



Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

PO Box 6118 – Clifford Gardens, TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350

(22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350)

Ph 07 4639 2135; Email: office@hopeaustralia.org.au

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ABN 48 036 173 161

HOPE E-news Bulletin 2017 #11 --- November 2017

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. Deadline for articles is 15th day of the month.

Editorial

Hello!

Are you part of an environmental NGO beside HOPE, or a community group that you would like HOPE readers to know about? Feel free to send us a few words about your group so that we can share with our members. Please email your statement to office@hopeaustralia.org.au and we'll include it here and on the website.

Miriam Sharp, Acting Newsletter Editor

2017 National/International Events Calendar

- [2017 – International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development](#)
- [2014-2024 – International Decade of Sustainable Energy for All](#)

November

- 5 [World Tsunami Awareness Day](#)
- 11 **HOPE AGM and 1st Ordinary Meeting of new committee for 2017-18**
- 12-19 [Pollinator Week](#)
- 13-19 [National Recycling Week](#)
- 16 [Sun Powered Queensland Summit](#)
- 21 [World Fisheries Day](#)

December

- 5 [International Volunteer Day](#)
- 5 [World Soil Day](#)
- 11 [International Mountain Day](#)

Volunteers needed

More pro-active volunteers – both local and remote (i.e. online) – are required to help us maintain our high levels of activity. Volunteers are needed to help with projects, events and display activities, as well as general admin duties and media/publications work. We invite members and supporters to step up and volunteer some time and talents to help share the workload. Current vacancies include Research Assistants, Media Officers and Publications Team Members.

Please contact the office on 07 4639 2135 or email office@hopeaustralia.org.au to offer your assistance.

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. However, quite a bit of the literature review, research, media and publications activity can be done via email. If you have a little bit of time to help us in any way, then contact the HOPE office on email office@hopeaustralia.org.au or phone (07) 4639 2135.

HOPE News – November 2017

Good morning folks,

Another busy month for office staff with most of the time spent on preparing paperwork for our Annual General Meeting which will be held at the HOPE office, 22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba on Saturday 11 November 2017. If you would like to help manage the affairs of HOPE, please volunteer some of your time and talents either as a committee member or in admin support.

The AGM will be followed by the 1st Ordinary Meeting of the new committee for 2017-2018. Items for discussion at this meeting includes potential projects; community events to support; campaigns and issues to promote, endorse and/or actively engage in; and which Environmental Observance Dates such as 'Clean Up Australia' and 'World Environment Day' to support.

Morning tea and lunch will be provided.

Please RSVP by Wednesday 8th November to assist with seating and catering arrangements.

Frank Ondrus, Office Manager – HOPE Inc., ph (07) 4639 2135



(Photo taken at Ipswich Plant Expo, March 2016)

FOR SALE

HOPE polo shirts - \$30 each

- Ladies: sizes 12, 14 and 16
- Men's: sizes L, 2XL, 4XL

Contact the office on 4639 2135 to arrange payment and pick-up.

Advertisement

PLS PRINTER SERVICES

[PLS Printer Services](#) has been operating in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs area for the past 15 years. We are a small privately-owned business, and we can supply all your printer consumables and needs.

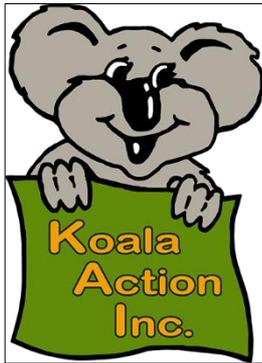
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Enquiries: Paul Simpson, E MAIL office@plsprinters.com.au
PH 07 4635 2300 | FAX 07 4635 2322 | MOB: 0478 413 767

Letter to the Editor

Dear HOPE,



Koala Action Inc. is extremely concerned as are many other wildlife and/or environmental groups about the rate of land clearing and fragmentation of bush land which has more than tripled following the weakening of regulations and enforcement by the Newman Government in 2012. TWS and ACF statistics confirm that an area the size of the MCG is cleared every three minutes in Queensland alone—surely, we can all see that this is an environmental crisis. New land clearing data for Queensland has just been released, and the outcome is devastating as this state has had a 33% rise in clearing since the previous year's data; Queensland saw almost 400,000 hectares cleared in 2015/16. This is totally unacceptable, unfortunately 40% of this was in the Great Barrier Reef catchments (a 45% jump).

