



Fostering education for a sustainable future

ozEEnews

Newsletter of the Australian Association for Environmental Education Inc

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AAEE 15th Biennial Conference Highlight

Communities Can Contribute –

Blair Nancarrow

By Jennifer Pearson

BLAIR Nancarrow struck a chord with many who attended the conference. Her career of social research through the CSIRO was showcased in her discussion about, The Community's right or an optional extra: Where does public involvement fit in environmental decision making?

Blair spoke about the community's capacity to contribute to the decision making needed for future dilemmas. Many in the community are becoming sceptical of scientists who appear not to be able to agree and certainly about politicians making decision more in line with their immediate job future than underpinning issues of survival.

Through her research Blair has found that people in the community have ideas to contribute to decision making but many are not based on 'science data' so they hesitate to speak out. Communities offer a longitudinal reflection about changes that is valuable but needs people to help them represent their thoughts and ideas in acceptable ways.

The association has a range of people working in communities that could help by linking to organizations such as CSIRO, with its strong research position, to tell the stories that need to get out in the public space.

Blair left the delegates with a challenge to listen to 'the bloke on the bike' and acknowledge that communities care about what is happening to their lifestyles because they worry about the future for their children and are prepared to feel a bit of pain now to set us all on a better pathway for a more sustainable future.

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**Deadline for October Issue is
22 September 2008.**

From the President

THANKS again to all those responsible for making the Darwin conference a beauty.

And thanks to those who have made contributions to this special conference edition of the newsletter. The conference provided one forum for discussion of key issues and matters raised by speakers and workshop facilitators. This newsletter provides another. And if you want to continue the conversation with the authors, please contact them...or respond in the next newsletter! Debate, dialogue, professional conversations...these are vital for our work as educators, as professionals and as individuals working towards sustainability.

The conference was also the time for the AGM. Thanks to all who helped put that on, including Sarah Whittington, whose work on the Annual Report and agenda were invaluable. The AGM was quite the

meeting! The achievements since the previous one in November last year are outstanding. AAEE is an association not only for the future but of the future. The hard work of Chapter and SIG Convenors, our newsletter editor and web coordinator provide a solid foundation for expansion. Let me use this as an opportunity to welcome new members and invite all – old and new – to sing AAEE's praises and its importance to building capacity within society to shift towards sustainable policies and practices.

And here I also welcome our new Executive. Thank you for putting your hands up. The 2008-09 National Executive takes over in October this year. A handover is being planned.

Look out for information in this newsletter about AAEE's next national conference in Canberra in 2010.

Phil Smith



2008 AAEE AGM Largest in History. (See more photos on other pages.)

Thankyou to contributors

Thanks go to all the members who contributed articles for this edition and tony@parslowart.net for the desktop publishing.



Millennium Kids Link Youth Across Australia

By Gabriel Anderson
Programs Coordinator SA
& NT, OzGREEN

From 9 – 12 July youth delegates from across the country participated in the youth component of the national biennial AEE conference in Darwin.

This year the youth conference had a unique new flavour and a small carbon footprint! On the 9th of July simultaneous youth programs were run in parallel across the country. Discussions, outcomes and recommendations were fed into the Darwin program via video conferencing saving a lot of travel, expense and hot air creation.

Young people from six states were involved and activities took place in Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and of course Darwin. State delegates in Darwin included representatives from Millennium Kids, the Northern Territory Youth Roundtable, Queensland Youth Environment Council, the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, OzGREEN, Change and Switch, the South Australian Youth Environment Council and local Darwin school students. On Friday 11th sixty students from the Australian Indian Universities Youth Forum 2008 joined in discussions and presentations.

Lots of fun was had by all and some serious planning, networking and work was done as well.

“It was fantastic meeting members of environmental youth organisations from around Australia. It’s so important for us all to start collaborating nationally, share our resources and learn from each other different ways of engaging more young people from our regions in the fight to help their environment. Young or old, experienced or simply inspired, we can all be environmental educators”, said Zarin Salter, Millennium Kids.

A highlight was the successful video conferencing with Queensland and WA showing that we can work together over great distances.

Recommendations

There was a strong desire both from youth and older delegates to have more involvement of youth in AEE as an organisation as well as the AEE biennial



Youth Delegates at the Darwin 08 AEE conference.
Back: Gabe Anderson, Kelly Mackenzie, Nicole Thompson, Marc D’Amici
Front: Alicia Curtis, Zarin Salter, Nadja Kunz, Linh Do, Nadja Kunz, Todd Buswell, Katie Chatto and Ellen



Delegates enjoy the Darwin sunshine.
Back: Linh Do, Kelly, Mackenzie, Katie Chatto, Alicia Curtis. **Front:** Todd Buswell, Nicole Thompson and Zarin Salter. Photo: Todd Buswell (Wes Parker)

Sandell (missing Wes Parker)
Photo: Todd Buswell



Youth Delegates Action Planning
Left to right: Katie Chatto, Nicole Thompson, Nadja Kunz & Linh Do. Photo: Todd Buswell

conference. Youth and other delegates were keen to form an alliance of environmental youth organisations under AEE.

Other recommendations for Youth Involvement in the AEE include:

- Have a youth representative on each State Executive (state chapters)
- Instigate a student Membership/Youth Membership fee
- Promote AEE to youth groups
- Invite youth groups to be involved
- Build partnerships with youth organisation

New ideas for AEE conference:

- Involve the Youth representative that is based in the conference location in conference organising
- Workshops not lectures
- Have a youth key note speaker
- Have only youth presenters on one day
- Program in a youth stream to run through conference
- Showcase not talk about
- Day 1 – Getting to know each other
- No lecture on Day 1

- Dress up as your favourite Environmental Hero
- Environment raps/rhythms
- Dance

We all look forward to involvement in state chapters and to the next conference in 2010!

Millennium Kids is a not-for-profit environmental youth organisation, run by kids, for kids, providing a consultation process allowing young people to have a voice regarding their community. See www.millenniumkids.com.au for further information.

OzGREEN is an independent non-profit organisation that educates, engages and empowers young people, corporations and communities to tackle critical environmental sustainability challenges and become agents for positive change. Oz GREEN works in Australia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor, Pakistan and India. See www.ozgreen.org.au

Youth of SA have their Say!

By Matt Cattanach NRM
Education Coordinator, Waterwatch
Central Adelaide, Adelaide and Mount
Lofty Ranges Natural Resources
Management Board.

On July 9th the Youth of SA were invited to come and have their say on key environmental issues at a free one day workshop at the Adelaide Zoo.

The fun, action packed day provided a forum for youth to have their voice heard, discuss current environmental issues such as water and climate change, create visions for the future and gather the necessary skills for tackling the issues and taking action – be it on a personal level or learning to engage the wider community.

The youth put forward that the whole community must look at using water more efficiently through re-use of grey-water, black-water and increasing aquifer storage and recovery methods. The youth also concluded that everyone needs to tread more lightly on the earth and seriously reduce their carbon footprints. Some of the suggestions for doing this included:

- shopping locally
- using renewable energy sources
- reducing dependence on heating and cooling through smarter



Youth at the SA event captured their vision for a brighter future.

