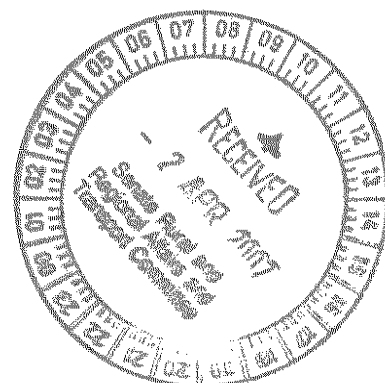


Lex & Ann Gorrie
313 Eatonvale Road
MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650

29th March, 2007

Committee Secretary
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee
Department of the Senate
P.O. Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Inquiry into Additional Water Supplies for South-East Queensland – Traveston Crossing Dam Information

The purpose of this letter is to provide information for the Senate Inquiry.

For the past ten months we have been horrified at the Queensland Governments's fool-hardy decision to build a mega dam on the Mary River at Traveston. We consider this decision to be nothing short of **environmental vandalism**, for the following reasons:

- The land in the affected area is some of the most beautiful and arable in Australia.
- Approximately 900 families in the affected area will lose their livelihoods, plus a domino effect all the way to Hervey Bay and beyond, most particularly in the farming and fishing sectors, and causing a flow-on effect to all other industries and employment in the whole area.
- The Mary River has already suffered from the building of a series of barrages, causing silting and salinity. We certainly do not want to suffer a repeat of the great ecological disaster of the Murray/Darling river system, caused by damming.
- If the Mary River is dammed it will completely destroy the fragile ecological balance of the Great Sandy Strait, preventing the regular flushing function of the river, and clogging channels with sand. It is already struggling to do this because of the effects of drought, and the barrages, as previously mentioned.
- If the Mary River is dammed it will in time make **extinct** a number of marine life, including the rare **Mary River turtle**, the **Mary River cod**, and the **Queensland lungfish "Dala"**, native only to the Mary River and the Burnett River (already dammed by the Paradise Dam, and considered by some world-wide experts to be one of the greatest, all-time, ecological disasters). **The lungfish has recently**

been discovered to be the missing evolutionary link between amphibian and human life. How could anyone even contemplate the extinction of such a precious creature, found nowhere else in the world?

THIS DAM SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO GO AHEAD !!

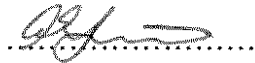
At a recent meeting that we attended other alternatives for solving south-east Queensland's water crisis were discussed. These include:

- Raising the level of the Borumba Dam.
- Making it mandatory for every home to have rain water tanks installed.
- Piping water from north Queensland, adjacent to the already existing railway line.
- Recycling treated effluent.
- Desalination; and others.

We hereby appeal to the Senate Committee to prevent the building of the Traveston Dam, on the grounds of the irrevocable ecological, economic and social disaster that would be caused by such an action.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,



Lex & Ann Gorrie

Attached: Information on endangered Mary River catchment fauna.



A Bid To Save "DALA" the Queensland Lungfish

Posted on Wednesday, October 4, 2006 at 11:00AM by [stevem](#) in [Dr Eve Fesl, Environmental](#) | [Post a Comment](#)
EXTINCTION IS FOREVER!

A BID TO SAVE "DALA", THE QUEENSLAND LUNGFISH, AN ENDANGERED SPECIES IN THE MARY RIVER
ACROSS WHICH A DAM IS PROPOSED TO BE BUILT

By Eve Mumewa Doreen Fesl, OAM, CM, PhD (nee Evelyn Serico), Gubbi Gubbi Elder

Imagine being able to link your history back 380 million years? Impossible you say? Yes, for humans, but we have one resident of Queensland who can do that – **THE QUEENSLAND LUNG FISH** (*Neoceratodus forsteri*). The lung fish appeared on earth 180 million years before the dinosaurs and found a habitat which enabled it to live into our days. Is it right that we humans are contemplating the destruction of this pre-historic example of evolution because of five years less rainfall than we used to have? This living fossil link is the evolution of all our feathery and hairy fellow creatures with fishes. There are six species of lung fish in the world belonging to two families. One family contains a single species only, and this is our Queenslander, making it a very rare species indeed.

