

# NRSM Research *NEWS*

## Issue 2, Nov 06

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

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

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### Editorial

Welcome to the second NRSM Research News! The first newsletter for 2006 included the news up to and including August. We will be publishing and displaying newsletters on the web at two monthly intervals. Hence most of the news in this issue is from September and October 2006. A newsletter in January will include the remainder of the research news from NRSM for 2006.

The first newsletter took a little time to format and organise. However, Leesa Young has done a great job preparing the format and the proforma for the newsletter. Material can now be incorporated as it is provided. Of course Leesa's job is made easier by the provision of well-formatted information in a timely way.

The Research Committee appreciates the positive way that the NRSM community has responded to this initiative. We are all very busy, but it is worth taking a

little time to publicise our successes in the diversity of our research.

In this issue we provide information on 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 research groups, centres or programs of research. This newsletter features the highly productive China Agricultural Economics Group. Other groups may wish to send their contributions (of not more than 500 words) to Leesa (l.young1@uq.edu.au) for inclusion in the next newsletter.

**Grant Wardell-Johnson**  
**(Acting Chair) for the NRSM Research Committee**

### Recent grants received by staff in NRSM

Staff in NRSM have achieved success in obtaining the following grants:

**Cramb R & McCarthy J F (ANU). \$246,780** ARC Discovery Grant: Oil Palm and Agrarian Transition on the Indonesian and Malaysian Frontiers.

**Page M., Slaughter G., Witt B. & Beeton R. \$161,818.** Commonwealth Government Research Grant: Economic and Environmental Analysis of Fodder Harvesting Practices Associated with Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) and Fire Management Practices in the Mulga Lands of South Western Queensland.

**Wardell-Johnson, A. & Allison, J. \$1995.** UQ First Link: Social values frameworks for integrated landscape planning: living sustainably in resource-challenged peri-urban futures.

**Wardell-Johnson G., Rundel P., Hibbs D., Armesto J. & Burrows N. \$32,200.** ARC Linkage International: Biodiversity in High Rainfall Mediterranean-Climate Ecosystems: Integrating fields of ecological enquiry to achieve improved conservation outcomes.

**Wardell-Johnson G. & Rhodes M. \$1,850.** UQ First Link: Integrating Networks of Habitat Tree Occupants for Wildlife Conservation in Urban and Peri-Urban Landscapes.

**Wardell-Johnson G. & Lawson B. \$1,984.** UQ First Link: Achieving Efficiencies and Improvements in Site-Based Ecological Datasets: Optimising spatial and temporal information to manage Australia's biodiversity.



## Where is UQ at with the RQF?

### RQF now a Reality

We are entering new and uncharted territory with regard to the assessment of the quality and impact of research – in particular through the soon to be implemented Research Quality Framework (RQF). The previous newsletter made clear that the RQF was on the way, and the School has taken some initiatives to ensure that NRSM is favoured by the process.

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, announced on the 14th of November that the Government will implement a Research Quality Framework (RQF) 'which will strengthen the assessment of research carried out in Australia'

The announcement stated that 'the RQF is an Australian Government initiative to formulate a world's best practice framework for evaluating research quality and the impact of research'. It argued that 'the RQF will ensure that public funding is being invested in research which will deliver real benefits to the wider community'.

The Minister recently received the RQF Development Advisory Group's formal advice from the chair of the group Australia's Chief Scientist Dr Jim Peacock, including the groups recommended model – which has received support from the Australian Government.

According to the Minister's press release preparatory work and trialing will continue in 2007, with data collection in 2008 and funding implementation in 2009.

The Research Quality Framework document outlines how 'quality' would be assessed differently from 'impact'. Impact is rated on the basis of a five-point, criterion-referenced scale benchmarked to standards of internationally-equivalent excellence. Publications from the period 2001-2006 are assessed against the rating scale by a panel.

Research impact is defined as the social, economic, environmental and/or cultural benefit of research to end users in the wider community regionally, nationally, and/or internationally. The basis for the assessment of impact will be an impact statement of up to 10 pages and will be assessed (also a five point scale) with reference to the Context Statement and the full list of outputs produced by the Research Group being assessed. Hence, a trial of the implementation will be of great benefit to NRSM.

NRSM will be implementing its trial of the process during 2007, based partly on material already provided by the NRSM community during 2006. However, further information will be requested of staff early in 2007. The Research Committee will play a major role in this process, and this newsletter will publicise the process as it develops.

