



LANDCARE NEWS

JUNE/JULY 1994

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE COMES TO TOWN

Barung Landcare hosted a hearing of the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs on Monday May 16.

The terms of reference for the inquiries relate to Landcare policies and programs and value adding in agricultural production. The chairman of the committee was Senator Bryant Burns - Labour (QLD) with David Brownhill - National Party (NSW), Winston Crane - Liberal (WA) and John Woodly - Democrats (QLD). We hosted the hearing at Barung House with a Hansard Parliamentary recording taking place. The hearing lasted a couple of hours with the Kenilworth Landcare group also making a presentation, with a lot of informal discussions before and after. My perception is that the Senators didn't have much of an understanding of the Landcare movement and Landcare in general and it would have been more beneficial if they had been briefed with more detail before they came. As they asked all the questions a better understanding of Landcare would have helped us give them more information. We presented them with a comprehensive document detailing our concerns etc. about Landcare in this country and I'm sure this will be the information they refer to when coming up with new policies (if any). It was a very interesting to see how a senate inquiry functions.

A BUS TRIP TO THE TREES

Barung Landcare held a very successful trip around our region to look at the planting projects being carried out on the range.

Our first stop was at Picnic Creek to look at the Creek Bank Stabilisation Project which has been carried out mainly by Peter Shirley the Ranger at Kondalilla Falls National Park and last years Leap (Landcare and Environmental Action Program) Crew. The planting is going well and has had a good start in the fact that there have been no floods this year, which is always a serious concern when working on creek banks. Next we visited a property on Western Ave, Montville which has been planting trees on major landslips for the past 5 years. These trees now seem to be holding everything together but you can never tell with a landslip. Rob Tap has been carrying out these plantings and when he has finished the next priority area, he will be starting to join the two areas to create a wildlife corridor.

The continued plantings on Western Avenue are really starting to look great. Before lunch a quick stop off at Gardners Lane to Phil's to look at Jack Mitchell's Demonstration Plot which is amazing considering it's less than a year old. We then climbed through the fence to check out Barry's three year old rainforest planting on beautiful soil. What a difference it makes! After lunch we headed down to look at a site near Mt. View Rd which has also been planted over the last year. The aim on this site is to rehabilitate certain areas and to grow harvestable cabinet timbers on the better soils - very interesting. Trevor Wilson is doing a lot of lantana clearing and replacement plus planting on the landslips; he has fenced off areas and is using cattle as a management tool to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Participants in the Barung "Bus Trip to the Trees" listen to Forester Ashley Sewell give details of a tree-planting project. Note one-year-old Blue Quondong in foreground.

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IMPORTANT LAYER IGNORED...

The understory or shrub layer beneath a tree canopy makes an important contribution to the forest ecosystems, yet often passes unnoticed by the public and some members of the forestry industry.

The understory usually contains a layer of shrubs, seedlings, low trees, grasses and sometimes vines and ferns, providing shelter and

food for birds, animals, and insects.

Although the widespread decline of Australia's trees has been well publicised, little attention has been paid to the loss of the understory.

This has meant many farmers establishing tree planting projects, be they for shelter belts or agroforestry have not included understory plantings in their plans.

Potential opportunities for

understory plantings include shelter belts to reduce wind, and on creek banks and dam filter zones to prevent soil erosion.

Where soil stabilizing is required, native understory plants offer THE BEST MEANS TO STABILISE THE SOIL on steep slopes, along creeks and drainage areas, but should be fenced off from stock.

So, when considering tree planting, consider the understory also.

BUS TRIP CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

graze off prior to planting and then to keep the grass down after the trees are big enough. Finally, we visited a property out at Mears Lane. About 6000 trees have been planted on this site with a view to landslip control, firewood and pole timbers, and cabinet timber production. It a very impressive property with work also being done on windbreaks and wildlife corridors. The idea in one area was to extend the southern slopes with the original rainforest vegetation and on the different soil type where eucalypts were originally they have been replanted.

RAINFORESTS ARE OUR BUSINESS

The World Wide Fund for Nature and the Australia Timber Importer's Federation united to present the 1994 "Rainforests are our Business" Conference in Sydney recently. Its aim was to discuss ways in which Australian companies, conservation organizations and consumers can help to develop an ecologically sustainable tropical timber trade.

...quote from conference
"plain evidence exists that practically no commercial operations in tropical rainforests today can be described as ecologically sustainable. In fact, many logging operations are more akin to mining forests for their timber, rather than farming the rainforests..."

IS THIS RHETORIC OR GENUINE CONCERN FOR THE RAINFORESTS?

MALAYSIA PUSHES LOGGING CHARTER.

