



3RD LANDCARE AND  
CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FORUM  
proceedings

2001  
parkes



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

The views expressed at the Parkes Forum and printed in the Proceedings are as varied as the people and natural resource challenges facing NSW, and are not particular to, or held by one organisation or all groups. But, they provide interesting food for thought for all of us.  
Editor.

## WELCOME TO PARKES 2001

Landcare is at a major crossroad and it is important that we choose the right road to ensure this great network continues to strengthen. After more than a decade of building sustainability through the creation of effective networks and community empowerment it is time for us to take stock.

A great deal has been achieved. In the last decade there has been an immense growth in the level of awareness of environmental and natural resource management. A substantial part of this change can be attributed to the Landcare movement. This has occurred from the smallest community group to the highest level of government.

Federal Government is revising its approach to natural resource planning and funding. The National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality is ambitious and broad ranging, while the Catchment Management Blueprints in NSW ensure that we focus on natural resource management at a regional level. The realisation of these ambitious plans will depend, to a large extent, on the commitment and dedication of volunteers who are the heart and soul of Landcare.

It is natural for such unprecedented change to lead to concern for our own futures and the shape and nature of Landcare. Landcare today takes many forms, including Bushcare, Waterwatch, Rivercare and many others: basically it is people cooperating to care. While this change is occurring we must remain robust and focused while retaining our flexibility. We need to use our experience and skills to implement and influence the onground plans and works at a community level. Landcare as an organisation has developed a set of credentials and a capability that is critical to our government and non government partners in natural resource management. We have succeeded in changing attitudes and behaviour at a grass roots level, and this will continue.

Recently the Federal Government requested that the Australian Landcare Council give advice on sustainable agriculture and capacity building. Landcare through its vast network will be able to provide experienced, sound and practical advice. It is the role of Landcare to remain and develop as a major player in natural resource management issues. This forum at Parkes has provided us with a vehicle to discuss, plan and work together.

### JOHN KLEM

Chair, State Catchment Management Coordinating Committee

## FORUM ORGANISING COMMITTEE

In keeping with the spirit of Landcare, the 2001 Parkes Landcare and Catchment Management Forum would not have taken place without a number of willing people. Many thanks and congratulations to the members of the Forum Organising Committee for taking on this project and running such a successful and positive conference. The Forum Organising Committee would also like to thank the many Parkes and Districts Landcarers who assisted in ensuring the success of the event, and local businesses who contributed their excellent services to the event. The proceedings are available in two parts: this document and the full transcript at [www.landcarens.org/NSWLandcareConference](http://www.landcarens.org/NSWLandcareConference)

### CHAIR

Christopher Cole

Community Landcarer  
Parkes and Districts Landcare Steering Committee

### COMMITTEE

Nina Adams

Farming for the Future

Mark Arrow

Department of Land and Water Conservation

Kent Boyd

Parkes Shire Council

Tom Gavel

NSW Landcare Working Group

Laurel Hull

Parkes & Districts Landcare Steering Committee

Maureen Jackson

NSW Landcare Working Group

Kate Lorimer-Ward

Catchment Management Boards Lachlan and Central West

Mary McGee

Parkes & Districts Landcare Steering Committee

Kathleen Mann

Regional Landcare Facilitator Lachlan

Stafford Orange

Parkes & Districts Landcare Steering Committee

Jenny Quealy

Department Land & Water Conservation and Landcare Australia Limited

Michael Sutherland

Community Landcarer and Landcare Australia Limited.

Kate Wright

State Landcare Facilitator



Parkes Forum Chairman, Christopher Cole, Landcarer, being interviewed by media. Parkes September 2001.

### EVENT MANAGEMENT

The Forum Organising Committee worked with Aurora Solutions of Dubbo to bring together more than 500 community, government and corporate representatives from across NSW.

## THE LANDCARE NETWORK IN NSW



## THE NSW LANDCARE WORKING GROUP

The NSW Landcare Working Group is the peak advisory council for Landcare, community, corporate and government partnerships in NSW. Representation on the Landcare Working Group has evolved throughout 1990-2001, and is drawn from the community in all regions, and a range of government and non-government agencies with a role or interest in natural resource management. The main function of the Landcare Working Group is to support and promote Landcare in NSW, and to represent issues from all Landcare groups in rural, coastal, urban and metropolitan regions to government policy units.

The Landcare Working Group has the following roles:

- Advisory to government
- Communication and co-ordination within the Landcare network and between Landcare and government
- Promotion of Landcare in NSW
- Assessment and review of community participation in natural resource management.

The Landcare Working Group:

- Advises the NSW Government on future community support staffing and the future of Landcare
- Manages Landcare information and directories through the Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC)
- Supports the work of the DLWC State Landcare Team and Regional Landcare Facilitators.

For details of your local representative on the Landcare Working Group, please see [www.landcarensw.org](http://www.landcarensw.org) or contact the executive officer:

Phillip Grenville  
 Department of Land and Water Conservation  
 GPO Box 39  
 Sydney 2001  
 Telephone: 02 92286319  
 Email: [pgrenville@dlwc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:pgrenville@dlwc.nsw.gov.au)

**THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN LANDCARE**

**ERIC ROLLS** – Keynote Address

[www.landcarenewsw.org/NSWLandcareConference/community](http://www.landcarenewsw.org/NSWLandcareConference/community)

Throughout Australia Landcare is doing wonderful work. Unfortunately, such is the wholesale ruination of this country, the work has scarcely begun. Our present practices will exhaust Australia’s resources. Irrigation in Australia has been a failure. No production compensates for the damage already done by flood irrigation. If methods do not improve four million hectares will be salted in the Murray-Darling Basin alone. That is sufficient land to grow one quarter of Australia’s wheat and barley.

