

June 2014



Australian Landcare International (**ALI**) is an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation whose aim is to assist other countries to manage their natural resources using a Landcare approach.

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President's Note

Landcare's continued spread

Thanks to Landcare NSW Inc, ALI has an opportunity to expand our catchment for OLF donations. Developing a Landcare crowd-funding platform is under way, to be launched at the national Landcare conference in Melbourne this September. ALI has been asked to nominate several overseas projects for the launch. After a month the site will be thrown open to all comers. At this stage it appears that ALI could participate in the platform and also continue its own OLF – which is aimed mainly at attracting donations from Landcare groups and networks. We are currently seeking reports from the projects funded so far.

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Landcare in Japan continues its progress via its Secretariat to Promote the Establishment of Landcare in Japan (SPELJ), of which Tomomi Maekawa is secretary, now back in Japan after a

happy and productive year in SE Australia. A one-year experiment in the township of Yamochi in Mie Prefecture has been very successful, and will be used to develop an approach to training people to be the Japanese equivalent of Landcare facilitators.

Awadh Chemangei, an excellent Landcare co-ordinator from eastern Uganda, will be a speaker at the September conference. We hope Awadh, whom Mary Johnson and I both know, will have some time beforehand to look at Landcare in Victoria.

Vick Mack and Ian Penna were involved in making the film, *Rediscovering the Country*, launched two weeks ago. It depicts Landcare revegetation activities (especially the Regent Honeyeater Project in Victoria), and Neosynth's analogue forestry and farming in Sri Lanka, with Kamy Melvani the main player.

ALI members Wendy and Horrie Poussard have just returned from Tonga and Fiji. In Tonga they worked with the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Food (MAFFF), Ministry of Environment and Tonga Health to develop an ongoing involvement with the people of Popua village, site of Tonga's first Landcare group. The Rotary Club of Nuku'alofa is taking an interest in the project. Moreover, several projects are under way in Fiji, including a major catchment management operation, which includes forming Landcare groups, on the western side of the main island. The Secretariat for Pacific Communities (SPC) is driving this project. Valuable contacts were made in both countries.

African Landcare continues to grow. Malachy Tarpey and I will attend the South African LandCare conference in late September at Durban, which will also attract a big African Landcare Network (ALN) contingent led by Australian Clinton Muller.

[Rob Youl](#),
[President, ALI](#)

New Landcare team completes project in Tonga

Last year we told you of the first Landcare group in Tonga – the village of Popua - which is beset by poor land and exposure to storm surges and flooding due to its low lying spot near the capital Nuku'alofa. Following a successful food garden and conservation project funded by Rotary Australia, under the guidance of ALI member Bob Edgar, Popua opted to take on the Landcare mantle. The Crawford Fund supported further training and evaluation at the village in June 2014.



Productive Popua food gardens

ALI members Horrie Poussard and his wife Dr Wendy Poussard went to Tonga in early June to do a final support

workshop with an emphasis on the “lessons learned” from the 3 years of the project. Wendy has much experience working in Asia and the Pacific over the last 30 years on community development projects for NGOs and major agencies. . The workshop was an opportunity for villagers to talk about technical and financial issues that have arisen over the project. The Tongan government’s staff from the Ministry for Agriculture Forestry Fisheries and Food, (MAFFF), and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC), along with Tonga Health, were on hand to listen to concerns and outcomes and to discuss their future involvement. Visits were made to the MAFFF Forest Research Centre at Tokolomolo and to sites where mangrove rehabilitation has improved shoreline protection.

The Popua project has become a pilot program for a newly approved NZ Aid project involving 3 villages and 300 households. This project will run over the next two years and use total funds of about \$NZ 300,000. Like the Popua project, it will include conservation practices and food production gardens.