Reported in The West Australian September 14/1993.

Malaysia is pushing a new plan for greening the world.

It wants a global initiative on protecting forests to follow on from last year's Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

Opening the 14th Commonwealth Forestry Conference in the Malaysian capital, Prime Minister Mahathir accused the West of disregarding the destruction of its own temperate forests while harping on about tropical timber.

Northern forest products competed with tropical timber in international markets but were not bound by any internationally agreed standards or commitments to sustainability.

Dr. Mahathir further stated, "Yet we know that the practice of clear felling of miles and miles of temperate forests causes more environmental damage than the controlled selective logging practised in tropical forests."

Six principles were suggested to govern world forestry.

- * All countries to have the sovereign right to exploit their forests on a sustainable basis.
- * Sustainable forest management should apply to all types of forests and timber.
- * Countries with low forest cover should be mainly responsible for greening the world and lead the way to a target of increasing the world's forest cover to 30% of the land area by year 2000.
- * The conservation and use of biological diversity should recognize the importance of tropical forests as one of the main repositories of terrestrial diversity.
- * The timber trade should be based on non-discriminatory and multilateral principles with emphasis on removing tariff and non-tariff barriers to forest products.

Malaysia is particularly irked about eco-labelling of forest products, a proposal which European green

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groups are promoting. This would certify that tropical timber products come from a sustainable rainforest.

Malaysia contends that labelling discriminates against tropical timber. Malaysia is the world's biggest exporter of tropical hardwoods and earned \$17 billion from the trade last year.

REALITY!!

To those concerned about what is happening to the Rainforests, the rhetoric somehow does not fit with the 4 Corners programme screened 16/5/94.

Malaysian timber barons linked to the Prime Minister's family business network have entered the New Guinea rainforests and have taken 1/3rd of the rainforest and within 20 years this resource will disappear. Rainforest timber is called THE NEW GOLD. There are only 4 major rainforest areas left in the world, and New Guinea is/was one of them.

The magnificent timbers go to Japan and are converted to construction timber, veneers, chopsticks, and plywood. The timber merchants have invaded New Guinea as a new field of exploitation, having moved on from their own doorstep.

**THANKS TO ALL
VOLUNTEERS OF BARUNG
LANDCARE OVER THE LAST
TWO MONTHS — WE HAVE
GOT HEAPS DONE.**

NOTE TO ALL MEMBERS

All meetings of the Barung management committee are open to our members to attend at any time. Please feel free to come along and have your say in our meetings.

BOOKS FOR SALE

We have a good range of Rainforest Tree books For Sale down at Barung House.

We are now also selling pH test kits for testing your soils acidity at home.

WE WELCOME ARTICLES FOR THIS NEWSLETTER...

CLOSING DATE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES for the next issue is
WEDNESDAY 27TH JULY.

BENEFITS OF AGROFORESTRY: WOODLOT TRIALS

Farmers can benefit from woodlots on farms. Trials in N.S.W. on a farm established in 1991, and being managed on commercial agroforestry practices, indicates that stock can be run on the plot after 3 years growth. The trial also shows that improved perennial pasture could actually have been established between the tree rows, making the entire area a valuable commercial operation for grazing and hay making, while also being a benefit to the land. The trial includes a mix of pines and eucalyptus. Cash flow from thinnings for the paper pulp industry within 10 years is anticipated and the mature trees will be sold as sawn logs as market patterns dictate after about 20 years. The eucalypt timber was planted for firewood and mature timber, creating a cash flow within 6 years. Indigenous area specific varieties were sown on higher slopes to stabilise soils and slopes.

To maximise on-farm returns from high quality sawn timbers, farmers have an advantage over huge plantations in that a farmer can manage a 20-30hectare plot without high labour input. It is this ability to manage a small woodlot as part of a WHOLE FARM PLAN that makes a woodlot worthwhile.

QUEENSLAND FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

June 5-8 at Surfers Paradise Travelodge

Contact Prof. Paul Saffigna or Simon Lutton 07-875-5332 for information and registration details. As part of a media release, Prof. Saffigna said,

"We urge farmers, charged with the responsibility of feeding the

population- scientists, policy makers, industry, teachers, students and members of the community to attend, be heard and share information."

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THREATENED SPECIES OF THE MALENY PLATEAU:

THE MARY RIVER COD

The Mary River Cod (*Maccullochella peelii mariensis*), a sub-species of the Murray Cod and well known inhabitant of the Obi Obi Creek and other tributaries of the Mary River, will soon be a "former inhabitant" if we don't take some steps now to conserve it. A report published in June 1993 by the QDPI Fisheries Division listed the Mary Cod as "critically endangered". This means that there is a 50% chance that it will be extinct in five years unless appropriate actions are taken.