Some of our problems can be solved, some alleviated. We have most of the knowledge – the scientific work has been enormous. Twenty per cent of every farm must have connected clumps and corridors of native grasses and the eucalypts that grew with them. That will not only enliven dying country, it will provide more profit for the farmers.

Our rivers, lakes, swamps and billabongs must be allowed to behave more naturally, they have to regain their health. Our seas must have clear water, they need water of low fertility. Our seafood, coral and seagrass are immeasurably more valuable than the agriculture and industry whose discharges contribute to their destruction. Much urban development is unsustainable. Australia cannot afford to lose productive land anywhere. Good soil that should be growing food is lost under buildings. Stormwater that should be collected for reuse pours off paved areas to pollute rivers and harbours.

We need ruthless determination. A strengthened Landcare is our main hope, groups of people planning the welfare of the land for hundreds of years, then speaking, not as separate groups, but with one powerful, united voice.

*“A strengthened Landcare is our main hope, groups of people planning the welfare of the land for hundreds of years, then speaking... with one powerful voice.”*



Mr Eric Rolls



Eric Rolls, author (left) with Professor Michael Archer Director, Australian Museum, after giving rousing speeches about the state of our landscapes.

**THE ACF-SOUTHCORP ALLIANCE**

**COREY WATTS** – Coordinator, Salinity and Sustainable Agriculture Program, Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF).

[www.landcarenewsw.org/NSWLandcareConference/acfscorp](http://www.landcarenewsw.org/NSWLandcareConference/acfscorp)

The Australian Conservation Foundation – Southcorp alliance supports ACF’s advocacy work in salinity and sustainable agriculture, and furthers Southcorp’s interests in ‘whole of landscape’ environmental management systems. The alliance extends the reach of ACF, opens up dialogue across industry and interest sectors, and provides access to campaign resources and tools. The alliance has increased ACF’s campaign capacity, and produced the *EcoVine Project* and, as a part of the Business Leaders’ Roundtable, the *Leveraging Private Investment Report*.

The Salinity and Sustainable Agriculture Program aims to raise awareness of salinity, advocates for public and private action sufficient to address salinity, and calls for improved environmental performance in agriculture. *EcoVine* scopes the relationship between viticulture and the environment on a landscape scale – covering issues such as salinity, river health, greenhouse and biodiversity. This project underpins further practical, sustainable EMS planning across agriculture, and develops linkages between farm based EMS and broader natural resource management processes.

*Leveraging Private Investment* puts forward a package of well-known policy instruments to catalyse large-scale private investment in sustainable and profitable land use. Recommendations include tax preferred investment vehicles, an accreditation framework and seed funding for innovations. A potential \$1.3b per annum could be mobilised, realising new management and land use opportunities and benefiting farmers, communities, new industries, and environmental interests.

The ACF 2051 vision of sustainable rural landscapes links property planning and management systems into whole landscapes, and integrates the social, economic and environmental aspects of production. Economies and production systems are increased and more varied, and rural Australia has been transformed through revegetation and farm forestry.

*“On a global level our markets demand food and fibre produced with no negative environmental impact.”*

## ISSUE DEVELOPMENT GROUP – COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Recognising that the success of Landcare is founded on partnerships, the Community Partnership Issue Development Group focuses on the nature of partnerships and how to improve them, and proposes the development of a framework for facilitating long-term, quality partnerships. Such a framework will provide Landcare groups with the resources and tools for the establishment of partnerships with particular groups and communities, yet retain the flexibility needed to accommodate the local diversity of partnership quality, depth and outcomes.

In considering the issue of ethics in partnerships, the group agrees that there is a need for open and honest communication between partners, and that the formation of partnerships should be guided by intergenerational equity and the precautionary principle.

### FORMING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Reaching beyond the current Landcare circle is an issue facing many regions – with the following three sectors identified as important groups for Landcare to either reach or improve relationships with:

- Indigenous people
- Farmers not involved in Landcare
- Local Government

To form strong partnerships, the diversity of cultures, values and attitudes held by different groups and individuals must be considered. Within partnerships a level of mutual understanding must be achieved in order to create avenues for negotiation and enterprise.

The group proposed that a set of non-mandatory, guiding standards be developed for use by Landcare groups which will:

- Provide guidelines which define partnerships
- Set protocols (i.e. a checklist) for specific types of partnerships
- Provide a 'template' Memorandum of Understanding to recognise formal partnerships
- Include contact database for specific implementation partnerships (eg Landcare groups with local government partners).

### ACTION NOTE

That discretionary guidelines be developed to assist Landcare groups in defining, establishing and strengthening partnerships.

### ACTION NOTE

The group puts forward the following recommendations to establish new partnerships and broaden the reach of Landcare:

- **Foster confidence in Landcare groups**
- **Involve Landcare ambassadors in schools and other 'multiplier' organisations**
- **Demonstrate Landcare success and track record back into the community**

## LANDCARE WORKING GROUP COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The LWG recommends that the targeted audiences be expanded to the following groups:

- Local government
- Farmers not involved in Landcare
- Indigenous people
- Urban community
- Business community

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

It is recommended that the research be carried out by the Department of Land and Water Conservation in association with the Local Government and Shires Association (LGSA), Landcare facilitators and co-ordinators.

