



The National Landcare Facilitator

Newsletter - March 2011

It seems to be the season for consultation with the Draft Action Plan for Australian Landcare and the review of the Federal Governments' Caring for Our Country Program generating significant discussion, and this is a good thing. Both of these issues are interrelated, but the Action plan for Australian Landcare is the opportunity for all those involved in the broader Landcare movement to put down what they think that the various partners could do in the future.

The Caring for Our Country Review is an important step in the Federal Government considering how best to respond to its investment in this important area. If you who have an interest in the broader Landcare movement/NRM and the environment and the investment of the Federal Government in this area, it is important that you take the time and make a considered response. In travelling across the country, I hear much about what people would like to see happen, so this is the ideal opportunity to get your views down and participate.

In early March, the Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI) forum and the first national meeting of the Regional Landcare Facilitators (RLF's), were held in Canberra. The CFI forum was hosted by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry and included the RLF's, regional bodies and industry representatives etc. The forum provided an update on the legislative processes and carbon related research which is being carried out. Also a focus of the forum was to discuss how best to engage rural land managers in the CFI. The participants gave some very frank and clear feedback that good quality practical information was essential.

The RLF meeting was the first time that this group had come together for a national meeting since this \$8 million per annum initiative was announced by the Federal Government last year, and it highlighted the breadth of expertise, experience and enthusiasm within the RLF's across the country. The RLF's have a major role in progressing the broader Landcare partnership within their region in ways that are relevant to their communities. Nearly all of the RLF's are now in place, so **to find the contacts for the RLF in your area go to:** <http://www.nrm.gov.au/contacts/regional.html>.

Federal Government Announces Recovery Funding for Natural Resources

The Federal Government today announced a new package of measures to drive the recovery of Australia's natural resources in the aftermath of the recent natural disasters. Environment Minister Tony Burke and Agriculture Minister Joe Ludwig outlined details of new funding to support the environmental recovery and agricultural activities in flood, cyclone and bushfire-affected areas across the nation.

"It is vital that we take action now to ensure our natural environment recovers from the disasters that have impacted our nation," Minister Burke said.

"These measures will address impacts on our plant and animal life, support the volunteers who do such a great job in protecting our environment and develop recovery and rehabilitation strategies.

"Volunteers will work on activities such as the reconstruction of wildlife corridors and removal of debris spread by flood waters."

Minister Ludwig said the funding would support ongoing recovery efforts following the devastating impact of natural disasters across Australia this summer.

“Over the last few months, Australia has been subject to extraordinary weather events that have and will continue to have significant impacts on our nation,” Minister Ludwig said

“This funding will bring together Conservation Volunteers Australia to work with Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisations in disaster-affected areas on the recovery and restoration of regional and rural environments. It complements the Government’s ongoing efforts in working with farmers to recover after the floods and cyclone.”

The package commits more than \$8 million including:

\$4.9 million to regional natural resource management (NRM) organisations in disaster-affected areas to undertake environmental recovery works including the restoration of wildlife corridors, removal of debris spread by flood waters and weed and pest animal control;

\$1.35 million to Conservation Volunteers Australia to coordinate and deliver assistance from volunteers for on-ground environmental recovery activities;

\$1.08 million to address immediate impacts of floods and cyclone on the Great Barrier Reef including to marine habitats and develop recovery strategies. It will also include early detection and eradication of new pests; and

\$785 000 for restoration activities in the Gondwana and Wet Tropics World Heritage Areas to respond to impacts of flooding and rehabilitate species and areas affected.

Information on Caring for our Country and disaster recovery is available at www.nrm.gov.au. Target NRM Regions include;

NSW	Border Rivers-Gwydir
NSW	Central West
NSW	Lachlan
NSW	Murray
NSW	Murrumbidgee
NSW	Northern Rivers
QLD	Border Rivers Maranoa-Balonne
QLD	Burdekin
QLD	Burnett Mary
QLD	Condamine
QLD	Desert Channels
QLD	Fitzroy
QLD	Northern Gulf
QLD	South East Queensland
QLD	Southern Gulf
QLD	South West Queensland
QLD	Wet Tropics
TAS	North
TAS	Cradle Coast
VIC	Corangamite
VIC	Goulburn Broken
VIC	Mallee
VIC	North Central
VIC	North East
VIC	Wimmera
WA	Perth

The Federal Government has also announced \$8.85m for 18 new research projects to protect the reef from runoff during extreme weather events. For more information go to: http://www.maff.gov.au/media-releases/2011/march/gillard_government_to_help_protect_the_great_barrier_reef_from_pollution.

