

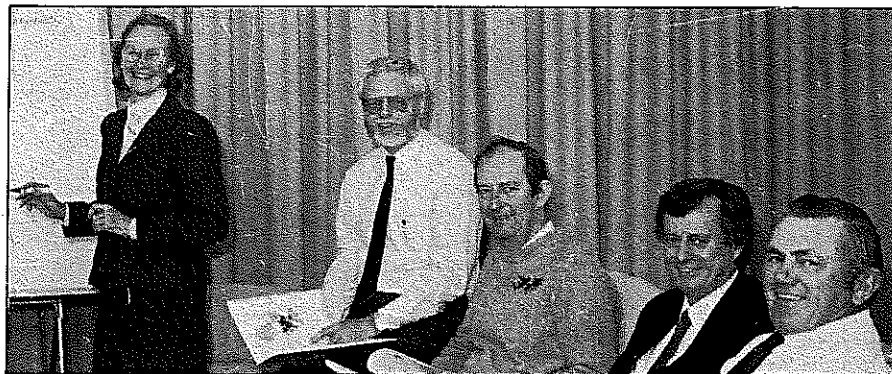


# OPERATION LANDCARE

## NEWS

A newsletter for the Decade of Landcare — South Australia

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No. 17 Dec. 1989



## Legislation in March

SA's new soil conservation legislation will operate from March 15 — 50 years after the original Act was passed by State Parliament.

Reformed legislation was tabled in September after extensive community consultation and following debate and amendment, passed both Houses on October 24.

It contains a number of changes including a more pro-active role for soil conservation boards; district and individual farm planning and a re-vamped administrative group — the Soil and Land Conservation Council.

This replaces the Advisory Committee on Soil Conservation and will comprise 12 people including an independent chairperson and a balance of landholders, public servants and others with particular expertise in landcare and conservation.

While the old legislation concentrated on soil and water erosion, the new embraces other forms of land degradation as well.

These include soil salinity and acidification; soil structure decline and pollution.

District plans will be produced within three years of the new Act's operations with emphasis on land capability and planning.

## Landcare committee gets the 1990 activities going

Widespread community support for '1990 — the Year of Landcare' can be expected, according to Mrs Barbara Hardy.

Mrs Hardy who heads the event's State Management Committee, said programming was well underway and would include:

- A community-based landcare campaign titled 'Operation Landcare'.
- Central and regional forums.
- A Kids-For-Landcare project being organised in co-operation with the Education Department.
- A calendar of landcare related events.

'The springboard for activity was the Prime Minister's announcement in July about the Year and Decade of Landcare,' Mrs Hardy said.

'Since then Landcare Australia has been formed, as have committees in other States.

'The former chairman of the Aust-

ralian Bicentennial Authority, Mr Jim Kirk, is the chairman of Landcare Australia.

'Our aim is to emphasise the positive things which are happening with soil conservation across our State and to help promote the many groups involved in landcare projects.

'We will also provide a link for further Federal initiatives.'

Mrs Hardy said seven subcommittees had been established to assist the State committee.

These were communications and promotions; education and schools; government department co-ordination; local government and towns; primary industry; commerce and industry and resource groups.

Other members of the State management committee are the Director-General of Agriculture, Dr John Radcliffe; member of the Advisory Committee on Soil Conservation, Mr Mike Kluge; Deputy Chairman of the Advisory Board of Agriculture, Mr Jeff Pearson; UFS president, Mr Don Pfitzner; Project Officer with the Australian Conservation Foundation, Ms Jacquie Gillen; Associate Director-General of Education, Mr Garth Boomer; Chief General Manager group planning and subsidiaries, State Bank, Mr Michael Hamilton and Chief of the Soil and Water Branch with the Department of Agriculture, Mr Roger Wickes.

Executive Officer is Mrs Cicely Bungey.

*Barbara Hardy at a recent State committee meeting with Roger Wickes, John Radcliffe, Garth Boomer and Mike Kluge.*

## LANDTALK

According to noted soil conservation scientist, Dr Brian Roberts, any social change can be simplified into four stages:

- Stage 1: No talk, no do.
- Stage 2: Talk, no do.
- Stage 3: Talk, do.
- Stage 4: No talk, do.

