



# Key Environmental Assets & Key Ecosystem Functions

Penny Everingham

# Overview

- Introductions
- Water Act Requirements
- Present Method, Status & timelines
- Questions

# *Water Act 2007*

- Enable Commonwealth in conjunction with States to manage Basin's water resources in the national interest
- Give effect to international agreements, optimise economic, social and environmental outcomes
- Ensure environmental sustainability and in this context, maximise net economic returns to the Australian community
- improve water security for all uses of Basin's water resources

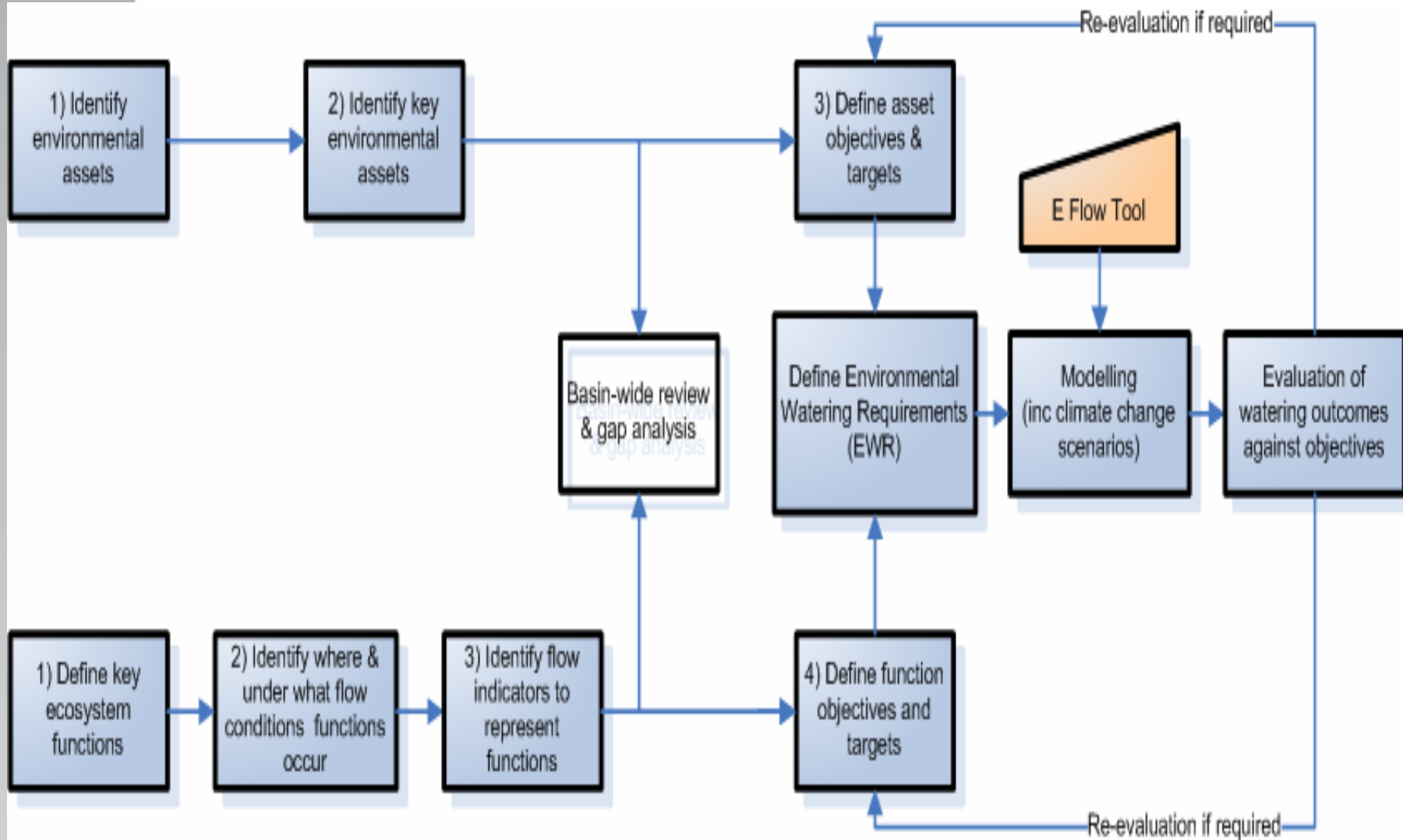
*(after Water Act 2007)*

# Environmentally sustainable level of take

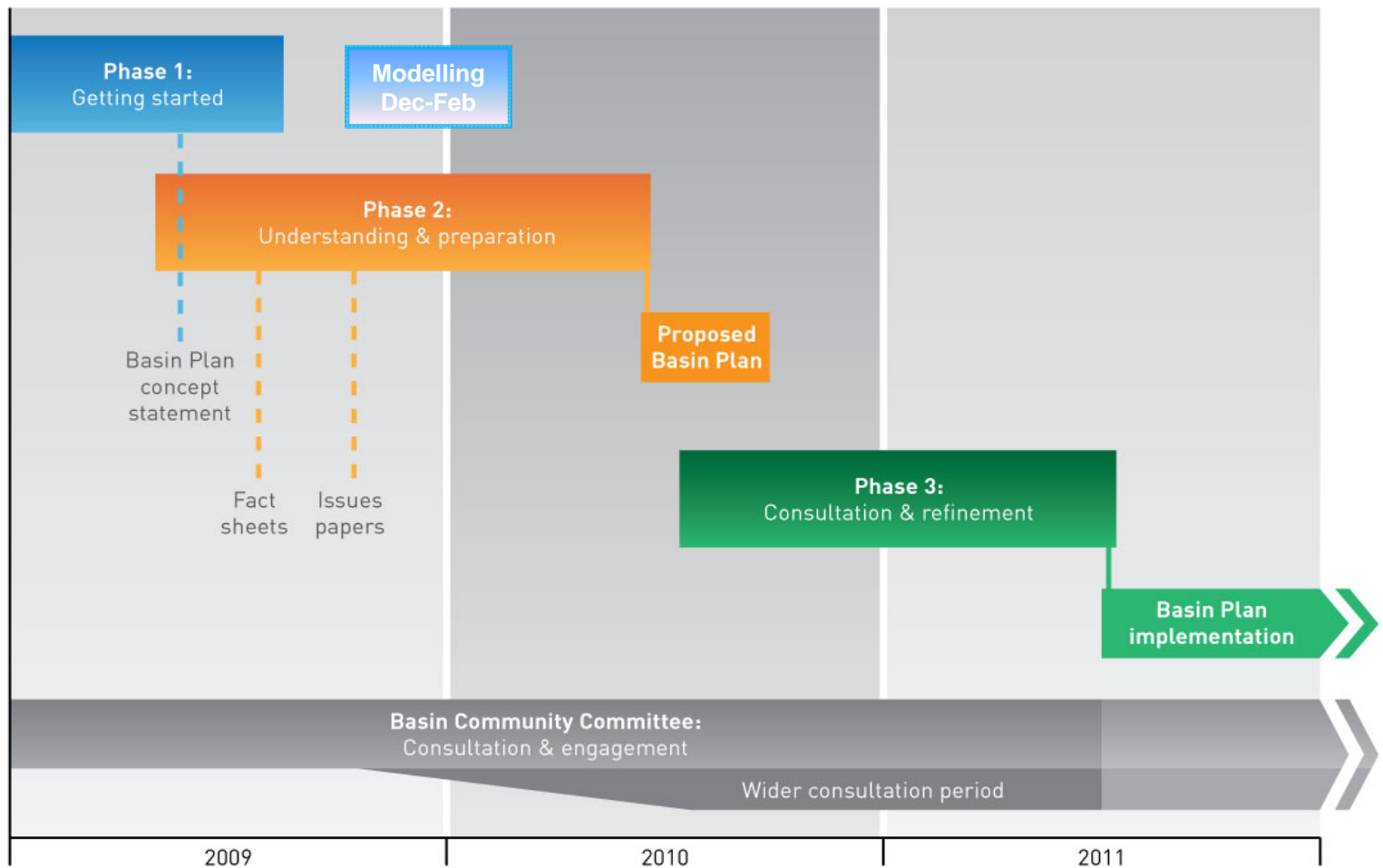
- to define an ***environmentally sustainable level of take*** for a water resource. That is a level at which water can be taken from that water resource which, if exceeded, would compromise:
  - key environmental assets
  - key ecosystem functions
  - productive base
  - key environmental outcomes

(after Water Act s4)

# Overarching Framework



# Overall timelines







# Classification/regionalisation: Context and History

Jeff Richardson

# Environmental Assets

- The Water Act defines environmental assets as:
  - Water dependant ecosystems
  - Sites of ecological significance
  - Ecosystem services.
- Water dependant ecosystems:
  - A wetland
  - A streams and its floodplain
  - A Lake or a body of water
  - A salt marsh
  - A karst system
  - A ground water system



# Key Assets are:

Water dependent ecosystems with known values:

1. *Water-dependant ecosystems of formally recognised significance*
2. *Natural, near-natural, rare or unique water-dependant ecosystems*
3. *Water-dependant ecosystems that provide critical habitat*
4. *Water-dependant ecosystems that support threatened species or communities*
5. *Water-dependant ecosystems that support significant biodiversity*

AND

Water-dependent ecosystems that are determined to be key through a gap analysis process.

This gap analysis fundamentally looks at representativeness: do we have a representative sample of the Basin's WDE?

# Thus far

- Workshop on 18<sup>th</sup> November aiming to determine feasibility of a credible classification and regionalisation with existing datasets (timeframe).
- General agreement that this was feasible
- Commissioned Chris to further develop.