





Using participatory foresight processes for strategic water management in Queensland

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Abstract: This presentation provides an overview of the Queensland Water Foresight project established to develop processes and tools to inform robust and adaptive water planning and management in Queensland. Two expectations were that the project would support the joint creation of possible future scenarios about Queensland's water resources and related ecosystems, and would identify opportunities and interventions to move towards desirable outcomes for water and associated resources. The project applied several foresight frameworks and methods, including the PESTLE (Politics, Economics, Social, Technology, Legal and Environment) framework, scenario development, the Three Horizons framework, and wild cards. A series of workshops were conducted with participants from government, industry and catchment management organisations. Workshop participants co-developed with the research team storylines for four scenarios – Agricultural Transformation, Sustainability Transition, Decentralisation and Vested Interest (Figure 1) – that would shape water security (or not) in the Mary River Basin and South East Queensland (SEQ) region. These scenarios represent alternative futures that could emerge under different types and levels of societal, environmental, political, economic and technological drivers of change. They supported the collaborative exploration of how water management might look like in 2050 and what changes are needed to move towards desired futures.

Transformations of the energy sector, one output from the analytical process, emerged as having strong implications for water planning and management into the future. The criticality of collaboration and nexus thinking to support robust and adaptive water management into an uncertain future cannot be understated. We argue that greater

uptake of Foresight approaches and outputs, within and across the institutions involved in water management would support this transformation. Capacity building and leadership is needed to achieve this uptake in Foresight; an emerging community of practice offers one avenue to build both through supporting collaborative networks and innovations to address challenges of uncertainty and complexity.

REFERENCES

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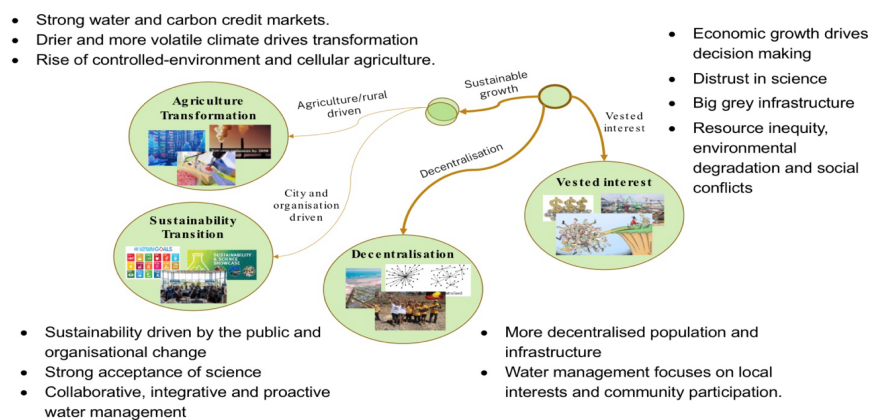


Figure 1. Key features of the Queensland Water Foresight scenarios.