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DEALING WITH THE SWAN CANNING CHRONIC PROBLEM

Proposal for direct action, a single responsible agency and a cultural heritage river Centre

This second media release is in response to the chronic health problems of Perth's iconic Swan River (eg. <http://bit.ly/2oVpbaM>). As described in a report by *My Clean River* (MCR), five concrete and steel oxygen injectors operate on the upper river reaches of the Swan and Canning rivers as palliative care systems to keep the river alive. In the spirit of not informing the public, their signage does not even say they are there to deal with the consequences of pollution.

The MCR report shows that nearly 80 per cent of the algal problem is a result of the pollution from inappropriate fertilisers and animal activities. That algae is not only harmful to humans, on dying it strips oxygen from the water killing fish, other aquatic life and so affecting other life including birds. Direct action to deal with the pollution would not only be cheaper for the taxpayers, it would eventually reverse the river's decline says MCR spokesperson Remco van Santen.

There are several lower cost opportunities to begin reversing the decline of the river:

1. Deal with the fertiliser problem directly in sensitive areas and especially for recreational activities such as sporting ovals and racecourses. MCR proposes that to achieve the government's own pollution target, the exclusion of the Avon River catchment must end as it alone contributes to one-half the pollution problem.
2. Review land use for animal and recreational activities, notably horse raising and cattle that account for around one-third the pollution problem.
3. Involve the Aboriginal people as required by the United Nations Environment Program Agenda 21 that Australia has signed to help rebuild the river's biodiversity.

4. Create an information and tourist Centre for the Swan River using Aboriginal understanding. This facility would help citizens and tourists gain an understanding of the important role the river plays in local Aboriginal culture and the life of Perth's residents today. With tourist interest for Perth in decline, this would be where they can access the Aboriginal heritage. This facility would draw people from all over the world, providing a window into more than 50,000 years of indigenous wisdom of how this part of the planet is being restored.

"The river must cease to be a costly political football" says Remco van Santen. There are low cost solutions available that, together with the insights from the local Aboriginal people, can have our river become a revitalised icon, a recreational asset and, with the Centre, create a fascinating tourist attraction that will inform and help us become aware of what can be done."

"While the river will never return to its original state", says Remco "with the stewardship of the Indigenous and informed Perth residents, we can ensure future generations will still have a playground and a place to catch prawns and to safely enjoy it once again".

If you would like more information about this topic, or an electronic copy of the *Swan Resource 2017* report contact us.