

November 2012 [Bumper Edition](#)



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

President's Note

I was invited to speak on international activities at RSA LandCare's biennial conference in Mafikeng, North West Province from 1-4 October. I paid my fare and the South Africans looked after me for a fortnight altogether, when I visited four provinces in all. I had a great time and learned a lot about this fascinating and complex country.

Firstly I appreciated the conference, which was like one of ours in many ways and had numerous positive sides.



RSA Landcare Awards night

The awards dinner was excellent—very rewarding. The entertainers were memorable, people were efficiently fed, the compere had lots of verve, the graphics were inspired and the audience reaction was priceless. And the

kids were so well behaved, even though they had to wait a long time for food

Junior LandCare—the students contributed so much to the conference and the idea of a parallel program for them was superb and well executed. RSA has a secondary-school bursary program to encourage young people to move into NRM

The African Landcare Network (ALN) session, Monday morning—fantastic—the action in all member countries following the Uganda master class has been very rewarding—this event certainly justified RSA's generous, strategic and responsible financial commitment to the ALN

The impressive attendance and prevailing spirit of friendship and equality, the excellent venue and catering and the abundance of great networking opportunities

The conference excursions—I went to Vryberg looking at grazing- were great as was the chance, thanks to Francis Steyn, to participate in an informal workshop with several farmers from the Karoo on establishing, financing, publicising and managing regional LandCare projects

LandCare is fostering connections with Conservation Agriculture—I was very pleased at the conference to again meet Dr Hendrik Smith and Dr Tonie Putter. Overall, I saw how relevant LandCare is to RSA and how it could be expanded to assist urban, coast

management, biodiversity, climate change action and mainstream farming groups.

I relished my post-conference tour through Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Gauteng provinces, where I learned more on Junior LandCare: Tonga View Primary School near Komatipoort (I'm hoping it can connect with one of Bob Edgar's schools in the Kingdom of Tonga) proved a pleasure to visit, as did Soshanguve Primary School near a huge township near Pretoria. I had superb guides, some of whom my readers will know:



Mango orchards in Limpopo hills.

Escort with Monkwe and Maté via Richard Selemela, Limpopo; Matthew, Mary and Lazarus via Ms PNZ Mpangane, Ehlanzani North and Dr M Kgaphola, Ehlanzani South in Mpumalanga; Sham, Harmen and Patrick via Melinda Swift in Gauteng; and finally Victor and William from the Pretoria DAFF staff, who were great companions and highly informative.



Grazing management team

Meeting the LandCare group executives in the field—many were very impressive and committed—I was humbled, and often reminded of their Australian equivalents. There was a spirit of enterprise at Khumbe, Limpopo, where the LandCare group makes *achaar*, green mango chutney, commercially,

and is looking at other products. The group asked me for advice, which I readily gave, bearing in mind German and Sri Lankan initiatives with cider, lamb and tea. Also around Khumbe (off R524) were excellent examples of gabions, vetiver grass on the contour and contour bunding—and the marvellous example of the spring (*fontein*) that had reappeared following local soil conservation works by the LandCare group.

Australia can be proud of the part it has played in helping LandCare evolve in South Africa, firstly through Sue Marriott's initiative with Elaine Spencer-White and several helpers in 1997 in bringing a group here to look at Landcare, followed by the efforts of AusAID consultants including Richard Holt, Theo Nabben, Les Bohm, Fiona Bain and Ted Rowley, visits by RSA staff to conferences here, and the many friendships built up over the years.

Mary Johnson and I went to Canberra in June to meet ACIAR staff. Discussions were valuable and their new **Australian International Food Security Centre** has relevance for what ALI is trying to achieve. The National Landcare Conference in Sydney in September had a strong international presence.

I have lately spent time helping Father Mick Seigel of Nanzan Catholic University, Nagoya, further the idea of introducing Landcare to Japan. In September, Strath Creek Landcare Group, Paul Dettmann and I showed his students local Landcare projects. One of those students, Tomomi Maekawa, will commence a PhD at Charles Sturt University this February. Moreover, Mick is organising a study tour in the Philippines for next year, when a group of Luzon farmers will visit their counterparts in Mindanao.

