

Preface and acknowledgements

The sustainable management of Australia's rich and unique endowment of natural resources has never been higher on the national agenda. But finding workable solutions to issues that require consideration of ecological, economic and social issues, as well as the ethical and cultural dimensions remains a considerable integration challenge. Researchers, policy makers, industries and others stakeholders in natural resource management are seeking to move away from single-issue and from single-discipline approaches to management, and from single-discipline approaches in research and training. Land & Water Australia places a high priority on making a critical contribution to these challenges.

In May 2004 Land & Water Australia hosted a symposium on integration to guide our contribution and to support the efforts of others. The aims of this event, the outcomes of which are consolidated in this volume, were to:

- Consolidate our understanding of available integrative approaches in R&D and natural resource management
- Identify the strengths of integrative approaches by drawing positive and operational lessons from experience, and
- Identify the potential for further developments, both for immediate value and to establish a basis for further efforts.

We trust that you will find the broad-ranging contributions in this volume as insightful, inspiring and helpful as we have. It is clear that there are many positive examples of integration in research, policy and management, but we are also wisely counselled that continued exploration and feedback of understanding is crucial to the development of sustainable natural resource management. We look forward to a continued exchange of learnings and experience in this exciting field of endeavour.

Finally, we would like to thank all those who made the symposium possible and contributed to its success:

- the 24 authors (and their co-authors) of the contributing papers
- the participants in the 2-day symposium
- the key note speaker and discussants: Professor Gary Jones (CRC for Freshwater Ecology), Professor Allan Curtis (Charles Sturt University), Assoc. Professor Ronnie Harding (the University of New South Wales), Dr Ruth Lane (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology), Dr Geoff Syme (CSIRO);
- the Steering Committee: Dr Alice Roughley from Land & Water Australia, and Dr Steve Dovers, Dr Gabrielle Bammer, both from the Australian National University and Dr Deborah O'Connell (CSIRO);



- administrative organisation by Helen Vooren and Amanda Bigelow Land & Water Australia, and
- Andrew Campbell, Executive Director, and the Board of Land & Water Australia who agreed to fund the Symposium.

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