

Edited by Robyn Bartel, Louise Noble,
Jacqueline Williams and Stephen Harris

Water Policy, Imagination and Innovation

Interdisciplinary Approaches



Earthscan Studies in
Water Resource Management

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Water Policy, Imagination and Innovation

This book explores creative interdisciplinary and potentially transformative solutions to the current stalemate in contemporary water policy design. A more open policy conversation about water than exists at present is proposed – one that provides a space for the role of the imagination and is inclusive – of the arts and humanities, relevant stakeholders, including landholders and Indigenous peoples, as well as science, law and economics.

Written for a wide audience, including practitioners and professional readers, as well as scholars and students, the book demonstrates the value of multiple disciplines, voices, perspectives, knowledges and different ways of relating to water. It provides a fresh and timely response to the urgent need for water policy that works to achieve sustainability, and may be better able to resolve complex environmental, social and cultural water issues. Utilising a broad range of evidentiary sources and case studies from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and elsewhere, the authors of this edited collection demonstrate how new ways of thinking and imagining water are not only possible but already practised, and growing in saliency and impact. The current dominance of narrower ways of conceptualising our relationship with water is critiqued, including market valuation and water privatisation, and more innovative alternatives are described, including those that recognise the importance of place-based stories and narratives, adopt traditional ecological knowledge and relational water appreciations, and apply cutting-edge behavioural and ecological systems science.

The book highlights how innovative approaches drawing on a wide range of views may counter prevailing policy myopia, enable reflexive governance and transform water policy towards addressing water security questions and the broader challenges posed by the Anthropocene and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

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 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

earthscan
from Routledge

First published 2018
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-1-138-72937-7 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-18990-1 (ebk)

Typeset in Goudy

by Swales & Willis Ltd, Exeter, Devon, UK

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Contributors

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Content Logic

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Darren Ryder is an Associate Professor of Aquatic Ecology and Restoration in the School of Environmental and Rural Science at the University of New England, Armidale NSW. In this role he teaches units in freshwater ecology, management and restoration. When not teaching he reverts to life as a field ecologist with research interests in the effective management and restoration of freshwater ecosystems in rural landscapes. Darren's research focuses on community and ecosystem ecology, and has fostered an ambition to provide a scientific evidence-base for the management of water resources to sustain both ecological and rural communities.

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Dr Mark Shephard has researched water law and natural resource management at the University of New England (UNE) 2014–17; Banting Fellow at McGill University 2012–13; Oxford University 2013; University of Lucerne 2011; and Lincoln University (NZ) 2010. Dr Shephard is recipient (with Dr Bettina Lange, Oxford) of the Richard Macrory Prize for the best article in the *Journal of Environmental Law* during 2014. A focal point for Dr Shephard's research is the stewardship responsibilities associated with property in natural resources.

This sits at the intersection of private rights and public interests in defining clearer obligations to achieve behaviour change.

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