



## Householder's Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

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## HOPE Enews Bulletin 2016 #01 --- 16 January 2016

The following items have been gathered from various e-newsletters received by HOPE in recent times; and/or prepared specifically by HOPE members and supporters. If you have any news to contribute, please forward to [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au).

Deadline for articles is 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month. If you would like to discuss news items displayed or have letters for the editor please contact the office or <[newsletter editor - hotlink](mailto:newsletter_editor@hopeaustralia.org.au)>

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### Editorial

*Hello and welcome to 2016,*

*I draw your attention to the 2016 Environmental Events Calendar (p2) and ask that you try to support as many events as you can.*

*The Office News Report (p3) outlines our planned and proposed activities for the year. The Management Committee welcomes your feedback on the matters raised; and, of course, your support for, and/or attendance at, our projects, events and meetings.*

*Lastly, we have quite a diverse range of articles for your reading pleasure. A big thanks to both our regular and new contributors.*

*Regards,*

*Frank Ondrus, Office Manager – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135, email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au)*

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### HOPE 2016 Fund-Raising Raffle

HOPE invites members and friends to support our major fund-raising activity for the year – a **multi-draw raffle** being held in conjunction with the 2016 Ipswich Plant Expo being held on 12-13 March at the Bundamba Turf Club, Ipswich. Funds raised will go towards defraying some of our annual operating expenses (of approx. \$25,000).



#### 2016 Ipswich Plant Expo **multi-draw Raffle**

Tickets are now available for sale!

Approx. \$1,000 worth of prizes on offer – mixed packs, gardening products, plants, books and a variety of vouchers.

Tickets are \$2 each; or, 3 for \$5

Please contact the office on 07 4639 2135 or by email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) to obtain your tickets.

## 2016 Calendar of Environmental (& Social Justice) Events

- [2016 - International Year of Pulses](#)
- [2014-2024 – International Decade of Sustainable Energy for All](#)

### JANUARY

- 26 [Australia Day](#)

### FEBRUARY

- 2 [World Wetlands Day](#)
- 27-6Mar [Sea Week](#)

### MARCH

- 1 [Business Clean Up Day](#)
- 3 [World Wildlife Day](#)
- 4 [Schools Clean Up Day](#)
- 6 [Clean Up Australia Day](#)
- 6-12 [National Ground Water Awareness Week](#)
- 17 [National Close the Gap Day](#)
- dd [Farewell Shorebirds](#) - tbc
- 19 [Earth Hour](#)
- 21 [International Day of Forests](#)
- 21 [Harmony Day](#)
- 22 [World Water Day](#)
- 23 [World Meteorological Day](#)

### APRIL

- 16-24 [Australian Heritage Week](#)
- 18 [World Heritage Day](#)
- 22 [International Mother Earth Day](#)
- 22 [Earth Day](#)

### MAY

- 1-7 [International Composting Awareness Week](#)
- 9-15 [National Volunteer Week](#)
- 12-12 [OZWater'16](#)
- 14 [World Migratory Bird Day](#)
- 21 [World Fish Migration Day](#)
- 22 [International Day for Biological Diversity](#)
- 23 [World Turtle Day](#)
- 26 [National Sorry Day](#)
- 27-3June [National Reconciliation Week](#)

### JUNE

- 5 [World Environment Day](#)
- 8 [World Oceans Day](#)
- 17 [World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought](#)

### JULY

- 3-12 [NAIDOC Week](#)
- 11 [World Population Day](#)
- 29 [Schools Tree Day](#)
- 31 [National Tree Day](#)

### AUGUST

- 9 [International Day for World Indigenous Peoples](#)
- 12 [International Youth Day](#)
- 13-21 [National Science Week](#)
- 19 [World Humanitarian Day](#)
- 22-28 [Keep Australia Beautiful Week](#)

### SEPTEMBER

- 1-31 [National Biodiversity Month](#)
- 1 [National Wattle Day](#)
- 5-11 [National Landcare Week](#)
- 7 [National Threatened Species Day](#)
- 11 [Sustainable House Day](#)
- 11 [National Bilby Day](#)
- 16 [International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer](#)
- dd [World Parks Day](#) - tbc
- 22 [World Car-Free Day](#)
- 22 [World Maritime Day](#)

### OCTOBER

- 3 [World Habitat Day](#)
- 4 [World Animal Day](#)
- 13 [International Day for Disaster Reduction](#)
- 12 [National Ride 2 Work Day](#)
- 17 [International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#)
- 18-24 [National Water Week](#)
- 19-25 [Bird Week](#)
- 19-25 [Aussie Backyard Bird Count](#)
- 24 [United Nations Day](#)

### NOVEMBER

- 6 [International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict](#)
- 7-13 [National Recycling Week](#)
- 11 [National Walk to Work Day](#)
- 21 [World Fisheries Day](#)

### DECEMBER

- 3 [International Day of People with Disability](#)
  - 5 [International Volunteer Day](#)
  - 10 [Human Rights Day](#)
  - 11 [International Mountain Day](#)
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## Office News Report --- January 2016

Welcome to 2016 – a year of great expectations!

