

Upper Goulburn Muster

The Newsletter of the Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee

Vol 9 No 2

June 2008



Towards a Dryland Landscape Strategy

A strategy to protect and enhance the landscape in the dryland (upper Goulburn and mid Goulburn Broken catchments) is being prepared by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA).

When completed the strategy will form a blueprint for care and oversight of this valuable part of the Goulburn Broken catchment for years to come.

The Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee (UGIC) has responsibility for community consultation in formation of the strategic plan and is seeking opportunities to attend meetings of community groups throughout the upper Goulburn region to explain the project and receive feedback on how the dryland should and could look up to 50 years ahead.

UGIC members will show a short presentation to highlight some characteristics of the catchment before and after remedial works and with a view towards the future. The presentation will highlight some of the drivers for change in



Vista from Highlands

UGIC members are contacting peak groups within their area to seek opportunities for discussion and will also ask group members to complete a short survey on how they view their landscape now and what changes they anticipate in the next 20 years.

This consultation process is an opportunity for people to contribute to a strategy that will form the basis of how we manage the dryland landscape into the next 50 years and will also highlight where funding is likely to be targeted.

For more information please contact Poppe Davis at the GB CMA office in Yea P 5736 0100. *What is the dryland? P 2.*



Willows on the Jamieson River

the catchment and then we will seek input from community members on how they see our catchment now and in the future.

There is no doubt that climate will play a huge role in how our landscape changes, but there are many other variations that will take place through social and economic adjustments, some of which are beyond our immediate control.



Erosion gully in farmland.

Did you know your newsletter is available in PDF format and via email? For an electronic copy of the Upper Goulburn Muster call 5736 0100 and it will be emailed to you.

Then all your members can have a copy.

IN THIS ISSUE

Landscape in Focus	1
Parker moves on	2
Environment tipping point	2
Biodiversity works	2
Awards alert	3
DEP bonanza	3
Climate change in Africa	4
Dates to note	4

2008 the AWARDS continue

The upper Goulburn Implementation Committee has agreed to continue the Landcare Groups Award this year following the success of the 2007 Group Award. The Landcare Award for Excellence and the Hubert Miller Perpetual Trophy will also be continued, with presentations at the Annual UGIC dinner.

Nominations and application forms have been included with this newsletter and the deadline for application returns is August 22nd.

Additional nomination forms from the CMA Yea office P 5736 0100.

THE UPPER GOULBURN MUSTER

IS PREPARED FOR THE UPPER GOULBURN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE.

EDITOR: POPPE M DAVIS

PHONE ; 5736 0108

SHOP 5, 10 HIGH STREET, YEA 3717

Email: popped@gbcma.vic.gov.au

Website: www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

Q & A

Q. What is the Dryland?

A. Rain fed land use. Land outside designated irrigation areas under the Water Act.

Movement at the Station

The Upper Goulburn Executive Officer, Lilian



Parker, resigned from the GB CMA last month to take up a position with the Glenelg Hopkins CMA in Warrnambool.

Lilian was with the Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee for 3 years and managing the Yea office, then took on management of the two dryland Implementation Committees, including the Mid Goulburn Broken IC for the past year.

Lilian said she was eager to learn more about coastal management and broaden her experience with other environmental issues.

She will be missed in Yea and all her friends and colleagues wish her well in the new position.

www.ghcma.vic.gov.au

Climate Change—Are we approaching tipping point?

Courtesy Banksia Environmental Foundation

The world could be tracking towards irreversible climate change as warming takes place much quicker than previously thought, an Adelaide academic has warned.

Climate change expert Barry Brook, of Adelaide University, told a Canberra conference — Imagining the Real Life on a Greenhouse Earth — atmospheric carbon dioxide levels were headed towards 600 parts a million, and forecast global temperature increases of up to six degrees.

Professor Brook said a global temperature increase of three degrees might result in the collapse of the Amazon rainforest, a four-degree increase would lead to the displacement of hundreds of million of people and the extinction of up to half the world's species, and a five-degree increase would create an ice-free planet and sea-level increases of 80 metres.

"We're seeing events predicted for the end of the 21st century happening already," Professor Brook said.

He cautioned that even the most ambitious international greenhouse gas reduction targets might not prevent a catastrophic increase in

temperatures.

"Two degrees has the potential to lead to three or four degrees because of carbon-cycle feedbacks," Professor Brook said.

The Australian National University's Janette Lindesay warned that the earth was moving towards "tipping points", where climate change would become irreversible.

