

NRSM Research *NEWS*

Newsletter of recent research outputs, outcomes and activities in the School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, NRAVS, UQ.

Issue 4, March 07

NRSM Research NEWS publicises NRSM staff & student research achievements and provides information on research activities relevant to the school.

Editorial

Welcome to the fourth NRSM Research News, your conduit for welcomes, celebrations of research success, and learning what is going on among your colleagues and research higher degree students. We publish and display these newsletters on the web at two monthly intervals. While it is primarily a communication 'tool' for us, we are noticing that it is picked up more widely, and that it is scanned for press-worthy material. I know academics tend to have so much on their plates that writing even three lines of announcement becomes a 'that can wait' task - I am the worst offender. However the unintended result is that your colleagues remain unaware of what you are doing, and it could well appear to our web readership that nothing is happening. I know this to be far from the truth. If the Chair of the Research Committee is the only person who makes the effort to contribute, it could look inappropriately as though they are blowing their own trumpet.

I know the Head of School, Research Committee, Professoriate and School community join me in thanking Grant Wardell-Johnson for chairing the Research Committee from July 2006 to the end of January while I was on Special Studies Program. The role is a busy one, with many behind-the-scenes duties

which take considerable time but are crucial to keeping wheels turning. Grant has always been one of the most energetic contributors to the committee and to research development within this school, and took this opportunity to bring on new initiatives including this newsletter. Thank you Grant!

In this issue we provide information on new projects, introduce an existing project in the school, recent post graduate completions and some recent publications. Future Newsletters will include our seminar program, enrolments of post graduate students, new post doctoral fellows, recent successful grant applications, publications and visiting scholars. In addition, future newsletters will provide a brief overview of other research groups, centres or programs of research.

Please send your contributions (of not more than 500 words, and less is welcome) to Leesa (l.young1@uq.edu.au) for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Helen Ross
Chair, NRSM Research Committee

New Seminar Coordinator

After a successful year by Ashutosh Sarker and Christine King as seminar coordinators, Carl Smith has leapt into the role – grabbing our attention by announcing he was the 'Seminator'. He will be assisted until June by Chrissy King, and we are looking for one or two research higher degree students to advise him on programming. What do you want to do within the program? What sort of people do you want to hear from?

This year we are varying the program. Confirmation seminars can now be held at any time that suits the student, adviser and guests, and the usual seminar slot will be used for a range of staff and student presentations, guests, and events of other formats such as forum discussions. Marlo Rankin has already organized one such forum, with the RHD students. Kim Bryceson has tantalized our palates and explained some intricacies of agribusiness research with her presentation on cheese in the UK, and as we go to print Bob Beeton [is about to present on the State of the Environment report.] We are privileged to have a vital role in Australia's knowledge management through Bob's leading the team which designs and writes the SoE report, a massive and vital undertaking in synthesizing and presenting information to underpin national decision-making and public understanding.

School Retreat

Staff and some Adjunct Professors attended the school retreat on 12-13th February in Marburg. The main purpose was to revise the school's plan, in readiness for the 18-month implementation plan following the School review of 2005. Presentations on our changing operating environment focused on the Research Quality Framework, led by Grant Wardell-Johnson. Adjunct Professor Gerald Midgley gave very cogent advice on preparing ourselves, by thinking fifteen rather than five years ahead.

The research 'table' suggested a range of new initiatives for the Head of School to consider, some of which Ockie started work on immediately. Gerald's advice that we make ourselves known, persistently, within a chosen community of scholars led us to ask Ockie to create a special fund to guarantee group attendance at the International Systems Conference to be held in Tokyo in August, with a review to repeated attendance over many years to come. (We stand a strong chance of organizing this conference, in Australia, in 2009). We chose this conference as it provides the best opportunity to develop our own thinking at the integrative centre of the venn diagrams (aka 'horrendograms') representing our school's research and teaching fields, and it enables us to publicise our efforts better in the systems field. (School staff were enthusiastic, and submitted six co-authored abstracts).

We were also given updates on two major integrative research projects designed to become foci of school and partner research. These are **New Forms of Green** (part of the larger 'The Field' endeavour) led by Janelle Allison of CRR1-Q, and a new project for **Cat Ba** in Vietnam which was suggested by Adjunct Professor Ishwaran Natarajan of UNESCO. Ockie Bosch is to lead the development of the Cat Ba supported by John Herbohn and Marc Hockings. Ockie is currently in Vietnam holding talks towards it.

Adjunct Professors

We know the School community would like to know more about our Adjunct Professors. Currently they are:

Dr Morgan Williams
Dr Natarajan Ishwaran
Professor John Bliss

Ms Leith Bouly
Dr Geoff Syme
Dr Gerald Midgley

In coming issues we hope to publish short profiles of each.

Post Graduate Students Completed

Hearty congratulations are extended to the following postgraduate completions.