The management committee and admin support team will be working hard to secure corporate sponsorship to help defray some of our operating expenses; expand our Partnership/Alliance list; increase our national membership; secure grant monies for a variety of landcare, renewable energy and other projects; provide information displays for local and regional community events; and host a number of community forums when possible. More detailed information on some of these matters is provided below.

### **Corporate sponsorship** (<http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/about-us/sponsors/>)

In mid-2015, HOPE embarked on an exercise to attract corporate sponsorship to help fund our operations. We seek your help by nominating potential businesses which may be receptive to HOPE's cause. Individual donations from members and supporters can be made at <http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/annual-pledgedonation/>. And, we gratefully acknowledge a private donation of \$5,000 received in December 2015.

### **Partnership/Alliance program** (<http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/about-us/partnershipsalliances/>)

Since 2000, HOPE has established a number of significant partnerships/alliances with international, national, state (Queensland) and local/regional (Toowoomba) organisations with the aim of supporting these groups and to access their expertise and resources. We ask you – our members and supporters – to suggest other organisations who may be interested in aligning with HOPE.

### **Membership**

In recent years our membership numbers have remained steady at around 650 full and associate members. The management committee is keen to increase our membership nationally and so invites you to help promote HOPE and its activities to your family, friends and work colleagues. Remember, membership to HOPE is FREE! More information on the types of membership may be found at <http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/membership/>.

### **2016 Ipswich Plant Expo, 12-13 March 2016**

HOPE has been invited to provide an information display and some demonstration activities at this year's Ipswich Plant Expo being held at the Bundamba Turf Club, Ipswich on 12-13 March 2016.

We have also been granted the raffle concession for the event.

*A planning meeting will be held on Saturday 23 January, 10am at the HOPE office, 22 Vacy St, Toowoomba to review preparations to date and to organise a roster of volunteers for this 2 day event.*

Your attendance at this meeting is welcome. Please RSVP by 22 Jan to assist with seating and catering arrangements for morning tea.

### **HOPE's 2016 quarterly Ordinary Meetings schedule**

Saturday, 13 February 2016	Ordinary Meeting
Saturday, 11 June 2016	Ordinary Meeting
Saturday, 10 September 2016	Ordinary Meeting
Saturday, 12 Nov 2016	AGM, followed by 1 <sup>st</sup> Ordinary Meeting for new year

### **Community Events supported by HOPE**

\*Ipswich Plant Expo, 12-13 March 2016

\*Toowoomba Languages & Cultures Festival (Aug 2016)

U3A Seniors Expo (Aug 2016)

\* A team of volunteers required for these events. To offer your assistance please contact the HOPE office on 07 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au).

Regards,

Frank Ondrus, President – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135, [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au)

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## Feature Articles

### Climate Change: Business-as-usual

By Shannon Michael

The possible impacts from climate change in the future are large, but are clouded with uncertainty and this is compounded by indecisiveness from governments. When considering the impacts and damages of climate change, it is often difficult to determine a precise method to measure the “costs” that the shifting climate will have.

Therefore it is common to compare the impacts that will occur if we continue on our current path with the impacts that will occur if we change our ways. The differences (or lack thereof) that we make are incorporated into different “emission scenarios”; these scenarios describe our greenhouse gas emissions depending on the variations we make in policy, technology, population growth, etc. A baseline scenario is an emissions scenario that would occur if no policy is or other intervention occurs in regards to climate change. In other words, it is a “business-as-usual” approach.

