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Associate Professor Day is a physical and social scientist with interests in water and environmental policy and futures. She currently works in postgraduate training with Indigenous academic staff at the University of Sydney and researches in Indigenous water issues, science and postgraduate Indigenous education. Diana's experience ranges across the sectors including as academic researcher at the Universities of Newcastle, the University of New England and The Australian National University and also senior policy advisor in regional water planning and natural resources management to the Australian and NSW governments. She holds directorships of several Australian government agribusiness research and development corporations and has contributed to Australian water and land management through directorships of a range of national statutory authorities in the environmental and agricultural fields. Diana also has professional interests and a private practice in career management, executive coaching and mentoring and contributes to related programs within the University of Sydney. Diana is Adjunct Professor, Division of Health and Applied Sciences at Southern Cross University at Lismore NSW. Diana is presenting two papers at the conference, once of which she is co-presenting with Claire McLisky.

Privatisation of Australia's Freshwater Commons: Implications for Indigenous Water Culture

Much of Australia's freshwater commons are already privatised, mainly to non- Indigenous interests. Few rivers run free. Most are regulated by storages and have water allocation to 'productive' economic or consumptive uses. Environmental water allocations are few and paltry. Very few aquifers escape commercial water extraction in Australia, the driest ice free place on Earth.

An Australian government decree in 2004, gave in spectacular fashion, big water users direct property capitalization of their water. Property values have always reflected the size of the water allocation held. Now this was clearer. All water 'owners' now have a guaranteed property right for water in law. This new ownership converts mere licence holders of water to water property

owners, ready to buy and sell and plan water for many years in advance, including Indigenous land owners---providing the water is there of course.

The gate is now wide open to further privatization of fresh water and to the diminishment of free environmental water protection and of Indigenous water rights. There is a globalised corporatist shadow growing over our environmental water.

While contemporary public planning exposure to traditional Indigenous water and land knowledges is slim, it is now more important than ever that this is sharply made, and soon. As governments push for Indigenous water owners to evaluate and use their water property, there is expectation that this water will be purposefully used for economic as well as cultural needs. But who will benefit?

The importance of unique Australian Aboriginal knowledges about water and its earthly and spiritual significance should be a vital element in contemporary water planning. Yet there is a large reluctance by mainstream natural resources and water agencies to adequately engage Indigenous perspectives. Even though western water values could be construed as extremely narrow in terms of its water statutes and water planning instruments and largely untested over long periods of time and climatic change. Key Indigenous knowledge systems pertinent to a broader strategic view of planning Australia's freshwater are suggested that incorporate wider equity and social good, security, scientific and sustainability contributions. Institutional and social policy responses to incorporation of Western and Indigenous paradigms in water and land are suggested.