the values of the Lake Eyre Basin. This objective could easily be combined with the one below.

Recommendation 19: A suggested rephrasing – Increased development of an environmentally sustainable basin economy, adaptable to the effects of climate variability and change

- ii. Objective 2 - Sustainable and inclusive development for a diversified economy

Again this objective could be in any Strategic Plan, anywhere in the world. It lacks specificity and does not seem to reflect the challenges of diversification. It is also not clear what this objective actually means or how it would be translated into effective actions.

Recommendation 20: A suggested rephrasing – A sustainable economy, promoting

diversification and inclusivity development of an environmentally sustainable basin economy, adaptable to the effects of climate variability and change

- iii. Objective3 - The basin is promoted as a unique accessible and culturally rich

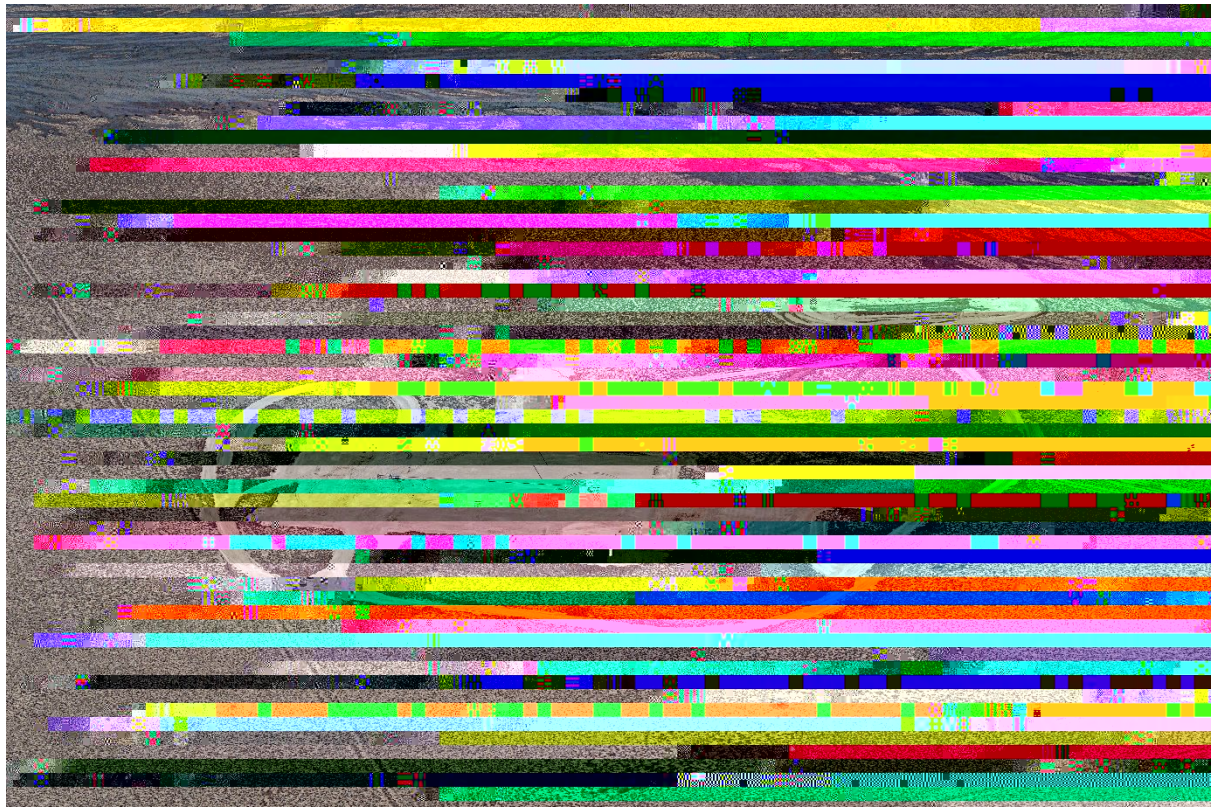
- Pages 173-191 in R. T. Kingsford, editor. Lake Eyre Basin Rivers: environmental, social and economic importance. CSIRO, Melbourne.
- Pisanu, P., R. T. Kingsford, B. Wilson, and R. Bonifacio. 2015. Status of connected wetlands of the Lake Eyre Basin, Australia. *Austral Ecology* 40:460-471.
- Wright, T. 2017. Kati Thanda Lake Eyre not just a wildlife paradise but an economic lifeline. R. T. Kingsford, editor. Lake Eyre Basin rivers: the search for sustainability. CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne.

Appendix 1– Increases in number of oil and gas wells on the floodplains of the Lake Eyre Basin floodplai1.2 I4o09

Appendix 2– Photographs and other images of floodplain development by the Oil and Gas Industry in the Lake Eyre Basin

Oil and gas infrastructure on the inundated floodplain (Photo –

Oil and gas well pad and roads newly developed (Photo D. Gimsey, July 2022)



Oil and gas well pad and roads newly developed (Photo D. Gimsey, July 2022)