Under the business-as-usual approach, we can attempt to monetise the impacts from environmental changes due to climate change. We also consider how much it will cost to adapt to these changes giving an overall “cost” of what our business-as-usual approach will incur. However, this is a very imperfect method: how do we place a cost on the loss of human life? How much is a species or ecosystem worth? How can we account for large variations in land-use change? Additionally, how do we account for low probability, huge consequence events? It is possible climate change can alter the ocean's currents, but the probability of this actually occurring is very low, but if it were to occur the global impacts would be massive and catastrophic for many people. These complications now spread even further with one seemingly simple economic principle: the discounting factor. Many economic calculations include a discounting factor/rate to relate costs to current generations to future generations. Essentially, most goods will be “cheaper” for future generations. But how do we apply this to the impacts of climate change? For example, the cost to build a sea wall to protect a community from sea level rise will be at a modest cost in today's terms, but when calculating the cost for 100-200 years, the cost becomes negligible. But this isn't realistic, and therefore discounting rates of zero are advocated.

Given the large complications of determining the future impacts of climate change, why don't we just default to the safer option? The primary argument against this is that it will harm economic growth and development, but research has shown that mainstreaming sustainable policies will only lower economic growth rates by 0.1-0.2 percentage points. Shifting towards sustainability by lowering our greenhouse gas emissions can be done through multiple avenues and has many co-benefits. For example, increasing energy efficiency in industry both lowers eventual greenhouse gas emissions and also decreases production cost, and therefore increases the competitiveness of the industry. Additionally, increasing the energy security of a country can also aid in lowering emissions: diversifying the energy production market (especially with renewables), increasing efficiency, and diversifying energy imports. Another point is the current impacts felt from emissions: annually over 700,000 people die prematurely from air pollution, which places a large burden on many social services. Reducing this pollution both reduces future impacts (and may even prevent them), and also reduces the current impacts.

Climate change is real and will have very real, very serious impacts. We can take action to safe guard ourselves from these impacts without harming economic growth, so even if the predictions of these impacts does not come to fruition; no damages have been caused.

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*HOPE request*

#### **WANTED – PHOTOCOPY PAPER**

HOPE has used up its current stock of photocopy paper and we are asking our members and supporters to donate a ream or two of A4 photocopy paper. Donations of paper can be left on the table in the carport at 22 Vacy St, Toowoomba.

Alternately, cash or cheque donations can be made online at <http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/annual-pledgedonation/> or posted to HOPE Inc., PO Box 6118 -Clifford Gardens Toowoomba QLD 4350.

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## Heroic Tourism

By Jessie Panazzolo



When many of us were younger, we used to get towels, sheets and any piece of material that we could get our hands on to tie around our necks and fly around the house with the material flowing in the wind. We used to believe we were super heroes so easily, just something as simple as a towel could transform ourselves into the saviour of the world, the protector of civilians.

Now, we are all much older and may spend our time folding towels instead of running them around the house, however it is still so easy to be a hero. Let's take a simple holiday for instance, in many cases one might see a monkey riding a tricycle, be tempted by an elephant ride or have the opportunity to get a photo with a tiger at a temple. Maybe Sea World is a destination that has always appealed to you or a dancing bear would be something you may find entertaining to see at a circus.

Little may you know, that this specific tricycle riding monkey is kept in a cage too small to move in, this elephant used for rides is beaten into submission with a bull hook, this tiger at the temple is drugged into lethargy. What about the orcas and dolphins at Sea world that were stripped of their natural habitat and families to be kept in tiny swimming pools and that bear at the circus who lives its life eating human food and lives a life behind bars.

This is where you can get out that towel again for this is your newest and easiest mission of all, to become a TOURISM HERO. Being a tourism hero is easy, all it takes to be a hero is to avoid detrimental tourist ventures which are harming animal lives every day, and instead substitute these ventures for conservation based, ethical ventures that will contribute in a positive manner not only to animal lives, but also to the local communities in the surrounding area.

Instead of riding an elephant or seeing a macaque riding down the streets or patting a drugged up tiger, instead go to a national park and see these animals in the wild. This will not only give you a better life experience and make you feel good about yourself, but it will also enable these areas to be protected to ensure long term survival for these critters! Sea World will seem like nothing when you support a local whale watching tour service and go see whales and dolphins in their own home. There are also many ethical ventures that allow you to swim alongside dolphins or snorkel with other marine life, and in many instances you can grab a snorkel and swim with turtles and millions of fish for absolutely free!

So that's all it takes, make the commitment to saving the world today and proudly call yourself a TOURISM HERO. For more information, visit [www.heroictourism.com](http://www.heroictourism.com).

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### *HOPE request*

#### **Positions Vacant**

Two key positions on the Admin Support Team remain vacant after the recently held AGM.

Positions vacant are that of Newsletter Editor and Media Team.