Several ALI members have helped Carrie Tiffany with the forthcoming edition of *Victorian Landcare*, with its global Landcare theme. Melbourne academic, Dr Ernest Mdogo, and I have been looking at reviewing an agroforestry project in Tanzania, and extending it. Finally I am working on a concept to establish a professional bureau to promote and raise funds for Landcare across the globe.

Rob Youl

Australian Landcare experts in Thailand

Dr Julian Prior from the University of New England was nominated by ALI to give a paper to an APEC conference in Thailand on the topic of *Sustainable Land Management to Enhance Food Production of APEC Members*. He is on his way there now and we look forward to his impressions and possible stronger links with the Thais.

A previous ALI study tour recipient, Karen Brisbane (she went to see Landcare development in the US) is also on her way there to work with Thai counterparts as part of her Heather Mitchell award at the last Victorian Landcare Awards.

The Crawford Fund celebrates 25 years

Mary Johnson

2012 is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Crawford Fund. Established in June 1987 by the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE), the Crawford Fund was named in honour of the late Sir John Crawford and commemorates his outstanding services to international agricultural research.

The Fund promotes and supports international R&D activities and supports the work of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) and other international research centres.

The Crawford Fund has been a great supporter of the development of international Landcare through funding a range of activities including study tours; technical and specialist training in forestry, conservation, agricultural and horticultural production; mentoring and governance, and in recent years Master class programs.

The first Landcare Master class, held in Melbourne in 2006, was made possible through the efforts of Bob Clements, Crawford Fund, Charles Wilcox Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and Bruce Lloyd Chairman Landcare Council. \$120 000 was raised in equal parts from Crawford, DAFF and AusAid.

Designed and delivered by Julian Prior, Rob Youl, Sue Marriott and Vicki Mack, around twenty people from South and East Africa, the Philippines and South Pacific spent three days at lectures (and field visits), discussing their own experiences and planning for the introduction of Landcare in their home countries. The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) also helped foster this first Master class.

In retrospect, the training contributed strongly to several outcomes including the further expansion of Landcare in RSA and its southern African neighbours, and the development in East Africa through the Africa Landcare Network which had formed at the third RSA National Landcare Conference earlier in 2006. In addition Landcare emerged in Sri Lanka and growth continued strongly in the Philippines. Fiji kept the Landcare concept in mind, so that in 2011, they were able to launch two Landcare groups in the outer islands to promote better land and reef management.

In 2011 it was considered timely by the African Landcare Network to organize another Master class, specifically for East African countries. Accordingly in March 2012, the African Landcare Network hosted a Master class at Mbale, 250 km east of Kampala in Uganda. The class was conducted over a week (18-24 March), including one day in the field looking closely at Landcare projects at Kapchorwa on the slopes of Mount Elgon, one of East Africa's volcanoes.

Australian practitioners including Julian Prior, Mary Johnson, Theo Nabben, Rob Youl and Rowan Reid were invited to deliver the Master class. The Crawford Fund supported the travel costs of four of the presenters.

A Village Project in Tonga

Bob Edgar

Over the past several years, with support from my colleagues in Rotary, I have been working on the development of a community-based project in the Tongan Village of Popua.

Tonga is a small independent Pacific Kingdom with an economy that relies heavily upon international aid and family remittances. A problem with many aid projects is that they do not satisfy real local needs and fall into disrepair soon after the donor leaves. Popua is a village on the outskirts of the Tongan capital, Nuku'alofa. It is not a traditional Tongan village but was established for internal migrants who had come from the outer islands in search of work. Unfortunately the land provided by the Government was very low lying and subject to storm surge and inundation during the regular tropical cyclones. I thought the Landcare model was an excellent framework for the development of vegetable and poultry production in the village.