Partnerships with local government range in quality and outcomes, but as no formal data on these has been collected since 1994, the LWG recommends that research be undertaken to establish the status of partnerships with this group throughout the state. On completion of the research, it is proposed that a set of guidelines, Partnership Mechanisms, be developed as part of an overall state and regional strategy.

The LWG will explore partnership opportunities with LGSA in areas and issues of common concern.

LWG recommends it conduct a 'social marketing' workshop to identify strategies to increase the number of farmers actively involved in Landcare.

### FARMERS NOT YET INVOLVED IN LANDCARE

While up to 60% of farmers are not formally involved in Landcare, a large proportion of these may be practising good land management.

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Since the Parkes Forum, much progress has been made to improve the full participation and partnership of the Aboriginal communities of NSW in the State's important natural resource and environmental management planning processes. The May 2002 Boomanulla Conference for Country, a two day workshop on natural resource planning for and by representatives of Aboriginal communities, created The Boomanulla Statement with clear and smart recommendations on the following 5 areas:

- A framework for a community approach to natural resource planning and management
- Aboriginal communities: natural resource goals
- Principles and protocols
- Processes for consultation and planning
- Resourcing an effective process.

The Landcare Working Group will be discussing the need for a summary document for the landcare and catchment management networks on current principles and practices for engaging the participation by Aboriginal communities with their catchment and landcare networks in landscapes across NSW. The summary could highlight the outstanding progress and recommendations made from this conference, which create an excellent guiding methodology for all catchment management boards and landcare committees, networks and groups and for all government agencies working on natural resource and environmental planning and actions.

### ACTION NOTE

That a research audit of current local government partnerships be conducted, and partnership opportunities, on matters of common concern, be explored with the Local Government and Shires Association.

### ACTION NOTE

That a set of guidelines, Partnership Mechanisms, be developed as part of an overall state and regional strategy, and the Landcare Working Group to further discuss and develop partnerships with the community sectors identified.



Yalmambirra, (Yarrawarra Aboriginal Corporation) reporting back to the Forum for the Community Partnership Workshop.

# PARTNERSHIPS

## URBAN AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES

The development and extension of relationships with members of the urban and business communities is part of the LWG business plan. A member of the LWG is currently working on developing business partnerships for Landcare, with Landcare Australia Limited, supported by DLWC.

For further details contact: [jquealy@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:jquealy@landcareaustralia.com.au)

## AWARDS

### NATIONAL LANDCARE PROGRAM INDIVIDUAL LANDCARER AWARD

#### Gold Award Winner

Dr Tony Parkes  
Big Scrub Rainforest  
Landcare Group  
Binna Burra

#### Silver Award Winner

Mrs Caroline Low  
Founder Richmond Riparian  
Management  
Landcare Group  
Richmond

#### Bronze Award Winner

Shirley White  
Angels Beach Dune Care  
and Reafforestation Group  
Angels Beach

#### Highly Commended

Jenny Castles  
Shortland to Wallsend Landcare  
John Lennis  
Royal Botanic Gardens  
Dayan Noonan  
Central Coast Landcare Network

### ALCOA COMMUNITY LANDCARE GROUP AWARD

#### Gold Award Winner

Dorrigo Mountain Top  
Landcare Group  
Dorrigo

#### Silver Award Winner

Berriquin Land & Water  
Management Plan  
Finley

#### Bronze Award Winner

Mount Gibraltar Reserve  
Management Committee  
Bowral

#### Highly Commended

Kergunyah Research Group  
Cobar  
Murrumbateman Landcare Group  
Murrumbateman  
Tilbuster Landholders Group  
Armidale

### SIGMA LANDCARE MEDIA AWARD

#### Gold Award Winner

ABC TV – Compass  
People Power Part 2: Civil  
Society and Volunteering

#### Silver Award Winner

Ms Asa Wahlquist  
*The Australian*

#### Bronze Award Winner

*The Forbes Advocate*

#### Highly Commended

Robert Freebairn  
NSW Agriculture  
*The Land*



Alcoa's representative Mr Gene Ramsay, Kaal Aust and Geraldine Harrington from Dorrigo Mountain Top Landcare Group, with the Gold Award.



Barry Shine, Forbes Advocate with Ken Kirby, Sigma Pharmaceuticals at the NSW Landcare Awards Ceremony, Parkes 2001.

**THE IMPACT OF LANDCARE ON FARMER ATTITUDES**

**BRIAN SCARSBRICK** – Chief Executive Landcare Australia Limited  
www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/NSWLandcareConference/impact

A number of landholder surveys (ABARE and Curtis) over the Decade of Landcare have demonstrated the significant impact that the landcare ethic has had on farmers' attitudes and adoption of more sustainable agricultural practices. With most of our productive land managed by practicing farmers, it is their skills, knowledge, attitude and adoption of conservation practices that will significantly reduce land degradation and accelerate the repair process.

Inappropriate agricultural practices in the past have contributed significantly to the massive salinity problems that now face Australia. The loss of valuable topsoil and weed invasion has resulted from the way we cultivate and graze our land. It is patently clear that the change in agricultural practices that occurred over the Decade of Landcare will do at least as much to reverse the environmental problems into the future as the onground repair projects undertaken by landcare groups. The great strength of the rapid growth in the landcare group network has been the flow of landcare information that is reaching the farming community.

It is the information flow, together with the support given by the other group members that is so effective in encouraging farmers to adopt more sustainable agricultural practices. The onground repair projects undertaken by group members has also been important as a catalyst in encouraging changes in the way farmers manage their own properties.