Campbell, Karl PhD (23/01/07): *Manipulation of the reproductive system of feral goats (Capra hircus L.) for increasing the efficacy of Judas goats: field methods utilising tubal sterilisation, abortion, hormone implants and epididymectomy (G Baxter).*

Gregorio, Nestor PhD *Improving the Effectiveness of the Forest Nursery Industry in Leyte Province, the Philippines.* Since returning to the Philippines, Nestor has taken up a permanent Faculty position at Leyte State University. Based on the results from his thesis, a large research project application was developed which involves the extension and application of his research. That project is now in the final stages of being approved by ACIAR. Nestor will be the Philippines Project Leader for the project.



Celebrity Corner

Recently ABC Landline ran a segment dealing with the further efforts of Agforce and others to connect the City and the Bush. **Bradd Witt** was interviewed for the segment by Pip Courtney (a long time reporter for ABC and Landline) late last year because of the work he is doing in the School on the relationship and understanding between city and rural people. **Bradd Witt is working with Bill Cater and Katherine Witt on a project funded by AFFA.**

NRSM students have done well in the recently announced round of UQJRS.
Three of our nominated students have been successful, in a total pool of 50 awards across UQ.
Congratulations to Ashley Brooks, Marteena McKenzie and Huang Nguyen!

New Grants

Marc Hockings has secured a **UNESCO research grant** to the amount of **\$754,700**. The project title is **'Enhancing our Heritage: Monitoring and managing for success in world natural heritage sites – Stage 3'**. This is the final stage of the project on monitoring and evaluation in World Heritage sites (EoH project). The project team has been busy over the past few months in conducting training programs with site managers to prepare them for the final assessments of management that they will undertake in the nine project sites over the next few months. We have also put a lot of effort into working with UNESCO and IUCN to extend the approach and methods we have developed to other World Heritage sites around the globe. IUCN West Africa recently obtained a grant of 1 million Euro to implement management effectiveness evaluations in protected areas in the region and UNESCO is applying to the European Union for 2.5 million Euro for similar work in the rest of Africa applying the EoH project methodology to World Heritage sites. Over the past year, NRSM staff have conducted seven training programs for protected area managers in management effectiveness evaluation in West Africa, East Africa and Asia.



Ken Keith and Helen Ross have been awarded a research grant of **\$150,000 by the Burnett Mary Regional Group**, to design and conduct surveys and focus groups to enable BMRG to evaluate the success of its communications and its partnering arrangements across its many regional constituents, and to continue interviews and workshops towards forming and strengthening partnerships.



After a long incubation period starting in 2005, two NRSM teams have been awarded large **four-year grants under the Marine and Tropical Scientific Research Facility**. **John Herbohn and Nick Emtage** lead one project on small-scale forestry development for the Atherton Tableland titled **"Integrating ecology, economics and people in forest landscapes"**. **The project has funding of \$500,000 over four years** while **Helen Ross, Chrissy King and Bradd Witt of NRSM, and Michael Cuthill of the Boilerhouse Community Engagement Centre on Ipswich campus**, have been awarded almost **\$300,000 for their share of a \$880,000 project with CSIRO and James Cook University** to conduct research to understand and produce indicators of social resilience. (The latter team is just returning from a successful two-day workshop with the other parts of the twelve-person team, in which a conceptual framework was designed collaboratively).



Annie Ross and Bill Carter are part of a team, lead by **James Udy from Water Resources in Engineering**, who have been awarded **\$250,000(USD) over 4 years to continue research in Marovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands**. The project is entitled "Conserving marine biodiversity in Marovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands, through community capacity building and action".



Annie Ross is part of another team, based at Colorado State University, to be **awarded \$63,000USD over 12 months to work on a global comparative project considering community well-being: "Changing notions of the good life in Indigenous Societies: Assessing the relation between environmental change, culture and mental well-being"**.



The ARC linkage grant on Adaptive Management of Protected Areas began last year. We are interested in the use of evaluation information to support learning and adaptation by protected area managers. This includes building trust in the data, understanding it better, and facilitating its use as part of decision making. The team includes three permanent academics (**Marc Hockings, Bill Carter and Grant Wardell Johnson**), a research fellow (**Chris Jacobson**) and two PhD students (**Carly Cook and Josie Kelman**). The project is now in the transition from the formative phase to data collection. The PhDs are close to confirmation and have conducted initial data analysis, including a multi-variate statistical analysis of drivers of effective management that will help managers make sense of the evaluation information. We are also beginning case study research, including research to understand how organisations as wholes adapt to new information. To address this, we intend to analyse the decision making context at each management level, and the effective utilisation of information introduced into this context through management 'interventions' at a combination of management levels. A key output thus far has been the development of a draft set of principles for management effectiveness evaluation.

Date Claimers

The Carrick Institute has released its guidelines and applications forms for the Discipline-based Initiatives (DBI) Scheme <http://www.carrickinstitute.edu.au/carrick/go/home/dbi>

The Discipline-based Initiatives Scheme is organised and funded through three focus areas, each with their own guidelines and application forms:

- Discipline-based Investigation Funds <http://www.carrickinstitute.edu.au/carrick/go/home/dbi/pid/114> ;
- Common Curriculum Initiatives <http://www.carrickinstitute.edu.au/carrick/go/home/dbi/pid/367> ; and
- Higher Education Enterprise Issues <http://www.carrickinstitute.edu.au/carrick/go/home/dbi/pid/92> .