The Tonga Community Development Trust, a local NGO, was helpful in gaining access to the village community and the project was organised within the existing community structure of the village. Several meetings were held with the community to discuss, plan and review what was needed. The village community selected twenty families to take part.

Sufficient funding was available to establish 20 small vegetable gardens using crushed coral to raise the beds above high water mark. Topsoil was then added. This method draws on experience in Tuvalu and Kiribati where rising sea levels present a major problem. Four work groups were established to spread the crushed coral and topsoil. Each group was provided with a wheelbarrow and hand tools. This process achieved a high-level of community participation and ownership of the gardens.

The Tonga Community Development Trust acted as local project manager and coordinated the purchase of materials and liaison with the village community. Training in compost making, crop protection, seed

collection was given by the Tongan Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forests and Fisheries.



Village meeting about the project

The first vegetables were planted in September 2011 and grew through the wet season. Vegetable production in the wet season is challenging as damage to crops from rain, pests and disease can be severe. However production was satisfactory with each family harvesting produce to the value of about \$20 per week during a six-week period in January and February this year. Unfortunately the harvest was cut short by the arrival of Cyclone Jasmine in mid February. An estimated 500mm of rain caused flooding and recently constructed roads blocked drainage causing some crops to be completely destroyed. Culverts have since been installed to rectify the problem. Good yields were obtained during the recent cool season (April to August) and plantings for the coming wet season were made in September.

Poultry shelters are currently being built as the second phase of the project. The shelters are to protect young chickens from predation by roaming cats and dogs. Poultry production complements the vegetable gardens by consuming scraps and providing manure as well as increasing available food supply. The aim is to increase village poultry numbers and to introduce improved strains of poultry to boost the amount of meat per bird while retaining the flavour of the village chickens. Improved genetic material has been made available in Tonga via the FAO. Initially the budget provided for three shelters but at a review and planning meeting the village community decided to build the shelters themselves rather than buy kits from

the suppliers. This means that all 20 participants will receive shelters. Construction is now underway.

It is planned to use the Popua project as a model for other villages as well as including the more Popua families in the next stage of the work. Funding for the development of a village Landcare plan and technical training in soils, plant propagation and protection has been obtained from The Crawford Fund for International Agriculture. Additional funding is being sought to complete an additional 25 gardens and to extend the work to include the planting of fruit trees, casuarinas for coastal protection and mangrove rehabilitation. The program will seek to involve additional local organisations including the village school and church groups.



A productive project garden of tomatoes and lettuce.

Work on the project has shown the value and challenges of working with the local community on land management programs. To be successful activities must be consistent with and build upon community strengths and aspirations.

The project was initiated by the Rotary Club of Frankston North and supported by the Rotary Clubs of Croydon, Phillip Island-San Remo and Nuku'alofa. The Rotary Foundation provided additional funding for the work.

Further information contact Bob Edgar (an ALI committee member) at

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Crawford Fund Parliamentary Conference

Mary Johnson

October 9 2012 may have been a day of high drama for former Parliamentary Speaker Peter Slipper but the attention of 300 participants attending the Crawford Fund Parliamentary Conference in the, Parliament House Theatre was totally focused on Conference Speakers.

Each year the Crawford Fund holds an international conference on issues that focus attention and debate on key aspects of food security and international agricultural research.

The 2012 Conference, ***The Scramble for Natural Resources: More Food Less Land?***, drew together presenters from around the world to address challenges between competing land use, biodiversity and natural resources, while addressing the need to feed the world's growing population.