## Overview of China Agricultural Economics Group (CAEG) Activities

The China Agricultural Economics Group (CAEG) within the School of NRSM has conducted in depth, fieldwork intensive, collaborative research on China's rural economy for nearly two decades now. Core members in NRSM are John Longworth (Emeritus Professor), Colin Brown (Senior Lecturer) and Scott Waldron (Research Fellow), along with range of postgraduate students (including Rodney Beard, Dominic Smith and Ben Lyons), support staff, visiting scholars and consultants. Key collaborative institutions in China are the Research Centre for the Rural Economy (Ministry of Agriculture), the Institute of Agricultural Economics (Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences), the Rural Development Institute (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) and a range of provincial level agricultural research institutions in Xinjiang, Shandong, Shaanxi. CAEG researchers at UQ spend several months of the year conducting fieldwork in China and some are fluent Mandarin speakers.

The focus of CAEG research is on the Chinese ruminant livestock sector (especially wool, beef and sheep meat) and related issues in grasslands, trade, processing, institutions and rural development. CAEG projects are externally funded, mainly by ACIAR and MLA and funding now amounts to more than \$3 million unadjusted for inflation. Five major projects have been completed and another two are underway including:

"Sustainable development of grasslands in western China: policies, regulatory and market settings" (ACIAR)

"Update on developments in the Chinese cattle and beef industry of relevance to the Australian industry" (MLA)

In addition, the CAEG has an ongoing role with various industry and government organisations involved in the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement.

The research has generated seven English language books published through major international publishers, six Chinese language books and enormous number of journal articles, monographs, reports and conference papers. We are currently fulfilling contracts for another two books for CABI and Edward Elgar. In addition, the Group has been involved in conferences held by the International Association for Agricultural Economists and the Association for Chinese Economic Studies (Australia).

For more details on the CEAG, please visit [www.nrsm.uq.edu.au/caeg](http://www.nrsm.uq.edu.au/caeg)

**The Research Committee has purchased a copy of the  
2007 Australian Green Grants Guide**

This guide is a comprehensive listing of environmental and heritage grants offered by Government and non-Government organisations. In the 2007 edition, you'll have access to more than 250 grants around Australia focusing on grants relating to seven themes: *Water ~ Biodiversity ~ Energy ~ Greenhouse ~ Heritage Sites ~ Land ~ Waste*. A notice will be sent around when the publication arrives for those who wish to have a perusal.

### Who's New at NRSM?

**Chris Jacobson** has come from New Zealand to join NRSM as a Post Doctorate Research Fellow, working with Marc Hockings on an ARC-linkage grant project that aims to build the adaptive capacity of Protected Areas management. A key part of her work will involve developing and testing practices for integrating information at multiple different organizational scales. Her PhD (currently under examination) is titled *Towards improving the practice of adaptive management in the New Zealand conservation context*, and was novel in the use of interventionist approaches to support the practice of adaptive management and to avoid issues of discourse that have (arguably) limited the utility of the approach.

**Dr Sun Daowei** has come to NRSM as a Visiting Scholar for a period of one year from July 2006. Sun held a position of Lecturer in Environmental Sciences with the Institute of Bio-resources and Eco-environment Research, College of Life Sciences, Dalian Nationalities University, PR China. He has a degree in Geography from the Shandong Normal University, PR China and a PhD in Environmental Sciences from the Chinese Academy of Sciences. While with NRSM, he is working with Dr Carl Smith, learning new skills in the area of systems dynamics modeling which he will apply in Professor Ockie Bosch's CRC Tropical Savannas project, extending models already developed to become available as decision support tools in other areas of the savannas through the internet.

**Michael Lyne** joined the School of Natural & Rural Systems Management as a Visiting Academic in July 2006. Professor Lyne is on sabbatical leave from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in South Africa where he teaches and supervises students in the

School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness based at the University's Pietermaritzburg campus. His recent research has focused on 'best institutional practice' for farm-worker equity-share schemes and for joint ventures between smallholders and processors. At Gatton, he and colleague Ray Collins analysed changes in cooperative legislation that facilitate horizontal and vertical co-ordination in supply chains, and which could be applied in South Africa to promote market access and better management of common pool resources by land reform beneficiaries. Professor Lyne returns to South Africa at the beginning of 2007 with new ideas for agribusiness training at UKZN.

**Angela Wardell-Johnson** comes to CRR1-Q after recently submitting her PhD thesis at Murdoch University, Western Australia. Angela's thesis provided an excellent background to her current work in CRR1-Q which is investigating the social values and aspirations of those living in the peri urban landscapes in South East Queensland. SEQ is undergoing rapid demographic and land use change and the new SEQ plan has particular implications especially for rural planning precincts and SME agricultural production. Angela's work will generate critical data of benefit to agencies and local government. This current project also forms an important basis for a larger ARC Linkage Grant: Sustainable living in resource-challenged futures: social values frameworks for integrated planning in peri-urban landscapes. A key part of Angela's work has been to involve the Dep't of Communities and Office of Urban Management and to interest commercial industry partners as well as the CRR1-Q joint venture partners in the linkage proposal.