ABARE (2000)<sup>1</sup> found 70% of members reported that the landcare network provided knowledge of farm practices to treat or avoid degradation. Importantly the landcare group network has had an impact on the skills, knowledge and attitudes of their non member neighbours. Curtis reported that 36% of non member farmers indicated that landcare groups were an important/very important source of information that affects their knowledge level.

This diffusion effect of the landcare group movement's impact on the general farming community is also supported by Reeve (2001) who reported that farmers overall had become slightly "more" green in their views about rural environmental issues. In some areas where 50% of properties have a family member in a landcare group, the flow on effect can be substantial. (Curtis 1998 Victoria)

<sup>1</sup> Landcare and Farm Forestry, *A Better Basis for Better Resource Management on Australian Farms*. ABARE November 2000. Alexander, F. Brittle, S. Ha, A. Gleeson, T. Riley, C.

*"It is the information flow, together with the support given by the other group members that is so effective in encouraging farmers to adopt more sustainable agricultural practices."*



Mr Brian Scarsbrick

**THE REALITY OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN A MARKET ECONOMY**

**NEIL DOBBIN** – General Manager Rural Australia, Rabobank  
www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/NSWLandcareConference/sustainableag

Farmers are trading in a competitive market – which means that sustainable practices need to be easily adoptable, and involve limited management time. Sustainable practices should not negatively impact cashflow, budget provisions, time to work ratios and land use proportions to income. Farmers seek and respond to change based on the combination of the following social and economic factors:

- Producer attitudes
- Funding
- Community
- Management
- Quality of existing resources
- Market demand
- Future
- Government

*"Landcare... provides realistic information and evidence of success... it is farmer and regionally focused within a national framework."*



Mr Neil Dobbin

Landcare is successful with farmers because a number of these factors are inherent to its nature and structure. It requires no immediate financial commitments, provides realistic information and evidence of success. It is farmer and regionally focused within a national framework.

Factors such as altruism for the community at large, income sacrifice, and 'big stick' legislation are not drivers of behaviour change for the farming community. Government, business, the finance and farming sectors must all take up measures which offer a combination of the above factors, to ensure a sustainable future. These could be offered through measures such as incentives, management and production accreditation, and regulations.

## ISSUE DEVELOPMENT GROUP – ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Environmental Management Systems is a rapidly developing process, one which Landcarers need to understand and integrate with. EMS is a stepped process of benchmarking and improving natural resource and production management for Australian farmers. It has been trialed with northern NSW grain growers. Further information can be obtained from the EMS office of NSW Agriculture or at [www.agric.nsw.gov.au](http://www.agric.nsw.gov.au). The Issue Development Group centred on the themes of EMS education, implementation and opportunities for Landcare. The groups' recommendations are:

- EMS should encourage and enhance voluntary involvement, rather than regulated involvement
- EMS should define the benefits to landholders (both environmental and productive)
- Landcare to seek further information and education for its members on EMS, and,
- The Landcare movement has significant potential input in those EMS frameworks and delivery processes which involve Landcare.

For further details on EMS contact: Genevieve Carruthers, NSW Agriculture.  
Email: [genevieve.carruthers@agric.nsw.gov.au](mailto:genevieve.carruthers@agric.nsw.gov.au) Telephone: 02 6626 1237.

### ACTION NOTE

That NSW Landcare Working Group continues to gather information on EMS and continues to advise Landcare.

## AWARDS

### THE LAND LANDCARE PRIMARY PRODUCER AWARD

#### Gold Award Winner

Ted and Geraldine Harrington  
Dorrigo

#### Silver Award Winner

RL, LD & EE Langley  
Greenthorpe

#### Bronze Award Winner

Bryan Ward  
Mullengandra Landcare Group  
Mullengandra

#### Highly Commended

Peter and Alison Campbell  
Alma Park/Pleasant Hills  
Landcare

Garth, Jan and Graham Strong  
Strontian Road  
Landcare Group  
Narrandera

**THE FUTURE OF LANDCARE FROM A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE**

**IAN THOMPSON** – Executive Manager, Natural Resources Management, AFFA  
[www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/NSWLandcareConference/fedgov](http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/NSWLandcareConference/fedgov)

Landcare is a community-based movement, but it encompasses individuals, groups, formal committees, business and government. While it is not easily defined all its forms are directed toward improving natural resource management. Commonwealth Government support for landcare comprises a package of measures including:

- opening avenues of communication
- supporting research and development
- delivering investment funding
- supporting monitoring and evaluation and target setting, and
- providing incentives and support to land owners and community and landcare groups.

Landcare's success has been researched. The findings provide guideposts for our future. Research indicates that a small-scale volunteer approach to improved natural resources management will by itself not be able to address all our resource management challenges. Government resource management policy focus has evolved from supporting small-scale projects to a strategic catchment or regional approach. Community landcare remains crucial to improving natural resource management. We must also explore a range of complementary mechanisms for promoting greater adoption of sustainable resource use practices.

Improved natural resource management practices can be difficult to promote – changes are often complex and risky and may offer low immediate returns. Sustainable farming practices have a better uptake if they are readily observable, they make money and build on current systems. Scientists and farmers question whether we have profitable, adoptable and sustainable systems for all regions. Efforts to change practice must address information, skills and incentives.

*The National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality* indicates the policy direction now being adopted. It emphasizes:

- integrated strategic action
- community based plans against stated targets
- accountability
- information and capacity building, and
- reviewing policy and incentive structures.

