

BEHIND LANDCARE'S SUCCESS: CREATIVE BUT SOUND MANAGEMENT AT STATE AND NATIONAL LEVELS



Rob Youl, Chair, Australian Landcare
international

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[Backdrop; Youl–Harris property, Adams and Blinkbonnie Roads, St Arnaud – late 2016]

Behind Landcare's success: sound management at state and national levels

- Landcare started in Australia 31 years ago, when Victoria's Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, Joan Kirner, launched a group at Winjallok on 25 November 1986



(Joan Kirner ten years later, with her collaborator, Heather Mitchell, former president of the Victorian Farmers Federation)

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- Today some 6000 groups operate nationwide, often formed into networks to better utilise regional resources and facilitate employment of co-ordinators



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- Fifty-five years a forester, and involved in Landcare since it began, I see its managerial elements from a national standpoint
- Despite age, frailty and mortality, I remain very interested in online training, promoting major multi-network revegetation projects, especially across state boundaries, and in Landcare's global growth

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In Australia, Landcare's major functions are:

- Community action on environmental restoration, including biodiversity – with a multi-disciplinary approach
- Sustainability projects, especially amongst farmers

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- Advice to and collaboration with all tiers of government
- Training at many levels covering both co-ordinators and community
- On-ground management of numerous public reserves

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- Citizen science, such as Waterwatch programs
- Environmental education for schools and the public – including Junior Landcare programs
- And, increasingly, post-disaster rehabilitation within communities affected by cyclones, floods and wildfire

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Not unexpectedly, this requires much effort behind the scenes. My paper lists infrastructural elements that have evolved in Australia.

Other countries initiating Landcare may well need similar provisions.

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These facets include:

- Publicity and events



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- Non-government (corporate, philanthropic and community, including 'crowd') fund-raising



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- Political lobbying



Pick the politicians!

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- Liaison and direct collaboration with all tiers of government – in this case a municipality



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- Insurance – and occupational health and safety



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- Projects with universities



PhD student at work

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- Legal support for incorporation



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- Signage and logos, including their use for commercial purposes



(Sometimes the 'caring hands' theme works for other countries)



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- Appointing official patrons



Cricketer and farmer Glenn McGrath

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- Supporting revegetation contractors and revegetation nurseries



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- Co-ordinating volunteers



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Co-ordinating revegetation and volunteers is the province of two large and effective organisations founded in the 1980s:



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- Spreading the word overseas



Uganda 2011



Jamaica 2015

Two community bodies in this arena; both represented at Nagoya: ALI and SILC

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- Awards and honours – recognising excellence



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- Forging links with artists, dancers, musicians, writers and poets to encourage them to interpret Landcare



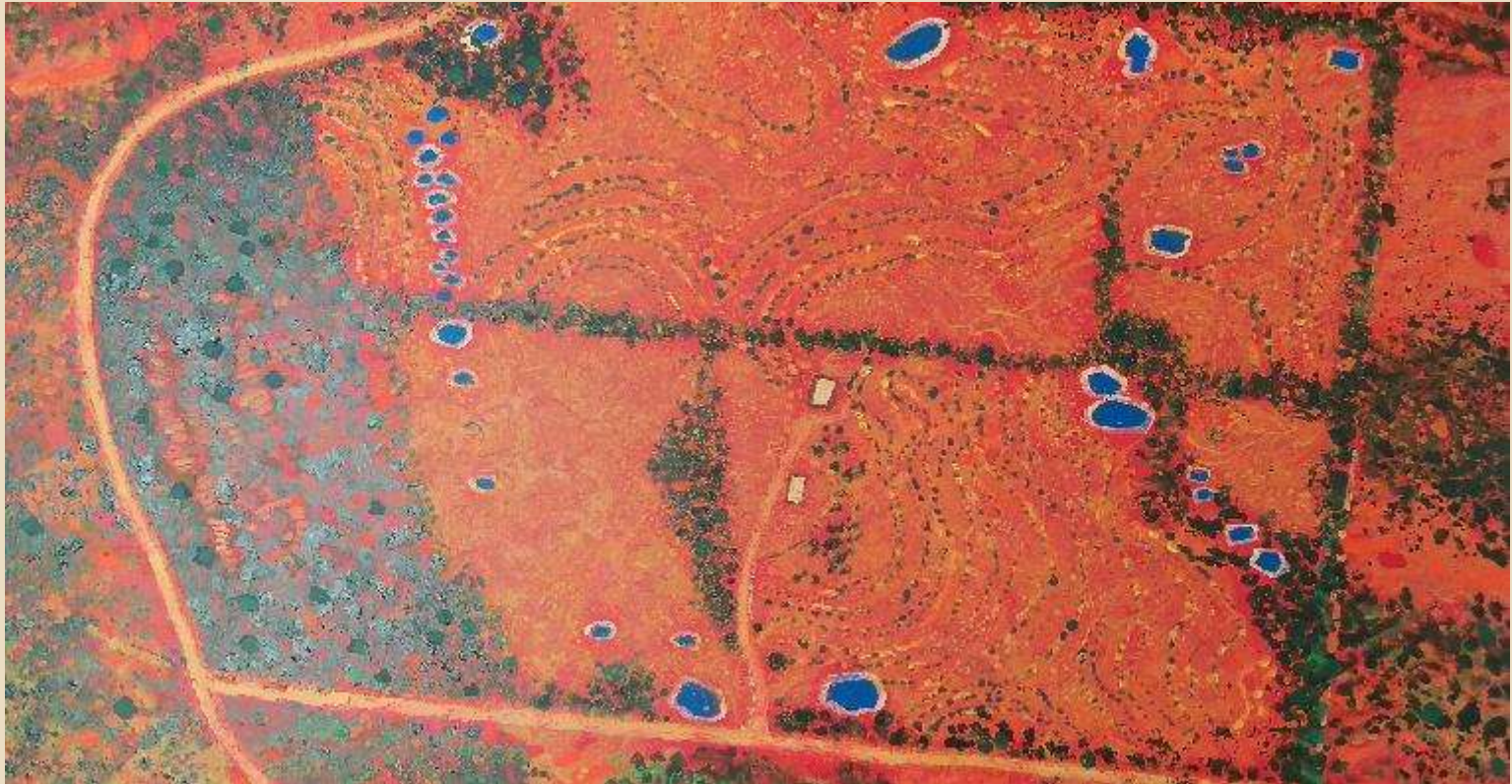
James Blundell singing
Working on the Land



