

# The Coorong: science and policies

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60% of beach covered by tyre tracks

6% of nests run-over per day





# Process & Outcome

- Conflict between two groups
  - 4WD users and locals
  - Conservation needs
- Community consultation
- Media involvement
- Eventual outcome – a compromise
  - Half 90-mile beach closed for 2 months













# Process and Outcome

- Despite Ramsar & EPBC listing
  - too costly to dredge the Mouth
  - wait for next flow
- Approaches to government
  - unsuccessful
- Approaches to media
  - successful (Murray Mouth is now dredged)
- Addressing symptom not cause



# Environmental flows

- How much is needed?
- Series of expert panels (scientists) for each reach along the River
- Used the best available knowledge to model influences of different flow requirements (350, 750 and 1500GL)







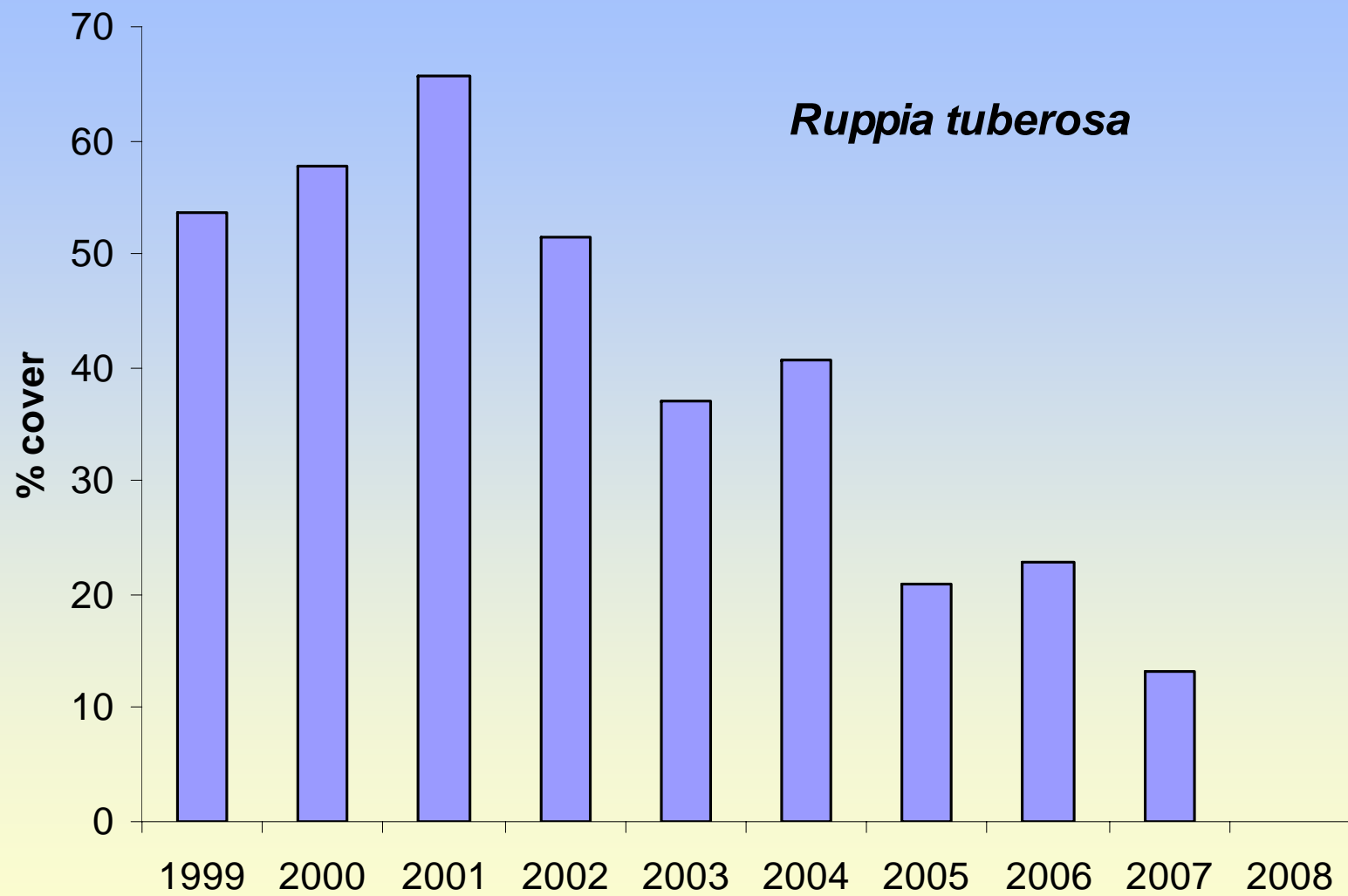
## Benefits of environmental flows

Flow	<i>Ruppia tuberosa</i>		Mouth Open Index
	Relative performance	% years high stress	% years MOI < 0.05
Year 2000	1.00	17	36
<u>Environmental flows</u>			
350 GL	1.17	8	26
750 GL	1.21	5	22
1500 GL	1.38	<1	8
Natural	1.79	<1	<1

