

# Adopt an Action

UNESCO  
for

# World Environment Day 5 June 2005

## Doing nothing is NOT an option

Angela Tillier, Public Relations, Men of the Trees

Global warming is threatening our planet on every level and carbon dioxide emissions must be reduced dramatically to avoid catastrophic consequences.

'Doing nothing is not an option,' stated Professor Ian Lowe of Griffith University at a talk in mid April on 'Our Drying Climate'. He presented a case that people are not living sustainably and our society has no future unless we all make some significant changes to the way we are living and treat our environment. David Suzuki also recently presented similar issues at a talk at the Concert Hall in Perth.

Both agree that we cannot wait for governments to lead. The change must come from all of us.

One of the many ways we can assist is to plant more trees.

Trees act as a carbon sink, restore atmospheric oxygen, help to control salinity, moderate the climate, reduce wind erosion and regulate and cleanse our water. In addition they provide a habitat for wildlife, improve the soil and provide food and timber.

The Carbon Neutral program, initiated in 2002 by Men of the Trees, offers government departments, private organisations and

individuals the opportunity to offset the carbon dioxide produced by their vehicles, air travel, homes and businesses, while helping to fight salinity.

Each year the average Australian car uses 1920 litres of fuel and emits more than four tonnes of carbon dioxide that contributes to global warming and climate change.

Each return flight across Australia produces around three tonnes of greenhouse gas per passenger, requiring 12 trees to be planted to offset these emissions. The trees will take 30 years to offset the emissions from that one passenger's flight.

Planting trees assists in the short term. We also urgently need to reduce electricity consumption, use alternative methods of transport and reduce fuel consumption. It is important to learn how to achieve a more sustainable level of greenhouse gas emissions.

### What you can do

For more info and to calculate how much it would cost to offset the emissions from your vehicle and flight travel, visit: [www.carbonneutral.com.au](http://www.carbonneutral.com.au)

Note: Men of the Trees were awarded the WA Environment Award in 2004. They are finalists in this year's national Banksia Awards.

## Call for action on deep sea trawling in NZ

Cath Wallace, Environment and Conservation Organisation of Aotearoa New Zealand

Deep sea bottom trawling is the ocean equivalent of clear felling old growth terrestrial forests. Deep sea trawlers drag huge weighted nets, assisted by heavy rollers, across the sea bed. They pick up everything in their path, including shrimp, fish, corals, sponges and invertebrates, and leave the sea bed barren and ploughed. New Zealand is one of 11 key nations still bottom trawling in the high seas.

- Deep sea bottom trawling has a double impact – it depletes populations of target and non target species, and at the same time destroys habitat and prevents sustainable recovery.
- Bottom trawling poses a threat to sea mounts and other vulnerable underwater structures.

right: Bycatch, including a starfish, outweighs the target catch of orange roughy in a Tasman Sea deep sea trawl.  
below: Ghost shark recovered from bycatch.  
Photos: ©2004-Greenpeace/Roger Grace



Sea mounts are areas of high biological productivity and have been the focus of commercial fishing for species that form large aggregations around them.

- Orange roughy are targeted by deep sea trawling. This slow growing species starts reproducing at around 30 years of age and can live for over 100 years. Long living deep sea fish are slow to recover from exploitation.

### What you can do

On World Environment Day join the international call for a moratorium on deep sea bottom trawling. Write to

The Honorable David Benson-Pope, Minister of Fisheries, Parliament, Wellington, NZ  
[dbenson-pope@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:dbenson-pope@ministers.govt.nz)

More info: [www.eco.org.nz](http://www.eco.org.nz)

## Victoria's old growth forests and water catchments

Megan Clinton, The Wilderness Society

The tall forests found across eastern Victoria would tower over most city buildings, growing to the same height as the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) light towers. These forests contain the tallest flowering plants in the world, the magnificent Mountain Ash. In the damp valleys, rainforests survive. Here you will find gnarled myrtle beech trees covered in moss and tree ferns spreading across the forest floor.

These old growth forests act as our heart and lungs, providing us with clean water and air. Presently the equivalent of 27 MCGs are logged every day in these forests and water catchments. Many animals are losing their homes at an increasing rate, and if we do not do something now they may become extinct. The Wilderness Society and other environment groups are proposing a reserve agenda that will ensure the survival of these animals and plants as well as providing future generations with clean air and water.



