



## The National Landcare Facilitator

### Newsletter - October 2011

#### Australia Represented at United Nations Meeting on Landcare

Last week the Australian Government participated in a Landcare event at a United Nations Environment Program meeting in Korea. The purpose of the event was to explain what Landcare is to other countries, and to articulate how it has been such an effective innovation to mobilize farmers and other land users at the grassroots level to combine their efforts to effectively improve the management of land in many parts of the world.

A range of countries where Landcare has taken root gave presentations including Iceland, South Africa, the United States and the home of Landcare, Australia.



**Changwon, Republic of Korea, 13 October 2011– Tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).**

The UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja said ““Landcare provides a sound, knowledge-based approach from the bottom up,” “We must take action in order to fight desertification, land degradation and drought with a bottom up approach, otherwise we miss meeting important international targets such as the [Millennium Development Goals](#).”

“The Landcare approach to sustainable land management is a community-based and grassroots led way to improve people’s lives and protect natural resources. Landcare has mobilised farmers and other land users at the local level around the world to effectively improve land management. Allowing for applications in different landscapes and farming systems, the Landcare approach has been successful in a range of social, economic and political conditions globally.”

“What people are doing on the ground is what it’s all about,” Dr. Dennis Garrity, [Landcare International](#) Chair and recently designated [UNCCD Drylands Ambassador](#), said. “Landcare is all about grassroots support for land restoration and land regeneration, and that’s what makes it so valuable for the UNCCD, because we’ve learned over the years that bottom up approaches of communities taking charge of their environment, grappling with their problems, and drawing in support from outside is the key to land regeneration throughout the world.”

It was also great to see the Australian Government helping to host this event and making a presentation. Michelle Lauder from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries represented the Australian Government at the event and highlighted the high level of leveraging that public investment in this area created with the community also investing significant resources in return. As the home of Landcare, it is encouraging that the Australian Government is helping to foster international discussions in this area.

Terry Hubbard and Horrie Poussard of Australian Landcare International described a project to restore the King Parrot Creek area of Victoria that had seen an increase in soil erosion and loss of native plants and wildlife. Local landowners and others collectively began restorative efforts by volunteering their time and knowledge and saw significant improvements over several years.

Hafdís Hanna Aegistóttir, Director of the UN University Land Restoration Training Programme based in Iceland, discussed efforts in Iceland to restore degraded land over the past century and noted that Landcare may help Iceland to become a carbon-neutral country.

Describing the burgeoning Landcare movement in the United States, which in some instances is being developed through public-private partnerships, Jeff Herrick of the US Department of Agriculture reiterated the importance of how volunteerism contributes to conservation.

Richard Selemela, Director of Natural Resource Management in South Africa, expressed the significance of building Landcare programmes in order to help meet the Millennium Development Goals aimed at eradicating poverty and creating a sustainable environment.

Noting that this was the first time that Landcare was highlighted at UNCCD, Dr. Garrity said, "We are very excited about seeing Landcare as a local participatory movement developing in countries all over the world, and we are encouraged to see how a vast number of smallholder farmers and local communities with damaged environments can succeed in regenerating their land, and that's what UNCCD is all about."

**About the UNCCD** - Desertification, along with climate change and the loss of biodiversity, were identified as the greatest challenges to sustainable development during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Established in 1994, UNCCD is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment, development and the promotion of healthy soils. The Convention's 194 signatory Parties work to alleviate poverty in the drylands, maintain and restore the land's productivity, and mitigate the effects of drought.

For more information, please visit <http://www.unccd.int/cop/cop10/menu.php>

## Taxation Concessions – Register of Environmental Organisations

The Federal Government offers a number of taxation concessions relating to conservation and protecting the natural environment. One of these is the Register of Environmental Organisations (REO). The objective of the Register is to assist environmental organisations to obtain financial support from the community for conservation and protection of the natural community, by providing a tax incentive mechanism for the community to donate to those organisations.

The Register is administered by the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (the Department) in consultation with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Donations of Gifts of Property over \$5,000 - The Government has introduced new philanthropy measures to encourage taxpayers to donate to certain funds, authorities and institutions. Taxpayers are able to claim the benefits of a tax deduction for a gift over a maximum of 5 years. To take advantage of this concession, the gift must have been a gift of property made to an organisation listed on the Register, on or after 1 July 1999, and be valued at over \$5,000. In order to claim a deduction over 5 years, a claimant must fill out an election form and send it to the Secretary of the Department of the Environment and Heritage.

For more information on being listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations go to: [www.environment.gov.au/about/tax/reo/index.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/about/tax/reo/index.html).

For more information on other environmental tax concessions available go to: [www.environment.gov.au/about/tax/index.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/about/tax/index.html).

## Australian Government Seeks Applications for Community Assessors

Assessors play a crucial role in sustainable natural resource management by representing community perspectives on a range of funding decisions. You could be involved in assessing funding applications for initiatives including [Caring for our Country](#) and the [Action on the Ground](#) element of the [Securing a Clean Energy Future](#) plan.



Assessors are people with:

- broad community knowledge and experience in managing natural resources
- knowledge of natural resource management issues and opportunities
- knowledge of sustainable farming practices, commercial fishing or aquaculture
- knowledge and experience in practices and technologies that can reduce the emission of greenhouse gas from the agricultural sector or increase carbon stored in soil.

Applications are welcome from Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians across a broad age range and from all regions of Australia. Applications should be submitted [online](#). Community assessors are paid for their time and travel according to rates set by the Remuneration Tribunal. You can be a community assessor, even if you're already in other employment, but will need to have some flexibility when taking part in a funding assessment process.