Deforestation and land clearing is a major threat to biodiversity and that holds true for Queensland's faunal emblem the koala now on the brink of extinction in many areas of the Moreton Bay region. In fact, all wildlife living within those ecosystems are at risk as is the health of the Great Barrier Reef. Land clearing also impacts on the health of our river systems and the productivity of our landscapes. In addition, when millions of tonnes of greenhouse gases are released into the atmosphere as a consequence of trees being bulldozed climate change is exacerbated.

All of us can chose to be part of the problem or be part of the solution. For a start, stopping the bulldozers would immediately protect the homes of native wildlife and save millions of tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. Restoring Australia's previously cleared land and rehabilitating secondary bushland habitat will increase its carrying capacity and help that land better support native wildlife. The bonus being a major opportunity to sequester carbon and bring down Australia's net emissions. The list of benefits when clearing is stopped include biodiversity restoration, landscape health (including in reef catchments) and regional economic opportunity. Queensland, of all of the states, stands to gain the most from a booming land carbon sector.

This is wonderful opportunity for the residents and businesses of Queensland as well as local, state and federal governments to put together a range of forward-looking solutions to wildlife conservation, land protection and regional development. All that is required is for each and every one of us to write to, email or telephone our local councillors as well as our state and federal government representatives and ask them to do the following: -

- Use whatever existing powers that are available to stop the worst land clearing;*
- Bring in new laws as soon as possible to end deforestation and excessive land clearing;*
- Develop a binding national climate plan, including all state and territory governments, that ensures measurable reductions in land clearing; and*
- Invest in nationally consistent monitoring programme and reporting of land clearing across the country.*

This makes sense to me and I am sure will make sense to those of us on the ground volunteering to ensure that our native fauna and flora continue gracing us with their presence.

*Thanks Vanda (aka Wanda) Grabowski
President/Secretary - Koala Action Inc.*

Feature Articles

Keep Australia great again

By Denis Moriarty, Managing Director - [Our Community Group](#)

Australia is a great place to live, and to keep on living. Our life expectancy, for example, has gone up by about three months a year since 1890, and is now among the highest in the world. That's wonderful, and we probably don't appreciate it enough. We certainly don't realise how fragile that achievement is, and how much vigilance is needed to protect it.

There's nothing inevitable about living longer. In the US, where improvements in the treatment of heart disease and cancer have increased life expectancy overall, deaths caused by overdoses of prescription and illegal drugs, particularly opioids, are so prevalent that they actually reduced the average life expectancy by about three months between 2000 and 2015, according to a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association. And this in a place that already ranks low among developed countries on the life-expectancy tables.

One of the underlying causes, surely, is the loss of community.

Healthy societies trust each other and help each other. Unhealthy, divided societies lash out at each other like rabid ferrets in a sack. And in the US at the moment, the ferrets would probably do a better job of promoting unity and harmony.

America is not a model for Australia to follow; it's a horrible warning. We have to back away from the precipice. We have to embrace diversity, rather than tolerate it. We have to counter the politics of hate with the discourse of community engagement. We must treat the symptoms of societal weakness with such direct interventions as injection rooms for addicts, housing for the homeless, and services for refugees, and, at the same time, combat those who hope to rouse our resentment towards addicts, street people, and immigrants.

Joining one of Australia's community groups is an opportunity to join those who are working to make life better. It's **good for you** as an individual. It's also the only way I know to inoculate the Australian polity against the plague of viciousness that's costing so many lives across Trump's America.