A giant of the forest: Grey Gum, East Gippsland Photo credit: Alex Kaeslin

### What you can do

On World Environment Day turn over a new leaf and help protect some of the last remaining old growth forests in Australia by writing a letter to Victorian Premier Steve Bracks or by signing an online postcard.

More info: [www.wilderness.org.au/regions/vic/](http://www.wilderness.org.au/regions/vic/)

## Western Australia's troubled waters

Katrina Strong, Environmental Defenders Office, WA

We cannot live without water. Common sense tells us that water is our most precious resource. So why is more water extracted in the Perth region of WA than the sustainable yield? Why are state election campaigns fought on ways to get more water rather than better usage and allocation of water?

One of the driest inhabited areas on earth, Western Australia has an ever increasing population combined with continuously decreasing rainfall due to climate change. Yet the consumption per household of water is 30% above the OECD\* average.

Water resource management is a hot issue in WA. The legal framework applying to the management and regulation of our most precious resource is characterised by a myriad of complex legislative instruments. There is a growing realisation across all levels of the community that we need to address water consumption and identify new sources of water in order to protect the environment while facilitating further economic growth.

### What you can do

1. Inform yourself on water issues from:

- Papers presented at the State Water

Symposium on 20 September 2004 [www.ourwaterfuture.com.au/community/symposium\\_presentations.asp](http://www.ourwaterfuture.com.au/community/symposium_presentations.asp)

- Waters and Rivers Commission, information on water allocation, environmental investigations [www.wrc.wa.gov.au](http://www.wrc.wa.gov.au)

- State Water Strategy one year progress report April 2004 [www.ourwaterfuture.com.au/Docs/State\\_Water\\_Strategy\\_progress\\_report.pdf](http://www.ourwaterfuture.com.au/Docs/State_Water_Strategy_progress_report.pdf)

### 2. Attend the EDO's 'Water Law in Western Australia' Conference. This includes

- sessions on WA's freshwater resources and sustainability. Are WA's laws and policies good enough? How do they compare to the policies of other governments? What are the hot issues? What must change and how can we do it?

- presentations of new research papers by the University of Western Australia
- a field trip to Gnaralara Mound guided by the Department of Environment

The Conference will be held on 8 July at the Elizabeth Jolley Lecture Theatre at Curtin University.

More info: [www.edowa.org.au](http://www.edowa.org.au) or ph 08 9221 3030

\*OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

## Community resist toxic dump in Vic

Deborah Banks, Mildura Rural City Council and The Save The Food Bowl Alliance

The community fight continues against a 'toxic dump' at Hattah/Nowingi, about 500km northwest of Melbourne, in northwest Victoria.

The latest development is the Highway to Hattah - too big a Risk! roadshow. It ran 4 to 6 May as a result of the Victorian State Government's most recent announcement that it will use the Calder Highway to truck the toxic waste.

On the roadshow hundreds of people turned out at No Toxic Calder public meetings in Ouyen, Wycheproof, Charlton, Wedderburn, Harcourt and Kyneton.

All gatherings passed resolutions that 'this Public Meeting urges the Local Council to protest and oppose the transport of toxic waste along our section of the Calder Highway'. This

is galvanising councils between Mildura and Bendigo.

The tour also had information stops which were very well received at Marong, Woodend, Gisborne, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Malmsbury, Culgoa, Berriwillock, Nullawil and Sea Lake. A strong desire from local residents to support the No Toxic Calder effort is evident.

In 2000 Victoria conducted a major investigation into toxic waste. The report states that hazardous waste 'should be managed through ... long term containment'. Long-term waste containment facilities become an 'alternative to current prescribed waste landfills'.

### What you can do

Join the No Toxic Calder mailing list

Phyl Clay, The Save The Food Bowl Alliance  
ph 03 5023 8205, fax 03 5021 1905  
PO Box 420 Mildura VIC 3502 [scg@mvcitrus.org.au](mailto:scg@mvcitrus.org.au)

**NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACT 2004**

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[www.edo.org.au/edosa/nrm/nrm.htm](http://www.edo.org.au/edosa/nrm/nrm.htm)

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For More Information:  
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COMES INTO  
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**JULY 1ST 2005**

EDO WA presents a one day conference



## WATER LAW

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SUSTAINABILITY, WATER PRICING,  
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**ONE DAY CONFERENCE**  
Friday 8 July, 2005  
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**Field Trip to GNANGARA MOUND**  
Saturday 9 July, 2005

Conference only  
\$120 waged \$66 unwaged

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For information go to [www.edowa.org.au](http://www.edowa.org.au)  
or telephone 08 9221 3030