



Burdekin Water Forum

International Guest Speakers

Professor Shahbaz Khan



Professor Shahbaz Khan is the Senior Programme Specialist and Chief of Section on Sustainable Water Resources Development and Management with UNESCO. Professor Khan actively contributed to the development and management of the Hydrology for the Environment, Life and Policy (HELP) Programme as the Chair of the international steering committee and the regional coordinator for Australasia.

Professor Khan has an outstanding multidisciplinary background in water law and policy, management, civil engineering, information technology, graphical information systems & remote sensing, economics and integrating societal water demands with the environment. He received his Master and PhD degrees in water resources technology and management from the University of Birmingham, UK in 1992 and 1995 respectively. His other major qualifications include Master of International Environmental Law from the Macquarie University, Australia and Master of Applied Environmental Economics from the Imperial College, University of London, UK.

Prior to his role with UNESCO, Professor Khan was Professor and Director at the Charles Sturt University, Research Leader at CSIRO, and Programme Leader, System Harmonisation at the Cooperative Research Centre for Irrigation Futures, Australia.

Dr Ken Knox



Dr Ken Knox is a consultant with URS Corporation, and formerly the Chief Deputy State Engineer for the State of Colorado, USA and adjunct professor with the University of Denver. Dr Knox has extensive experience in water resources research, engineering, management and policy. This includes responsibility for negotiating, on behalf of the State of Colorado, interstate and international water sharing agreements (compacts).

Recent negotiations have successfully integrated groundwater-surface water interactions into what were previously surface water only compacts. This includes integrating groundwater as a reliable source of water into water resources planning and management activities to provide confidence to all water users seeking a reliable and high quality source of water supply to meet existing and future demands.

Dr Knox received his BSc in Chemical Engineering from the Colorado State University in 1982 and his Master and PhD degrees in Civil Engineering from the Colorado State University in 1991 and 2004, respectively.

Dr Keith Bristow

Dr Keith Bristow is a Senior Principal Research Scientist with CSIRO Land and Water, Program Leader of the Cooperative Research Centre for Irrigation Futures System Harmonisation Program, and Honorary Professor at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. Keith is a soil physicist/hydrologist by training with interests in water, the environment, complex systems, irrigation and integrated water resources management. Keith has extensive experience working with governments and industry across northern tropical Australia.

Mr Nigel Kelly

Mr Nigel Kelly is the Regional Manager, Water Services North Region, Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM). Nigel has gained extensive experience in various aspects of natural resource management, over many years in the public service and across much of Queensland. In his current role with DERM, Nigel is responsible for the service delivery component of water resource planning, water resource management, water quantity and quality monitoring, regional water supply strategies, water metering and wild rivers consultation.

Dr Jon Brodie

Dr Jon Brodie is a Principal Research Officer specialising in water quality at James Cook University. During his career Jon has been a lecturer in chemistry, an analytical chemist, environmental researcher and consultant within the field of marine and freshwater pollution, water quality and management, especially long-term work on pollution of the Great Barrier Reef and its management. Jon's research interests are in the sources of pollutants in catchments; transport of pollutants to the marine environment; the dispersal of land-based pollutants in coastal & marine environments; & the effects of terrestrial pollutants on marine ecosystems.

Mr Tom Vanderbyl

Mr Tom Vanderbyl has over twenty years experience with the irrigated agriculture industry in the planning and delivery of water infrastructure and policy reforms in Queensland, Australia and internationally. As the Manager of Strategy and Stakeholder Relations for SunWater Limited, Tom is committed to working closely with the irrigation industry to identify and adopt water management innovations that will assist in enhancing productivity and profitability within irrigation systems. Through his involvement in the Irrigation Futures, E-Water and Cotton Cooperative Research Centres he maintains an ongoing interest in the direction and outcomes of national irrigation research, development and innovation programs. He is also currently a board member of Irrigation Australia Limited.

Mr Andrew Kelly

Mr Andrew Kelly is the Executive Officer of Lower Burdekin Water, a joint venture between the North and South Burdekin Water Boards. Andrew has been involved with the irrigation industry for over 25 years, with the past 13 years in northern Australia. He has represented irrigation and irrigation companies on many State and National panels and committees over the years, including the original Lower Burdekin Initiative, more recently the Northern Australian Irrigation Futures and the National Groundwater Users Group. Andrew has recently been appointed to the Advisory Committee for the National Groundwater Centre.

Mr Trevor Williams

Mr Trevor Williams is the Director of Environment and Operations at the Burdekin Shire Council. In his 19 years with the Council, Trevor has performed the roles of Water and Sewerage Engineer and Director of Engineering Services. Trevor is also a Director of the Queensland Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia, the parent organisation of the Queensland Water Directorate. Trevor has been a member of Burdekin Water Futures since 2008, and has a keen interest in the Burdekin aquifer and drainage systems.

Cr Lyn McLaughlin

Mayor of the Burdekin Shire Council since March 2004, Cr Lyn McLaughlin chairs the Burdekin Water Futures & the Burdekin Cultural Complex Board. Cr McLaughlin is also Deputy Chair, Burdekin Shire Rivers Improvement Trust, Deputy Chair, Regional Development Australia, President, North Queensland Local Government Association, & member of the LGAQ Regional Development & Relationship Reference Group. Cr McLaughlin advocates for the long-term sustainability of the Burdekin and its water resources by encouraging a whole of system approach to the management of the environmental, social, & economic systems of the region.

Mr Michael Hoey

As Deputy Chair of Burdekin Water Futures, Mr Michael Hoey is keen to see the sustainable future of the Burdekin and its water resources. Michael currently operates a sugar cane farm in the Burdekin with his family, who have been a part of the Burdekin for 125 years. Michael is also the Chair of the North Burdekin Water Board, a member of the Lower Burdekin Water Executive Committee, and a practising accountant.