The DPI, liaising with the Department of Environment and Heritage, has applied for funding to write and implement a "recovery plan" for the Cod. This application has been written with a view to enabling community input into the recovery process. The Threatened Species Network will be involved with this, as will the Mary River Catchment Co-ordinating Committee and Waterwatch.

Mary River Cod are found in deeper pools of relatively undisturbed tributaries where fallen timber, branches and boulders provide cover. Currently fish are known to remain in the Obi Obi, Six Mile Creek, Tinana Creek and Coondoo Creek.

Reasons for their decline include destruction of physical habitat and alteration of water quality (and quantity) by dams and weirs, loss of native streamside vegetation, siltation from accelerated catchment erosion due to agriculture and forestry, and stream channel damage from sand and gravel extraction. Overfishing becomes a problem when these other factors have taken their toll. There is a risk that numbers will be reduced below viable recovery levels if recreational fishing is not monitored and controlled to some degree.

Some recovery actions which would greatly benefit from community input include

streamside revegetation with appropriate plants, monitoring the effects of dams on various water quality variables, collecting local history about the decline of cod in the Mary and tributaries, and raising public awareness about the need to go easy on the fish that are left. Different actions are appropriate in different sub-catchments and with so many interested parties in the total Mary Catchment, co-ordination will be essential for success.

If you are interested in being part of a community effort to conserve the Mary River Cod, contact Jan Tilden (Threatened Species Network Co-ordinator) at the Barung Landcare Centre.

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Queensland Landcare Conference

The 1994 Queensland Landcare Conference is being held at the University of Queensland, Gatton College, Gatton.

From 5-7 July, 1994, join other Queenslanders with interest in landcare issues at this important conference.

For further information contact:

Barry Dixon
CMP Services
PO Box 705
TOOWOOMBA Q 4350
Ph (076) 39 3250
Fax (076) 39 1531

Geoff Penton
Regional Landcare
Facilitator
PO Box 102
TOOWOOMBA Q 4350
Ph (076) 31 4200
Fax (076) 34 7421

Approximate cost of the Conference, including registration, meals and accommodation is \$110. A travel subsidy will also be available.

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CANE TOADS AND OTHER NASTIES!!

The effects on wildlife are disastrous! As well as poisoning native predators, cane toads are voracious feeders which consume a wide variety of insects, frogs, small reptiles, mammals and even birds. The most humane way to help eradicate the cane toad is to catch it, put it in a plastic bag and place it in the freezer, and after a week or two, dispose of it in the weekly rubbish(or compost it?).

BOOK REVIEW:

Bushland on Farms: do you have a choice?

Rob and Steve Davidson. Govt of Victoria Agriculture Publication. (details at Barung)

This is a wonderful book. At a time when we might all despair about the future, here we read of hope – hope given of trial and error, of failure and indeed of despair and real emotional struggle. We read of the methods and the successes, not in the words and language of experts, but of ordinary rural people who can talk through the pages to so many other ordinary people whose commitment will be critical if we are to make a truly ecologically sustainable Australia. Highly recommended.

POINTS OF VIEW!

Barung Landcare would like to hear from you! We invite concise, topical and relevant letters.

Do you have an interesting tree story? Do you have ideas about sustainability? Have you had success in planting trees? Have you had a success with a land degradation problem, if so, please share it with us and our readers.

Send along the details and a photograph and we will try to include it in our newsletters.

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE – FARMING FOR OUR FUTURE: JULY 1-3 University of Melbourne.

International speakers and participants will join in forums, action groups and workshops to discuss women in agriculture, present and future contributions toward production, environment, sustainable development and economics.

CONTACT: Conference Management 03-344-4490 fax: 03-344-6122

MEMBERSHIP IS GROWING!!! MAY 1993.....85 members
MAY 1994.....130 members

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MALENY AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION IS GIVING AWAY FREE TREES TO MEMBERS AS PART OF THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT DURING WORLD ENVIRONMENT WEEK JUNE 12-17



NATURE NATTER: WEEKEND CAMP.

WHERE: Beerwah Field Study Centre.
Roys Road, Beerwah

WHEN: July 16-17

This is an opportunity for people involved in professional and amateur environmental work in this region to meet in a relaxed, informal atmosphere, to present their particular field of expertise, to learn what others are doing, and to discuss the problems and difficulties they may encounter.

ENQUIRIES: Mrs. B. Henderson phone: 07-289-9272
MS 1063 Farrow Road
SAMSONVALE. 4520

QUEENSLAND LANDCARE CONFERENCE

Lexy Forbes will be presenting the community part of the workshop on "What's Happening with Funding", and to lighten the evening, the Maleny Players will also be there! Other members are welcome to attend the conference if you are interested please contact Barung.