- building design
- legislating certain industries
- increasing environmental and sustainability education throughout schools and the curriculum.

The Youth Workshop was timed to coincide with the Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE) National Conference and Youth Conference in Darwin. The workshop was developed by youth for youth, “a youth event by youth for youth is about creating ownership and designing processes that are meaningful for those participating” Jo Bishop, AAEE..

The workshop was supported by the Youth Environment Council of South Australia and the Department for Environment and Heritage with the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management

Board through the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative, where project officers work directly with students and their communities to protect local natural resources.

All participants were very positive about the workshop’s events and some of the comments included:

- “Overall the workshop was even better than I could imagine it would be, and I got to meet lots of other young people all working together for a common goal which was awesome”.
- “It was great – should happen every year!”
- “I really enjoyed today and it inspired me to get out there and make a difference”
- “ Well done for letting the youth of SA have a voice”

The youth’s concerns, issues and future visions were shared with conference go’ers in Darwin and will be forwarded to key government bodies and the AAEE networks nationally.

NRM Education hopes to offer more youth events in the near future. Keep an eye on future newsletters or the website www.waterwatchadelaide.net.au

What role education?

By Phil Smith

Our Darwin conference featured John Coulter’s presentation on growth. My opening address referred to the need for continuous economic growth as our current-day Noble Lie.

In a recent article in BMJ (August 2008 Vol. 337), Prof John Guillebaud, University College, London, argues that universal access to family planning needs to be a priority in managing population growth and climate change.

The following extracts come from Guillebaud’s article (www.bmj.com/). (Note that this paper has numerous references excised from these extracts.)

The world’s population now exceeds 6700 million, and humankind’s consumption of fossil fuels, fresh water, crops, fish, and forests exceeds supply. These facts are connected. The annual increase in population of about 79 million means that every week an extra 1.5 million people need food and some-

where to live. This amounts to a huge new city each week, somewhere, which destroys wildlife habitats and augments world fossil fuel consumption. Every person born adds to greenhouse gas emissions, and escaping poverty is impossible without these emissions increasing. Resourcing contraception therefore helps to combat climate change, although it is not a substitute for high emitters reducing their per capita emissions....

Last year’s parliamentary hearings concluded that the United Nation’s millennium development goals, including millennium development goal 1—to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger—“will be difficult or impossible to achieve without a renewed focus on, and investment in, family planning.”

It is often assumed that “any quantitative concern for population must be intrinsically coercive.” India in the 1970s polluted the whole concept by adopting coercive means for population “control.” China stands similarly accused. But why consider infringing human rights when around half of pregnancies worldwide are unplanned? Moreover, numerous countries as varied as Costa Rica, Iran,

Korea, Sri Lanka, and Thailand halved their total fertility rates primarily through meeting women’s unmet fertility needs and choices....

The evidence is clear within a wide variety of settings that—despite no increase in per capita wealth or other presumed essentials—demand for contraception increases when it becomes available, accessible, and accompanied by correct information about its appropriateness and safety; when barriers are removed; and when the principles of marketing are applied....

As doctors...we should advocate for [family planning] to be supplied only wisely and compassionately.... “Population” and “family planning” seem taboo words and were notably absent from two BMJ editorials on climate change...[but] isn’t contraception the medical profession’s prime contribution for all countries?...[D]octors should help to bring family size into the arena of environmental ethics, analogous to avoiding patio heaters and high carbon cars.

Indeed, what role doctors in climate change? Do we, as environmental educators, have a role – a position, even – in the debate on population growth?

Your comments and thoughts and suggestions are welcomed on this topic.



Live It Up It'll Cost You the Earth

The True Cost of Consumer Lifestyles

**Workshop and Presentation by
Syd Smith And Jillian Cupitt**

In a one hour workshop Jillian and Syd introduced a group of 50 odd participants to a presentation and workshop on the alarming and unsustainable growth of consumption in the developed world.

Issues raised included the impact of expanding consumption on the environment, its exacerbation through population growth and its contribution to inequity and poverty in the world. The role of schools and their lack of freedom to really confront these issues was raised especially when our society is so enmeshed in the growth syndrome and the power of advertising and the media on our culture.

One way of highlighting connections between consumption and the environment was to illustrate "the life cycle" or "cradle to grave" of products. For example, when referring to the coffee industry a number of social, economic and environmental factors were highlighted such as the energy to transport and refine the product, the resources and packaging it required and the inequitable distribution of the wealth generated to the original growers.

The workshop concluded with the group ranking a number of environmental, social and economic values. What this demonstrated was that some strong values can be agreed or disagreed on easily but most values are harder to agglomerate and are less able to gain any consensus.

Why is consumption in a developed economy such an issue?

One of the most confronting yet unacknowledged problems facing our society is the culture of wasteful or unsustainable consumption. Why are we encouraged, some would argue brainwashed, into buying what we don't really need? How did we become the slaves of fashion, advertising and peer group pressures, often the result of status items feeding our need to be



Students learn to grow their own food and subsequently see the advantage of avoiding unnecessary transport over long distances, appreciating the saving on energy, reducing carbon emissions and developing a greater sense of community.

accepted by society at large?

Regrettably this is one of the core features and requirements of our modern day capitalist democracies and, for many Australians, a life and existence where any alternative would be incomprehensible and certainly unacceptable. Ironically we appear to support so called moves to more sustainable lifestyles but in truth we are still only articulating the values of sustainability. The challenge now is to change the habits of people who have

lived mainly in relatively affluent times and for those who are not affluent but moving hastily towards it.

Schools in partnership with their communities can lead the way to a more sustainable future

Schools, usually dominated by politically oriented bureaucracies, should be given more freedom to challenge the unsustainable policies and operations of companies, industry and government. This would then facilitate students working collaboratively with communities to adopt newer more innovative sustainable management and production strategies.

A number of other issues inhibiting sustainability were also raised in the workshop with an analysis of community programs that have been either successful or unsuccessful in changing people's behaviour to the environment and subsequently their attitude to sustainable lifestyles. In essence, as claimed by UNESCO, "we need a politically embedded cultural and economic understanding of sustainability rather than one that would orient schools towards the economy only". And last but not least reorienting education for sustainability does not require large additional sums of money; in fact it could help us save a lot of money.

Darwin Conference photo spot



Hilary Macleod (above left) and Ruth Vickery (above right) at the fibre workshop, 2008 Darwin Conference.

LAND – the 3rd SPACE

By Phil Smith AAEF President

Philosophers down through the ages have consistently identified dialogue and debate as central to moral and intellectual development. In the current climate of environmental crises, we need to see discussion as also central to sustainable development. Conversations are critical.

But there are barriers, real and perceived, to those conversations (some are perhaps even conceived of as insurmountable). They include:

- Professional disciplines
- Cultures
- Generations
- Languages
- Positions of power

There are others. Despite these, crucial conversations must still take place.