Landcare must build a role in planning for and implementing resource management in a regional framework. Landcare's direct connections with landowners and managers and its success in raising awareness and understanding of resource management issues makes it critical in the Commonwealth's approach to natural resource management.

The framework is now more strategic but the fundamentals remain the same:

- applying a range of measures to address a range of issues, and
- Governments and communities working together to improve our shared resource base.

*“Landcare’s direct connections with landowners and managers and its success in raising awareness and understanding of resource management issues makes it critical in the Commonwealth’s approach to natural resource management.”*



Mr Ian Thompson



Rod McKelvey, Orara Valley Rivercare Group, Dr Tony Parkes, Big Scrub Rainforest Landcare and Ian Thompson, Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry Australia.

### ROLE OF LANDCARE IN PRODUCING AND IMPLEMENTING NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PLANS

**MR JOHN VERHOEVEN** – Group General Manager Landscape Investment, Department of Land and Water Conservation, on behalf of the Director General, Dr Bob Smith  
[www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/NSWLandcareConference/role](http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/NSWLandcareConference/role)

The two main issues covered in the address were Community-Government Collaboration and From Planning to Implementation.

#### COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENT COLLABORATION

Often in the past, Government has been the dominant player in the community/government partnership in natural resource management, and has largely set the agenda. The Department of Land and Water Conservation is determined to ensure that this partnership changes to one of collaboration, that is, the community and government working together in a strong and equal relationship.

We recognise that the community has a genuine desire, and a legitimate role, to participate in the decision-making, not just to be consulted, which has tended to be our approach in the past. As a result the Department is working to support the community to provide advice and recommendations to the Government, and to participate more fully in improving the management of our natural resources.

#### FROM PLANNING TO IMPLEMENTATION

We all recognise the importance of planning, not only in natural resource management, but in life generally. Unfortunately, however, there has been a tendency, at least in natural resource management, to regard planning as an end in itself, rather than as a means to an end. In the past we have seen some excellent plans which have gone no further.

We are determined that this will not happen with the Catchment Blueprints, currently being developed by the Catchment Management Boards.

The Department is developing a detailed process to drive the implementation of the Blueprints following their approval by the Government. This will include a commitment from all those who have accepted responsibility to implement management actions in the Blueprints to actually do so. This, of course, includes landcare which I see as having an important role, not only through on-ground projects at the paddock and local levels, but also in carrying out larger sub-catchment scale, or even catchment scale, projects.

In conclusion, I want to stress that I see an important role for the community in developing the tools and programs to improve the management of our natural resources. This includes a continuing and more focused role for landcare in the future, particularly in helping to implement natural resource management policy through the Catchment Blueprints and other natural resource management plans.

*“This includes a continuing and more focused role for landcare in the future, particularly in helping to implement natural resource management policy through the Catchment Blueprints and other natural resource management plans... not only through on-ground projects at the paddock and local levels, but also in carrying out larger sub-catchment scale, or even catchment scale projects.”*



Mr John Verhoeven



John Claringbould, Chairman Landcare Australia, with Cr Ken Keith, Deputy Mayor Parkes Shire Council and Dr Tony Parkes, Individual Landcarer Gold Award winner.

## AWARDS

### APN OUTDOOR MEDIA GROUP LANDCARE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARD

**Gold Award Winner**  
Parkes Shire Council  
Parkes NSW

**Silver Award Winner**  
Bega Valley Shire Council  
Bega NSW

**Bronze Award Winner**  
Lake Macquarie City Council  
Lake Macquarie  
Landcare Resource Office

**Highly Commended**  
Hornsby Shire Council  
Muswellbrook Shire Council

**THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM'S FATE (FUTURE OF AUSTRALIA'S THREATENED ECOSYSTEMS) PROJECT – A PROPOSAL FOR EXPERIMENTAL TRIALS IN THE DEGRADING RANGELANDS**

**PROFESSOR MIKE ARCHER** – Director, Australian Museum  
[www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/NSWLandcareConference/FATE](http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/NSWLandcareConference/FATE)

The FATE Program, now a whole-of-government initiative, will test the hypothesis that long term benefits for biodiversity and for rural and regional Australia can be achieved through the sustainable use of natural resources. The initiative has the support of many government and non-government agencies including National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Australian Mammal Society, the National Farmers Federation, Meat and Livestock Association, Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia and the Ecological Society of Australia.

It also springboards off recommendations of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, federal and state legislation which urge trials of sustainable utilisation of wildlife for conservation benefits. The intention is to select a bio-region in Australia's degrading rangelands within which graziers and FATE advisory groups co-operate to develop wildlife conservancies – operating as 'commons'. Within this bioregion we will explore initiatives aimed at diversifying that region's resource base to the mutual advantage of the local economy and the environment.

The development of a successful multiple land use model, with cultivation of suitable native food and fibre, timber, pharmaceuticals, combined with eco-tourism, offers significant potential for regional conservation and economic benefits. Such a trial may begin with a dedication of 10% of a number of adjoining properties, with business as usual on the rest of the property.

We expect that any shift from introduced crops and species to native products will be gradual and must demonstrate both economic and conservation benefits. An anticipated outcome will be the strengthened economic resilience of the properties and their regions, and an increased emphasis on healthy, natural, biodiverse environments as a source of sustainable, value-adding income.

In implementing FATE we must keep a realistic eye on both the economic and market reality of the project, as well as the conservation and environmental aspects. Hallmarks of the project are strategic market planning, and rigorous benchmarking of biodiversity levels on participating and non-participating control properties.