Anybody wishing to trap feral cats in their area can hire (for a minimal cost) a trap from David Wilson (the vet) up at his surgery (top of Maple St., Maleny). They are happy to humanely put these animals to sleep to help to give our desperate native animals a bit of a chance.

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LANDCARE: SUCCESS FROM THE GROUND UP

Landcare Australia's chief executive, Brian Scarsbrick, says that about 25% of Australia's farmers are now involved in the Landcare movement through 1600 Landcare support groups.

Estimates have put the total cost of land degradation, including treatment of degraded land, nutrient loss, research, and costs related to silting and pollution of rivers, lakes, dams and harbours, at about \$2 billion annually.

For every loaf of bread produced, an average of seven kilograms of soil is being lost from our cropping lands when conventional cultivation techniques are used.

For every bottle of wine produced one kilo of soil is lost to our rivers and oceans.

Landcare is gaining wider acceptance in farming and rural communities and is starting to spread into urban areas through Dunecare (sand dune stabilisation), Bush Care (bush regeneration) and Ribbons of Blue (water quality monitoring).

The Landcare group approach offers the opportunity to tackle huge and often daunting national problems in "bite-size chunks", by developing local situations which are driven by grass-roots concern for the future of our local natural resources.

There are now three principal components of the Landcare program: water catchment management; sustainable agricultural practices; and rural/urban interaction.

In smaller water catchments, the

technique is to involve all properties in the catchment area and encourage them to develop property plans and management practices which could improve soil and water quality.

In larger catchments, the concept is to join individual Landcare groups to co-ordinate these processes regionally rather than locally.

In terms of sustainable agriculture practices, the Landcare strategy is to increase on-farm vegetation cover based on a whole farm plan, with trees and improved perennial pastures reducing salinity, soil loss and acidification.

Improved subdivisional farm fencing is also encouraged, as is treatment for soil erosion and the adoption of zero-till practices, particularly for the more fragile soils.


The application of phosphate in the drier months is also encouraged, particularly on light sandy soils, given that high rainfall, after super is applied, stimulates high run-off from a catchment into rivers and streams.

In Queensland there are about 116 Landcare committees and 35 sub-groups operating. In the grazing areas, groups have tackled issues such as pasture establishment and rehabilitation, appropriate methods of timber clearing and




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regrowth control, and the spread of weeds such as parthenium, rubber vine and prickly acacia.

More than 1.28 million hectares of cropping land are now protected with soil conservation measures throughout Queensland.

Some 13.940 landholders have contributed to the protection of 10million hectares of cropping land by contour banks and waterways.

This represents 56% of the total area of cultivation requiring protection with contour banks.

In today's money terms, this means that landholders have spent a total of \$117 million operationalizing Landcare procedures.

A total of 6100 properties, covering an area of 3.8 million hectares have property plans.

Trash retention practices are now used on 70% of cane fields on sloping land.

In 1991-92 almost 500,000 trees provided by the Queensland Forest Service were planted by farmers.

Land management and conservation have continued to feature in many farm field days , but, there is still a long way to go!

Landcare is a success story of great significance and will continue to be successful for as long as it can attract people and farmers who are committed.

SEEDS - Small Eager Environmentalists Do Something

S.E.E.D.S is a joint initiative of Barung Landcare and The Threatened Species Network (Qld.) It is a project designed to educate and motivate young people from 5-12 years of age, in all aspects of Landcare and Biodiversity. We envisage it will provide a resource centre and library, activity days, (comprising of planting seeds and trees, and following guidelines set out by the National Landcare Program)

Assistance with school and personal projects, ranging from Landcare to Threatened Species, will be available, and at this initial stage we propose 1 day per month after school for 2 hours duration, will be available to members.

To access the requirements of members we would ask that children in the appropriate age group fill in the form provided and return it to Barung Landcare.

Membership is \$2.00 per year, per child, or, \$5.00 for tree or more children in one family.

OUR FIRST DAY WILL BE ON TUESDAY THE 12TH JULY FROM 3.00PM TILL 5.00PM.

If any of you parents out there would like to give us a hand to run these Landcare afternoons, Please don't hesitate to call us.



MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN INQUIRING AS TO THEIR MEMBERSHIP STATUS. PLEASE NOTE THAT WHEN YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS DUE IT WILL BE WRITTEN ON THE ADDRESS LABEL ON THIS NEWSLETTER.