At our AAEF conference in Darwin, a number of keynote speakers raised issues of Indigenous knowledge and perspective; they talked of the need for dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. And they spoke of the challenges inherent in this dialogue, given different world views, different cultural and historical understandings – especially of the land, time and responsibilities.

One speaker, Jerry Schwab, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Research at ANU, excited participants with the notion of the 3rd Space: a space not 'white/Western' and not Indigenous. He considered **the land** to be this 3rd space. Learning 'on country' – a place where effective environmental education can occur for Indigenous youth. The 3rd place as a space where western, science-based land and resource management knowledge could meet indigenous knowledge. Jerry spoke of the land as a place where *learning together* is possible. A place where knowledges (and ways of knowing) and values and identities can meet. A place that no-one owns, though everyone owns the experiences they have on it; he talked of the importance of discovering the land for oneself.

Water as the 3rd Space

In a workshop on water quality just a week after the conference (and by coincidence also in Darwin), I put forward this idea and wondered if this 3rd space could be the water itself. The creeks and rivers, the aquifers,

the springs, and other water bodies. Meaningful water management action plans could be built on the common concern for the future of the water in the NT; common concerns could be given prominence above the differences.

It was acknowledged that Western knowledge, skills and resources are vital for managing the water resources for the demands – constantly increasing – on water quality and quantity. And it was acknowledged that Indigenous knowledge and skills are also vital for the local, historical and cultural understandings. Neither set of knowledge is sufficient alone. We talked about how experience on, in and with the water could be the place to learn together. The 3rd space could bring to the surface the similarity of need and the commitment to act together.

Building Community as the 3rd Space through schools

In another field, the notion of a neutral third space for building community is also used. The urban sociologist, Ray Oldenburg, in his book, *The Great Good Place*, argues that third places are important for civil society, democracy, civic engagement and establishing feelings of a sense of place.

He calls the home (including those who live there) the *first* place. The *second* place, where people may well spend most of their time, is the workplace. In this context, the *third* places are the informal meeting places – bars, coffee shops, general stores, post offices, malls... Oldenburg says these are anchors of community life that facilitate and foster interaction; he says they are central to local democracy and community vitality. Third places allow people to put aside their concerns and simply enjoy the company and conversation around them. They provide a setting for grassroots politics, create habits of public association and participation, and offer psychological support to individuals and communities.

Anna McKenzie, Deputy Principal at Campbell Primary School (part of the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative) in the ACT and a practitioner with over 20 years experience in environmental education and advocacy, recently made these comments about the potential/possible role of schools in helping to build civil society:

With the demise of church and workplace as constants in people's lives,

schools are the focus for community-building. They act as the hub of the community, particularly now with the trend of governments and other partners rationalising the provision of infrastructure and services through shared community use (of gyms, healthcare, childcare, recreation etc) in and around schools in support of children's health, development, learning and care.

Outside of the work and home that Oldenburg says are two key places in our lives, it could be that schools are (or can be) an essential 3rd space for community building, community learning and community action, particularly around building social capital and a truly just and civil society through building respectful relationships with each other and the environment.

Here, a little leap from a real place to concept. Given the urgency of the current environmental crises, perhaps the ubiquitous and very human desire for survival – expressed today as sustainability – needs to be the place where we meet across cultures, disciplines, histories, generations and power gaps to talk about *how* to become sustainable. Collaboration on sustainability – a place that no-one owns and no-one has exclusive knowledge about – is vital.

Presently, mechanisms are being established through Australian schools to have the necessary local discussions and undertake necessary local actions. The Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI) supports school communities to achieve sustainable development. AuSSI schools can be, as Anna McKenzie suggests, a 3rd space hub for community development and well-being, based on personal, social and environmental responsibility and on an ecologically sustainable approach to decision-making in the school and the wider community. The sphere of influence ripples out into the community through measures to conserve energy, water and resources and increase recycling and biodiversity in the school grounds and locale, and through the school's environmental management practices and curriculum. The learning and modeling is shared between generations, cultures, demographics, worlds of work and spheres of influence in their connection to the school. Learning crosses boundaries – real and perceived.

Ideas, actions and learning can come together through local conversations in neutral – but jointly owned and valued – 3rd spaces. Our challenge is to make them happen.



Empowering the Social Movement for Sustainable Greenhouse Solutions

— Major Presentation By Dr Mark Diesendorf

Reviewed by Syd Smith
AAEE Vice President

Dr Diesendorf is currently at the Institute of Environmental Studies at the University of NSW. He is co-editor of Human Ecology, Human Economy: Ideas for an Ecologically Sustainable Future' and recently released his book, "Greenhouse Solutions with Sustainable Energy"

Mark's conference topic was "Empowering the Social Movement for Sustainable Greenhouse Solutions", his major message being that global climate change from the human-induced greenhouse effect, is accelerating at a rate we never anticipated. However there are solutions that are environmentally benign and relatively inexpensive, comprising primarily the efficient use of energy that is obtained from renewable sources.

The biggest barrier to sustainable energy solutions is neither technological nor economic but rather is the political power of the big gas emitting industries. These industries exert pressure on major political deforestation, unsustainable agriculture and ever increasing demand for consumer products. To achieve ecologically sustainable

and socially just solutions to human induced climate change, we need to empower the growing non violent social movement for genuine climate action. Environmental educators have a vital role in disseminating the multi and interdisciplinary knowledge that is needed to resources this movement and the community at large.

Some other points raised by Dr Mark Diesendorf

- Cleaner energy technologies that are already commercially available could help us to make big reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Other renewable energy technologies are already at hand, yet in Australia most are starved for funds
- Governments are paying huge subsidies to industries that are big contributors to global warming, to consumers of these industries' products and to other industries that offer dubious solutions to the problem.
- Despite being a coal and oil dependent country, Australia could achieve an ecologically sustainable energy system. All we need is the political will.

- Wind power can substitute for coal power in Australia and is the one of the least expensive and most environmentally sound of the new renewable sources of electricity. Wind power, with a small amount of peak-load back-up, which is operated infrequently, could substitute for several of Australia's coal-fired power stations. Several additional base-load coal-fired power stations could be retired by implementing efficient energy use and solar hot water, while banning electric resistance hot water systems. A little further down the time track, bioelectricity, generated from combusting the residues of existing crops, and hot rock geothermal power could replace the remaining coal-fired power stations. The barriers to this transition are not primarily technological or even, with a significant carbon price, economic. It is political.
- There seems to be no rational or moral case to delay embarking on wind, solar and other renewable alternatives. The higher increases in global average temperature, the higher probability of irreversible changes.

Advancing Leaders, an inspiring leadership program from Water for Life

Water for Life has recently announced Advancing Leaders, a new leadership program for sustainability and water educators in greater Sydney.

The program focuses on the skills and capabilities educators need to deliver leading practice sustainability education projects and to lead change within their own organisations into the future and is open to all sustainability and water

educators in greater Sydney.