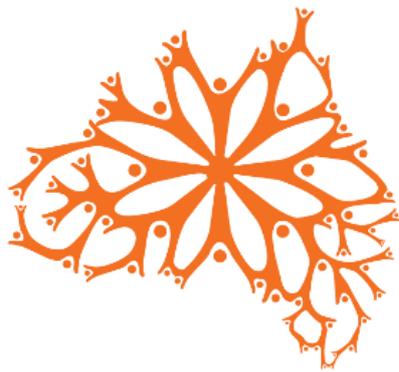
Tasks of the Newsletter Editor include literature review, preparation of articles and the compilation of the monthly Enews Bulletin.

Tasks of the Media Team include reviewing media reports and newsletters with the aim of writing media releases, short information articles, community service announcements and/or date claimers.

So, if you have some spare time and talents to offer, please give the office a call on 07 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) and register your interest in looking after one of these positions.

A fair portion of the above work would ideally be done by locals (i.e. in the Toowoomba area) because the HOPE office is in Toowoomba, Queensland. However, quite a bit of the literature review, research, publications activity can be done via email.

**Take Part in Making Discoveries – by Citizen Science** ([www.citizenscience.org.au](http://www.citizenscience.org.au))



# Australian Citizen Science Association

Do you love nature and want to help the environment? Well, now is your chance! Community members can now actively take part in cutting edge research by the click of a mouse or enjoying the outdoors. Just become a citizen scientist!

Community members have made observations of the natural world that have contributed to research for decades. For example, since 1989 volunteer Storm Spotters across the nation have been sharing local extreme weather events with the Bureau of Meteorology. Likewise, passionate birders in Queensland have been diligently recording movements of migratory shorebirds as part of the Queensland Wader Study Group since its formation in 1992. The Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland (<http://www.wildlife.org.au/>) also hosts a wide variety of opportunities for citizens to contribute observations of local animals and habitats. Imagine your favourite local animal or habitat, and there is a good chance that there is a citizen science project related to it!

Advances in technology have made sharing observations easy and have allowed citizen science to expand into new areas. Anyone can now share information instantly via internet through use of computers and mobile phone apps. Are you interested in astronomy? How about observing changes in the seafloor? Does reading and transcribing historical journals strike your fancy? Well, Galaxy Explorer, Explore the Seafloor, and Weather Detectives respectively, are examples of online citizen science projects that Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Science has sponsored annually in recent years, as part of National Science Week. You can now help make important discoveries from the comfort of your own home!

Are you apprehensive to take part in scientific research because it sounds intimidating or you are worried about accuracy of your outdoor or online observations? Well, the best projects are designed to be fun for citizen scientists and informative for scientists. With modern technology, researchers now have new methods to collect more data, vet and verify anomalous observations, and handle variation with statistical modelling. Community members with a strong interest or expertise are now also able to start projects that lead to substantial scientific findings too!

In 2014, a small group of people passionate about citizen science hosted a workshop in Brisbane bringing 80 citizen science managers and volunteers from all around Australia together to discuss creating a national network. At that point the **Australian Citizen Science Association (ACSA)** was born! Since then, Australia has had its first ever citizen science conference that brought together over 200 delegates to share projects and work to further the development of citizen science. To date, no one has any idea how many projects exist across the nation, but I have diligently been searching across the country to get a sense for what types of projects are underway, and what projects the future holds.

If you would like updates about ACSA or the 2014 conference, visit our website ([www.citizenscience.org.au](http://www.citizenscience.org.au)), where you can also subscribe to our email list. In the next few months, we will be sharing our three year strategic plan and invite people to join working groups. You are also welcome to share projects you know about with me through emailing me via the website. Eventually, ACSA will host a website that allows you to search for projects. We are also very active on social media (Facebook, Twitter @CitSciOz, LinkedIn, and Google+), and following us is a great way to learn about projects happening around the country!

*(Article written by Jessie Cappadonna, ACSA Management Committee member, January 2016)*

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## Engineering our Environment: The Invisible Factor

(Author: Stacey Vorwerk, Environmental Engineer, Australia, January, 2016)



Surprisingly there is currently minimal information as to how specific tree species roots grow in Australian suburban environments, as clearly specified in the current 2011 version of the Australian Standard for Residential House Footings. With this lack of information engineers are unable to effectively engineer our environment, to consider the growth of trees and their root architecture (the invisible factor) in the design and operation of infrastructure for the long term.

