

## **Living with water**

My talk on 'living with water' acknowledges how closely our lives are intertwined with freshwater, and how understanding this is a central step to re-working our Australian water ethics. We do not just live with water as a drink or a resource that is integral to our food webs, rather, we are made of water, and without water we will die. This is true not just for humans, but for all species. Understanding this powerful role of water is something that traditional owners from along the Murray River repeatedly emphasise. They also identify the Murray River itself as a living being. This water-as-life understanding is often missing from water debates that narrowly perceive water-as-resource for human management and consumption. We need water for both – life and resource – and bringing these two elements together is something that Indigenous people are doing in their language of 'cultural flows'. This presentation will connect living with water, and living water, with the work of Wamba Wamba and Barapa Barapa traditional owners to have a cultural flow recognised as part of the Edward-Wakool river system in southern New South Wales.