For more information go to: [http://www.daff.gov.au/about/jobs/community\\_assessors](http://www.daff.gov.au/about/jobs/community_assessors)

## Tax Basics for Non-Profit Organisations

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has recently released a new version of its guide Tax basics for non-profit organisations. The guide provides an overview of tax obligations for not-for-profit organisations, and is a valuable resource for treasurers, officer bearers and employees involved in the administration of a not-for-profit organisation.

The guide will help you determine whether your organisation is 'not-for-profit' and explains a range of taxes and concessions that affect not for profit organisations, including: Income tax, GST, Employees and other workers, Fundraising, Record keeping, administration, and payment, State/territory government taxes and duties.

To download or order the guide, follow the link to the ATO website: [www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/content.aspx?doc=/content/33609.htm](http://www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/content.aspx?doc=/content/33609.htm).

## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Landcare in Victoria - 1986-2011

### Growing Sustainable Communities Conference – 15<sup>th</sup> November



In November a number of events will be held around Victoria to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Landcare. One of the highlights will be a full day conference to be held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 with guest speakers such as Andrew Campbell and John Williams.

The conference invites Landcarers and supporters to come together for a day of exciting presentations and interactive sessions and provides the opportunity to:

- share successes over 25 years with inspiring stories of landscape change.
- learn about growing the Landcare movement in the next 25 years.
- meet Landcarers and likeminded people from around the state.

This is a conference for Landcare members, volunteers, support staff, stakeholders and supporters, sustainable farmers, environment and friends groups, teachers and students, local government councillors and staff, and government professionals. Numbers are limited and some quotas apply to ensure that everyone has the best possible opportunity to attend. For registration details visit [Landcare gateway](#).

## Other Funding Opportunities

**Grants of up to \$22,000 are on offer as part of the 2012 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry** - Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig, said the awards support young people aged 18 to 35 years who have an innovative project that will benefit Australia's agriculture, fisheries, forestry, food and natural resource management sectors. "The awards aim to encourage the uptake of science, innovation and technology in rural industries and help to advance the careers of young people through national recognition of their research ideas."

There are a number of industry category awards available to applicants, supported by research and development corporations, including animal welfare, cotton, dairy, fisheries and aquaculture, grains, horticulture, new and emerging rural industries, pork, viticulture and oenology. Winners can use their funding for a range of activities including research projects, industry visits or to attend conferences and workshops.

Following an additional application and judging process, one of the industry category award recipients will then receive the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's Award, which provides an additional \$33,000 in funding to further develop their research project. Applications for the awards close on Friday 18 November 2011. For further information and application forms visit [www.abares.gov.au/scienceawards](http://www.abares.gov.au/scienceawards). email [scienceawards@abares.gov.au](mailto:scienceawards@abares.gov.au) or contact 02 6272 2260.

**Farm Ready Grants re-open** – The program re-opened on 1 July 2011 and changes will be introduced to extend the availability of funds and make the program accessible to more primary producers. The Minister also announced that the Farm Ready Reimbursement Grants will be expanded to include agritourism and food tourism training.

Primary producers and wild game harvesters will now be entitled to a reimbursement of 65% of the costs of approved courses. Each primary producer can still claim up to a maximum \$1500 each financial year, with funding up to \$500 also available to assist with travel, accommodation and child care expenses. The arrangements for indigenous land managers will not change and they will be eligible for a 100% reimbursement of the cost of approved training courses up to the maximum of \$1500 annually. For further information about FarmReady visit: [www.daff.gov.au/farmready](http://www.daff.gov.au/farmready).

**Victoria: 25th Anniversary of Landcare Grants** - \$600,000 helps Landcare in Victoria mark its 25th birthday. On Friday 29 July 2011, Mr Ryan Smith, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, announced that the Victorian Government has made available \$600,000 to help fund activities to mark the 25th Anniversary of Landcare in Victoria. For more information: [www.landcarevic.net.au](http://www.landcarevic.net.au).

**Queensland: \$15,000 grants available for rural communities** - Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies Tim Mulherin has announced the opening of the last round of the \$2 million Building Rural Communities Fund. The grants will provide increased support to communities to strengthen their capacity and build a more sustainable and prosperous future for rural and remote communities across Queensland. The funding is for plans like developing local sporting facilities or volunteer organisations, implementing tourism strategies or building natural disaster resilience. Applications close on the 23rd of November to apply go to [www.regions.qld.gov.au](http://www.regions.qld.gov.au) or call 132 523.

## State Landcare Conferences & Other Dates

**Landcare in Action: National Landcare & Catchment Management Conference 2012 -** NZ Landcare Trust will host a 2-day conference starting 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at the Academy of Performing Arts, University of Waikato Campus, Hamilton, New Zealand. The event will celebrate the work of numerous Landcare Groups from all around New Zealand and provide an opportunity to explore the role that communities play in sustainable land and water management. The conference will include keynote and workshop sessions, Landcare Group presentations, a celebration meal, and optional field trips. Detailed planning is currently underway and more information will be made available on the conference website. Email: [conference@landcare.org.nz](mailto:conference@landcare.org.nz)

## Regional Landcare Facilitators

These are now in place in most NRM regions across the country and are hosted by a variety of organisations such as Landcare Networks, CMA's/Regional Bodies and industry groups. Funding for one full time RLF (up to \$150 000 per year) has been allocated by the Federal Government to each region and some regions have opted to split this across a number of part time positions. For the contact details for the RLF in your region go to: <http://www.nrm.gov.au/contacts/landcare.html#regional>.

**Items for NLF Newsletter – If you have any events or items you would like included in the NLF Newsletter, please email them to me at the email address below.**

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**To sign up for the NLF newsletter go to:** <http://www.landcareonline.com.au/about/the-national-landcare-facilitator/nlf-e-newsletter/>

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Regards,

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