To effectively become “low-carbon societies and economies” as intended in legally binding agreements formed at the recent United Nations Conference on Climate Change, held in Paris (COP 21), (<http://www.cop21.gouv.fr>), to quantify water moisture usage of various tree species and their root architecture to stabilise soils through moisture movement and extraction (evapotranspiration) and acting as carbon sinking agents is an area that must be further explored.

The instrument, most commonly utilised, to actually see a tree’s root architecture, is called a ground penetrating radar (GPR). This piece of equipment is useful, however excavator trenching works are required to see the tree’s roots to validate the information obtained from the GPR ground scan. With the Australian Government introducing the ageless concept of “*Business needs ideas. Ideas need business. Australia needs both,*” it is both your business and my business to understand trees and their root system as there is not one person in Australia (within their life time) that is not affected (indirectly or directly) by the lack of understanding of this “invisible” architectural system. It is through new ideas and development of inventions to view trees without disturbing their normal function that will assist in this matter.

Generally, the thinking process and governing standards/legislation, when considering trees/vegetation, water moisture in soils and soils is of a compartmental focus. There are a number of professions that focus on these areas however occurring in isolation. The one sector that views all of these areas with consideration at one time is the agricultural sector, whereby producing maximum crop production. The thinking styles exhibited within the agricultural sector for crop production are directly relevant to optimising tree growth in a suburban environment along with combinations of thoughts from professions such as arborists, botanists, soils scientists, climatologists, civil, geomechanical and structural engineers, to find the long term balance between infrastructure design and operation, and ground stability along with tree growth optimisation.

It is through a new systemisation of the knowledge from all these industries/professions that trees and/or vegetation and soil can start to be fully understood so knowledge gaps can be identified and further research and information can be developed to assist this matter. The results from integrating professional knowledge will contribute towards informing the Australian Standard for Residential House Footings and also pavement design (i.e. asphalt roads) as to how specific vegetation/trees and their root architecture can be complementarily designed into the long term operation of newly developed Australian suburbs.

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### HOPE 2016 Fund-Raising Raffle

HOPE invites members and friends to support our major fund-raising activity for the year – a **multi-draw raffle** being held in conjunction with the 2016 Ipswich Plant Expo being held on 12-13 March at the Bundamba Turf Club, Ipswich. Funds raised will go towards defraying some of our annual operating expenses (of approx. \$25,000).

 The logo for the Ipswich Plant Expo Raffle. It features a green starburst graphic with a red center, followed by the text "Ipswich PLANT EXPO" in green. Below this is a large green rectangular frame containing the word "RAFFLE" in white, bold, serif capital letters.	<p><b>2016 Ipswich Plant Expo <u>multi-draw</u> Raffle</b></p> <p>Tickets are now available for sale!</p> <p>Approx. \$1,000 worth of prizes on offer – mixed packs, gardening products, plants, books and a variety of vouchers.</p> <p>Tickets are \$2 each; or, 3 for \$5</p> <p>Please contact the office on 07 4639 2135 or by email <a href="mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au">office@hopeaustralia.org.au</a> to obtain your tickets.</p>
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## Toowoomba Regional News

### Report on successful *Help Our Properties Environment NRM* project

By Steve Cupitt, Crossroads Rural & Environment

Late 2015, HOPE received a Landcare Grant to trial a program designed to test community interest in wildlife friendly gardens; encourage a network of linked vegetation across the urban landscape; increase interest in allowing the next generation of native trees to establish; and protecting small patches of retained vegetation. Following a media release and mailbox drop, the program proved to be a clear success with 5 landholders requesting a site assessment, 5 landholders becoming members of HOPE and each receiving a sign for their front fence indicating they have a wildlife friendly garden.



*Wildlife Friendly Garden in Highfields*

While the trial program only allowed 5 landholders to be assessed, provided with signs and given information about native garden design, 15+ other landholders contacted Steve Cupitt to enquire about participating in the program. The 5 landholders currently participating all said they had neighbours and friends who would like to participate in the program, but as funding was limited, these landholders were turned away with the indication that a future program may be conducted where they could participate.

Desktop reviews of where gaps occur in the urban wildlife landscape and amount of community interest, indicate an additional program would be quite successful with a high participation rate and community interest.

Of note, is the fact that no landholders requested, or expected, money or materials with all stating they were not doing this for any other reason other than to assist the wildlife and protect / enhance what little vegetation remains. The fact they could access local knowledge and be put in contact with local experts and other like-minded people was "incentive enough".

