

Natural Resource TALK...

NRM Communications

As dozens of case-studies are being written for the Mosaic Map Project, the NRM Web Team is preparing a new-look website to host more than 500 case-studies and photographs. The site will be embedded into the current NRM website and consultants have tested the concept with users (the Sydney-based consultants used people from the Sydney Metro CMA, Local Governments, students and general users).



NRM Team website coordinator Gerry Maynes said the website will provide an information portal to both NRM users and those who aren't aware of NRM. The first mock-up of the new design received very positive feedback. Users said that they wanted a mechanism like this to find information, which is relevant, quickly. Consultants are now looking at restructuring the NRM, NAP and NHT websites to remove duplications and promote better integration as a family of related sites. A search tool is being developed to generate a list of NHT/NAP projects by region. Future development will provide links to reports and publications produced by individual projects and allow projects to be searched by themes. To give you an idea of the desired result, check out www.nht.gov.au/envirofund/index.html where users can obtain project ID, the proponent and funding amount listed by state and region.

A final concept should be in place by late October for final revisions and a pre-launch test with targeted people - potentially facilitators.

Up to 40 documentary videos are in the pipeline for NRM Communications to raise the profile of NRM achievements across a broad range of issues.

ABC Television has expressed interest in one of the videos, which features the Banksia Award-winning Ghost Nets Project in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Other videos currently in pre-production include: Victoria's Shepparton Irrigation, peri-urban horticulture, tree farming in Western Australia, biodiversity, salinity, Coastcare and the threatened Western Swamp Tortoise. Eventually this collection will have a fully-searchable index for users and will be available online.

A survey has been completed on school curriculum documents in each state and territory to identify places where NHT learning resources might be appropriate. It was found that all four areas of the NHT concerns (land, bush, rivers and coasts) are studied in schools.

The main curriculum area where NHT resources would be most used is Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE), particularly geography.

The main levels where such resources would be used are Years 8/9-10.

Currently, teachers rely on existing resources such as textbooks and videos that touch on the four areas of NHT concern but these do not provide an integrated or comprehensive approach.

Teachers requested the development of factual materials and video/DVD, classroom ready units and website materials.



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Photo competition

Land & Water Australia has launched a photography competition - Peoples, puddles and paddocks - Water in the landscape - as part of its 15-year celebrations.

The competition is open to all Australian residents, with three category winners and one major winner to share in \$15,000 in prizes.

The three categories are: Landscapes, Lifestyles and Livelihoods.

Entries close Friday, 27 October 2006. For more information visit www.lwa.gov.au



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

Department of the
Environment and Heritage

Feedback

The 5th National NRM Facilitator Forum held in Canberra in July was a great success. Keynote addresses were made on climate change and the NRM Knowledge System plus a futures expo looking at emerging issues, policies and programmes in keeping with the forum's theme, "NRM the future". During the forum, the four main facilitator groups (Australian Government, Regional, Local Government and ILMF) and the state teams had their own sessions to share how they carry out their roles and work together. All forum presentations will soon be available on CD with audio recordings. Contact: Capacity Building Team 02 6271 6355.

An Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) survey is available on *NRM Activities and Issues on Australian farms in 2004-05*. This survey will be conducted every two years and was developed in response to a demand for a more extensive range of NRM statistics. While the ABS has previously collected data on NRM topics (eg. water, salinity), the NRM survey will allow for the ongoing collection of a range of topics.

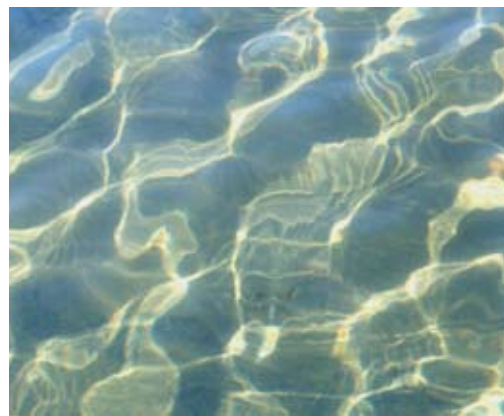
In developing the NRM survey, five priority topics were identified; native vegetation, weeds, pests, land and soil, and water. The survey found that nine out of ten Australian farmers reported undertaking some form of NRM activity during 2004-05. Weed and pest management were the most common NRM activities farmers undertook nationally. Most (86 percent) farmers reported having at least one NRM issue on their holding, with weeds and pests again topping the list. Native vegetation, land and soil and water-related issues were other natural resource management issues reported by farmers. For more information contact 1300 135070 or visit www.abs.gov.au and search for the survey's title.