The due dates for submission of funding applications to The Carrick are:

- **13 April - Discipline-Based Investigation Funds (round 1)**
- **6 August - Discipline-Based Investigation Funds (round 2)**

Refer to Lyndell's email dated 6 February 2007 for further details.



You are invited to nominate a candidate or candidates for this year's Australian Museum Eureka Prizes.

The Australian Museum Eureka Prizes are Australia's largest and most comprehensive award program for science, with prizes of over \$200,000. In 2007, there are a range of prizes rewarding specific areas of scientific research, leadership and communication:

- Innovative solutions to climate change
- Water research and innovation
- Environmental research
- Scientific research
- Leadership in Science
- Young leaders in environmental issues and climate change, and
- Promoting the understanding of Science

You are strongly urged to consider nominating a scientist or scientists for these prestigious prizes. Your help in promoting the Eureka Prizes amongst your colleagues would also be greatly appreciated. Nominations and entries for the Australian Museum Eureka Prizes close on 4 May 2007. Entry details and nomination forms are available at www.australianmuseum.net.au/eureka or from eureka@austrmus.gov.au or phone 02 9320 6483.

New Post Graduate Students

A warm welcome to the following postgraduate students who commenced with us in 2007:

Annandale, Mark PhD (Herbohn, Emtage Schmidt) *"Agroforestry in northern Australia – science supporting community development. Principal Supervisor"*.

Alchin, Bruce PhD (Manda Page & Ockie Bosch): *"Ecosystem Response to Cell Grazing"*.

Cedamon, Edwin PhD (John Herbohn & Steve Harrison): *"Modeling markets for timber from smallholder tree farms in Leyte Island, Philippines"*.

Kanowski, Alexander MPhil (Greg Baxter & Manda Page): *"Linear infrastructure impacts on glider species and amelioration techniques"*.

McKenzie, Marteen PhD (Rob Cramb): *"Oil Palm and Rural Development in Sarawak, Malaysia"*.

Moodie, Donna PhD (Helen Ross): *"Inclusive Engagement and Development: an indigenous perspective on community, business and sustainable development"*.

Muriuki, Grace PhD (Greg Baxter & Clive McAlipine): "

Puan, Chong Leong PhD (Luke Leung & Greg Baxter): *"Habitat use by two Typical Owl (Strigidae) species and their functional and numerical responses to density of rodents"*.

Sander, Juliane PhD (Grant Wardell-Johnson): *"Biodiversity and productivity in high rainfall Mediterranean ecosystems."* Julie was awarded an APA and is working on International Linkage project – 'Biodiversity in high rainfall Mediterranean-climate ecosystems: integrating fields of ecological enquiry to achieve improved conservation outcomes'.

Publications from Natural and Rural Systems Management

Lawson, Ben & Wardell-Johnson, Grant (2007) Relating Spatial and Temporal Patterns in Floristics with Vegetation Mapping: An example from Fraser Island, south-east Queensland, Australia, *Pacific Conservation Biology* **12** pp288-300.

Sun, Ximing (Tim) and Collins, Ray (2007) The Application of Fuzzy Logic in Measuring Consumption Values: Using data of Chinese consumers buying imported fruit. *Food Quality and Preference* **18** pp576-584.

Waldron, S.A., Brown, C.G., Longworth, J.W. and Zhang, C.G. (2007) China's Livestock Revolution: Agribusiness and Policy Developments in the Sheepmeat Industry. *CAB International, Wallingford, UK, ISBN 978 1 84593 2466*

Wardell-Johnson, G.W., Williams, M.R., Mellican, A.E. and Annells, A. 2007. Floristic Patterns and Disturbance History in Karri (*Eucalyptus diversicolor: Myrtaceae*) forest, south-western Australia: 2. Origin, growth form and fire response. *ACTA Oecologica* **31**pp137-150.



THE BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTION IS NOW UNDERWAY
FOR

ALL 2006 PUBLICATIONS

CLOSING DATE FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Friday, 20th April 2007

REFER TO THE WEBSITE FOR PROFORMAS AND OTHER INFORMATION
AND SEND ALL YOUR PAPERWORK TO LEESA

<http://www.uq.edu.au/research/orps/index.html?page=4614>

In January 2007, **Steve Harrison and John Herbohn** ran a course on *Financial and economic research methods for natural resource managers* in Manila, Philippines from 9-13 January. The course was funded by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and was attended by researchers from a range of Asia countries including Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and India. The course provided researchers with the tools for understanding the socio-economic factors that contribute to successful management of natural resources. The focus was primarily on financial and economic research methods but some discussion of social research methods was also included. The course was very well received by the participants and ACIAR have approached John and Steve to run a second course aimed at agricultural scientists later in the year.

A detailed course manual was produced and is available on CD from Annerine Bosch.