He suggests SA may be in stage three as far as landcare is concerned.

## Comment sought

The State Management Committee welcomes comments on this first edition of our newsletter.

It is being sent to a large audience of diverse community and business backgrounds. Another edition is planned for early February so let us have your thoughts by mid-January at the latest.

The newsletter is the cornerstone of a communications program and is here to be used for a range of landcare news and views (space permitting, of course).

All contributions should be sent to:

Mrs Cicely Bungey,  
Executive Officer,  
1990 Year of Landcare,  
Department of Agriculture,  
GPO Box 1671, Adelaide 5001.

## Landcare across the borders

**Capsulated comments on landcare activities in other States and Territories.**

**NSW** — Strip cropping, establishment of contour banking and the building of dams to control water erosion are just some of the many landcare activities.

As well, nearly 70% of NSW rice growers have or are engaged in laser landforming projects to combat salinity in irrigated soils.

The cost for 103, 000 ha is put at \$80m.

**Queensland** — There are now 42 landcare committees covering the majority of the State, and more are being formed.

Contour banking at the rate of 60,000 ha a year has occurred during the 1980s and strip cropping practices are being

adopted on the erosion-prone Darling Downs.

Over 4,000 landholders have soil conservation plans covering 700,000 ha.

**Northern Territory** — All range and grasslands in the Territory are covered by four landcare associations.

These are centred on Alice Springs, Victoria River Downs, Mary River and Barkly Tablelands.

Emphasis for cattlemen is on sustainable landcare practices coupled with the control of feral animals plus the role of native grasses for the cattle industry.

**WA** — Since 1982, some 100 land conservation districts covering 90% of agricultural land, have been formed and the concept has also extended to the Kimberleys and other pastoral regions.

An estimated 20m trees a year are being planted by farmers and thousands of kilometers of contour and interceptor banks have been built.

Soil stability will also be enhanced under a program to have 100,000 ha of plantations established on cleared farm land.

**Tasmania** — four community landcare projects are expected to be formed by January 1990 with a target of 10 by June.

One of these is likely to be an urban group.

**Victoria** — This State now has 60 landcare projects directly involving 2,000 landholders and covering over 1m ha.

These integrated programs feature soil conservation; salinity control; tree planting and pest plant and animal control.

A further 35 projects are planned for 1990.

Tree decline is being reversed under a Victorian Farmers' Federation program through participation by 40 regional groups.

## Five new advisors

**SA landholders are about to get more help from Greening Australia.**

State Co-ordinator, Mr Malcolm Campbell, said last week that a technical officer would be stationed at Quorn to assist in re-vegetation work in the pastoral and peri-pastoral areas.

'This will be one of five new positions created by the organisation for SA,' he said.

Others would include:

- A person to concentrate on assisting schools, 50% of the time to be spent in the country.
- An advisory officer to help farmers with whole farm planning.
- An administrative officer.

Mr Campbell expects the appointees to be named this month.

'The appointments are part of a nationwide campaign to plant one billion trees in the next decade,' he said.

'SAs target is 100m and given that we are planting about 3m a year now, a three-fold increase is needed.

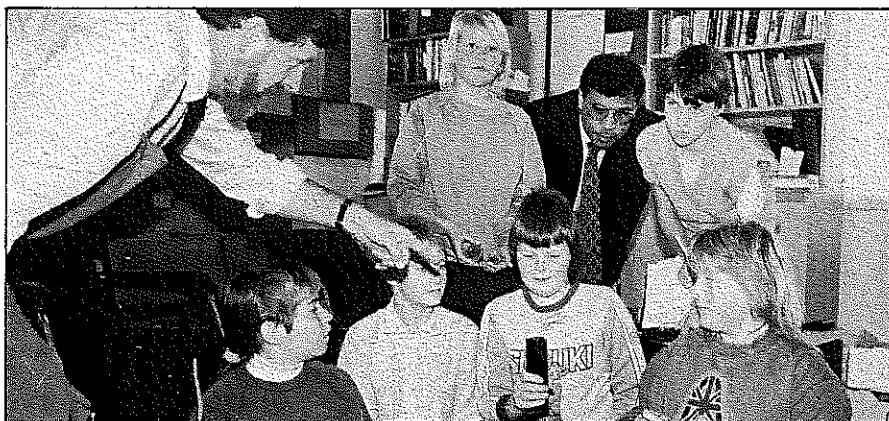
'We are very determined to increase the survival rate of plantings and there will be a lot of emphasis on direct seeding.'

