

Exploring a systemic framework for intervening in a current local sustainability issue – Traveston Crossing Dam

Anne Stephens, Tanzi Smith, Cynthia Mitchell, Juliet Willetts and Christine King

It is widely stated that Australia is in a water crisis. A microcosm of this crisis can be found in the region of South East Queensland, where there are presently many controversial proposals for water management. In this paper, we present a systemic framework for considering environmental values and how they relate to one of these proposals – the Traveston Crossing Dam. The first two authors share personal experience as residents of the communities affected by this proposal and are strongly motivated to evaluate whether the decision making processes in relation to the Dam proposal have been critically informed. To achieve this, the systemic framework draws on the theoretical contribution of ecofeminism to enhance our capacity to explore issues of conflict, power and their cultural expressions. Translation of this framework into practical action is facilitated by the use of ecological principles which guide the practice of Permaculture. The capacity of this systemic framework to explicate the Traveston Crossing Dam proposal and to offer guidance for our intervention with respect to this proposal is explored and described. Implications for action by citizens and professionals in relation to future water management in South East Queensland are also drawn from the analysis.