The program is run as a short course with activities spread over nine months and structured to achieve a balance between theory and practical experience. It includes innovative and tailored workshops, personal development plans, mentoring and a work-based project, inspirational and high level guest speakers, practical examples and case studies and an opportunity to extend networks and partnership

opportunities.

Selected participants from local government, non-government or state government organisations in Sydney, the Illawarra and Blue Mountains will be offered fully subsidised places in the program thanks to the Water for Life Education Program.

For further information visit www.waterforlife.nsw.gov.au/leadership

The Virtual World

By Hazel Storey

The virtual conference was strongly supported by Charles Darwin University, and DEWHA contributed funds for specialised technical and equipment support. As there is a plethora of communication software on the internet we had much deliberation until our virtual conference team chose three options to explore ways of including IDL.

Video streaming

We succeeded in having Charles Hopkins on Saturday morning. He reflected on the leadership of Australia in the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and encouraged our work in the field in front of a white gothic arch. Chuck raised a glass of red wine at the end of his presentation as it was 2am in Austria while 9am here. In addition, all conference presentations from the Mal Nairn Auditorium, keynotes and breakout groups included, were video streamed through Quicktime. Any interested parties could log in and view the presentations.

Second Life

This interactive game program was used to trial a way of social interaction without using carbon points. A Second life art exhibition extended on a real life exhibition and places were offered to artists to speak about their work. Two artists, John du Feu and Strider presented a talk about their art through their avatars. Sally Jones, Samantha

Cubillo and Bill Wade at CDU helped facilitate opportunities for delegates to experience the Second Life world.

On the Topophilia exhibition opening night (9 July 6pm CST) there was intense discussion amongst people through avatars about cutting back on carbon and the importance of keeping up communication networks when flight becomes less possible.

Some installed features of the Jokaydian Island site considered sustainable practices such as water collectors, and a permaculture garden. Links were placed on the poster veranda to give visitors to the gallery a chance to measure carbon activities.

The facilitators of Jokaydia are keen to extend the use of their venue to explore alternatives in sustainable practices and future conference conveners may want to consider how spaces like this could be used more effectively pre and post conference to extend networks in the field of Efs. On 17th August, the exhibition area was used for a presentation about our association and conference activity for the Youth Global Futures 2020 forum. To get an idea of the space- look at the video clip – *AEE 2008 Conference in Second Life – short* Website related to the site <http://jokaydia.com/2008/07/09/are-you-interested-in-environmental-education/>

Wimba

Wimba is a platform commonly used at CDU for engaging students in interactions with their lecturer and each other



at a particular time. Powerpoint presentations can be uploaded and spoken about with the presenter off site or vice versa. Presenters were encouraged to register and upload their work; then speak to an audience on and off site at a particular time. CDU allowed the conference access to this software.

Presentations in the media room were facilitated by Bill Wade and Samantha Cubillo from the School for Creative Arts and Industries. Wednesday ran smoothly with presenters from New Zealand telling exciting stories of Permaculture in their institution and their efforts to act with sustainability. The highlight was on Friday morning. Peta White in Canada presented her paper on ethical behaviour and described her sometimes painful actions to minimise her carbon footprint. It was calculated that Peta avoided emitting 30,000 tonnes of CO2 by choosing to present virtually and not attend the conference in-person. To hear Richard Smith in Adelaide ask her questions about her presentation was very exciting.

The possibilities of what a future conference might be like if the technology keeps being adapted for this purpose are encouraging but good support is essential.

More photos from the Darwin Conference



Council of Wisdom (COWs)



2008 Conference Conveners, Jennifer, Biruit and Kate (AKA Joan Sutherland).

Virtually there...

Studying and living in Canada would normally preclude me from being able to participate in the AAEE conference, however this year it was a different story, thanks to the techno savvy folks from AAEE NT.

By Peta White

I have made a commitment to personally practice sustainable living and it was my story in this practice that I wanted to share with my Aussie colleagues at this year's AAEE conference, however, it was my commitment to this lifestyle that prevented me from making the trip in person. It was with great relief and excitement that Birut Zemits and her team (Bill Wade) agreed to include a virtual strand to the conference, thus facilitating my participation not only as a presenter, but as a conference delegate too.

I was able to listen and watch all of the keynote speakers. I could participate in others presentations, including other virtual presentations. And had I been able to negotiate the second life program I would have been able to participate in the virtual conference opening (although the timing of this was a bit difficult as 6pm in Darwin was 3am for me!).

My presentation was at 6pm my time and I thought it went quite well, considering! I nervously shared my story with my friends and colleagues from my homeland, for the first time (I came to Canada to begin my PhD studies three years ago and this was my first formal/academic presentation in Australia!). It was a particularly disembodying experience, (I

think I made the mistake of not clicking the right button – so the participants couldn't see me, and I couldn't see them either) but it was rewarding in the end, especially when participants asked great questions and the presentation turned to dialogue.

I felt that sharing my story in sustainable living practice was worthwhile as I know many of us think about it, lots of us teach about it but I wonder if any of us can honestly say they do their best to practice all the time. Well, I can say that I do and I can also say that it is hard work. I spend lots of time contemplating and compromising. Many of my practices have multiple steps and require timely organisation. I have done the usual (replaced lights, turned off appliances, recycled – as best you can here in Regina, etc). I have also done the big things like becoming vegetarian for a year, realising that this is not the best approach (given where I currently live) and now I have undertaken to eat locally and seasonally (a challenge in the middle of a prairie that is frozen for 6 months of the year – let me tell you!). I sold my car, moved into high density living, got a community garden plot and managed it (loving enjoying the fruits of my labour).

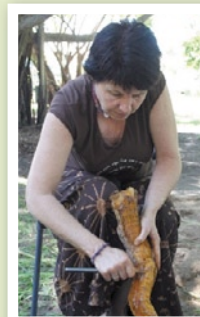


hours right now). I am also exploring food preservation techniques and food production issues (BIG issues in this country). I decreased my ecological footprint from 16.4H down to 2.3H over two and a half years and learned LOTS along the way and have along way still to go!

So, I wanted to write this article to say THANKYOU AAEE for walking your talk and supporting virtual participation in the 2008 conference. This is an important practice for all environmental educators to consider as transport remains a HUGE environmental issue. I will be presenting my experiences and extolling the virtues of virtual presentations and AAEE's bravery in this action at the NAAEE conference in October this year, as well as presenting virtually at the EECOM conference, now that AAEE has shown us it can be done. So congratulations AAEE – a super effort!!

Thank you.

Peta is from the south west of Western Australia and is currently undertaking her PhD in environmental education at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. NAAEE = North American Association for Environmental Education (<http://www.naaee.org/>) EECOM = Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (<http://www.eecom.org/>)



Fibre Workshop

“As a participant at the 15th biennial AAEE conference there were a few key messages that I came away with. A sense of urgency towards climate change was apparent throughout the duration of the conference. There was a revelation that people are ready to change and make concessions to mitigate climate change. However, we still don't know what a sustainable society will look like or whether the current economic and political system will allow for the facilitation of such a society. Regarding Indigenous education, I found a call for more hands on education that engages with the environment and a general consensus among educators that want to turn away from the classic classroom model.”