Carbon Farming Legislation Introduced To Parliament

Legislation has been introduced to Parliament to establish the Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI). The Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Greg Combet, said the legislation is critical to providing long-term investment certainty and enabling the land sector to be part of Australia's climate change solution. 'Up to now, we have not had a lasting framework for rewarding land sector abatement. We want to encourage private and commercial investment in areas such as carbon sinks forests, native forest protection, landscape restoration and more sustainable, carbon efficient farming practices.'

The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Joe Ludwig, said the Carbon Farming Initiative would assist the agricultural sector to build resilience to deal with the impacts of climate change. "Under the Carbon Farming Initiative, farmers and other landholders who make changes to their current practices that result in emission reductions will be rewarded for their efforts," Minister Ludwig said. "Farmers will be encouraged to generate carbon credits from a range of activities such as fertiliser management, reduced livestock emissions, soil carbon and reforestation. "This initiative provides us with the opportunity to be at the forefront of global developments in land sector offsets."

Mr Combet said "The Government has consulted extensively on the design of the Carbon Farming Initiative. We received around 280 submissions and have made a number of changes to the draft legislation to reflect stakeholder views,". Mr Combet said the key changes include a streamlined additionality test, improved investment certainty and extra protections against adverse impacts on food production, water availability, employment and biodiversity. The Government has clarified that abatement activities that enhance agricultural productivity can meet the additionality test.

"The price that buyers are willing to pay for carbon credits will depend on their environmental integrity," he said. "Carbon credits have to represent real, permanent abatement if they are going to be treated as genuine offsets for carbon emissions."

The Government is aiming to pass the legislation before 1 July 2011. Further information on the CFI is available on the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency website at: www.climatechange.gov.au/cfi.

Garnaut Climate Change Update – Transforming Rural Land Use



On March 1st, Professor Garnaut released his updated paper as part of the climate change review called "Transforming Rural Land Use". This paper outlines issues associated with carbon sequestration and emissions mitigation associated with rural land use. Professor Garnaut, while supportive of the Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI), suggested that the requirement for financial additionality be reconsidered and that a link between the CFI and an emissions trading scheme be established to assist in the purchasing of non-Kyoto offsets. Professor Garnaut also noted that co-benefits such as biodiversity should be encouraged. Importantly Professor Garnaut also outlined the challenges for global development due to the linked issues of climate change and food security. For a full copy of the paper go to: <http://www.garnautreview.org.au/update-2011/update-papers/up4-key-points.html>.

Caring for Our Country Review – Make A Submission or Comment

On the 7th March the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, Tony Burke, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig, and Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Dr Mike Kelly announced a review of the Caring for our Country initiative. In reviewing Caring for our Country, the efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness of the initiative and options for future delivery will be assessed.

Under Caring for our Country, the Government is investing \$2 billion over five years to achieve environments that are healthy, better protected and support sustainable production in a changing climate. The Caring for our Country discussion paper is available at www.nrm.gov.au/thereview. To have your say, join the online forum at caringforourcountryreview.com.au, email thereview@nrm.gov.au or call 1800 552 008. It is important that all those who have an interest in this area participate by **making a submission before the 20th of May** and/or participate in the online forum.

Draft Action Plan for Australian Landcare Framework Out for Comment

The Australian Framework for Landcare has been developed by the Landcare Community to help guide Landcare over the next 20 years. At a workshop in Melbourne on 30 April 2009 a small cross section of community Landcarers agreed enthusiastically that the first community-driven Australian Framework for Landcare should be developed. The Framework has been developed by the Australian Framework for Landcare Reference Group, which is made up of Landcare community members. The reference group has ensured that views expressed by the Landcare community are reflected accurately in the Framework document. The consultation period commenced in April 2009 and concluded with a public call for feedback on the draft Australian Framework for Landcare by 30 July 2010.

The final print version of the Australian Framework for Landcare was launched on 8 September 2010 in Sydney by Coral Love, Chair, Australian Framework for Landcare Reference Group as part of the National Landcare Week celebrations. To request a printed copy of the Australian Framework for Landcare please use the following link [email](#).

Comments are invited on the draft Australian Framework for Landcare Action Plan - The Australian Landcare Council is seeking your comments on a draft of the Australian Framework for Landcare Action Plan. The Action Plan supports the Australian Framework for Landcare which was released in September 2010. The Australian Framework for Landcare builds on two decades of knowledge, experience and achievements to address a range of current and emerging environmental challenges. The Framework is a guide for Landcarers and sets out the vision, main features, guiding principles and key elements of the Landcare approach. These underpin the actions and measures of the Action Plan.