AS YOU WILL ALL NOTICE THERE IS A MEMBERSHIP FORM INCLUDED WITH THIS ISSUE OF OUR NEWSLETTER. WOULD IT BE TOO MUCH TROUBLE TO ASK ALL OUR MEMBERS TO FILL IN THIS NEW FORM?? WE ARE UPDATING OUR RECORDES, AS WELL AS TRYING TO GET A BETTER PICTURE OF THE WHOLE AREA AND COME UP WITH SOME STATISTICS ABOUT OUR MEMBERS. PLEASE SEND IT BACK OR DROP IT IN SOMETIME. **THANKS.**

DATE CLAIMERS

- | | |
|----------|---|
| June 1 | 10 a.m. Bridge Creek Working Bee |
| 4 | Conondale Range Committee Rainforest Walk |
| 5-8 | International Symposium on Environmental Agriculture Towards 2000 |
| 7 | Rural committee meeting 7.30 p.m. with Brian Lee as a Guest Speaker. |
| 12 | World Environment Day. Cotton Tree Park |
| 16-18 | Sunshine Coast Show. Farm Forestry Display |
| 19 | Sunshine Coast Environment Council Inc. Annual General Meeting. 12.15p.m. |
| | Kilkie River Cruise. Cod Hole, Maroochydore. R.S.V.P. 2/6/94 |
| 25 | Waterwatch Workshop at Barung. 9a.m-1p.m. |
| July 1-3 | Women in Agriculture International Conference. |
| 5-7 | Queensland Landcare Conference. Gatton Agriculture College |
| 9 | Portable Sawmill display at Barung 9.30am |
| 16-17 | Nature Natter Weekend Camp. Beerwah |
| 29-31 | Farming the Future. Cooroy |

Please check the "Landcare Update" in the Range News every fortnight for details of other events.

MALENY SHOW

This year Barung Landcare had its own "pavillion" at the Maleny Show. Sandra Griffith initiated and co-ordinated this effort, ensuring that the Landcare message was presented to show goers in a thoroughly professional and interesting way. Barung had displays and leaflets covering all aspects of its operations, including nursery and book sales, publicity and the rural committee.

Associated groups - Waterwatch, the Threatened Species Network and the local Catchment Care group presented displays and had members available to speak to the interested public. Our tent was so spacious that we also had room for displays from the Maleny Co-ops.

Plenty of people came through and quite a few stopped to talk - always a good sign. Those who organised and participated in the event felt that it was a resounding success and a great way to present ourselves to the land-holders of the area. As well, we had a lot of fun getting it all together. Many thanks to all those who contributed their time and energy.

RURAL REPORT

A brief update on the **Dairy Effluent Trials** - Peter Dart from Qld Uni. came up and gave us a report on the Soil Testing to date. If anybody wishes to look at the report please drop in at Barung or contact Mal Thompson on 944420. At this stage we need to take a few more samples, one on an unfertilised site and one in some untouched rainforest to get some further comparisons.

Bridge Creek Site. A working bee will be held at Col Corks place on Wed. 1st of June to erect a more permanent fence around the slip area and do some spot spraying for further trees to be planted.

The next meeting will be on the 7/6/94 at Barung at 7.30pm with Brian Lee our new councillor.

A big thanks to Kim Collier, our new member who has taken over the task of editing this newsletter. Another thing now being done by our ever-increasing band of volunteers.

WATER QUALITY

Monitoring Workshop

(to help in the formation of a community-based water quality monitoring network in our local area)

When: Saturday June 25,
9.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.

At: Barung House
Bicentenary Lane, Maleny

The purpose of the workshop is to train community people from all walks of life in the use of simple, safe, accurate water quality monitoring equipment and to give them an idea of how to record and interpret results.

This will help us to develop a community-based water quality monitoring network in our local area. Equipment and back-up training and advice will be supplied. Find out how you can help to maintain or improve the quality of our surroundings. You don't need to be an expert - just interested enough to give a couple of hours every month to do some monitoring.

Learn how to test for: pH, dissolved oxygen, total dissolved solids, turbidity, temperature, phosphates, nitrates and E. coli bacteria.

Learn how to spot bio-indicators (creepy-crawlies in the water).

This network is supported by;

- Barung Landcare
- Lake Baroon Catchment Care Group
- The Mary River Catchment Co-ordinating Committee
- Mary River Waterwatch

Cost of the workshop is \$10.00 (morning tea included). **Register with Barung Landcare (074-943 151).** If you wish to bring your own samples, pick up your acid-rinsed sample jars from Barung after June 14..

For more information contact Barung Landcare (074-943 151), or Peter Oliver, Mary River Waterwatch Co-ordinator, (074) 821 522)