### New enrolments and commencements of post graduate students

A warm welcome is extended to the following new post graduate students

**Kelman, Josephine (27/02/2006) PhD:** (M Hockings, G Wardell-Johnson).

**Meadows, John (30/10/2006) PhD:** (N Emtage, G Slaughter, J Herbohn).

**McLachlan, Kathryn (17/11/2006) MPhil:** (C King)

**Nengovhela, Nkhanedzeni (Baldwin) (25/07/2006) PhD:** (B Beeton).

**Sally, Kararaina (01/09/2006) PhD:** (I Russell 50/50 Split with Animal Studies).

## Upcoming Seminars – NRSM Gatton

### November 22nd (Wednesday) Scheduled

Lygia Malzoni Romanach, PhD Candidate, St Lucia

### November 24th (Friday) Scheduled

Jacky Williams, PhD Candidate, Gatton. Success attributes of Regional NRM systems in Australia.

### December 8th (Friday) Scheduled

Maggie Zhong, PhD Candidate, Gatton

### December 13th (Wednesday) Scheduled

Hayley Moreland, PhD Confirmation Seminar, Adoption of technology in beef industry value chains: a holistic investigation.

**For further information on seminars, please contact Ashutosh Sarker on 50053 for Gatton or Colin Brown on 52148 for St Lucia.**

## Publications from Natural and Rural Systems Management

**Harrison, S.H. (2006)**, Exploring the Potential for Forest Industry Development in North Queensland, in S.R. Harrison and J.L. Herbohn (eds), *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*, Workshop Proceedings. Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Rainforest CRC, Cairns (pp. 1-8).

**Harrison, S.H. (2006)**, An Integrated Approach to Examining Obstacles to and Options for Forest Industry Development, in S.R. Harrison and J.L. Herbohn (eds), *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*, Workshop Proceedings, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Rainforest CRC, Cairns (pp. 17- 30).

**Harrison, S.H. and Herbohn, J.L. (2006)**, *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management. Rainforest CRC, Cairns (180 pp).

**Harrison, S.R. and Herbohn, J.L. (2006)**, Developing a Business Case for Forestry Expansion: Concept and Method, in S.R. Harrison and J.L. Herbohn (eds), *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*, Workshop Proceedings. Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Rainforest CRC, Cairns (pp. 173 - 179).

**Herbohn, J.L. (2006)**, Potential Financial Returns from Hoop Pine and an Assessment of the Likely Impacts of Various Support Measures on Landholder Willingness to Plant, in S.R. Harrison and J.L. Herbohn (eds), *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*, Workshop Proceedings, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Rainforest CRC, Cairns (pp. 123-134).

**Maczkowiack, R.I. (2006)**, A Case-based Study of Private Landholders Who have Planted Trees, in S.R. Harrison and J.L. Herbohn (eds), *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*,

Workshop Proceedings, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Rainforest CRC, Cairns (pp. 59-70).

**Page M. & Baxter G. (2006)** A Curse Upon the Land: Foxes and cane toads, *The Great Mistakes of Australian History*. UNSW Press.

**Ross, H. (2006)**, Integrating Social Analysis and Participatory Planning Processes for Assessment and Design of Forestry Options, in S.R. Harrison and J.L. Herbohn (eds), *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*, Workshop Proceedings, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Rainforest CRC, Cairns (pp. 163-172).

**Suh, J., Lwanga, R., Harrison, S.R. and Herbohn, J.L. (2006)**, Visitor Attitudes to a Proposed Hoop Pine Plantation Establishment on the Southern Atherton Tablelands, in S.R. Harrison and J.L. Herbohn (eds), *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*, Workshop Proceedings, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Rainforest CRC, Cairns (pp. 135-146).

**Venn, T.J. (2006)**, Optimal Timber Utilisation Strategies for Wik People on Cape York Peninsula, in S.R. Harrison and J.L. Herbohn (eds), *Sustainable Forest Industry Development in Tropical North Queensland*, Workshop Proceedings, Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, Rainforest CRC, Cairns (pp. 77-96).

**Waldron, SA., Brown CG. & Longworth JW. (2006)** State Sector Reform and Agriculture in China, *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 186. No. 2.

## Publications In Progress

**Cavaye, J.** Review of Regional Development: Issues, Approaches and Directions for Innovative Regional Development in Queensland, *CRRI-Q (Joint Venture between School of NRSM, The University of Queensland, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems and QDPI&F)*.