For further information contact Bob Edgar at redgar@netspace.net.au

Philippines – ACIAR Mindanao Agricultural Extension Project

By Mary Johnson

A partnership between the Landcare Foundation of the Philippines (LFP), RMIT University in Australia, and the University of the Philippines at Los Banos (UPLB) and Mindanao (UPMin), will examine how improving agriculture can reduce poverty in the conflict areas of

Mindanao, Philippines.

The five-year project is funded by the Australian Government through the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). It aims to develop a new agricultural extension framework that can be used by communities and agencies in conflict zones.



The ACIAR Mindanao Project team

The project team includes: Ben Aspera, Evy Carusos, Emily Garcia (LFP), Shang Fuentes (UPMin), Canesio Predo (UPLB), Noel Vock, Mary Johnson, Ken Menz and Beau Beza (RMIT).

Farming households within conflict-affected areas of Mindanao face many challenges in improving their livelihoods. These include dislocation from farm activities, difficulty in accessing markets, uncertainty about long-term investment in farm infrastructure, lack of social cohesion and isolation from government information and services.

Agricultural extension that supports organised self-help education activities will bring together agencies and villagers to share information on agricultural and livelihood innovations, and work on how they can be adopted locally.

The research team will work with communities in western Mindanao, including the Autonomous Region of

Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), to test and evaluate agricultural extension methods developed through this and previous ACIAR projects. While undertaking the program at three sites, the project will engage and draw-in other service agencies at regional and national levels. This will broaden the application of the work and maximise its impact.

Visit to Fiji Landcare sites

On their way back from Tonga, Horrie and Wendy Poussard discussed a Landcare Program in Fiji with Inoke Ratukalou, the Director of Land Resources at the Secretariat for Pacific Communities (SPC). Inoke was a participant of the 2006 International Landcare Conference in Melbourne and the subsequent Landcare Master Class for international attendees.

SPC have a program to improve the land management of the Sabeto catchment near Nadi in western Fiji. The catchment has significant commercial fruit and vegetable growing on its lower lands which were severely affected by flooding and soil loss following serious storms in recent years.



Steep slopes in the Sabeto catchment , Fiji.

The SPC and Ministry of Primary Industries team has done an extensive assessment of the landscape (geology,

soils, land use, land capability, weather) in order to assess the vulnerability of the catchment to climate change. Extensive information gathering of the socio-economical factors (village population, schools, household income and expenditure, attitudes to change, etc) also provides a good base for planning future programs.



Ineffective erosion control bamboo barriers

It is envisaged that maybe 4 Landcare groups will be developed at village level over the next few years. We were fortunate to be given a quick visit to the catchment by the SPC project manager Inosi Yabakivou who had spent some time working in Australia last year. He has already started installing demonstration areas for various crops and has made the first steps towards Landcare beginning there. We look forward to further news.

Meanwhile several Landcare groups have been established near Labassa on the northern main island of Fiji – Vanua Levu – by WWF.

Overseas Landcare Fund

The Overseas Landcare Fund (OLF), less than a year old, has given small (\$500) grants to ten projects in Asia and Africa. Its aim is to encourage donations from various sources to provide small grants to establishing

Landcare activities in developing countries. We have received donations from Landcare groups and networks, private donors and some corporate support.

The latest project to benefit is in Laos near the Mekong River where a group of villages are revegetating the banks of a lagoon wetland. The lagoon is vital for local fishing and the degraded shoreline is in dire need of repair. The revegetation will stabilise the foreshore and provide environmental protection both on land and in stream as a fisheries nursery. Dr Jo Millar of Charles Sturt University has been the link between ALI and the WWF group in Laos who are overseeing the project. The funding has come from The Yea Wetlands group- part of the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network in Victoria. The Wetlands group is just one of a number of Victorian Landcare groups and networks who are supporting the OLF with funding.

This is the opportunity for other Landcare groups and networks to help the spread of the Landcare approach to NRM concerns in developing countries. Recently a Victorian Landcare group had an auction and raised \$2100 to go to projects in the Pacific.