Mr Campbell said research had shown that trees could be established on a broadacre basis for \$1 each.

This included 70c for the seedling and 30c for weedicides.

Higher survival rates were feasible without extra waterings in rainfall regions above 300 mm a year.

Mr Campbell said the SA division of Greening Australia had applied for projects from Federal funding sources worth \$301,000.



*Malcolm Campbell demonstrating the intricacies of plant propagation at the Hinks Avenue Primary School, Whyalla.*

## EP soil boards helped

**Soil conservation on Eyre Peninsula has received a major boost.**

Under the National Soil Conservation Program, the Department of Agriculture has been allocated nearly \$55,000 to assist Eyre Peninsula soil conservation boards draw up district soil plans.

The funds will enable the appointment of an officer specifically for this purpose.

The person chosen will work with boards already established on lower and eastern Eyre Peninsula and another planned in the western part of the region.

The project is part of an integrated package being developed for Eyre Peninsula to help its communities recover from extensive drought.

Another mapping project has also been funded from the same source.

The Department of Environment and Planning has been allocated \$44,000 to continue its mapping program of the Flinders Ranges.

Information tabulated and collected is designed to assist soil conservation boards in the region and the Department of Lands in its pastoral assessment program.

## LANDTALK

'... a carefully balanced program of conservation and development is essential; one is no good without the other unless we plan to spend our future either in a mechanised cess-pool or a petrified forest,' JOHN BURTON, president, Soil and Water Conservation Association of Australia.

'There are reports of very large yields. Where are those who said this country should be closed down. Hide your heads in shame,' Upper Eyre Peninsula farmer, RON PROVIS.

# Mallee among many regions assisted

Control of erosion on Murray Mallee sandhills is one of many new projects to be assisted by the National Soil Conservation Program.

Submitted by the Murray Mallee Soil conservation Board headed by Mr Mike Kluge, funds will enable saltbush to be trialled on various sandhills as the beginning of a planned revegetation program.

It is hoped that these plants will provide drought tolerance and fodder reserves while stabilising shifting sand areas.

The Murray Mallee project is among 19 community landcare groups in SA to get funds from the first round of applications.

The Minister of Agriculture, Mr Arnold, released the complete list on November 23 and it is:

Mt Lofty Ranges — Hoads Hill land protection, \$19,970; Point Sturt, land and water assessment, \$7,620; Harrogate, environmental land project,

\$13,200; Adelaide Hills, reducing erosion from potato paddocks, \$16,700.

Mid North — soil and management training, \$8,100; lower north farm planning, \$17,900; lower north land management, \$2,100; Mannanarie-Yongala tillage trials, \$16,200.

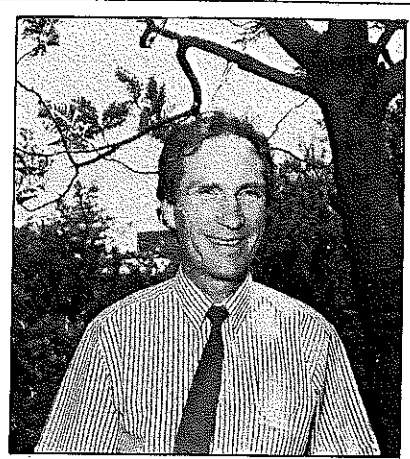
Yorke Peninsula — soil and water management at Artherton, \$11,500 and at Wokurna, \$19,000.