We're not doing that badly in Australia now. The polls on marriage equality, for example, show that we're not being conned by the forces of division.

But nothing can be taken for granted. The challenges are increasing day by day. Ideologues still manage to profit from our prejudices. If we don't lift our game to meet them, it's a long way down.

Ten reasons to join a community group

1. **It's good for your health** - Studies show that having a good social network extends your life, keeps you healthy, and staves off mental deterioration.
2. **You meet new friends** - Get to know new people and work with them on things you all care about. How many people have met their future partners at the club?
3. **You make new contacts** - Keeping your networks in good repair helps you to see opportunities when they come up and gives you people to call when you want help.
4. **You learn new skills** - You can learn workplace skills from being a volunteer. You can learn governance skills – committee management, business planning – from joining a committee.
5. **It's good for the community** - The more people work together and get to be familiar with the way things work around the area, the more people support each other through the tough times.
6. **You can follow your interests** Whatever you like to do, there are other people out there who like it too. Join a group and you can learn from them.
7. **You can build up your CV** - If you're applying for a tertiary place, or a new job, or a new relationship, it helps to be able to point to the unselfish efforts you're putting in for the community.
8. **You can learn how to win your battles** - Experience in operating a community group gives you the tools you need to get your voice heard in the centres of power.
9. **You can make a contribution** - We all want to make the world a better place, even if it's only by having our team take the flag.
10. **You can make a contribution** - We all want to make the world a better place, even if it's only by having our team take the flag.

Report on All Energy Conference, 11-12 Oct 2017, Melbourne VIC

By Dan Bielich, B.Sc. – Climate Science, Completing M Env. Sc.

The All Energy Conference was held in Melbourne's Convention and Exhibition Centre on 11th and 12th of October of 2017. Speakers from all over the world congregated to discuss the current and future proposals of renewable energy technologies in the market. The diversity of technology was high, with a range of devices on the brink of entering the market or theorised to revolutionise the energy sector. These innovative technologies were focused on everyday life energy alternatives and covered a broad range of applications - from transport alternatives to the complete decentralisation from the grid through the introduction of micro grids within communities. The good news is that the future looks promising.

We are all on the brink of what is called a Renewable Revolution. It slides off the tongue quite nicely, doesn't it? The Renewable Revolution has small businesses, entrepreneurs, tech geeks, and academics very excited. In my opinion, the public isn't so excited. Part of it is that the public does not yet know a lot about it. However, another part of such reaction is that all potential consumers want to know answers to questions such as "How much is it going to cost me?", "When will I be getting a return to my investment?" and "How will it affect me?". For the public, what it means is, that each individual household that installs renewable energy, will have the ability to generate their own energy and store it in the latest battery systems, to use when needed. Like any technology, it is developed and refined in stages. For example, an I-phone 3 didn't just jump to the I-phone 7. There were stages and updates as well as upgrades of software and hardware that improved the model gradually to the product it is today. The same concept applies here. Energy alternatives such as Solar and Batteries have become substantially more efficient and economically viable. This will continue as the market adjusts to the influx of alternative energies. With an increase in variations of product technology, second hand options and competition, the prices will continue to fall. Currently, we are on the brink of this major energy transition. Within the decade, we will witness major restructuring of the energy systems, transport industry and variety in renewable energies. The existing major energy retailers seems to be on edge with this transition, with the potential of losing many customers to a more environmentally, friendly source of energy generation, which will also be more affordable and have long lasting financial benefits to those customers.

Currently we rely on large energy retailers to provide us with consistent, reliable and "cheap" energy within a centralised system. These large retailers have the monopoly of the energy business, and basically own the energy market. However, the issue for them is if me and you decide to invest in renewable energy, generate and store energy in efficient batteries, we no longer rely on retailers as we completely become decentralised from the system, meaning they will lose customers at an exponential rate as soon as the renewable energy market takes off.