The types of projects to date include:

- wetland protection and improvement
- tree nurseries
- soil erosion control
- training on better resource management for conservation and food security
- protection of water supplies
- School gardens

Further information can be obtained from the ALI website www.alci.com.au or from Rob Youl at robmyoul@gmail.com

Webinar – using Landcare to increase market participation

Landcare International and the African Landcare Network recently hosted an online webinar on the topic of “building on Landcare to address food security through increased market participation”.

The event, presented by ALI member Bernie Wonder, attracted participants to log in from across Australia, Kenya, Uganda, Lesotho and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Bernie presented the findings of a study he is undertaking into Smallholder Value Chains for Food Security. The study, funded by the Australian International Food Security Research Centre (AIFSRC), is an initiative within the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). It has been examining the use of farmer groups and innovation platforms to promote smallholder market participation.

A key finding from the study has been the potential role of Landcare groups, through strengthened capacity of soft skills, to be an effective and durable approach to improving market participation. Such improvements include an increased smallholder focus on commercial agriculture and the attendant food security, poverty alleviation and household welfare benefits.

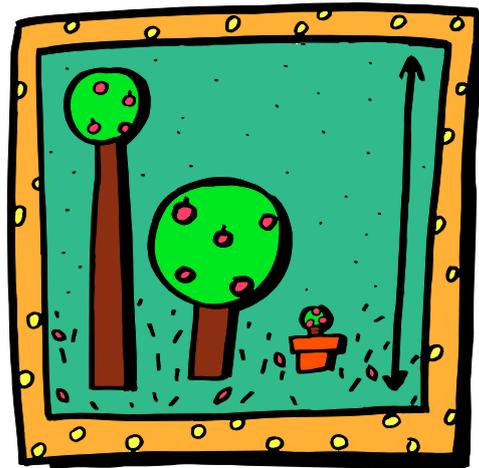
The final report of the study will be published by ACIAR soon. Meanwhile, a copy of Bernie’s presentation from the Webinar can be accessed [here](#).

From Landcare International Newsletter

National Landcare Conference In Melbourne

The 2014 National Landcare conference will be in Melbourne on 17th – 19th September. It will be celebrating the history of Landcare – 25 years as a national program. While the focus will mainly be on Australian Landcare development, we have been working hard to include international Landcare on the program as an outcome of the success of Landcare in Australia. ALI has also been instrumental in getting an invitation for Awadh Chemangei come and deliver a talk on Landcare in Uganda to the conference. Further details from :

<http://www.landcareonline.com.au/>



Volunteers wanted

ALI recently set up a stall at the Port Phillip Volunteers Expo in Melbourne. All the work is falling on a few shoulders and we need new ideas and extra energy to kick ALI along. Liz, Phillip and Alice signed up at the Expo but need more. You don't have to be in Melbourne. Anika, a student member from NSW has also put her hand up. Many of the jobs can be done via email and the internet. For example we need more experienced people who can:

- Keep our website up to date
- Personally promote membership- particularly to students

Contact Horrie Poussard at
poussard@iinet.net.au

New website for ALI

To make life a little easier ALI has simplified its website address to read
www.alci.com.au

The old address will also get you to the website for a while longer. But we suggest you change your records now.

Become a member of ALI .Your membership helps ALI keep up with what is happening globally and supports our website and other office costs.

Annual Membership

<i>Student or under 25</i>	<i>Free</i>
<i>Individual</i>	<i>\$20</i>
<i>Landcare or community group</i>	<i>\$40</i>

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

Name/Group

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

Email.....

Interested in volunteering some time? Yes
We need help with admin, publications, PR, etc.

Type of membership (x) : **student or <25 Individual.... Group.....**

Return with cheque (where required) to:

Treasurer ALI:
32 Loch Avenue, St Kilda East 3183 Vic , Australia

Or direct Bank Transfer to Bendigo Bank

Acct: Australian Landcare International. BSB 633-000 Acct 1331 03598

And send details to treasurer@alci.com.au

Website: www.alci.com.au