Kangaroo Island — salinity, \$20,000.

Northern — central Flinders surveyor training, \$9,945; Marla-Oodnadatta soil stabilisation and revegetation, \$20,000; Pankalah reseeding, \$2,905; northern Flinders revegetation, \$19,800.

Murray Mallee — publicity and promotion for soil boards, \$2,960; Forster-Bandon sandhill revegetation, \$5,000.

Eyre Peninsula — Coultas salinity, \$10,700; Marble Range, salinity; \$5,200.



## Ross returns from Nigeria

From Kaduna to Kaduna and back to Adelaide.

That has been the recent work history for Ross Britton who left the Department of Agriculture in 1983 for a four-year stint in Kaduna, Nigeria, imparting his agricultural expertise through a Christian mission in that country.

Ross returned recently and now has a landcare officer's position with the Department of Agriculture, based in Adelaide.

'Mine is a co-ordinating role working with other landcare officers who work from a number of centres throughout the State,' he said.

'I also have the job of contacting various community groups such as service clubs, Greening Australia and Trees for Life and linking them in the overall landcare program.'

# Big boost in members

Trees for Life has doubled its membership in the last six months.

Spokesperson, Cherie Hoyle, said this week that Trees for Life now had 5,700 members, up from 2,500 in April.

'We will be distributing 1.15m trees for autumn planting,' Cherie said.

Many of these would be used to help rectify soil degradation problems.

For example, soil desalination projects were underway at Lake Bonney and Burra.

As well, plantings would be used to halt soil erosion in the Mannum water-fall reserve.

Cherie said Trees for Life was co-operating with landcare groups on Eyre Peninsula to the extent that farmers there would plant 500,000 trees in autumn 1990.

Trees for Life volunteers, apart from growing seedlings were encouraged to help landholders prepare sites and then get involved in planting, installing tree guards and fencing.

'We survey the germination of seeds and have applied for a grant to assess the survival rate of seedlings,' she said.

'We have enough interest to be able to give out between 2m and 3m trees in 1991.'

## Governor is the patron

The Governor of South Australia, Sir Donald Dunstan, has agreed to be patron of '1990 the Year of Landcare.'

The Governor's support for the program was announced by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Arnold, at the recent landcare forum held at Stirling.

Head of the State Landcare Management Committee, Mrs Barbara Hardy, said the Governor's patronage was indicative of swelling community support for the project.

'There is a responsibility on everyone to care for the land and to ensure current problems are rectified.'

'We all own the problems and we can all help in finding the solutions.'

The Governor-General, Mr Bill Hayden, is also supporting the program by agreeing to be patron of Landcare Australia.

## LANDTALK

'Proponents of tree projects readily acknowledge that there's a lot more to fixing land degradation than just planting trees. But they know it's easier to arouse interest in trees than soil structure or acidity ... once that interest in trees is aroused, it quite naturally creates interest in soil, water and wildlife ...' ALAN CUMMINE, Greening Australia.

## Ideas flow from forum

The first SA forum about the Year and Decade of Landcare had been an outstanding success, Executive Officer, Mrs Cicely Bungey, said this week.

The forum was held at Stirling and included representatives of farmers, commerce, local government, government departments, landcare organisations and conservationists.

'A major plus was bringing over 100 people from very diverse groups together,' she said.

'Many stimulating suggestions were made during the working sessions and these will be considered by the State Management Committee.'

Mrs Bungey said many had favoured regional landcare forums while others opted for a State landcare conference.

As well, groups like the Agricultural Bureau and UFS had indicated their intention to incorporate landcare related matters in their 1990 conferences.



## Mid-Northern school project a winner

'Don't treat our soils like dirt' — the theme of a poster competition devised by Appila farmer Barry Harvey and recently taken up by the West Broughton Soil Conservation Board, attracted intense student and community interest.

Mid-North soils officer, Mary-Anne Young, said primary schools from Jamestown to Port Pirie took part in the competition with entries judged by board members.