What is special about our lung fish is that it has only one lung, while all other species have two (paired) lungs.

World-wide lung fish are very rare and endangered because they rely on special habitats that increasingly are occupied by humans.

The natural habitat of the Queensland lung fish is restricted to the Burnett and Mary River systems. The Queensland lung fish is unique in the world, making it a creature of highest biodiversity value and significance. It is a rare natural asset which we have a duty to protect. Its uniqueness, the links to the past, afforded by its natural habitat confined to our State, should be sufficient reasons in themselves for highest protection priority for this creature and the habitat on which it depends to ensure the survival of a viable population – the only one of its kind on the planet.

CULTURAL HERITAGE: However, another important reason to protect it, is that it is a sacred (totemic) fish of the Gubbi Gubbi people. We never killed or ate the fish, and saw it as important to protect it. We call it "Dala" and for reasons associated with its important place in our culture, we were often referred to by other Aboriginal groups, as "the Dala" people. Our traditional land encompasses the Mary River basin and its catchments. The Mary Cod is an important economic fish, but the Dala (Lung Fish) are not to be killed but protected from harm. The lungfish's longevity of life and occupancy of our waterways, is undoubtedly due in part, to its protection by our people over tens of thousands of years. We are still bound by this duty of care – the reason for my penning this document in an appeal for help for the survival of "Dala".

LEGISLATION: Through the Integrated Planning Act (1997), now embodied in the South East Queensland Regional Plan (2005), the State government committed itself to "recognise, protect and conserve Aboriginal values in land, water and natural resources" (section 7.4). It also recognises the principle and policies to "conserve and manage the region's biodiversity values" and "ensure land use planning and development activities "...respect identified biodiversity values" in order to "protect, manage and enhance areas of ..biodiversity significance: (section 2.1). p.t.o The proposed dam on the Mary River clearly violates the SEQ Regional Plan because the Mary-Burnett basin is known to be the only natural habitat of the Queensland Lungfish.

It also ignores the Gubbi Gubbi cultural heritage values and the reverence we give to this creature. Studies to date give sufficient reason to not dam the river, however, if further studies are undertaken for developments which involve use of water from the Mary River, the following should be given special attention: Studies must involve fresh-water stream ecologists and other scientists using the most up-to-date technologies and methodologies. The issue is too critical to rely on outdated practices. (Data to date indicates that our lung fish transported to other catchments have not done well, so transportation is not an answer). Its eggs are attached to specific aquatic plants during August to December. However, it is slow growing, taking 2 years to reach 1.2 cm. and 100 years to reach its maximum size of 1.5 m. The plants on which eggs are laid, should also be the subject of study and care. With its long life span, the fact that Dala fails to reproduce under altered conditions such as those caused by a dam will go unnoticed for years – but then it will be too late to rectify the

mistakes we make today, which will destroy Dala forever.

SUMMARY: Effects of dams on Queensland Lung Fish ("Dala" to the Gubbi Gubbi people)

* Dams prohibit the possibility of migration over the long distances they need during spawning

* Dala requires shallow, flowing riffles and glides amongst dense beds of submerged aquatic plants to lay its eggs – these do not exist within a dam.

Breeding Area 300 m South of proposed dam site at Traveston Crossing: Note riffles (shallow water rapids) top left hand side. Breeding cannot occur in the deep waters of a dam.

There are many issues associated with the need for riffles, optimum water quality, and so on, but the bottom line is: Do people in Queensland, Australia and around the globe care enough to protect Dala, the Queensland Lungfish and its habitat? Let the Premier of Queensland and Government, (Parliament House, Brisbane) know your views! Dala budawathin!