— **Damian Meoli-Charles**
Darwin University student

Keeping connected with people with YOUR interests

If you want to learn about areas of sustainability education, or really dive into your area of interest then the special interest groups (SIGs) are for you. SIGs mean you can exchange ideas about the things that you are really challenged or excited about with others who are equally interested, track trends and progress and find out about projects and activities interstate. Members like the fact that they can connect with other professionals who are on their wavelength. Around half of AAEE members are involved with a SIG. It's free to connect!

At the conference SIG members got together to review the year and make plans. Members also raised interest in creating a couple of new SIGs. SIG convenors contacts are listed below along with the focus of the SIG. If you joined a SIG at the conference or would like to join a SIG or can help the new ones get established please drop the convenor a message as that's the only way to get connected. Please remember that SIG members must be AAEE members too.

The new SIGs need 10 members to be established so some of the new groups may be a little small at this stage. Their viability will be determined by member interest in them! So get involved and keep connected.

Indigenous Knowledge and Perspectives (proposed new SIG)

This SIG works towards representation and inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge and Perspectives in Education for Sustainability. The group is defined by Indigenous membership and builds connections with Indigenous groups interested in environmental education.

Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

In 2005 the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development commenced. The Decade provides AAEE with unprecedented opportunities to further promulgate and facilitate environmental education and education for sustainable development across all sectors. The DESD SIG commenced in late 2004 with members from across Australia who all share an interest in DESD activities.

SIG Group	Convenor Name	Convenor Email
Indigenous Knowledge and Perspectives (proposed new SIG)	Birut Zemits	birut.zemits@cdu.edu.au (temporary convenor)
Decade of Education for Sustainable Development	Wendy Goldstein	wgoldste@gse.mq.edu.au
Teacher and Teacher Education	Sandra Wooltorton	s.wooltorton@ecu.edu.au
Early Childhood	Sue Elliott	susan.elliott@rmit.edu.au
Young People and Citizenship	Awaiting a volunteer	sue.burton@environment.nsw.gov.au OR admin@aaee.org.au
Transformative Learning	Jo Bishop	jobishop@internode.on.net
Research Student	Kate Thompson & Rebecca Miles	k.thompson@edfac.usyd.edu.au AND rmiles@csu.edu.au
Community Engagement and Empowerment (proposed new SIG)	Pat Armstrong	pat.arm@bigpond.net.au
Australian Places for Sustainability (proposed new SIG)	Syd Smith	sydsmith@optushome.com.au

The SIG provides an opportunity for members to find out about international, national and local events surrounding the decade, and an opportunity for partnership and dialogue to further enhance education for sustainable development for the next decade.

Through this SIG, AAEE is working closely with UNESCO Australia and State and Commonwealth government agencies to plan for and engage with the opportunities that the DESD provides.

Teachers and Teacher Education SIG

There are over 60 million teachers in the world and each one is a key agent for bringing about the change in lifestyles and systems that we need (UNESCO, 2002). Teachers play an indispensable role in environmental education. The Teacher Education SIG is comprised of teachers/educators actively working in environmental education. If you are like-minded, please join our SIG and contribute to the reorientation of environmental education in the profession of teaching (both informal and formal).

Early Childhood SIG

The EC SIG was established in 2003 by AAEE to recognise an emerging group of early childhood professionals working

across the early childhood sector to promote environmental education. The group includes practising early childhood educators, lecturers at university and TAFE, primary school teachers, educators in extension education services and others with a professional interest in early childhood environmental education.

The group functions across Australia as a network for coordinating, advocating and resourcing early childhood environmental education. The SIG group has developed an Action Plan that identifies priorities for action in the early childhood sector. SIG members connect electronically by email and meet locally or at the AAEE conference. The SIG convenor circulates a quarterly newsletter and contributions are welcome.

Young People and Citizenship (proposed new SIG)

Young at heart? Young in age? Interested in action? Across Australia there are many organisations that work with young people (under 25), there are many organisations that work in the environment and there are a few that do both. There are also many young people who are actively involved in sustainability education. This SIG will initially focus on what is currently going on across Australia and internationally in engaging

continued next page

AAEE ER SIG Update



The Transmogrification of Emerging Researchers

By Rebecca Miles & Elaine Lewis

Our SIG meeting at the Darwin conference saw our group transmogrify from a 'new researcher' focus to the more dynamic 'emerging researcher' (ER) status. This SIG name change reflects our broader vision. The new ER SIG includes all emerging researchers (research students – honours, masters and doctoral students), researchers in the first five years of their research career, as well as experienced researchers who are willing to take on a mentoring/helpful suggestions role.

As our SIG is all about the development of emerging researchers in the field of environmental sustainability education, we encourage other AAEE members in any of the aforementioned categories to join us. We warmly welcome new members. Please contact our SIG conveners; Rebecca Miles rmiles@csu.edu.au or Kate Thompson kate.thompson.77@gmail.com

Writing Group

As part of our member services, the Emerging Researcher SIG is setting up a writing group. Members will get together online every six weeks, each presenting a short piece of writing (half a page to a page) that we can all read and critique. The aim of the writing group is to provide you with peer feedback and promote discussions around environmental and sustainability education. If you would like to join the

SIG for the writing group send Rebecca or Kate an email (as above).

Wiki

The wiki is an online collaborative space open to members. The wiki will also host information for members on useful publications, conferences, and places to study. This information can be added to immediately by any member, and provides a real opportunity for collaboration between researchers, whether on publications or online discussions.

Member Profiles

Rebecca Miles is currently a full time PhD candidate in the School of Teacher Education at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, NSW, Australia.

Through the employment of case studies, her research focuses on the use of places in environmental education experiences in primary schooling, investigating the way places are used for regular environmental learning experiences and how these experiences are used in school curricula.

She is also researching teacher training and the understanding of prospective primary teachers of place-based processes in education for sustainability, as well as the curriculum decisions made by prospective primary teachers in designing place-based environmental education. Previously she has undertaken research into the environmental education attitudes, knowledge and per-

ceptions of primary pre-service teachers.

A trained primary teacher, Rebecca has taught in primary schools in NSW, worked as an educational designer and tutored in educational sociology and qualitative research methods and practices in the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood, Primary and Honours) courses at Charles Sturt University.

Elaine Lewis is currently undertaking doctoral studies, part time, at Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia.

She is investigating the impact of education for sustainability at a Montessori school, with a particular focus on the outcomes of involvement in the Sustainable Schools Initiative. Elaine is involved in numerous school-based education for sustainability projects that have been funded by state and federal government grants, as well as grants awarded by non government organisations.

She is presently employed at Murdoch University to assist with educational research in the Teaching and Learning Centre. Previously Elaine conducted her Master of Education research in the field of gifted education and has taught in numerous primary schools in WA, including a Montessori school where she worked for ten years.