The posters have been displayed in local towns and are also destined to be shown in the Conservation Centre in Adelaide.

'The display has gone down well in local communities and there has been positive feedback from parents,' Mary-Anne said.

The major winners and their schools in each category were:

Year 5 — Kellie Slattery, Laura; Kelly Simpson, St James; Sarah Honan, St James.

Year 6 — Catherine Smith, St James; Shane Brown, St James; Kristy Jean Thomson, Laura.

Year 7 — Samantha Moore, St James; Scott Land, Georgetown; Naomi Hill, Risdon Park.

School awards — year 5, Laura; years 6 and 7, St James; with special awards to St Mark's College, Port Pirie, Risdon Park and Jamestown.

*West Broughton Soil Conservation Board chairman, Doug Henderson, with Father Heading of St James Parish, Jamestown, and some of the posters in the board's competition.*

### CARE CALENDAR

Readers are invited to submit dates and details of landcare related events for inclusion in this column to:

Mrs Cicely Bungey,  
Department of Agriculture,  
GPO Box 1671,  
Adelaide 5001,  
Ph: (08)226 0538.

The deadline for the next edition is January 15.

December 16-17, Marla Soil Board, Cadnee Park, Wellbourn Hill revegetation project.

February 9, State Management Committee, Head Office, 2.30 pm.

February 14, Dryland salinity technical conference, Hawker Centre, Waite Institute.

February 22 for 12 weeks, TAFE rural property planning course, Clare, Nuriootpa and Adelaide.

February 28, Saddleworth Agricultural Bureau and Lower North Soil Board, stubble handling field day featuring modified machinery, north of Saddleworth.

## State-wide

All of SA's farm and pastoral lands are likely to be covered by soil conservation districts within 18 months.

'Initially we thought it could be the mid-1990s before this goal was reached but thanks to the enthusiasm of landholders and farmer groups, we look like being at least three years ahead of our former target,' the chief of the Department of Agriculture's soil and water branch, Mr Roger Wickes, said this week.

'Since 1988, nine new districts have been proclaimed, including for the first time, areas in SA's pastoral north,' Mr Wickes said.

'More are imminent including three proposed districts in the South-East.'

Mr Wickes said landholders had realised that soil conservation districts and boards provided many advantages. These included:

- Primary responsibility for landcare being vested in local landholders through board representatives.
- Access to expertise provided by Department of Agriculture officers.
- A focus for landcare activities including funding programs available under the National Soil Conservation Program.

## BRIEFLY

### Workshop

A two-day workshop for Department of Agriculture soil conservation officers was held in the Barossa Valley in early December.

Keynote speaker was the chairman of the UFS' natural resources division, Mr Peter Rehn.

### Ibis 1990

Planning is underway for the 1990 Ibis Awards.

This award which recognises excellence in commercial farming and flora and fauna conservation, is sponsored by the Commonwealth Development Bank and State Government.

This year it attracted 44 entries from all regions of the State with the winner being Mr Sam Jericho of Rudall, Eyre Peninsula.

### Sponsorship

Taubmans and Colgate Palmolive have joined a growing list of major companies involved in landcare sponsorship.

These two companies have committed funds to Greening Australia for the cost of trees in a number of that organisation's projects throughout Australia aimed at combatting problems like soil salinity and erosion.

It is estimated that these two sponsorships alone, will result in 200,000 trees being planted.

### Planning

The Department of Agriculture is to hold training programs for representatives from landcare groups.

Using funds obtained from the National Soil Conservation Program, the programs will concentrate on budget and financial management, project management and communication and promotion skills.

### Crop Care

Sustainability and productivity are features of a landcare initiative launched this year by ICI.

Key elements include:

- The formation of farmer groups concentrating on crop rotations and tillage methods.
- 'Better farming' demonstration sites to illustrate better productivity with reduced erosion.
- Crop Care items carried in rural newspapers.

### Revegetation

A vegetation specialist will soon be appointed to assist landcare groups with tree planting and other revegetation techniques.

Funds for the position have been obtained by the Department of Agriculture.