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Wise use of wetlands

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WISE USE OF WETLANDS

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WISE USE OF WETLANDS

1. Background statements

2. Conclusions

3. Definitions and Concept of Wise Use

4. Model for progress

5. The future?

1. Background statements

- We are not making wise use of our wetland resources globally and in (northern) Australia
 - We grossly undervalue our wetland resources
 - Wetland loss and degradation has often been accompanied by narrow sectoral or private gain
 - Wetland restoration and remediation has usually been supported by public funds

• We need a better approach to wetland management collaboration, cooperation, consultation, incentives and a combined sense of society or community

Background statements (cont.)

Our information base is insufficient!

- We need to commit to the necessary research and inventory, and the researchers need to deliver the outcomes.
- We don't seem to have the will and understanding necessary to make a substantive change in direction!
- We need to commit to ongoing community-wide education and awareness about wetland values.
 - We don't seem to able to manage effectively (adaptively)!
- We need leadership and to commit to ongoing assessment and monitoring of wetlands.

2. Conclusions

• We have come a long way in the past few decades and more and more people realise that we need to go further and develop better approaches for wise use.

• We need to emphasise consultation, community and private sector involvement and incentives for wise use.

- We need to focus on both the primary drivers and proximate causes of wetland loss and degradation.
- We need to invest now and undertake effective research, inventory, assessment and monitoring of wetlands.
 - We need to promote and implement the outcomes of wetland research and assessment efforts.

3. Definitions and Concepts

Wise use / Sustainable Development

The wise use of wetlands is their sustainable utilisation for the benefit of humankind in a way compatible with the maintenance of the natural properties of the ecosystem.

3. Definitions and Concepts

Natural properties / Ecological character

The sum of the individual biological, chemical and physical components of the ecosystem and their interactions that maintain the wetland and its products, functions and attributes (goods and services derived from the ecosystem).

WISE USE OF WETLANDS

Wise use = maintenance of the ecological character of a wetland

"Wise use of wetlands involves maintenance of their ecological character, as a basis not only for nature conservation, but for sustainable development"

WISE USE OF WETLANDS

Wise use comprises three components:

- 1. maintenance of the biological, chemical and physical components of a wetland
- 2. maintenance of the ecological processes between the components of a wetland
- 3. sustainability of the products, functions and attributes (goods and services) derived from a wetland

WISE USE OF WETLANDS

Case studies of wise use leading to guidelines/principles

Obstacles to wise use were summarised as:

a lack of political will

lack of coordination

insufficient use of existing knowledge

fragmentary management

lack of training

absence of follow-up

Similar principles identified in an analysis of loss and degradation of Australian wetlands

WISE USE OF WETLANDS

Underlying principles for wise use of wetlands

Social and economic forces are of central concern

Control over resources should be devolved from central government to local structures

Private/public institutions with expertise for effective long-term wetland management should be involved
Establish specific site demonstration projects
Problems of surrounding coastal zone or catchment should be taken into account

• A precautionary approach should be adopted

WISE USE OF WETLANDS

Basic question - 1994 Wise use of wetlands - can we do it? Basic question - 2002 Wise use of wetlands - will we do it?



















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