*“The development of a successful multiple land use model, with cultivation of suitable native food and fibre, timber, pharmaceuticals, combined with eco-tourism, offers significant potential for regional conservation and economic benefits.”*



Professor Mike Archer

**ISSUE DEVELOPMENT GROUP – NATIVE VEGETATION**

The group recognises the value of native vegetation in maintaining healthy catchments and productive agriculture. Key native vegetation issues in NSW relate largely to the level of clearing, fragmentation and degradation of native vegetation and the invasion of pest animals and plants.

Throughout the session the group considered the following two questions:

1. What are the main native vegetation issues from the perspective of Landcare?
2. For these key issues what are the unifying Landcare messages?

**ACTION NOTE**

The group proposes a series of overarching messages across the major issues:

- All of community, not just farmers
- Action encouraged by incentives
- Learning from historical experience
- Respect for aboriginal knowledge and culture.

The group also proposes that native vegetation management be approached on a catchment basis, with a focus on local species only and the collection and distribution of quality information and data.

## EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

The group emphasises the need to create greater knowledge and awareness, by understanding the history of land management, implementing research in areas where little knowledge exists and simplifying native vegetation and other relevant legislation.

Education and participation will help to ensure that Landcare action in native vegetation management and conservation goes forward with informed action and an informed community.

### **ACTION NOTE**

That Landcare continues to be involved in management of native vegetation at a local government level.

## INDIGENOUS CULTURAL VALUES

There is a need for Landcarers to recognise, understand and respect indigenous management practice of native vegetation, and the indigenous sense of country.

### **ACTION NOTE**

That Landcare acknowledge and respect indigenous names for places, animals and plants.

## BIODIVERSITY

A whole of catchment approach to biodiversity is required, backed by research and expert advice. Landcarers are encouraged to recognise and use local species of grasses, shrubs and trees, and to work with community to retain and enhance existing native vegetation.

## LINKING AND PRESERVING NATIVE VEGETATION

The group challenges land managers to identify and map existing remnant vegetation, and calls on government to create incentives to retain vegetation on both public and private lands. The establishment of seed banks, and increased plantings will extend corridors and create linkages between regions of native vegetation.

### **ACTION NOTE**

Land managers, through incentive programs, be encouraged to identify and map existing remnant vegetation.

## WEEDS

A co-operative approach between all levels of government, landholders and community is required to create greater recognition and a holistic approach to the management and eradication of weeds. There needs to be recognition that the problem is not wholly the responsibility of landholders, and a simplification of regulations.

### **ACTION NOTE**

That Landcare reinforce the messages that:

- The problem of weeds is shared beyond the 'farm fence'
- Regulation on weed management to be simplified.

## MONITOR PROGRESS

Landcare groups need to pre-determine their aims in vegetation restoration – specifying type, species and abundance, and implementing measures for evaluation. Monitoring methods for such programs have been developed and should be drawn upon for local native vegetation plans.

### **ACTION NOTE**

That Landcare groups draw upon existing resources, such as monitoring methods, to establish vegetation restoration plans and evaluation measures.

## PLANNING

The group puts forward a stepped process for planning the conservation of native vegetation:

- Map remnant species
- Supplement map with pre-1788 species
- Identify economic restraints, environmental requirements and catchment plans which impact on native vegetation
- Map desirable vegetation distribution
- Conduct community consultation
- Identify tasks → Funding → Implement → Monitor progress → Assess achievements

## INCENTIVES AND COST SHARING

The group puts forward these recommendations on financial incentives and cost sharing in native vegetation management:

- Establish environmental levies to support native vegetation conservation
- Promote covenants for voluntary conservation
- Abolish tax breaks and replace them with conservation payments.

### **ACTION NOTE**

That a planning and cost sharing framework for the management of native vegetation be developed.

## ISSUE DEVELOPMENT GROUP – SALINITY

The Salinity Issue Development Group identifies five areas of significance in the future management of salinity. The group recognises that salinity has been singled out and politicised by government and media, when the Landcare view is that salinity is one of a number of symptoms of broader issues. Without developing a formal Landcare policy statement the group put forward a series of suggestions for government policy makers:

- Avoid politicising natural resource management issues
- Continue an integrated approach to natural resource management, rather than targeting single issues
- Provide the community with detailed knowledge on which to base decisions and actions
- Increase the emphasis on the 'no blame' policy of the State's Salinity Strategy
- Government to utilise the excellent networking and education skills and capacity of Landcare

*Government to utilise the excellent networking and education skills and capacity of Landcare.*

### **ACTION NOTE**

Ensure a high level of awareness amongst government officers and decision makers of the excellent networking and education skills and capacity available through Landcare.

## ISSUE DEVELOPMENT GROUP – WEEDS

The Weeds Issue Development Group draws from a wide cross section of the Landcare community, with a significant depth of knowledge within the group on weeds biology, management strategies and legislation. The group frames the key issues in the area of weeds as the following:

## FUNDING

The group calls for weeds management to be made a part of mainstream Natural Resource Management funding. The key areas identified which require increased funding are:

- Research into Integrated Pest Management
- Weed education programs through local government, to underpin resources and costs for weed management on private lands
- Develop native species which can compete with weeds.

Weed control is best achieved through a whole-of-community approach, with increased levels of training and support for extension officers, and community access to these staff.

## ACTION NOTE

The development of Best Management Practice guidelines covering:

- environmental and noxious weeds
- integrated pest management
- weed movements
- impact of weeds on human and stock health
- weed biology
- existing and potential weeds in the nursery industry.