Funding

Australian Government Envirofund Round 8 will be announced later this month. After funds from Round 8 have been distributed the Australian Government will have invested more than \$100 million in community groups since the inception of Envirofund in 2002. In Tasmania alone 219 projects have been granted over \$3.7 million in funding. Round 9 is planned for early next year but no dates have been set as yet.

Visit www.nht.gov.au/envirofund or call the Envirofund Hotline 1800 303 863



Australian Government Community Water Grants Round 2 applications have now closed. The latest round attracted applications from local governments, schools, sporting clubs and other community groups across Australia. We anticipate that application assessments will be complete by November 2006. Visit www.australia.gov.au/communitywatergrants

Threatened Species Network Community Grants Programme Round 9 will announce the successful applicants on National Threatened Species Day, 7th September 2006. Round 10 of the TSN Community Grants Program is expected to open in April 2007. For more information visit <http://wwf.org.au/ourwork/species/tsngrants/>

Natural Resource Innovation Grant applications for the 2006-07 funding round close on 18th September 2006. Total grant funds are limited to \$3 million in 2006-07. Natural Resource Innovation Grants are one-off grants to encourage people engaged in farming, food, aquaculture and forest industries to contribute to sustainable production. For more information call 1800 657 220 or email nlpinnovations@daff.gov.au

Awards

The 2006 National Landcare Awards has recognised the NRM network with the following regions making the finalists in the regional category: Queensland's Desert Channels, SA's Integrated NRM Group for the Murray Darling Basin, Tasmania's Cradle Coast NRM, Victoria's Port Phillip and Westernport CMA and WA's South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team. For the **rivercare** category, congratulations go to the NHT-funded CAMPFIRE Monitoring Group in the ACT. Following the bushfires of 2003 over 200

volunteers have monitored water quality at more than 50 sites. Also nominated as a **rivercare finalist** is the NAP-funded Bookpurnong Lock 4 Environmental Association, a group of irrigators addressing salinity by developing a land and water management plan for the district and helping to establish the feasibility of a salt interception scheme.

In the **Indigenous category**, the Northern Gulf Indigenous Savannah Group has been named a finalist. This group promotes cross-cultural awareness, partnerships, GPS and GIS training and access to country. Since forming in 2002 the group has played a critical role in regional NRM planning.

Under the **bushcare nature conservation category** the Tiwi Land Council is nominated for cane toad activities, including the Trust-funded barge service, which has a post-washdown holding area surrounded by a cane toad exclusion fence. The group has also helped improve public awareness through training activities. Good luck to all on 10th October!



The Carpentaria Ghost Nets Programme has won the 2006 Banksia Environmental Awards (water category). Riki Gunn, coordinator of the project, said, "It is a great achievement of which we should all be proud."

Ghost Nets are fishing nets that have been lost, discarded or simply abandoned at sea, threatening fish and other marine wildlife. To date Indigenous ranger groups have removed 5,148 metres of net. This programme is also a finalist in the 2006 National Landcare Awards (Coastcare).

The **National Awards for Local Government** have been announced and the Community Water Grants category, sponsored by DEH, goes to joint winners: Goulburn Mulwaree Council in NSW for its Water Conservation Community; and Brisbane City Council for its Rocks Riverside Park Water Mining Project. The NRM Category goes to Byron Shire Council in NSW for its West Byron Integrated Water Management Reserve.



The **savewater! awards** close on the 18th of October. The awards are open to all Victorians, however, for the first time one category – 'product innovation' – will be open to entrants nationally. For information visit www.savewater.com.au

The National McKell Medal applications close on 17th November 2006. The McKell Medal is a prestigious national award that publicly recognises excellence and achievement in natural resource management in Australia. For information visit www.daff.gov.au/mckellmedal

Calendar

The **15th Annual Australian Weeds Conference** will be held from 24-28 September 2006 at the Adelaide Convention Centre. This year's theme is Managing Weeds in a Changing Climate. For more information and registration details visit: www.plevin.com.au/15AWC2006/index.htm.

Natural Resource Talk

New appointments

Australian Government Facilitators:
Mike Misso - will start in September as the Australian Government facilitator for biodiversity in the Northern Territory.
Simon Goodhand - Australian Government facilitator for sustainable agriculture in South Australia, has moved to the Northern Territory.