Senator the Hon Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs opened the conference. Participants were then treated to a day of eminent speakers including:

- Dr Frank Rijsberman, Chief Executive Officer, CGIAR Consortium and formerly of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation;
 - Professor Jonathan Foley, Institute on the Environment, University of Minnesota;
 - Dr Derek Byerlee, International Agricultural Policy Specialist and author of "Rising Global Interest in Farmland";
 - Dr Shenggen Fan, Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington;
 - Dr Nteranya Sanginga, Director General, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Nigeria and
 - Dr Chris Moran, Director, Sustainable Minerals Institute and Member of the Management Board of the International Mining for Development Centre.
- Over the day speakers and participants considered many complex issues on topics covering:
- The global dimensions of the future population growth – food security nexus as affected by land availability for food

production, food losses, energy and climate change

- The dynamics of global land use and cover change affecting food production, greenhouse gas emissions and water resources
- Impacts of land clearing for agriculture in tropical areas on biodiversity and ecotourism
- Changing patterns of foreign investment in land in Australia and in developing countries – the land grab?
- Mining and agriculture – competitive or compatible uses of land?
- Urban encroachment on good agricultural land as people flock to the cities

To conclude the day's proceedings an extended Q and A session provided the opportunity to further highlight and discuss points.

Conference Dinner and Breakfast

The Conference Dinner and 2012 Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecture was held in the National Portrait Gallery. The lecture was delivered by Sir John Beddington Government Chief Scientific Adviser (UK) well known for raising the concept of the "Perfect Storm" of food, energy and water security in the context of climate change.

During the dinner the Biography of the Crawford Fund's founding director, Emeritus Professor Derek Tribe AM, was launched with author Professor Lindsay Falvey provided a background to the writing of the book.

The following day the Conference Breakfast: *Implications for Australian and International Food Policy* was held in the Mural Hall, Parliament House and well attended by delegates, senators and ministers.

For further conference information and some speakers notes go to:

<http://www.crawfordfund.org>

Full conference proceedings will be available in 2013.

Global Landcare Alliance

Australian Landcare International, along with **Landcare International** which is based in Nairobi, Kenya, have formed the **Global Landcare Alliance (GLA)** to further promote and support the Landcare movement throughout both developed and developing countries.

The New Zealand Landcare Trust has shown interest in joining GLA at some future date when it is able to look beyond its shores to promoting Landcare in other South Pacific countries.

Membership of GLA is open to organisations that encourage and support Landcare internationally. ALI's Horrie Poussard is the initial Chair of GLA, with the position rotating annually among member organisations.

ALI Website

Have a look at the ALI website from time to time. We aim to update it regularly. www.australianlandcareinternational.com

Some websites of interest

The Crawford Fund
<http://www.crawfordfund.org/>

Landcare International
www.worldagroforestry.org/projects/landcare/

Landcare South Africa
www.nda.agric.za/docs/landcarepage/

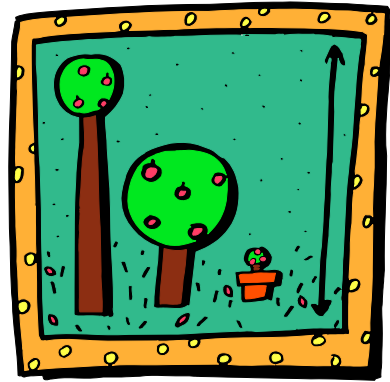
New Zealand Landcare Trust
www.landcare.org.nz/

Landcare Foundation of the Philippines
www.landcarephilippines.org

Dr David Suzuki's talk available

A number of sessions of the Australian National Landcare Conference were recorded including the inspiring talk by Dr David Suzuki which was on a tele link direct from Vancouver. They can be seen on <http://www.daff.gov.au/landcareconference/videos>

Horrie Poussard also gave a short presentation at the following plenary panel session, including a 'plug' for international Landcare, which can be seen on the same site.



Vetiver grass bunds and gabions constructed on steep slopes by the Landcare group at Khumbe , Limpopo Region in South Africa.

Become a member of ALI for only \$40 per year. Your \$40 helps ALI keep up with what is happening globally and supports our website and other office costs.

The Benefits of ALI membership

- Using your Landcare experience to assist overseas groups
- Overseas contacts for future travel
- Developing links with possible sister groups overseas
- Being part of a world-wide movement for land, biodiversity and community improvement
- Regular e-newsletter on overseas Landcare developments

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