



First Circular: Wetlands in Drylands Research Network conference, 24-25 July 2017

WIDS2017 is the second meeting of the Wetlands in Drylands (WIDS) Research Network, and will take place at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, from **24-25 July 2017**. The venue was confirmed at the inaugural meeting of the WIDS Research Network at Parys, South Africa, in 2014.

The WIDS Research Network is a collaborative international initiative to promote the science and management of these important landscapes and ecosystems. Participation by international scientists, practitioners, managers, and early career and postgraduate researchers is encouraged and valued.

This is a call for expressions of interest (EOIs) to attend WIDS2017. Please send your EOI to Tim Ralph at fse.wids@mq.edu.au by **1 November 2016**, noting: 1) your professional role and affiliation, 2) whether you wish to attend, 3) whether you are interested in presenting, and 4) what your main area of interest is in WIDS. A draft programme and list of participants will be published in early 2017.

Dynamic Landscapes

The theme of WIDS2017 is “Dynamic Landscapes”. Wetlands in drylands typically have a negative annual water balance and provide essential ecosystem services in moisture-limited landscapes. WIDS are also inherently dynamic systems, since the form and functioning of rivers and wetlands change over time in response to extrinsic controls such as climate, hydrology, and human activities, and intrinsic factors such as sedimentation, erosion, and ecological succession. WIDS have irregular flood, drought and fire regimes that create mosaic-like aquatic ecosystems that often defy simple approaches to management. For example, changes in the location, extent, and integrity of channels and wetlands can lead to significant changes in inundation, aquatic ecosystem responses to flooding, and to flow-on effects for biota, habitat condition and agricultural productivity.

Although knowledge of the external controls and internal processes of WIDS is ever-growing, integrative, multidisciplinary research is required to understand the key threats and thresholds of change in these dynamic systems. The long-term sustainable use of WIDS will also rely on appropriate applications of multidisciplinary research to holistic and adaptive management practices.

Agenda

WIDS2017 will include six core interactive sessions that will combine formal presentations with panel and group discussions. The sessions will be framed around the following topics:

1. Hydro-geomorphological dynamics of WIDS (e.g. inundation regimes; channel change)
2. Ecological dynamics of WIDS (e.g. ecosystem metabolism; vegetation succession)
3. Biogeochemical dynamics of WIDS (e.g. nutrient cycling; carbon dynamics)
4. Socio-cultural dynamics of WIDS (e.g. changing perspectives; adaptive management)
5. Understanding environmental drivers of change and resilience in WIDS (an integrative session)
6. Perceptions of science and management for WIDS and future outlooks (an integrative session)

Further Information

For more information about the Wetlands in Drylands Research Network and WIDS2017, please visit <http://wetlandsindrylands.net>