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### COMMUNITY EXCHANGE

By Alison Bird ([aliart@aliart.com.au](mailto:aliart@aliart.com.au)), one of the founding members of Far North Queensland Community Exchange (Tableland LETS) and a keen trader in BrisLETS.

**Community exchange systems** are a way to share local resources by trading goods and services without money.

There are several active community exchange systems in this region, including Condamine Catchment Community Exchange (CCCE), Toowoomba Community Exchange and Stanthorpe LETS (Local Exchange Trading System). Joining one of the groups allows you to trade with any of the others, and even with BrisLETS if you happen to visit the city.

Members receive log-in access to the web site where offers and wants are posted as well as the contact details for other traders. Every member has a trading account which starts with a zero balance.

The way it works is that each trade has a value in local units, like keeping score of your contribution to the system. For each transaction, the seller enters the details in the accounting software online. Account balances may go into debit or credit and everyone is encouraged to keep aiming for zero. There's no interest involved and local units mean nothing until they are spent.

More information is found online for Australia [www.communityexchange.net.au/](http://www.communityexchange.net.au/) and for the global network here <https://www.community-exchange.org/home/>.

Community exchange systems are a return to the basics of looking after the well-being of the community, and they are fundamentally different to the conventional money system. With money there is always potential for a power imbalance and corruption. Community exchange systems have qualities of balance and equity.

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## Queensland News

### **TRANSITIONING FROM A COAL MINING FUTURE?? YES WE CAN!**

**A study of the potential for regional communities in QLD to embark on an economic transition away from a dependency on coal mining was undertaken this year by Just Transition Brisbane (JTB).**

The specific research aim was to identify **any potential barriers and/or opportunities** in relation to this kind of economic transition taking place. The region of Oakey was identified as being an important case study for this research, due to the fact that the nearby Acland Coal Mine is currently applying to expand their mining operations.

Representatives of the five categories (*government, agriculture, business/tourism, local community, social/environmental community organisations*) were approached with a set of **key questions** and the answers to these questions have been presented in the *Just Transitions: transitioning toward a mining free future* report.

The following list of opportunities and recommendations summarise the findings of this important research project.

#### **Opportunities for alternative economic development for the Oakey region include:**

- Return to agriculture and related industries, e.g. cropping, piggeries, and feedlots
- Possibility of expansion of meat works and army base
- Development of poultry industry
- Lightweight perishable crops distributed via Wellcamp airport
- Small business opportunities connected to agriculture, e.g. rural supply
- New retail and residential opportunities to support the increase in business opportunities
- Alternative use of existing infrastructure to power new manufacturing industries
- Tourism that supports sustainability of the region's natural resources and promotes cultural assets: eco-tourism, on-farm visits, B&Bs, food & beverage, and regional cuisine-based enterprises and festivals
- Establishment of alternative, renewable energy generation: wind and solar farms.

#### **Recommendations to support possible alternative economic development:**

- Facilitation of ongoing community engagement with state and local government representatives
- Widespread promotion of viable economic development opportunities for the region — especially in regards to job creation and re-skilling/up-skilling of locals
- Support from community and relevant stakeholders for development of locally-based economic action plan for transition
- Community support for the development of communications strategies to target identified stakeholders
- Facilitation of engagement activities with youth sectors of the Oakey region in relation to training and up-skilling for new/alternative industries
- Need for community engagement campaigns in relation to the reality of the long-term physical and environmental effects of mining

This important research responds to an urgent need to address the perception that regional communities must remain dependent on mining jobs in particular. And the findings contained in the report indicate that while this issue is both complicated and contested, there is growing support for both transition and diversification for regional economies throughout QLD.

*(The information contained in the *Just Transitions: Transitioning towards a mining free future* report was identified as part of a **Participatory Needs and Opportunities Assessment (PNOA)** completed for the Master of Communication for Social Change at The University of Queensland.*

*The PNOA was undertaken on behalf of the **Just Transitions Brisbane (JTB)** group. JTB aim to work with communities traditionally economically dependent on mining in order to support a just transition — to a locally supported economy that is diverse and largely self-sufficient, and thus more sustainable and equitable in the long term).*

A link to more information can be found here: [Just Transitions Presentation 2015](#)

**Oakey Coal Action Alliance would like to thank the members of Just Transitions Brisbane for their interest and efforts in undertaking this pivotal study.**

*(Extract of research paper prepared by Kirsty-Lee Workman, OCAA website, posted 23 November, 2015)*

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## National News

### Current Status of Feral Animals in Australia

By Sam Horner, studying for a Master in Environmental Management at University of Queensland

#### Camels

It is estimated that there are **750,000** feral camels roaming the rangelands of Australia, ***the largest camel herd in the world***. No substantial market has been established for their meat, hides or milk.