The Action Plan discusses the seven key elements of the Framework identified by the community, how the key elements will improve Landcare and actions for landcarers to contribute to achieving Landcare goals. The Action Plan has been drafted by the Australian Landcare Council. [Request a hard copy of the draft Action Plan](#). This draft Action Plan will be open for public comment for three months, from 7 March 2011 to 17 June 2011. The Australian Landcare Council welcomes feedback on the proposed goals and actions and any suggestions on what activities and actions you or your group can take to contribute to the achievement of these goals. Your involvement in the development of this Action Plan will help to strengthen and reinvigorate the Landcare movement into the future. The Australian Landcare Council has proposed actions that it can do to help achieve eight goals it identified in the Australian Framework for Landcare. We seek your input into what you, as an individual or an organisation, can do to also help achieve these goals.

How to make a comment: Read the [Australian Framework for Landcare Action Plan](#). You may also find it useful to read the [Australian Framework for Landcare](#) before providing your comments and email your comments to: [Email your comments](#). Submissions close 5pm AEST 17 June 2011.

The Australian Landcare Council (ALC) is the federal Government's advisory body on Landcare and NRM and was reformed last year. The ALC meet recently in Canberra and copies of its communiqués and membership can be found at <http://www.daff.gov.au/natural-resources/landcare/council>.

Little River Landcare

In each edition of this newsletter I try to feature Landcare/farming or other community groups as part of the broader Landcare movement which provide examples of the environmental and productivity gains that are being achieved across the country. The Little River Landcare group is a great example of how many Landcare groups over time have evolved. It is a community owned organisation and believes in a holistic approach towards primary production, the environment, the people and communities that make up the 320,000 ha catchment area of the Macquarie River Catchment in Central NSW.



Little River Landcare is helping to shape a positive future that meshes primary production with sustainability and conservation. They have created a thirst for knowledge within the catchment community and provide a nurturing service to accommodate people during their adventure of change. Ultimately, Landcare is about people. If we support them, we will support our environment.

Being a community owned organisation that employs three staff members, allows the organisation to be spontaneous and respond to current needs. Like many other Landcare and productivity groups, Little River Landcare has developed a reputation for pushing the boundaries and providing services and programs to accommodate the personality of the catchment.



Landholders discussing erosion control at a Little River Landcare field day.

Education is what Little River Landcare does best. During 2009-10, Little River ran 47 days of educational events with 886 people attending these days, which ranged in topics such as riparian management, holistic management, sustainable grazing, biodiversity, and soil biology. Little River generates change by promoting small intimate learning environments – “we have learnt that for us to get the greatest bang for each buck, it doesn’t come from having lots of people attending each event. We get the greatest level of change by having small intimate groups. Education isn’t a numbers game – it is about providing the best possible educator, in the best learning environment, catering to all learning styles”.

Little River Landcare explores the hard issues and actively undertakes campaigns to raise the awareness in issues such as mental health by arranging workshops, educational activities, support programs and providing information sheets. Little River Landcare believes that people need to be a focus in all its activities, even if it is out of their comfort zone.

This year Little River Landcare plans to deliver a variety of on-ground works and educational activities such as the ‘*Repairing the Links*’ project which has been funded by the federal governments Caring for our Country program with \$256,000 in funding. This project focuses on the iconic paddock tree and the endangered Blakely’s Red Gum White Box and derived grasslands ecological community, which makes up 46% of the catchment area. They plan to establish 2400 trees with 2m high stock proof guards as part of an effort to reconnect the landscape with paddock trees. This is an innovative project with a high investment towards conservation. A further 12,000 trees will be planted across the catchment and a variety of capacity building programs will be run.

For further information contact Fergus Job on 02 68464569 email: manager@littleriver-landcare.org.au

Climate & Weather Information at Climate Kelpie

Climate Kelpie is a website funded by a number of R & D corporations and the Department of Agriculture Forestry & Fisheries which brings together a range of information on managing climatic variability, decision support tools as well as climate change projections (at the regional level for 4 States) and weather forecasts. It is worth a look at <http://www.climatekelpie.com.au/about>.