Two Landcare groups meet in eastern
Uganda - RY

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- An artist interprets Landcare – in this case one of the Youl-Harris bush blocks, Aboriginal 'dot-painting' style



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- And a film-maker



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- And, as network budgets can be substantial, sound accounting and auditing will be necessary – note that misuse of funds is almost unknown, because group scrutiny of expenditure is the norm
- Some budget examples:
 - Friends of Westgate Park - \$150-300 000
 - Leigh Catchment Group - \$200-300 000
 - Bass Coast Landcare Network - at times
+ \$2 000 000

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Not yet achieved, but highly desirable: a system of modest environmental payments to landowners who, by protecting biodiversity, sequestering carbon, restoring landscapes and improving catchment values, are helping the broader community.

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All this needs excellent internal communications, readily assisted today through the Internet.



WHAT'S NEW IN JUNE

BCLN E-News

Its time for action - Planting season is here!

Many landholders are busy preparing their project sites now that the Autumn rain has softened the ground ready for planting. Plants are slowly leaving ours and other local nurseries, destined for their new homes across the Bass Coast Landcare Network. You too can get involved in planting some of the 130,000 plants going in the ground across the network this year by checking out our planting calendar below for a Community Tree planting day near you!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Click on the links for event information and booking details.

Community Tree Planting Dates announced



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It also demands specialised and sensitive support from government departments, budget allocations covering community projects and contributions towards group and network overheads, and possibly formal advisory committees.



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Ideas for the future – entirely possible because we have never set limits to Landcare:

- Tourism levy
- On-line training – of major potential
- Better links between the national fundraiser, LAL, and on-ground Landcare

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- More biodiverse agroforests and forest crops
- Rehabilitating waterways, slowing down and holding back local drainage by re-creating chains of ponds
- Bank Australia model – companies purchase land to conserve biodiversity – often via subsequent community management

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- Art and culture – next year sees the Cavendish Red Gum Festival
- Collaboration with Indigenous groups (see my booklet *Caring for Country – some thoughts*)
- Many more Junior Landcare programs

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- Environmental levy on households
- Networks as community enterprises
- Environmental rehabilitation after wars
- Australian Landcarers using their skills overseas

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- Reducing the metropolitan-rural gap
- Networks of walking/riding (bike, horse) tracks
- Sewerage ponds re-engineered as wetlands
- Corridors of new native vegetation across the landscape, connecting major blocks of forest

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- Habitat creation – nest-boxes, artificial hollows, piles of stone and organic matter – encouraging insect populations
- Post-disaster programs
- Community management of parks – for example, granite belt springs around Wedderburn, Victoria

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- Litter and rubbish campaigns
- A dispute-resolution mechanism
- Intrepid Landcare
- Social media – crowd-funding
- Reintroducing curlews, mallee fowl ...



STOP!!!!!!!!



UP ST ARNAUD WAY

Misery Road, Tottington



Red ironbark

UP ST ARNAUD WAY

Misery Road, Tottington



Blue mallee

On our revegetation block, we now have around 100 *gilgai* – here is part of a recently constructed chain of 11 ponds



Connectivity



Habitat creation

Habitat specialist, Gio Fitzpatrick, installs a powerful owl nesting box (PO Box 1) at Adams Road in early 2017. Since then wood duck have nested in this former wheelie-bin. Note the roll bar to prevent possums stealing eggs. Incidentally, Gio should wear a helmet when doing this work



Aboriginality



Grey box, Dalyenong Road

Aboriginality



Grey box, Pyrenees W of
Stuart Mill

Why is Landcare effective?

- Flexibility, multi-disciplinary character, freedom from corruption through group decision-making, plus commercial partnerships and resultant community empowerment
- The best Landcare networks, here and abroad, run as community enterprises