## ORGANISATION ISSUES

Partnerships with other stakeholders are key for Landcare's approach to weed control, at a research and government level through to the development of strategies aimed at overcoming operational constraints at local government level.

## ACTION NOTE

Landcare should develop and implement a co-ordinated approach to weed control at district and subcatchment levels.

## LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

A structure which ensures a working relationship with the community, and a framework for consistent reviewing of weeds categories are two of the issues put forward.

## ACTION NOTE

Revise current legislation to:

- Ensure land title transfers include a weeds inspection certificate
- Allow any person to enforce duty of care for weeds management
- Implement stricter controls on the nursery industry
- Expedite the permit application process.

## RESEARCH

Priority research areas identified are:

- effects on human health
- integrated pest management and biological controls, and
- the development of economic values and uses for weeds.

## AWARDS

### WHITE PAGES LANDCARE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AWARD

#### Gold Award Winner

Upper Billabong  
Land and Water  
Management Plan  
Holbrook Landcare Group  
Holbrook

#### Silver Award Winner

Southern New England  
Landcare Co-ordinating  
Committee Inc  
(SNELCC) Armidale

#### Bronze Award Winner

Murray Land and Water  
Management Plans  
Murray Irrigation Limited  
Finley

### BUSHCARE NATURE CONSERVATION AWARD

#### Gold Award Winner

Big Scrub Rainforest  
Landcare Group  
Binna Burra

#### Silver Award Winner

Lansdowne Brush  
Bush Regenerators  
(Lansdowne Reserve Landcare)  
Lansdowne

#### Bronze Award Winner

Palm Grove/Ourimbah Creek  
Landcare Inc

### NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST RIVERCARE AWARD

#### Gold Award Winner

Orara Valley Rivercare Groups  
Management Committee

#### Silver Award Winners

Mullumbimby Creek  
Progress Association

Wherrol Flat and Caparra  
Landcare Inc  
Taree



Tablelands Achievers. Members of the Southern New England Landcare Coordinating Committee with their Silver Landcare Catchment Award.



Mark Robinson (Coordinator) and Don Craig Palm Grove/Ourimbah Landcare Group with the group's Bronze Award.



Andrew Lawson (left) and Barbara Ross Holbrook Landcare Group, State winner with John Claringbould, Chairman Landcare Australia.

## FUTURE OF COMMUNITY LANDCARE ACROSS AUSTRALIA

**BRUCE LLOYD** – Chairman Australian Landcare Council  
[www.landcarensw.org/NSWLandcareConference/comland](http://www.landcarensw.org/NSWLandcareConference/comland)

Over the next 18 months, two factors will significantly influence the future shape, and the very future of community landcare in Australia. These factors are our partnerships and our programs, and the danger of assuming that everything will continue as before. In order to continue and expand our work, Landcare groups must achieve significant, rather than symbolic, representation on government committees and advisory boards at every level, from the local level up. Experience over the past decade shows us that government natural resource programs, without the community partnership provided by community landcare, lack the delivery mechanisms, grass roots promotion and volunteerism which we deliver.

On the other hand, community programs without government partners lack integration, scale and influence. The Australian Landcare Council is currently lobbying on a structure for full partnership on all new programs, as these partnerships are vital to the future of delivery of the programs, the environment, and Landcare and other volunteers. There is a role here for all Landcare members to lobby for a genuine partnership role at regional, catchment and state levels.

Community Landcare membership has continued to rise despite decreasing percentages of volunteerism in Australia and overseas, and the very limited numbers of people we have in rural and regional Australia.

For Landcare to maintain and increase our volunteer numbers and our capacity to employ facilitators, the Australian Landcare Council is working to identify, plan for and attempt to ensure adequate community participation in the significant changes taking place in the area of natural resource management in Australia.

*“Landcare groups must achieve significant, rather than symbolic, representation on government committees and advisory boards at every level, from the local level up.”*



Mr Bruce Lloyd

## THE BABY AND THE BATH WATER – THE VIEW FROM THE NSW LANDCARE WORKING GROUP

Prepared by a Task Group of the NSW Landcare Working Group.  
**CHRISTOPHER SCOTT** – Chairman, NSW Landcare Working Group  
[www.landcarensw.org/NSWLandcareConference/workinggroup](http://www.landcarensw.org/NSWLandcareConference/workinggroup)

The Decade of Landcare came to an end in 2000. It is timely to reflect on what landcare has achieved in NSW and look towards the future of community involvement in natural resource management.

In a little over ten years the landcare movement has achieved a great deal. Through the landcare movement, the community is now a major partner in decision-making and investment in natural resource management in NSW. The social benefits of landcare cannot be underestimated. There has been steady growth in the number of groups and in the number and scale of projects initiated by groups.

We hear it said that landcare has been ‘ad hoc’ and ‘non-strategic’. This is in fact one of landcare’s great strengths. Landcare begins when an individual or community decides to seek a solution to a natural resource issue they see as needing attention. Landcare begins with a local perspective and then moves to the regional. If we are to continue to build a network of dedicated and skilled landcare volunteers there must be resources, including support staff and funding, for small, ‘non-target’ projects to support and encourage this ‘ad hoc’ landcare activity. No matter how strategic, far-reaching, inclusive, well-targeted or indeed well-funded a plan we have to work with, implementation will come to individual decisions to become involved... or not. In our efforts to improve on the past, in our effort to make the next decade even more successful, let us discard what has not worked, but let’s be careful not to throw the landcare baby out with the bath water!

