



Research Directions

Office of Research Services

The Sustainability Challenge

Associate Professor Basant Maheshwari, School of Natural Sciences, is undertaking research into measuring sustainability within the irrigation industry. Funded by the Cooperative Research Centre, Irrigation Futures, the research will enable measurement of how the irrigation sector is impacting on surrounding areas to determine whether it can continue into the future without long-term detriment to the environment.

Irrigation system



‘The community is now placing very high demands on irrigation industries to perform better and to demonstrate how much they have improved’ explained Professor Maheshwari. ‘At present the irrigation community does not have a widely accepted way of doing this. Our research will identify sustainability indicators and build a framework that can be adopted by irrigators across Australia’.

The study will bring together data from a range of sources and review the sustainability indicators and models being currently used across Australia. Consultation with irrigation industry stakeholders will be carried out. Along with a review of international and national literature, this information will be used to design a framework for sustainable irrigation. The framework will take account of biophysical, economic and social indicators.

The Irrigation Futures projects in the Goulburn Broken Catchment and northern Australia will act as case studies for the development and implementation of the sustainability framework. By studying multiple factors affecting both urban and rural irrigation systems, the research will build the future capacity of the irrigation industry by providing tools to benchmark the industry’s performance in a unified and systematic way.

Project Title: *Challenging the irrigation industry (urban and rural) to measure its sustainability.*

Research Partner: *Cooperative Research Centre for Irrigation Futures*
Funding has been set at: \$341,000.

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