All the animals populating the vast inland rangelands have different grazing habits, and camels are no exception. These animals are large enough to cause substantial and repetitive damage to fences in the rangelands, and their consumption of water is prodigious at 200 litres in three minutes; this substantial water consumption is problematic for cattlemen.

#### Feral donkeys

The national feral donkey herd in Australia was estimated to be **5 million** in 2005. Like camels, these animals are herbivores and compete with camels for vegetation and can digest native poisonous plants which horses cannot. In addition, donkeys over-graze vegetation and foul waterholes, deterioration of which depletes native species of fauna.

#### Feral horses

Feral horses, otherwise known across Australia as 'brumbies' inhabit various parts of Australia, from the alpine areas of NSW and Victoria to the vast rangelands areas; their numbers are estimated at **400,000** and represent another herbivore in unacceptable and uncontrolled numbers. ***Australia has the largest feral horse population in the world.***

#### Feral pigs

The estimated population of feral pigs is **23.5 million** with Queensland being the state most affected by this pest. Crop damage, fouling of waterholes and the ecological damage wrought by these animals which are both herbivorous and carnivorous are all detrimental to farming operations and to the broader environment.

#### Feral buffaloes

Estimated numbers of feral buffaloes were estimated at **150,000** in 2008; these were mainly confined to the floodplain areas of the Northern Territory.

#### Feral goats

Feral goats are most prolific in the dense scrub of the Murchison pastoral region in WA. Their numbers are estimated to be **2.6 million**, subject to fluctuations during prolonged drought. Feral goats also do not flourish where there are considerable numbers of dingoes and wild dogs.

#### Feral cats

Feral cats do not appear to be included in the Rangeland Condition Monitoring program outlined above; this apparent oversight is surprising when one considers the Department of Environment's recognition of sustainable ecosystems, protected and endangered species along with the preceding government statistics of feral stock numbers impacting on the environment and pastoral operations. The feral cat population is estimated at **15-23 million** and account for ***75 million native animals every night***; this rate of predation will have dire consequences for Australia's wildlife and ecosystems.

#### Feral foxes

Red foxes were introduced into Australia in the 1830's for recreational sporting pursuits. Since then, their numbers have increased to an estimated **6.2 million** and they are heavily responsible for loss of native fauna as well as depredations on young lambs in sheep-farming operations.

#### Feral rabbits

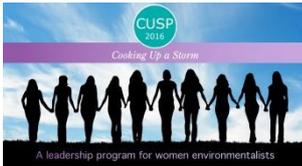
Rabbits were introduced into Australia when the First Fleet arrived in 1788. Since then, they have spread across the lower two-thirds of the Australian continent over a similar area to the red fox. By the 1920's, the rabbit population was estimated to be **10 billion**; since then, there have been various eradication campaigns such as the myxomatosis and subsequent 1080 poison baiting campaigns.

*Red fox distribution equates to rabbit infestation. (Department of the Environment)*

#### Cane toads

Cane toads were introduced into Queensland in 1935 to combat the pest beetle damaging the sugarcane crop. Cane toads have traversed the continent from coastal north Queensland to the Kimberley region of WA. Cane toads are capable of poisoning any predator such as native reptiles and birds of prey which might try to eat them; the toads are voracious and live on insects and small prey.

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## Women leading in environment action | 2016 workshop series

Women environmentalists in Australia have asked for a women's environmental leadership program and we are excited to announce that we are launching a national program in 2016 in collaboration with the Change Agency. Cooking up a Storm Program (Cusp) is designed to recognise women's extraordinary environmental leadership in Australia and support them and their campaigns into

the future at this ... [Read more.](#)

## World News

### GARDEN CITY, MEGA CITY, 12/16/2015 BY [THE DIRT CONTRIBUTOR](#)



An increase in density doesn't have to mean a decrease in the quality of life. Quality of life can be ensured with improved access to communal green space, which doesn't have to be limited to parks on the ground. In a lecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design (GSD), Wong Mun Summ and Richard Hassell, the founders of [WOHA](#), an architecture firm based in Singapore, depicted enormous residential towers that are lush and verdant, with vines spilling over the edges of shared balcony gardens, and trees and shrubs covering the rooftops, creating a dense, leafy canopy. Vertical surfaces are

swathed in healthy greenery. I marveled at their rendering skills before realizing that they were showing built projects.

