

If the Murray could Speak

I flow on as always, ancient red gums like soldiers stand guarding my flanks
Timeless trees that throughout the ages have always dropped limbs on my banks
I sustain many life forms from wedge tails that wheel and soar high in the air
To humble worms and insects, and snails- they know that I've always been there
The fish that evolved in my currents and are truly unique on this earth
I am their world, their environment, what price can you put on my worth?

My tributaries are etched across this great land and they wander so far and so wide
They all flow to me, you will understand when born west of the great Divide
I flow to the rhythm of nature, those close to me follow its call
Crippling droughts have not dented my stature-I've been able to flow through it all.
Until new wave of people arrived, when my waters were pristine and pure
Some say now that I' may not survive to be honest. I'm not really sure.

You dont have to be academic to know that disaster looms
With my water hit by epidemics of Toxic green algal blooms
My best water lies under the Liverpool Plains and it hydrates the fertile loam
Sustainable farms growing meat, growing grain, black and white have made it their home
A food basket for all of Australia, even during the very worst drought
The loss of such land's a great failure for the nations beyond any doubt

And lost it might be, if greed wins again and exacts a terrible toll
With my sweet water a nuisance to men cause it's stored above seams of brown coal
Worth millions in export earnings- at what cost? is my heartfelt plea
The lessons they should be learning concern aquifers purity
Beware of the spin doctor's song, serenading they'll do me no harm
They'll just shrug their shoulders when they are proved wrong, - and a mine is worth more
than a farm

But outweighing the harm to productive farms or a mine's export earning coal seam
Is to my underground water cause harm, and degrade my whole system downstream.
I know there are some with good hearts speaking out against the old habits and greed
But my time's running out, and actions not words have now become my greatest need.
So rise up, all you and show that you do really and truly love me
By helping me flow unpolluted from the mountains and plains to the sea.

We can, and we must live together, underneath our great Southern Cross
I'm now in your hands, and you must understand you never will measure my loss.
Because I am more than one river, I'm billabongs and countless streams
All interconnected forever, and more ancient than man's oldest dreams
Your children must learn I'm a miracle - a gift that will give on and on
The evidence is clearly empirical - you can't replace me when I'm gone.

Jim Brown