Landcare Awards

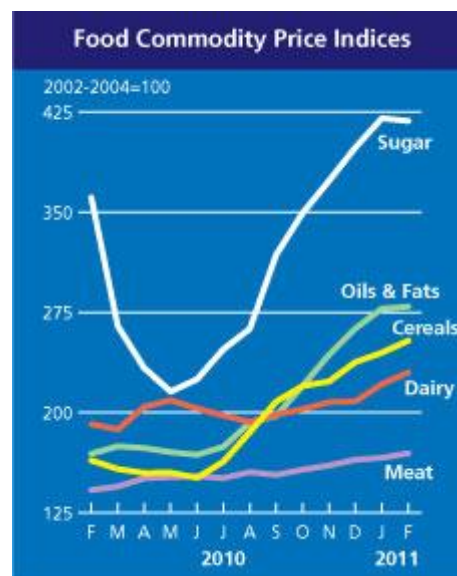
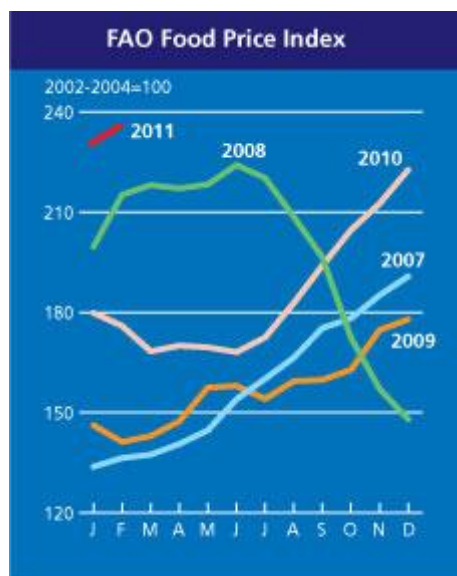
Groups or individuals with a story to tell should make a submission to the State and Territory Landcare Awards. In the next 2 months, a cycle will kick off that will culminate in 2012 with the national Landcare awards.

This year, it is the states and territories that have the task of selecting their winners, which will then go onto the National awards in 2012. There are 12 categories in total, covering aspects such as primary producers, local government, indigenous, education, youth and Coastcare.

For more information go to: http://www.landcareonline.com.au/?page_id=2930.



FAO Food Price Index



The **FAO Food Price Index (FFPI)** rose for the eighth consecutive month, averaging 236 points in February 2011, up 2.2 percent from January and the highest (in both real and nominal terms) since January 1990, the inception date of the index. Except for sugar, prices of all other commodity groups monitored registered gains in February with dairy products and cereals climbing the most. For more information go to : http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/wfs-home/en/?no_cache=1.

Economist Magazine Feature on Global Food Security – This well respected magazine recently produced a feature on the global food security issue called “The 9 Billion-people question – A special report on feeding the world”. This report is well worth a read and can be found at: <http://www.saiplatform.org/uploads/Modules/Library/Economist%20Special%20Report%20on%20Food%20Security%20FEB26.pdf>.

Other News

Climate Change Adaptation Research Grants Announced - The Australian Government has announced funding for priority adaptation research into preparing Australia for the unavoidable impacts of climate change. Up to \$2 million will go into research addressing the impacts climate change poses to Australia's primary industries. Up to \$5 million will support research focusing on the social and economic implications of climate change on Australian communities. Application guidelines are available from www.nccarf.edu.au or www.climatechange.gov.au.

Government Announces next step in Carbon Farming – from March 12 people will be able to submit methodologies to the Domestic Offsets Integrity Committee to be assessed for use under the CFI. The Interim Guidelines for Submitting Methodologies are now available on the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency website. These have been developed following public consultation on the proposed CFI design, which closed last month. The Government expects to introduce the CFI legislation to the Parliament in the first half of 2011. <http://www.climatechange.gov.au/en/minister/greg-combet/2011/media-releases/March/mr20110312.aspx>. Further information on the CFI is available on the [Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency website](#).

Australian Climate & Agriculture Monthly Update March 2011-

http://adl.brs.gov.au/data/warehouse/pe_abares99001796/ACAMU_March_2011.pdf.

National Tree Day 2011-



Now entering its 16th year, Planet Ark's National Tree Day is one of the nation's largest community environment events. It provides an avenue for communities and groups to showcase the work that they do, help foster a community understanding of the needs of the local environment and to engage them in its care. This year, National Tree Day will be held on Sunday the 31st of July and schools Tree Day on Friday the 29th of July, however you can register a site or activity on any date that suits you. For more information go to: <http://treeday.planetark.org/>.

5th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture: Brisbane, September 25 – 29, 2011. See <http://www.wcca2011.org/index.htm>

State Landcare Conferences:

- NSW, Parkes 5-7th September
- Queensland, Ayr 22-23rd September
- Tasmania, Stanley 9-10th October

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Regards,

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