Eve Mumewa DoreenFest

Please forward to all who may help. Advise me by short email of your support efest@cytech.com.au 29 Fountain Road, Burpengary – 4505, Queensland, Australia Tel: 07-3888-52

see also>>

[Sacred sites bid to kill of dam](#)

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The Queensland Premier's announcement (5 July 2006) to build a mega-dam on the Mary River threatens the very existence of the most endangered turtle in Australia and one of the most unique turtles in the world. The seasonally variable Mary River is actually the last remaining habitat for several of the country's endangered species. One of these is the Mary River Turtle *Elusor macrurus*, but other endangered and vulnerable species of this catchment include the Southern Snapping Turtle (*Elseya albagula*), Mary River Cod (*Maccullochella peellii mariensis*), Queensland Lungfish (*Neoceratodus forsteri*) and Honey Blue-eye (*Pseudomugil mellis*), just to name a few! The Mary River is clearly a unique habitat that provides specific requirements for all of these species that are found nowhere else in the world.

The Mary River Turtle was only described by Cann and Legler in 1994. It is a monotypic (one of a kind) genus representing a very old lineage of turtles that has all but disappeared from the evolutionary history of Australia. It is one of Australia's largest species of freshwater turtle with specimens measuring in excess of 50 cm carapace (shell) length! The tail structure, particularly in males, is a unique feature that has been lost in all other modern turtle species! This species is able to absorb oxygen via the cloaca/vent whilst underwater which is a survival strategy, particularly for hatchlings and juveniles. To do this, they require the water to be highly oxygenated and therefore impounded or dammed areas do not provide suitable habitat for their survival! Dams also have the effect of dividing or fragmenting populations thus impeding the gene flow and causing a loss of diversity.

The main threatening factors to the survival of the Mary River turtle include slow maturation (20+ years), the continued use of historic nesting sites (even when nests are heavily predated by feral pests and trampled by livestock), loss of habitat and loss of specific foods associated with the lack of aquatic and riparian ecosystems. Do they really need a dam to add to all of this?

Prior to the announcement of this dam the Mary River Turtle was federally and internationally listed as endangered by the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)* and the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (2000)*, respectively. This listing is currently being revised using available data and, even before this dam is constructed, their status may be changed to 'critically endangered'.

The Federal Minister for Environment and Heritage is the only person with the power to stop this dam. He has to be made aware of the potential destruction of this species, to be persuaded to act!


The answer to Queensland's water crisis should lie in education about sustainable water use, storm water collection and the introduction of water recycling and other modern technology, not the damming of a fragile and unique river ecosystem.

Threatened Fauna of the Mary River Catchment


Take steps to protect waterway fauna

Don't pollute waterways

Revegetate with local native plants




Mary River turtle
Chelonia mydas
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Areas near the Mary River

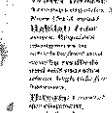


Queensland lungfish
Neoceratodus forsteri
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary and Chertina river systems only. Also found in the Chertina and Mary rivers.

Water issues
A major concern is the impact of the Traveston Dam on the Mary River catchment. The dam will reduce the flow of water in the river, which will affect the survival of many native species.




Water monitor lizard
Varanus salvator
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Lowland areas, particularly near waterways.




Giant water bug
Psephenopsis australis
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, fast-flowing water in the Mary River catchment.


Don't release non-local fauna species in waterways



Tusked frog
Myobatrachus tuskus
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary River catchment.




Rufous birdwing butterfly
Gynephanes hirsutus
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary River catchment.

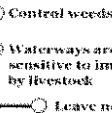


Ridge's ant-blue butterfly
Anteosia ridgei
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary River catchment.


Control weeds - early is best



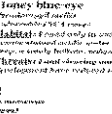
Waterways are sensitive to impacts by livestock



Leave near-stream vegetation intact




Honey blue eye
Phrynobranchia mulleri
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary River catchment.




Mary River eel
Anguilla marmorata
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary River catchment.

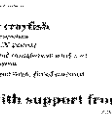
Grand treefrog
Litoria saccolina
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary River catchment.



Cullen's fig-parrot
Stiphodon cullenii
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary River catchment.



Barriers to flow are barriers to fish



Grand spiny crayfish
Euastacus armatus
Endangered (EN) 1.9992
Habitat: Shallow, slow-moving water in the Mary River catchment.