Barrie Pittock, of the CSIRO, said the amount of carbon dioxide going into the atmosphere had overtaken even the worst-case scenario included in last year's bench-mark report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

"We are at or exceeding the fossil-fuel-intensive scenario, which the latest IPCC report didn't cover because they thought it was too much," Dr Pittock said.

He listed nine reasons for the faster-than-expected increase in greenhouse gas emissions, including the rapid growth of China and India.

He said global temperatures, rising sea levels, polar ice reduction and rainfall changes were all happening much faster than previously predicted.

The Age June 2

Biodiversity protected in Highlands

A number of important peatland and spring soak wetlands have recently been fenced in the Highlands by the GB CMA as part of the Drought Employment Program (DEP).

With the cooperation of local farmers and other land owners the wetlands were fenced at no cost to the owner to aid their protection and the unique native plants and animals they support.

GB CMA CEO Bill O'Kane says that little is known about these unique wetlands and the Authority is funding a project that will see scientists from the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research, and Melbourne University, investigate the values of peatland and spring soak wetlands in the Highlands and Strathbogie Ranges over the next 12 months.

The project will also evaluate their condition and future risks. Outcomes from the project

will help develop ongoing investigations and future management.

This project builds on a previous study undertaken by the GB CMA which identified and mapped over 400 Peatland and Spring Soak wetlands across the catchment. In addition, possible Peatland and Spring Soak wetland sites were modelled, which will be verified over time by GB CMA field staff.



Peatlands and spring soaks are distinct wetlands that support a number of threatened plant and animal species and perform hydrological functions. These wetlands however, have a long history of disturbance including grazing, drainage and vegetation clearing. This has resulted in their degradation and loss. For information contact Simon Casanella on 5820 1100.

Awards and Rewards back in the Frame



The Upper Goulburn Awards will be held again this year with a dinner to celebrate the achievements of individuals and Landcare Groups in the upper Goulburn catchment.

Once again the Upper Goulburn Implementation Committee will offer the Landcare Award for Excellence, the Hubert Miller Perpetual Trophy and the Landcare Group Achievement Award.

The Landcare Award for Excellence is awarded to an individual committee member who has shown exceptional dedication to their Group; the Hubert Miller Perpetual Trophy is awarded to a community member who has demonstrated long term community

engagement in the natural resource management sector; and Groups will be asked to produce a short film or poster option to demonstrate their most significant project in the past 10 years.

The Group Award was originally offered to celebrate 10 years of CMA's in Victoria and the UGIC has decided to offer it again due to its success.

Application and nomination forms are available electronically from the Yea office on 5736 0100 or by emailing popped@qbcma.vic.gov.au

Look for these brochures on the CMA website or call in to the CMA office for a hard copy.

Weeds Booklet updated

The much loved "Weeds of the Goulburn Broken" booklet has been re-printed and is now available at CMA offices throughout the Goulburn Broken catchment.

Plans to launch the 3rd Edition of this popular reference book are underway.

First and second editions were so popular that they were snapped up very quickly, but the new edition also contains information on aquatic weeds, which were missing in the earlier versions.

The book is a collaborative effort between the Department of Primary Industries, Goulburn Murray Water, the Goulburn Broken CMA, Department of Sustainability

and Environment, North Central CMA and other contributors.

Everything is covered, from thistles to grasses and water hyacinth, plus many plants that were once thought to be suitable for gardens and parks. Check the book; some garden plants are now considered weeds and need to be controlled even in urban gardens.

Plenty of work for DEP Crews

Drought Employment Program (DEP) crews are working throughout the dryland catchments to fence and revegetate rivers and creeks

Work is currently being done to fence off an area of the Delatite River in Delatite Lane Mansfield, before an intensive tree planting project to rehabilitate a previously cleared section river frontage.

The DEP program is run by the Goulburn Broken CMA to employ farmers and farm workers who have been adversely affected by drought. Participants are trained in chemical handling, chain saw use and other skills to meet occupational health and safety requirements.

The CMA believes this is a winning situation for all concerned as it provides an ongoing income to participants, makes

good use of funding for the river health program and assists landholders to sustainably maintain their river frontages.

Fencing works have been undertaken at Wicket Hill, in the Highands, to protect a highly valued and popular site on the Hughes Creek.

A popular picnic and camping destination, the site was identified as a priority for urgent management action to control the impact of high visitor usage.

3.3 kilometres of fencing was erected along both banks by the Seymour work crew. Gates and stiles to allow for restricted foot traffic have been installed.