Regional Facilitators:
Grant Millar - Desert Channels Region Queensland
Nicola Wright - Mackay/Whitsundays Region Queensland
Sarah Conner - has returned from maternity leave to her position in Northern Gulf Region Queensland
Chris Lewis - Regional facilitator East Gippsland, Victoria

Natural Resource Talk

Cybersurf

The Weeds Australia web site has been updated to enable searching of their weed identification tool by NRM region. You can find the general jump off page at <http://www.weeds.org.au/ntmap.htm>

This tool is built on the WEEDeck identification cards - for details see <http://www.weeds.org.au/weeddeck.htm> - and currently covers 233 weeds.

The 62nd Murray Darling Association Conference and AGM is being held 20-23 September, 2006 in Barham, NSW. The conference offers knowledge exchange and networking with local government and community members, state and federal NRM agencies and other stakeholders.

Visit www.mda.asn.au

The 2006 International Landcare conference will be held from 8-11 October in Melbourne. The conference focuses on: People and the environment, creating future landscapes, lifestyles and livelihoods. For registration details visit:

www.internationallandcareconference2006.com.au/Registration.htm

The first National NRM Workshop will be held on the Gold Coast 21-23 November. This is the first time all 56 NRM regions have been brought together to "share the experience". In the past four years chairs have made a combined presentation to the Ministerial Council however, there has been no attempt to bring the practitioners together to learn from each other. The programme is designed for all regional bodies. Visit: <http://astmanagement.com.au/nrm6/>

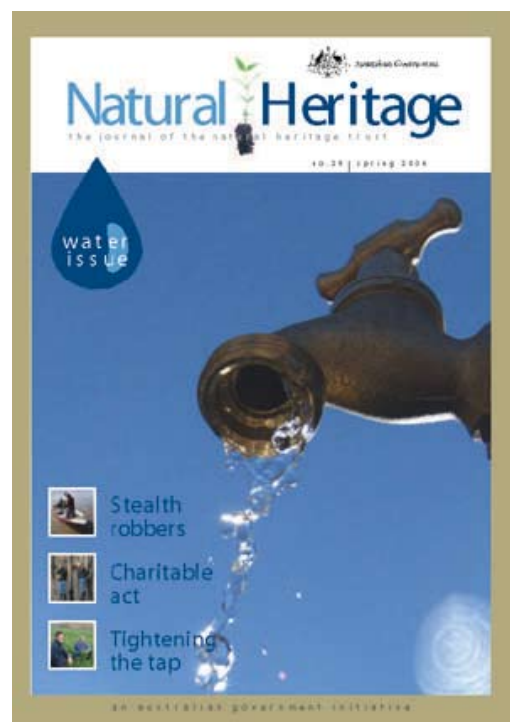


Library

Australia's mangroves: an authoritative guide to Australia's mangrove plants describes the 41 Australian species that make up 57% of the world's mangrove types. It provides a key to help identify mangrove species and contains a pocket-sized wheel key tool for field work. Visit www.uniquest.com.au

Natural Heritage journal, spring edition, is out now. The theme for this issue is "water efficiency" and 12 successful NRM projects are featured from across the country.

If you would like a copy of the latest issue email heritage@canmail.com.au
Upcoming themes for the quarterly-published



Natural Heritage journal are: "salinity" (due out December 2006), "facilitators" (due out March 2007), "local heroes" (due out June 2007) and "youth" (due out September 2007). If you would like to contribute a story idea for any of these themes email georgia.curry@deh.gov.au

Betting on Rain draws together basic information on weather and climate systems and recent research on the application of seasonal risk assessment tools, in the specific context of western NSW. To download this guide visit: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/resources/majorpubs/guides/betting-on-rain

The Field Manual for Surveying and Mapping Nationally Significant Weeds has been published by the Bureau of Rural Sciences. Download the manual from www.daff.gov.au/brsweeds or order a free hardcopy or CD by visiting www.affashop.gov.au/ or by calling 1800 020 157.

Hydrology of the Lake Eyre Basin is a 130-page report about the climate, rainfall, evaporation, streamflow and groundwater of the Lake Eyre Basin, which will help to protect the catchment area that extends through the desert and channel country of Queensland, NT and SA. The basin covers more than a million square kilometres and contains artesian springs that are up to 700,000 years old. The key findings of the report have been summarised in a 12-page brochure. Contact 1800 803 772.