This poster developed by the Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee with support from:

For information contact MRCCC, QPWS or your local Landcare group.

Click on the image above for full size.

Click here for more on [Mary River Dam](#)

when rain falls on the Sunshine Coast, the surf - from the mouth of the Maroochy River south to Alexander Headlands Surf Club - goes brown from run off. [read more](#)

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Ever feel intimidated by four-wheel-drives and believe that they don't belong in an urban environment? [read more](#)

Global warming hits 'close to home'

This issue, Living Smart's Jo Turner looks at the "hidden" transport in delivering the wants and needs of a typical suburban home - the impact of global warming, and on our hip pockets. [read more](#)

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Mary River Catchment fauna threatened by Traveston dam proposal

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By Amy Coleman

Some of southeast Queensland's most endangered species and ecosystems are likely to be devastated by the Mary River mega-dam.

Of most concern are the impacts on three nationally listed animals – the Mary River Cod, Queensland Lungfish and the Mary River Turtle. The threatened fauna of the Mary River Catchment are shown here.

The Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee's Dale Watson says that of 260 rare and threatened species in the region the three aquatic species are of major concern.

Watson says: "There will be massive effects on aquatic life. It may even be more catastrophic than what has happened to the Murray River".

"The Mary River Cod and Mary River Turtle are listed as being endangered on the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) and the Queensland Lungfish – often seen as the missing link between humans and fish – as vulnerable."

Ironically, just 12 months ago, the then Primary Industries and Fisheries Minister Henry Palaszczuk announced further protection for the "iconic and endangered" Mary River Cod.

The Minister announced the provision of new signs to tell anglers that it is "an offence to target or possess the fish with penalties of up to \$75,000 for those who break the rules."

Mr. Palaszczuk said: "Mary River cod were once distributed extensively throughout south-east Queensland but are now found naturally only in parts of the Mary River system.

"Mary River cod numbers have declined in the past mainly due to habitat loss.

"Mary River cod are totally protected in Queensland except in some stocked dams. If anglers follow the rules, there is a chance that stocks of these iconic fish could be saved from extinction."

While his current Natural Resources and Water Minister may know the difference, Premier Beattie was confused between Mary River Cod and Murray River Cod, which he called them at the dam announcement.

There is no confusion however, about the ecological impacts on both the Mary and Murray river systems.

The WWF's Dr. Stuart Blanch says up to \$5 billion has already gone into restoring the damage to rivers like the Murray.

In a recent article calling for national water protection Dr Blanch said: "Lessons learnt from the Murray Darling and other stressed waterways show that it's ten times cheaper to protect healthy water systems than repair them once they've been degraded."

Watson said: "There is a very good chance that what has happened in the Murray Darling Region may happen here.

"The Mary River Cod population is lower in numbers than the Murray River numbers were before what happened there."

The Mary River region is also the home to several other endangered, threatened and vulnerable species including the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly, three species of frogs, and Coxen's Fig Parrot.

At the announcement the Premier claimed: "We are not environmental vandals.

"We will be working closely with the environment movement to ensure minimal impact on species such as the Murray River Cod, the Mary River Turtle and local lungfish populations."

At the time of publication there had been no official contact between the Queensland Government and the Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC), the Qld Conservation Council (QCC) or the Sunshine Coast Environment Council (SCEC) about the dam. None were consulted before the Traveston decision was announced. All agree these endangered animals will suffer if a mega dam is to proceed.

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A recent, independent report has reinforced community opinion after finding the Traveston Crossing Dam is not necessary. [read more](#)

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The Sunshine Coast Environment Council today called on the State Government to delay all Council Local Growth Management Strategies until after the 2008 council elections. [read more](#)

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Every oil field goes through a production cycle of increase-peak-decline. While half of an oil well remains at the peak in its production, the other half of the oil is harder to extract, it becomes filled with water and requires more energy to pump it out. Eventually the well is abandoned. [read more](#)

Drowning in a Sea of Brown!

It is generally accepted that