Summ and Hassell named their lecture "Garden City, Mega City," suggesting these two notions don't have to be opposed. The [Garden City movement](#) was a city planning effort that began in the late 19th century as a response to the congestion and social alienation of industrial cities with small, self-contained communities, each with a healthy amount of shared open and agricultural space. But while the movement has many merits, density was not one of them.



Fast-forward a century to the exponential growth of mega cities, which are cities with populations over 10 million. There were only 2 in 1965, but there are now 35, and, in 2050, there will be 50. In these mega cities, higher density is inevitable. While the Garden City movement is widely considered passé now that we now the enormous costs of sprawl, WOHA is shrewdly mining it for concepts that can work in our megalopolises.

Already, WOHA integrates greenery into their architecture using something they call "topographic architecture." We've all seen buildings that have vegetation applied as an afterthought, like candles stuck into a birthday cake. Not surprisingly, it's difficult to keep the plants happy. WOHA's strategy is to allow the form of the building to be shaped by the needs of the vegetation that will grow in or on it, increasing the chance of growing healthy plants and all the

things that they bring. When there were complaints from the residents of the 24th floor of one of the towers that their children were being stung by bees in the sky garden, the architects couldn't say they were entirely unhappy – they had successfully created a small but functioning ecosystem in the sky.

### **Newton Suites, Singapore / WOHA (<http://www.woha.net/>)**

WOHA also sees their work as prototypes for the mega cities of the future. Each project is designed to work on a local level, but also as part of a larger, replicable system. They want to see an "inverted skyline" – a dense amalgamation of buildings that would all reach to the same height. This platform in the sky could provide a continuous surface, an alternate ground plane that could be used as an armature for agriculture or solar panels. Hassell said "more than cross programming, we want to create this mix of architecture and infrastructure, or architecture and agriculture, or even architecture and forestry, to try and see how we can put together things that are normally seen as separate."

The majority of WOHA's projects are located in the tropical regions of Asia, where plants are fast-growing, highly adaptable, and don't have to survive a cold winter. One question is: can their model be applied in other climates? The delightful photos of towers dripping with jungle vegetation are impossible in a climate where most trees have no leaves for half the year, but perhaps that isn't important. The real strength of WOHA's work lies in their commitment to make dense living as socially and ecologically as viable as possible.

*This guest post is by Chella Strong, Student ASLA, master's of landscape architecture candidate, Harvard University Graduate School of Design.*

<http://dirt.asla.org/2015/12/16/garden-city-mega-city/>

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## Resources

### **Switchwise** - <https://www.switchwise.com.au/>

Switchwise was launched in 2009 with the purpose of un-complicating the task of switching to a better deal. We are a free gas and electricity comparison service that Australian consumers can use to search for cheaper options that meet their energy needs. We are Australian owned and operated and are based in Melbourne.

To find a competitive deal from leading energy companies, visit: <https://www.switchwise.com.au/>

In late 2015, as part of our commitment to helping consumers save energy and money, Switchwise put together this helpful infographic, which features 20 great energy saving tips for around the home. Check it out here: <https://www.switchwise.com.au/energy-saving-tips/>

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### **Latest technology in straw bale home construction comes to unique organic community**

A unique, organic farming community is expanding with new types of straw bale homes being constructed.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-01-11/new-straw-bale-home-latest-for-unique-organic-farming-community/7080612>

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### **[Climate Change Resources from Routledge](#)**

We've compiled valuable climate change content that echoes the themes of COP21. Download our [Climate Change Research FreeBook](#), read author blog posts and interviews, and discover some of our [newest titles](#) on climate change! Learn more [here](#).

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### **Reverse Garbage**

Reverse Garbage (Brisbane) is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes environmental sustainability by intercepting quality industrial waste material before it ends up as landfill. The collected products are then organised and made available to the general public at a low cost to help fund the daily operations of the organisation. Reverse Garbage collects products from over 200 Brisbane based businesses, and as a result has an amazing variety of interesting products that can be used for in many applications such as arts, crafts and even construction. The long product list includes various forms of fabric & textiles, glass & ceramics, metal, paper & card, plastic, timber, rubber & foam and many more.

Their large warehouse at 20 Burke Street, Woolloongabba is a treasure trove for those who like to explore, with new items arriving daily. For more information, or a sneak peek of what is in store, visit: <http://www.reversegarbageqld.com.au> .

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