Elaine also has experience as a Sessional Lecturer in Bachelor of Education (Primary) and post graduate education courses at Edith Cowan University, Perth, Western Australia.

young people, share and develop good practice in environmental citizenship for young people and encourage young people to be actively involved in the environment. The ultimate success for this SIG is to have a young person as Convenor. Any out there?

Transformative learning

Twenty people are participating in this SIG. In the light of the escalating environmental and social issues of our times and the potential flow-on social and economic impacts, we need to learn our way forward to "one planet living" with speed. The goal of the group would be to map who is doing what in the field and to share learning and tools for facilitating personal, community and organisation transformation.

Research student and early career researcher

Targeted towards current research students (honours, masters, doctorate),

AAEE members who have recently completed their degree, who are just starting out in research, or who supervise research students and would like to provide advice. This SIG provides an opportunity for new researchers to share their research in a supportive environment and provides members with information about research opportunities.

Community Engagement and Empowerment (proposed new SIG)

There are some "big questions" that concern many community based sustainability educators or school-based educators who wish to engage their communities. What is our role in helping to mobilise community action across a range of sustainability issues? What strategies and actions can we use to best mobilise, engage and empower our communities; to 'bring them out of the woodwork' and keep them involved?

The Community Engagement and

Empowerment SIG will suit educators for sustainability working in the fields of community development, community engagement, community empowerment or community outreach, but will be open to all educators for sustainability who care deeply about the "big questions"

Australian Places for Sustainability (proposed new SIG)

This SIG will focus on improving the effectiveness of places or centres with the potential to effect change for sustainability – such as museums, botanic gardens, community gardens and environment centres. Some key words are experiential learning and "enough for all forever".

Lastly if you work in the **Vocational Education and Training** sector and are interested in connecting with your peers through a SIG, please let the AAEE office know as there has been interest in creating a SIG in this field.

Go Green!

By Suzanne Pritchard
Project Officer, Trees In Newcastle

The Go Green project forged partnerships between teachers and local sustainability educators, students and their environment and schools and their communities.

The key ingredients that produced the successful social change outcomes in this project came through "the initiatives of individuals and organisations" (AAEE, 2007) such as:

- the networking and environmental skills of the Project Manager, Jenny Robinson
- the educational expertise and enthusiasm of the Teacher, Carolyn Taylor
- the "target teachers" from each school who enthusiastically participated
- the provision of a Project Officer, Suzanne Pritchard to assist in resource development and the support of Holy Family School staff and community.

Q. What got you interested in environmental issues?

A. My teacher because she's one of the main people involved, she's such a star !!!

— Emmaliese, Yr 4

There are an assortment of services that are available to support schools. This project was about identifying them, introducing the educators to the teachers, building up a network to maintain the connections and developing resources to assist in integrating the activities into the curriculum. The project launch brought all stakeholders together, excursions and incursions to Holy Family School strengthened the relationships, regular newsletters provided feedback and ideas for project partners, and a network of Catholic Sustainable Schools was formalised to maintain the dialogue.

Several characteristics of good

Bibliography

Australian Association for Environmental Education(2007) . *Write it Up! A guide to writing sustainability case studies.* Sydney, Australia: Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE)

Project Proponents

Holy Family Primary School
Janet Street, Merewether,
NSW, 2298
Ph 4963 3009



Trees In Newcastle,
252 Parry Street,
Newcastle West, NSW, 2303
Ph 4969 1500
education@treesinnewcastle.org.au
www.treesinnewcastle.org.au



Forging Partnerships Project funded by



Natural Resources Advisory Council
NEW SOUTH WALES



World Environment Day celebration



Coastcaring kids



Composting kids

practice sustainability education were reflected in the Go Green project. Participatory decision-making through the co-development of teaching units meant that there was support, expertise and relevant resources available to assist in incorporating locally relevant hands-on activities and excursions into the programming.

The peer teaching model provided the foundation for developing substantial professional relationships and strengthened the emerging Catholic Sustainable Schools Network.

The emphasis on positive hands-on activities such as Waterwatch, landcaring, coastcaring, composting, worm farming, water and energy monitoring and outdoor environmental games promoted critical thinking and problem solving and provided a structure for students to 'evaluate information to help address the dilemmas and challenges of sustainable development' (AAEE, 2007 p2).

"As a teacher... I have found that an effective way to teach about sustainability practices is to work with environmental organisations and their educators. The children, generally, respond positively to this approach and extend their knowledge, skills and attitudes towards our world." — Carolyn Taylor.

Another feature of the Go Green project was the inter-disciplinary and holistic approach to implementing schools-based projects by assisting schools to develop a School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP). The SEMP became a vehicle to guide and direct on-ground projects,

provided a framework for applying for funding and clarified the relationship between the diversity of environmental problems facing the schools and a comprehensive and proactive management approach, a good practice sustainability education principle.

The Go Green project successfully tackled the issue of resourcing Catholic schools that had previously been unable to access school sustainability solutions by reducing the barriers of time to develop resources, providing an experienced teacher to support the development of integrated curriculum materials, assisting networking by introducing teachers to sustainability specialists and coordinating incursions and excursions to a variety of venues and promoting the project and its outcomes.

A lasting symbol of the success of the project is that a demountable classroom was donated to the Go Green protagonists, relocated adjacent to the constructed wetland at Holy Family School and outfitted to allow students from any school in the region to experience a session of stimulating sustainability activities in a school setting.

"Every person should plant at least one tree in their school and every school should have an environmental program."

— Andrew, Yr4



Cow Pats?

Wealth from Waste in India — The Green Schools Program

By Nel Smit & Lorne Kriwoken

Roving environmental educators - written from the United Nations compound in Nairobi

When we arrived in New Delhi, India we were daunted by the pace. In a battered taxi from the airport we passed many cows and the odd tractor. We were soon part of the thick chaotic traffic on the dusty road, with visible air pollution and piles of garbage on the broken pavement. People squatted outside huts made from cardboard and rags. We noticed curved hand prints on cow pats drying on the walls of buildings we passed. None of the cars stayed in any lane.

They drove where they could find space, including the sidewalks. Our young daughter asked why all the drivers were tooting their horns. The driver stopped at one point and took a hammer to the front of the vehicle to get the headlights going. He then stopped and asked a number of people for directions to our hotel. There are no good road maps of Delhi we were told. We soon met with Shankar Musafir from the Environmental Education Unit, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE). He had just finished a workshop on sustainability with 20 teachers and students. Shankar immediately struck us with his passion and energy. He coordinates the Green Schools Program based in New Delhi which operates in no less than 4,000 schools throughout India.