This fencing project, along with many others undertaken by the DEP crews, will serve to protect a significant section of a

priority waterway from the adverse affects of inappropriate use.

Improved management of this site will encourage existing streamside vegetation to regenerate over time, and will ultimately enhance stream health and the enjoyment of visitors to the site.



A stile protects a section of Hughes Creek near Wicket Hill.

Report from other places—Poppe Davis

Courtesy Banksia Environmental Foundation

GLACIERS, lakes and forests have disappeared from Africa at an alarming rate in the past 36 years, satellite photographs have revealed.

The changing face of the continent was brought home to African ministers yesterday when they were presented with an atlas charting the speed of environmental destruction.

The loss of ice on Mount Kilimanjaro and the vanishing waters of Lake Chad were among the best-known problems, but deforestation, urbanisation and the spread of agriculture have also taken their toll.

Other great changes included tree loss and land degradation caused by refugees in Sudan, the virtual disappearance of Lake Ngami in Botswana, the expansion of the city of Bujumbura in Burundi, and the loss of Cameroon's rainforest to rubber and palm plantations.

Hundreds of "before and after" satellite images offered a sobering assessment of the damage caused to the natural environment in less than four decades.

The images formed part of Africa - Atlas of Our Changing Environment, launched yesterday after a two-year project by Unep, the United Nations Environment Programme.

Examples where the landscape has been restored or improved included the re-establishment of trees in Niger and the creation of mangroves on the Eritrean coast, but the majority of images highlighted cases of environmental damage.

Marion Cheatle, deputy director of Unep's early warning division, said that the atlas - presented in Johannesburg at the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment - was intended to show where and why action needed to be taken.

"What we are really trying to do is to make people aware of the extent and rate and the

enormity of changes taking place," she said. "We are trying to make policy and decision-makers realise they can take decisions that will stanch this degradation."

The biggest factor contributing to the changes, she said, was the rise in Africa's population to 965 million.

From 2000-05 the population rose 2.32 per cent each year compared with the global average of 1.24 per cent, and 20 of the fastest growing countries around the world in terms of population are located in Africa. This has meant the area of land available for each individual has fallen from 13.5 hectares in 1950 to 3 today and is forecast to fall to just 1.5 hectares by 2050.

Ms Cheatle said: "Where we've got problems at the moment, they are likely to get worse with climate change."

Deforestation was a key concern in 35 African nations, most notably the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi and Rwanda.

About 4 million hectares of forest is lost in Africa a year. Biodiversity loss was highlighted in 34 countries and land degradation from erosion - up to 50 tonnes of soil are lost per hectare - was a "major worry" for Ghana, Cameroon and 30 other nations.

In the Rwenzori mountains, Uganda, glaciers shrank by half between 1987 and 2003.

Monika MacDevett, of Unep's world conservation monitoring centre, said: "If we carry on business as usual, we'll destroy our planet."

Achim Steiner, a senior UN official, said there were many examples of how action has been taken to restore the environment and he said those projects should act as beacons. But he said the outlook for many areas and the people who live there remain poor unless remedial work is undertaken.

Read the full report and see pictures at www.unep.org (*The Times*)

From the National Landcare Facilitator

Awards & Training

Nuffield Australia 2008 Scholarships for Australian Primary Producers

The objective of Nuffield Scholarships is to increase practical farming knowledge, management skills and general techniques.

Applications close 30 June. Visit www.nuffield.com.au

2008 Agricultural Industries Young Innovators and Scientists Awards

The Science Awards are open to people aged 18 to 35 years who are working or studying in the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, food or natural resource industries.

Applications close 30 June. Visit www.brs.gov.au/scienceawards

Tree Day competition

The Australian Landcare magazine is holding a Tree Day competition to find out how much people in landcare know about the roles trees play in our environment. Seven multiple choice questions are in a survey on page 22 of the June edition of the Australian Farm Journal's Australian Landcare magazine. Answers can be emailed **by no later than 1 July** to magazine@landcareaustralia.com.au

For updates on other Landcare events and funding calls please log on to:

national@landcarefacilitator.com.au

UGIC Awards Presentation Night and Dinner

Landcare and other Community Groups should start thinking about arranging a table for the

UGIC Awards Dinner on Wednesday September 10th.

Trawool Resort

Goulburn Valley Highway, Trawool.

6pm.

Musical quartet

To book contact the CMA Yea office P 5736 0100

The GBCMA website is under constant renewal and revision.

Use our site to link with other environmental sites.

Goulburn Broken CMA



www.gbcma.vic.gov.au