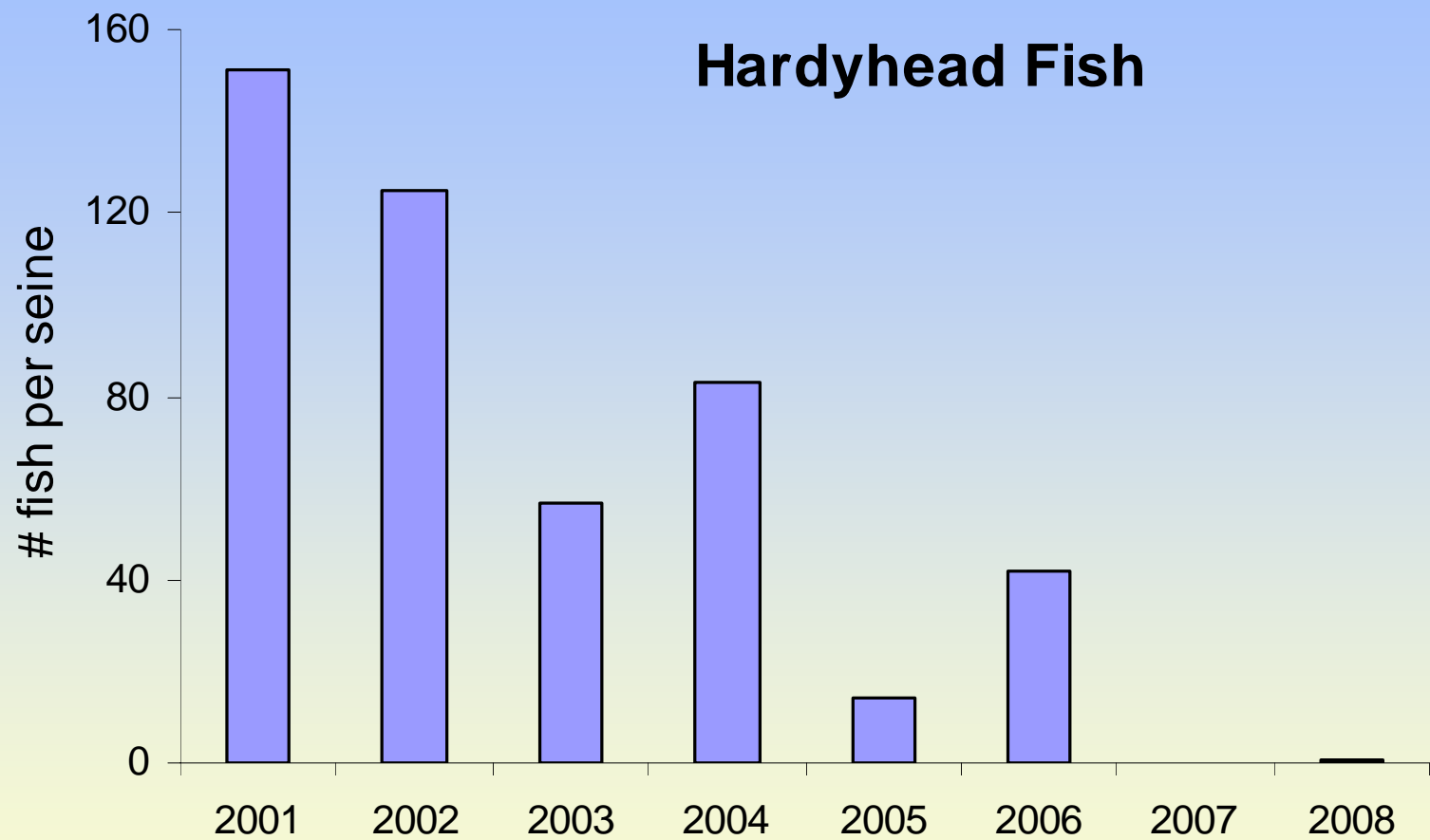


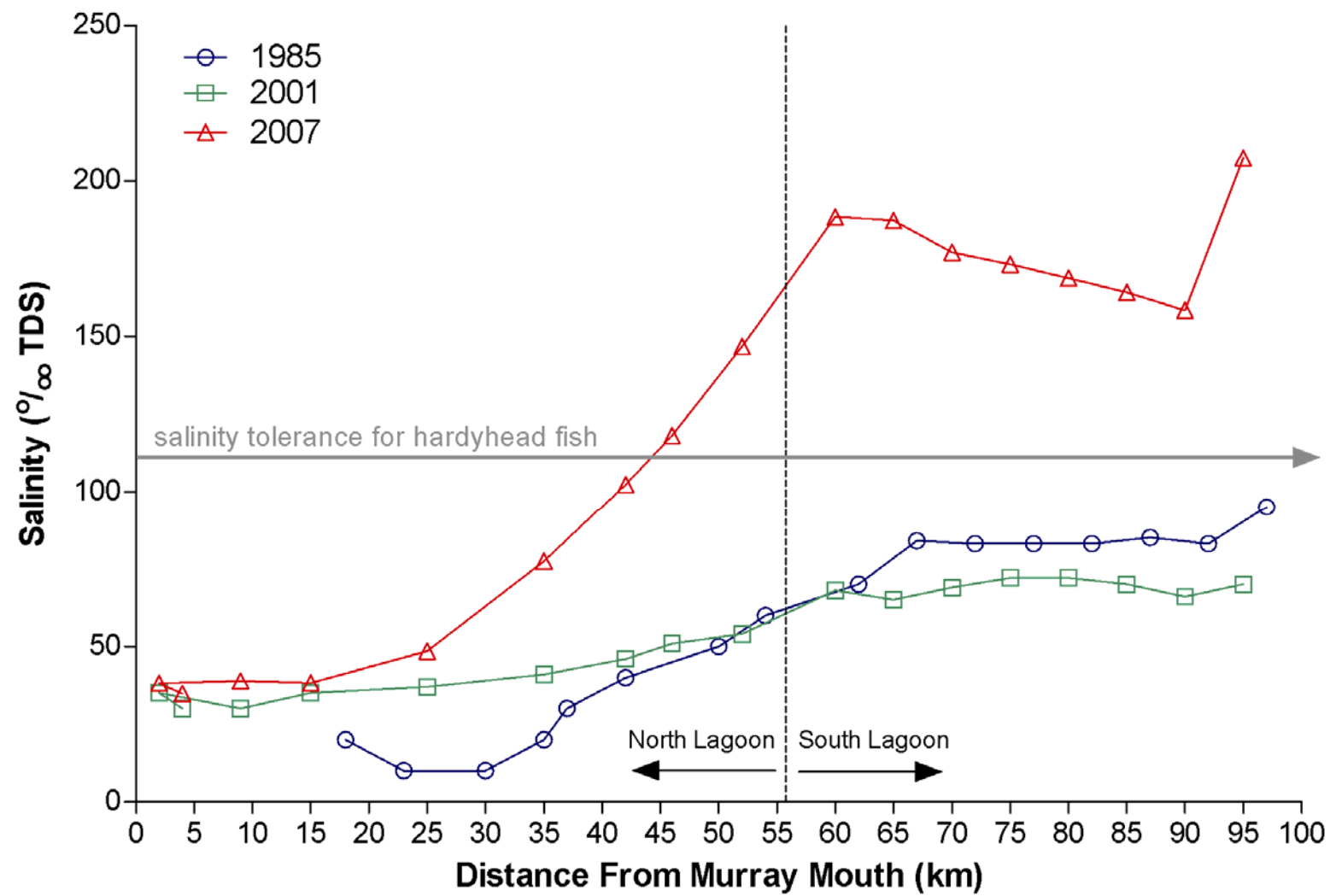
# Outcome

- Major political parties key policy
  - deliver 500GL of environmental flow to the Murray River
  - Prior to **2004** and **2007** federal elections
- Still to meet this obligation
- Should have modelled the “no environmental flow” scenario













**Grey Teal**

1980s      59,000

2000s      10,000

2007      2,500



**Fairy Tern**

1980s      1350

2000s      240

2007      6



## Migratory sandpipers

1980s 45,000

2000s 12,500

2007 9,000



## Red-capped Plover

1980s 2,200

2000s 500

2007 430

# Lessons learnt

- Need science to inform policy
- Need science to manage natural resources
- Scientists need to be strategic
  - Commence by engaging with government
  - Lobby relevant politicians
  - Use the media