About Green Schools

This experiential learning program focuses on environmental auditing in schools. Teachers and students are supported by training workshops, a monthly magazine called *Gobar Times* and a comprehensive manual published by the CSE entitled *How Green is My School: A Do It Yourself Manual*. The two-day training program takes teachers through every component of the audit. It includes films, interactive sessions and some practical calculations and case studies of schools. The training includes strategies for implementing the program in real working conditions and includes rain water harvesting, sanitation, water recycling, commuting practices, oxygen balance, ventilation, clean energy, pesticides, afforestation, waste segregation and reuse. Eighteen training workshops were held in 2007. These were held both in New Delhi



and in regional centres and involved over 450 teachers. Shankar also holds monthly meetings in Delhi on key environmental concerns.

Shankar explained that the students began their schools audit with an exploratory journey around their school to investigate how resources were being used. The audit comprises of five major themes of water, air, land, energy and waste. The manual provides formulae by which students can convert their findings into a score card for the school. Each of the five themes carries 100 points. Students make a formal report card which they present to the school principal. The aim is to improve the school's report card every year by incorporating changes, based on the students' recommendations.

Exploring the school in itself provides extensive experiential learning opportunities through team building and developing social connections. While children have fun finding the oldest tree in their school grounds or finding the highest water catchment point they develop cooperative skills, language and interview skills. Shankar says, 'Nobody lectures the students to 'save water' or 'save electricity'- they learn independently through problem solving. Research might involve digging out the electricity bills of the school, locating the water meter or talking to the school gardener or bus driver'. Students are encouraged to develop their sense of place and a deeper understanding of their impacts on the world in which they live. Shankar was enthusiastic that students learn to take responsibility in the context of their lives. 'They can feel empowered to make a difference'.

'The school campus becomes a laboratory with students learning the key fundamentals of sustainable living and environment. They explore what is

around in the school as part of where and how they live', he said. This encourages an emotional awareness and deeper connection with the earth.

What's in the audits?

For the **water** audit the students collect information about the total water consumption and then calculate the per capita consumption of water. This per capita figure is compared to a benchmark rating of the school. Rainwater runoff in the school is also calculated with the help of the manual. In Australia we have ready access to fresh running water. Water issues in India are quite different. The latest issue of *Gobar Times* focused on the wells of India. 70% of people in the southern India state of Kerala depend on wells for their water supply and because ground water overuse many wells are drying up. Students become acutely aware of water conservation issues in such an environment.

Through the **air** audit students survey every class to find out how people commute to school. A comprehensive list is made indicating how many students travel by public transport, private cars or use non-emitting means of transport such as cycling or walking. Students also interview the bus drivers and calculate mileages of school vehicles.

The **energy** audit involves research into the electricity bills and an investigation of student habits in saving energy such as turning off lights when not in

continued next page



Students find the oldest tree in their school grounds.

Teaching Climate Change through Political Cabaret

Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative ACT



By Jenny Dibley

The ACT Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AUSSI) recently funded the development of a political cabaret performance on climate change for primary students. 'Too Hot Too Handle,' produced by PJ Casey was seen by over 4,000 ACT students.

Students from three ACT primary schools were invited to provide the content. Jigsaw Theatre visited the schools and invited students to discuss their concerns about climate change and offer solutions.

The performance received great reviews, particularly for the humorous way it conveyed complex concepts about climate change. Teachers and students agreed they had a greater understanding of climate change after viewing the performance.



Scenes from the *Too Hot to Handle* performance, raising awareness of climate change.

In December 2007, AuSSI ACT developed teaching units (P-10) on climate change. These materials, launched by the ACT Education Minister support the performance. In addition, Jigsaw Theatre produced curriculum resources to accompany *Too Hot Too Handle*.

A review from *The Australian*, said of the performance, "Caseydeservedly conquered the house.....People were weeping with laughter, hooting with pleasure and cheering at the end".

The performance is available to other States and Territories.

Cow Pats? continued

use. The **land** audit engages a host of people as children identify the plant and animal species on campus. 'The gardener helps with local names while the biology teacher helps in identification of species', Shankar said. The biodiversity of the school grounds is also captured through photographs. The **waste** audit involves students getting their hands dirty. Students stay back after school to let the house keeping staff collect the garbage. Once collected at a single place, the waste is segregated and put in small packets to be measured using a spring balance. Many schools now proudly call themselves zero waste schools. These data are also shared with the wider school community.

Once the audits are completed, the schools register online at the CSE website www.cseindia.org to upload the data. Over half of the participating schools have submitted multiple reports. Many schools have three years of data and can compare how their report card has changed over

the years. Around 4,000 schools are registered as Green Schools.

Getting the word out there

CSE initiated the annual Green Schools Award, where the rating of top 20 schools in the country is made public. Schools from around the country submit their detailed report cards and the most successful schools are chosen among them. The event is held as a festival where the best student auditors of the country get together, share their experiences and celebrate recognition at the national arena. Last year's winner, the Government Secondary School at Boormajra, Punjab, set up a rainwater harvesting system.

The Gobar Times (i.e., Cow Pat Times) is a lively monthly magazine that promotes the Green Schools programs. Editor, Sumita Dasgupta explained that the name was chosen because of the many uses of cow pats in millions of Indian homes. It is a wonderful example of the best use of natural resources, a tradition of wealth from waste. She was interested to hear

about our Walking School Bus program in Australia and we volunteered to write an article for her magazine.

CSE operates mainly from institutional funding from partners and also the sale of publications. We felt very connected to this group of passionate environmental educators with their philosophy of sustainability at the practical school level. It was exciting to see similar initiatives in both Australia and India. We found the process to be more formal than what we were developing in Australia but we were pleased to see how student- focused it was.

We were in awe of the achievements of CSE in providing local inspiration and practical support to thousands of teachers and their students throughout India. Almost half of the top 20 schools winning the 2007 awards were from rural or semi rural areas! We felt humbled by Shankar's determination and drive and the achievements of his team in providing on-ground support, with limited resources.

For more information contact www.cseindia.org/euu/html

Funding Opportunities



The George Alexander Foundation

Closes: 6 October 2008

Grants with a focus on community partnerships, environmental education and sustainable land practices. Only eligible are those organisations with both Deductible Gift Recipient and Tax Concession Charity status. Visit: www.gafoundation.org.au/

Helping Hands

Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal

Closes: 27 October 2008

Grants up to \$50,000 To assist small rural communities (10,000 people or less) to implement or complete projects that will ensure their economic sustainability. Preference will be given to projects that support Community Infrastructure, Health or Community Services, Environment and Adaptation to climate change, Provision of Education or Training, or Innovative Community Based Business Ventures. Visit: www.frrr.org.au/programsDetail.asp?ProgramID=15

Youth Grants

Foundation for Young Australians

The Spark Fund – 22 Sept
Youth Change makers – 6 October

Buzz Grants – 20 October
Indigenous Small grants 14 October

Visit: www.youngaustralians.org/funding/index.shtml

WA in Darwin

By Jennifer Pearson

Being up in the warm weather was such a change from 2 degree mornings! Meeting people that you know from the newsletter articles and sharing their passion was fantastic. The key speakers and interacting with other delegates certainly made us think about lifting the energy of what we are doing.