*“No matter how strategic, far-reaching, inclusive, well-targeted or indeed well-funded a plan we have to work with, implementation will come to individual decisions to become involved... or not.”*

The NSW Landcare Working Group is committed to becoming an independent council to provide advice, leadership and representation for landcare at the state level. To do this the Working Group needs support from the whole community.

## ISSUE DEVELOPMENT GROUP – LANDCARE FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The issue development group agrees that Landcare will continue as a main delivery mechanism for on-ground natural resource management. In focusing on future directions of Landcare three strategic areas are addressed and recommendations put forward. All three areas of discussion require increased representation and involvement of Landcare at all levels of natural resource management.

### REPRESENTATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Establish a stand alone organisation charged with representation, lobbying and partnership development in NRM decision making processes at every level.

### SUPPORT

Community based landcare must be recognised and supported by both government and community as a legitimate contributor and channel for natural resource management. Such recognition should be backed by appropriate financial and staffing support.

### FINANCE

The group calls for a simplified and regionally targeted funding process, and greater financial support for administration, auditing and training purposes. The Issue Development Group recognises and promotes the need for an evaluation of environmental assets in monetary terms, and the development of a formal process by which to undertake this evaluation. Incentives for Landcare works and improved land management practices should continue.

## LANDCARE WORKING GROUP COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Any structural change within the organisation of Landcare must be developed without jeopardising the strength and benefits of current partnerships, and the weight of Landcare's role as an advisor.

### ACTION NOTE

The LWG will consider the current relationships of Landcare, operational and administrative issues and explore options for improvement or change.

## ISSUE DEVELOPMENT GROUP – PLANNING (NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT)

This discussion proposes a formal process of involvement and consultation between community, Landcare and the State Catchment Management Co-ordinating Committee (SCMCC). The group recommends that the SCMCC investigate options for integrating the implementation of Catchment Blueprints via a regional committee framework – involving all stakeholders, (particularly local government, industry, aboriginal and Landcare groups) and reflecting that particular region in its constituency.

The continued development of district and sub catchment plans are prioritised by the group, with recognition of the importance/priority of the resourcing and support of key areas such as:

- Staff
- Investment
- Regional/district committees
- Standards for plans
- Links between catchment, subcatchment and district plans

## LANDCARE WORKING GROUP COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One role of the Landcare Working Group is to provide advice to the Minister for Land and Water Conservation on the catchment planning process – in particular the community capacity building aspects.

The LWG recommends that DLWC update the community on the catchment management planning process.

### ACTION NOTE

That Landcare establishes a process of sharing information with Catchment Management Boards, ensuring input and knowledge of key decisions.

### ACTION NOTE

The LWG will assign one member to work with each board on their community consultation process.

The DLWC State Landcare Team will work with the DLWC Investment Services to have property plans recognised as a tool for investment within the blueprints.

## AWARDS

### WESTPAC LANDCARE EDUCATION AWARD

**Gold Award Winner**  
Nambucca Valley  
Landcare Group  
Bowraville

**Silver Award Winner**  
Field of Mars  
Environmental Education Centre  
Boronia Park  
Sydney

**Bronze Award Winner**  
Coastal Environment Centre  
Narrabeen

**Highly Commended**  
Dorrigo High School  
Dorrigo

### BHP LANDCARE RESEARCH AWARD

**Gold Award Winner**  
Holbrook Landcare Group  
Re-birding the Holbrook  
Landscape  
Holbrook

**Silver Award Winner**  
Mallee Sustainable  
Farming Project  
Buronga

**Bronze Award Winner**  
Kergunyah  
Rangecare Group

**Highly Commended**  
Institute of Rural Futures  
University of New England



Gina Anderson, Westpac with Tim Ryan, Nambucca Valley Landcare.



## SKILL ENHANCEMENT WORKSHOPS

The following skill enhancement sessions were made available at the forum. The Forum Organising Committee thanks both the presenters and the organisations which they represent.

### RAISING COMMUNITY AWARENESS

#### LAWRIE KIRK

Communications Manager  
Murray Darling Basin Commission  
[www.mdbc.gov.au](http://www.mdbc.gov.au)

### EFFECTIVE MEETING SKILLS

#### MARK GARDNER

Principal  
Gardner & Associates  
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### BIODIVERSITY IN URBAN / AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES

#### LOUISE BRODIE

Education and Community Involvement Unit  
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service  
[www.npws.nsw.gov.au](http://www.npws.nsw.gov.au)

### AGROFORESTRY

Farm Forestry Advisory Unit  
NSW Agriculture  
[www.agric.nsw.gov.au/reader/2291](http://www.agric.nsw.gov.au/reader/2291)

### EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

- Paul Spyve, Manager Community Liaison Hurstville Council
- Lisa Smith, Communications Officer, Hornsby Council
- Local Governments and Shires Association [www.lgsa.org.au](http://www.lgsa.org.au)

Thank you also to the Issue Development Group facilitators who helped participants explore, shape and express ideas, actions and recommendations.

#### KIRSTY COOPER

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#### ALAN NICHOLSON

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#### BOB TROUNCE

Agriculture NSW  
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#### MEREDITH LAING

Australian Landcare Council  
[www.affa.gov.au](http://www.affa.gov.au)

#### LACHLAN POLKINGHORNE

National Landcare Facilitator Project  
[www.rg.com.au](http://www.rg.com.au)

#### TREVOR WEBB

Bureau of Resource Sciences  
[www.affa.gov.au](http://www.affa.gov.au)

#### MIKE LEE

Joint Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry Australia  
and Environment Australia Team  
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