

Australian Landcare International Newsletter September 2009



Australian Landcare International Inc.(ALI) is an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation whose aim is to assist other countries to take up Landcare ideas. **ALI does not normally provide funds for overseas projects – this is left to various aid organisations**

Secretary's Note

ALI enters another new year with a growing involvement in international Landcare. We have had 2 Landcare Travel Fellows venture to New Zealand and the US, respectively, in the past and a third will be going overseas later this month. The Fellowship has been generously supported by ALI members and additional funds recently came from the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Landcare Section. DSE sees the Fellowship as a valuable staff development and training opportunity for its coordinators, a view we believe is practical and enlightened. The Fellowship committee welcomes any additional offers from ALI members who wish to support the Travelling Fund. Discuss with President Rob Youl about tax deductibility.

On the down side, the Federal government's new Caring for Country funding program, which has replaced previous NHT and NLP programs, has radically reduced the previous level of funding going to CMAs most CMAs have had to reduce their coordinator numbers drastically. Hopefully there will still be enough to benefit from the Fellowship and to share their skills and knowledge with emerging Landcare movements in other countries.

ALI is entering a new phase after its initial enthusiastic beginnings and the 2nd **Annual Meeting on Friday Sept. 18th** will provide an opportunity for members to

chart a more developed course for the next couple of years. I hope you can get to the Annual meeting and contribute to the discussions to make ALI a worthwhile addition to the global Landcare scene.

Horrie Poussard

Note: President Rob Youl is away overseas but will be back in time for the Annual Meeting.

ALI was started last year by a group of Australians who had been involved in Landcare at various levels over the last 20 years. We are interested to use our Landcare experience to help others overseas to take up the Landcare approach. There are now more than 10 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, North America and the Pacific where Landcare is established. Other countries have heard of Landcare and want to know if it could help their local communities. ALI provides the prime contact point for overseas enquiries about Landcare, and can give guidance and support to those communities interested to know what Landcare is all about.

ALI has direct links with Landcare International (LI). This is a multi-national group formed out of the International Landcare Conference and based in Nairobi, Kenya. It works at a senior government and industry level to promote and support the development of Landcare. in many countries. ALI sees itself working at an organisational and local level.

Travel Fellowship Winner

The 2009 ALI Landcare Travelling Fellow is **Karen Brisbane** from Shepparton. The Goulburn Valley Landcare coordinator is off next month to help run a workshop in one of the largest environmental conferences in the US, the Land Trust Alliance Rally. During her travels, she will meet with farmers, environmentalists, wildlife managers, pest plant controllers and local government officers.



At home in Shepparton, Karen has coordinated the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network for eight years and more recently has been helping to raise corporate and philanthropic funding for local community Landcare projects.

Karen has a packed program visiting a number of States across the US. She spends her first week in Missouri with Rita Mueller who works for South West Missouri Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D). This agency is like a CMA that embraces many Landcare ideas and seeks funds for community projects. Projects can be environmental, or to enhance infrastructure and community activity. Karen will then be a few days in eastern Kansas before flying to the northwest to be hosted by Steve Burke (ex DSE many years ago) in Seattle, before attending the national rally of the Land Trust Alliance in Portland, Oregon. This is a huge conference/workshop and Landcare USA is represented, manned by the Virginians including Jerry Moles, Landcare coordinator from Grayson County, VA. To

finish off the study tour, she plans to travel through California with Jerry looking at significant landscape change issues.

Annual Meeting

The 2nd Annual Meeting of ALI will be held on Friday 18th September from 12 noon to 3pm at the 12th Floor, VFF office, 24-28 Collins Street, Melbourne. Light lunch provided.

The focus for the meeting will be a discussion on how ALI can best develop in order to have a significant impact on the growth of Landcare overseas. Peter Huthwaite, from Phillip Island Landcare Group, will assist us with the discussion. Peter has been involved in Landcare, initially as member of the Queensland Landcare Council and Landcare Australia Board, and more recently as President of Phillip Island Landcare Group, one of the most dynamic groups in the State. He has also been in leadership roles in several rural service organizations. He is currently Vice- President of the VFF Farm Tree and Landcare Association and Chairman of the recently formed Victorian Landcare Council.

Another visit to Indonesia

Victoria Mack and Sue Marriott from the Secretariat for International Landcare (SILC) made a second visit to Indonesia recently to further develop a project there. This report from Victoria Mack gives a taste of how things are progressing -

Peduli Lahan, or Landcare, is about to become a reality in Indonesia. The first Landcare group will be formed in September 2009 in the corridor area between Mt Merapi, which is an active volcano that towers over the village of Selo, and the inactive Mt Merbabu. Within Selo are the sub-villages of Samiran and Lencoh. The Indonesian Institute of Forest and Environment, INFRONT, will drive a program over three years working with approximately 7000 villagers from Samiran and Lencoh representing over 1600 households.

Indonesia's first Landcare facilitator will be INFRONT's current project manager, Uyung Pramudiyanto (below).



There are also six farmer facilitators working with INFRONT who, over the past three years, have been helping local farmers in Selo become aware of the problems and the potential solutions to the environmental and sustainable agricultural development challenges they face. They have over this time developed action plans to tackle deforestation, water quality and land degradation as well as planning for new home based enterprises and new crops, improved marketing, community nurseries, and increased dairy and livestock production.

Victoria Mack and Sue Marriott from SILC, based in Melbourne, have been working with INFRONT for the past 10 months to secure financial support for the project. This support is now close to reality. It will enable INFRONT to extend its support to the local facilitators, farmers and their families with the establishment of demonstration plots, farmer to farmer field schools, training and capacity building and the contracting of forestry, agricultural, marketing and climate specialists to help.