One of the immediate outcomes was inspiring colleagues from James Cook University to take up the Catchments Corridors and Coast program that has been so successful in WA. Ruth Hickey will now plan a day event in collaboration with Terrain, who also presented about their many programs with community. We will be happy to pass on any planning tips to support them.



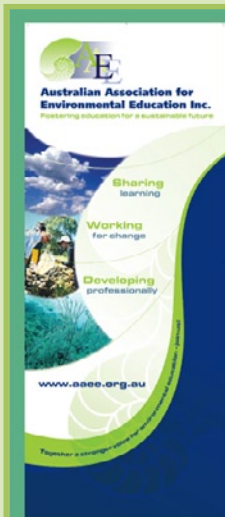
Most importantly it meant that the WA team spent time together talking to each other about our work and mapping how we could weave into the year ahead the ideas gathered from the Conference. Mind you, getting us all together for the photo was a challenge

with the fast pace of the days so apologies to members who did not make it.

News Flash – Catchments Corridors and Coast is a finalist in the Western Australian Environmental Awards for 2008.

Calling Helpers for the 2010 Conference Committee

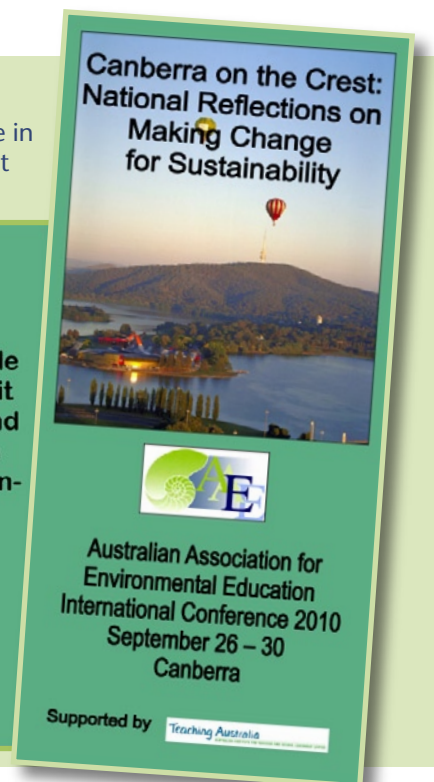
If you would like to assist with arrangements for our next national conference in Canberra in 2010 (postcard shown below), please contact Jenny Dibley at Jenny.Dibley@act.gov.au or Phil Smith at rephilled@hotmail.com



The Australian Association for Environmental Education invites you to its 2010 National Conference in Canberra. This event will review achievements in the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and it will focus on creative, collaborative, systemic and integrated initiatives that help our communities journey towards sustainability through the remaining years of the Decade...and beyond.

Information on the national website at www.aeee.org.au

See you there in 2010



Calendar 2008



Here is just a sample of events taking place across Australia; we would really like to extend this calendar to make it more comprehensive. Please send any details of other events you may know of to the newsletter editor at ozeenews@yahoo.com.au

10-11 September

Local Government Sustainable Development 2008 is designed to assist local government managers and practitioners to identify, plan and implement best practice sustainable development solutions, Sydney. Visit: www.halledit.com.au

13-14 September

Solar House Day. This ANZSES community event enable you to visit sustainable houses in Australia. Visit: www.solarhouseday.com

18-19 September

The National Sustainable Procurement Conference 2008 is a must for government or business organisations interested in integrating sustainability considerations into their procurement practices, and for suppliers of sustainably preferred products, Brisbane. Visit: www.sustainableprocurement.com.au/

21-24 September

State Landcare Conferences Queensland Landcare Conference, to be held at Monto. Visit www.landcare.org.au/Conference.htm

17-19 October 2008

Save Water Save Energy Expo. Green building products, solar hot water & heating, rain tanks, grey water systems, energy efficient appliances and lighting, water savers, and much more, Melbourne. Visit: www.savewatersaveenergyexpo.com.au

24 October 2008

Education for sustainability: connecting classrooms and communities. E E Conference for teachers and interested community members. Environmental education is undergoing a change in focus from education about the environment to education for the environment in the environment. This exciting conference addresses each of these areas and offers a variety of information and practical ideas that will enable schools and their communities to develop engaging sustainability programs. Contact Jan Page 02 6338 4367 or jpage@csu.edu.au or Rebecca Miles (02 6338 4622 or rmiles@csu.edu.au

28-31 October

Victorian Landcare Network Forum, to be held at Port Fairy. Contact Linda Jemmett Ph: 03 55712526 or Email l.jemmett@ghcma.vic.gov.au

7-8 November

Green TECH 08 3rd Australian International Green Build, Design and Technology Show. Leading Australian and International brands will have the opportunity to showcase and demonstrate products and services relating to green building, sustainable product design and green or clean energy technologies. Visit: www.greentechshow.com.au/index.shtml

16 November

NSW Landcare Muster, Contact Marion Benjamin Ph: 02 6925 7718 or Email mbenjamin@murrumbidgeelandcare.asn.au

5-7 December

Deep Breath Environmental Muster. This year's theme is Hope, Light and Flight. A weekend of interactive workshops, discussions, bushwalks, creative activities, wholesome food and good company in the foothills of the Barrington Tops. \$130 waged (\$100 if paid before end of October). Concession for unwaged. Visit www.wangat.com.au

7-11 December

World Indigenous Peoples Conference: Education 2008 provides a forum for Indigenous people around the world to come together not only to share and learn from their experiences and promote best practice in Indigenous education policies, programs and practice but also to honour and celebrate their cultures and traditions, Melbourne. Visit www.wipce2008.com

5-7 January 2009

Fifth International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability is to be held in conjunction with the University of Technology, Mauritius. The conference will work in a multidisciplinary way across the various fields and perspectives through which we can address the fundamental and related questions of

sustainability. Main speakers include some of the leading thinkers in these areas, as well as numerous paper, colloquium and workshop presentations. Visit: <http://s09.cgpublisher.com/>

17-19 February 2009

29th Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology & Conservation. Creating – Community – Collaboration: The symposium will explore themes such as building communication and networking at local, regional, and global scales. It aims to create linkages between communities and to connect communities, policy-makers and managers at all levels with the latest information coming out of sea turtle research and conservation programs, Brisbane. Visit: www.turtles-brisbane2009.org/

Other Key Dates

- September: Biodiversity Month**
- 1 September: Wattle Day**
- 1-7 September: Landcare week**
- 7 September: National Threatened Species Day**
- 14 September: National Bilby**
- 13-14 September: Sustainable House Day**
- 18 September: World Water Monitoring Day**
- 20-21 September: Clean Up the World Weekend**
- 22 September: World Car-free Day**
- October: Energy Awareness Month, International Walk to School Month**
- 3 October: Walk to Work Day**
- 4 October: World Animal Day**
- 6 October: World Habitat Day**
- 15 October: National Ride to Work Day**
- 19 – 25 October: National Water Week**
- 29 October: National Bird Day**