

Preface

Moreton Bay *Quandamooka* and its catchment cover a large area of approximately 23,000 km² and nurture the lives and livelihoods of millions of people. Burgeoning populations, urbanisation and industrialisation have put various components of this system under substantial pressure. There is some urgency to take a closer look at its current health so, from the 1st to 3rd November 2016 we did just that in the form of the Moreton Bay *Quandamooka* and Catchment Forum.

The Forum revisited many of the issues addressed at the Moreton Bay & Catchment Conference of 1996 (see the proceedings volume *Moreton-Bay-and-Catchment 1998* at <https://ian.umces.edu/blog/2014/01/30/moreton-bay-and-catchment/>) and brought together people with expertise and a passion for the Bay and the health of the lands and waters in its catchment. From the outset, our position was that this meeting should be a partnership among institutions, entities and individuals. Ideally, it should not only deliver an update of research, but also find a new way forward so that we would not have to wait another 20 years for a broad collaborative opportunity to engage in research, governance and citizen science to foster positive outcomes for the Bay and catchment.

We succeeded with the Forum, in part, due to the kind offers from particularly dedicated individuals to act as leaders of the discipline areas (called Clusters by the organisers) which, with some modifications, later became the basis of the chapters of this volume. They recruited experts and managed the process of putting together a series of presentations designed to cover the latest information available on their topic.

Some 170 attendees from a wide diversity of backgrounds and disciplines signed on, and most got to hear all of the presentations. Chaired by the Cluster Leaders, the first two full days were assigned to a rapid-fire series of ten-minute talks that summarised the current state of knowledge on a wide range of topics, and identified key research, management and legislative priorities. The third day was reserved for a series of synthesis meetings led by Cluster Leaders that drew on the evidence heard during the first two days. Significant moments included an impassioned talk on Respect and Recognition (Mind the Gap) by Darren Burns of the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation (QYAC); Andrew Davidson's very amusing and insightful talk on catchment planning, with his Duggie (dugong) awards, represented as star ratings in his formal paper with Darryl Low Choy in this volume; and Justine Kemp's sobering analysis of regional pre- vs post-"European" sediment erosion histories. We also learned about a planned development at Toondah Harbour that would violate Moreton Bay's Ramsar status as a Wetland of International Significance – a designation that is meant to protect habitat for migratory waders (shorebirds) and other wetland values. No doubt others will have their own significant moments, but perhaps *the* most significant few minutes of the entire forum occurred when John Goodman of the Goodman Foundation pledged \$500,000 to establish The Moreton Bay Foundation. A remarkable family who are now likely to have made a singularly important contribution to the well-being of the Bay and its catchment.

The Forum was followed by two years of work led by Ian Tibbetts, Tamara Homburg and the Cluster Leaders, seeking papers from contributors, organising independent peer reviewers, all guided by a dedicated group of volunteer editors. We met in coffee shops, restaurants and offices to thrash out the structure and means of publishing this volume. It has been a process filled with interesting challenges, including how to fund the book's publication. That issue was resolved with the realisation of The Moreton Bay Foundation (TMBF) and the decision to

publish electronically. We expect this first TMBF publication will be quickly followed by others, adding to a compendium of knowledge about the Bay and its attendant systems.

The Moreton Bay *Quandamooka* and Catchment Forum of 2016 was an important event; both for what it achieved at the time, and what it has sparked since; particularly the establishment of the multi-institutional and independent Moreton Bay Foundation Limited. We are convinced, as are the founding members of TMBF (The Goodman Family Foundation, QYAC, The University of Queensland, Griffith University, and Queensland University of Technology), that we now have a mechanism that will ensure: future partnerships in research and restoration; independent advice to government - a voice for the Bay; and a focus around which to regularly meet to review where we are and what we must do to secure a brighter future for Moreton Bay and its catchment. We have found our new way forward.

The editors,

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