Agriculture is the area's economic mainstay, and farming is done on steep slopes with very limited soil and water conservation methods. This has exposed the soils to erosion, thereby reducing the productivity of the small farm plots. Poverty is a daily reality for most of the district's farming families. However, most of the farmers are young and enthusiastic about finding better ways to protect their

livelihoods and secure the land base on which they depend.

The INFRONT project will pursue both new agroforestry plantings as well as the installation of biogas plants to convert livestock and other wastes into cheap and effective cooking gas which will reduce reliance on daily firewood gathering. There are currently 10 pilot biogas plants working effectively in the villages.

Another challenge is finding fodder for livestock, primarily dairy cattle. Fodder is generally harvested by hand involving long walks up steep slopes to find local grasses and heavy loads being carried home. Fodder alternatives including fodder crops will be investigated by the INFRONT project.



Mt Merapi – the home of Indonesia's first Landcare group.

The ongoing battle is to get sufficient funding to carry out these project plans.

Any members wanting further information about this project should contact Victoria Mack on vmack@silc.com.au.

ALI membership subs due

Membership of ALI is a modest \$40 per year and is due now for all members, except those who signed up within the last 6 months. .

Landcare International Meeting

Landcare International (LI) based in Nairobi, Kenya, provides a means to promote Landcare at government level in various countries. It has been instrumental in progressing Landcare throughout Africa nations, particularly in East Africa. ALI has had close relations with LI since its inception and we have ALI members Bruce Lloyd, Noel Vock on the LI committee and Mary Johnson representing ALI. The LI committee meets by teleconference and Mary's notes of the recent August meeting include:

- the Australian National Landcare Forum will be held in Adelaide, SA on 23-24 March 2010. The theme will be on past achievements and future challenges.
- growing interest in Landcare in India and a move by LI to support a Landcare discussion at the upcoming World Congress on Conservation Agriculture being held in October 2009.
- the new international Landcare book was launched at the 2nd World Congress of Agroforestry in Nairobi, Kenya, late last month. ALI member Alice Knight was at the congress and we hope to hear all about the Congress when she gets back.
- AusAID is broadening its programs in Africa and LI have approached it and other donors to support a large Landcare project in Africa.
- there is strong lobbying for the Year of Landcare continues, with early responses from UNEP and UNDP being extremely well received. Although obtaining the declaration can take a couple years, lobbying is geared up with the aim to get it into the approval process by 2010.

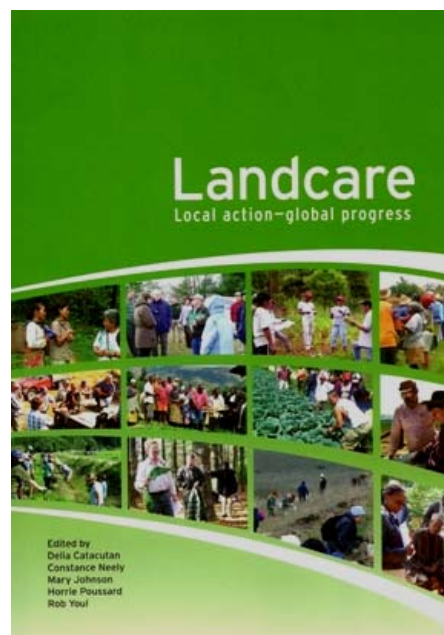
ALI gets some extra funding.

ALI recently obtained a small amount of funding from the Computershare fund (e-Tree) to do two projects

1. Develop and support an ALI website (\$1000). This is in progress with inputs from a number of volunteer sources. We hope to have the website up and running over the next month. The funds will go towards the cost of hosting the website over the next 3 years.
2. Provide a small contribution of \$500 to initiate a Landcare project in Nigeria. (Not a Nigerian scam !) The project is under the guidance of the Tropical Research and Conservation Centre at the University of Uyo, Nigeria. This aspect of the project specifically targets training and practical community education in tree planting and maintenance.

International Landcare Book

ALI has been able to get a further 50 copies of the new Landcare book "**Landcare: Local action-global progress**" to go with our initial 100 copy order. We have been generously supported by Computershare to purchase and distribute copies to Pacific agencies, organisations, universities and key individuals. Copies @ \$25 per book are still available. Contact Rob Youl.



MEMBERSHIP SUBS are now due.

The Benefits of ALI membership

- Using your landcare experience to assist overseas groups
- Overseas contacts for future travel
- Developing links with Landcare groups overseas
- Being part of a world-wide movement for land, biodiversity and community improvement
- Providing an avenue to support suitable overseas projects
- Regular e-newsletter on overseas Landcare developments

Surname..... Given Name.....

Address.....P/C.....

Email.....

Skills/interests.....

Send cheque or money order for \$40 to:
Secretary/Treasurer ALI :
Horrie Poussard, 32 Loch Avenue, St Kilda East 3183

Or direct Bank Transfer to Bendigo Bank
Acct : Australian Landcare International. BSB 633-108 Acct 1331 03598
And inform Horrie on poussard@thereef.com.au

Stop Press

The 2008 ALI Victorian Landcare Travelling Fellow, John Robinson, yesterday was awarded the People's Choice award for a person or organisation that made a major contribution to local Landcare. John is the Upper Maribynong Landcare Coordinator and is based at Sunbury. John was presented with his award at Government House by the Victorian Governor and the State Minister for Conservation.