Also, if you and I have the ability to generate and store energy, what is stopping us from selling it to our neighbours at a cheaper rate? Nothing! Currently, we do have the option of selling energy back to retailers, however the exchange rate is a joke. We are buying energy at a rate of approximately 27c/watt (depending on the time of day), however to sell back energy from our renewable technology, it would sell at a rate of approximately 4-6c/watt. Yes, this does seem unfair, but currently, that is the way it is.

In terms of technology, we're not all there yet. There are still some fundamental issues that are restriction of progress. These include:

Current regulations: The solar hardware itself only takes a few days to be imported into the country, whilst batteries can take months to clear the administrative requirements. A couple of months can cause a lot issues to business, if they are unable to import their product into the country efficiently, especially with the growing demand. Therefore, the regulations must change, to keep up with the demand and a changing industry.

Rate of return of investment: When renewable energy first came into the market, this was one of the factors that deterred most people from purchasing solar technology. It was a large investment with a very long return in investment. However, in the last decade the return in investment has dramatically shortened to approximately 5-10 years, depending on the product. Importantly, the cheaper product doesn't always mean you'll receive your return of investment any faster. If you invest in an efficient solar system, with an advanced battery system, will cost more up front, however you will likely get a faster return of investment as the technology is faster, adaptable and more effective. This is one of the communication barriers between the public and the renewable energy industry. As trying to convince someone to spend more now, to save more later, is usually the opening line to a scam. However, in this case spending more now, may indeed mean you will save a lot more later.

Lack of critical decision making: This energy transition will be slow, mainly because the federal government is dragging its feet and seems to daily produce new obstacles for renewable energy. Not surprising, as the coal companies, energy retailers and coal lobbyists are the ones that will lose the most to this revolution.

There are limitations and challenges that are currently inhibiting the progression of the Renewable Revolution. Disappointingly, only a few days after the All- Energy Conference concluded, the Government announced a new energy plan. It seems that, according to this plan, the renewable energy's share of the electricity sector will plateau from 2020, which, can make it harder for Australia to meet its climate goals and will have a negative impact on the currently booming industry. Fairfax media predicted that the share of renewable energy would be 28-36 per cent, including hydro and solar photovoltaics, by 2030. The decision is effectively dumping the clean energy target, and scrapping millions of dollars of fund money (which was already allocated for renewable energy) to potentially save \$100/year per household on energy bills.

Many members of the public have reacted with comments, which in summary, express their views that \$100 does not represent a significant saving. It is clear that powerful coal lobbyist groups are not willing to go down without a fight. Their influence is present in so many segments of the community. This is particularly visible in our media space, which is still keeping us in the dark about hundreds of innovative companies all over the world stepping into the market with the latest technology in renewable energy.

In plain language, it is the giant businesses trying to delay the transition for as long as possible, to maximise profits. What is clear is, it is not only that the technology experts, businesses and entrepreneurs that want this revolution to occur - more importantly the public demand is increasing, which is the key to the transition. This will likely trigger the snowball effect, and when that occurs, not even the largest coal mining companies in Australia will be able to stop the revolution. It will be interesting to observe what is happening across the Tasman where the new government just announced that New Zealand will be 100% reliant on renewables by 2035.

An Example of a Tiny House Built by Brisbane Architects



Architecture graduates Andrew Carter and Lara Nobel have long advocated for well-designed small spaces. Along with builder Greg Thornton, who Lara subsequently completed her carpentry apprenticeship with, they could see the tiny house movement filling a gap in Australia's housing stock. Last year, Lara and Greg attended Portland's Tiny House Conference to satisfy their curiosity and returned inspired. They and Andrew decided they would regret not testing out their own design ideas.

It is not a housing model to suit everybody but there are individuals as well as financial and social situations for whom a tiny house is ideal (see box). It was important to Lara, Andrew and Greg to demonstrate that a tiny dwelling can be a legitimate, aesthetically appealing and well-designed alternative to the mainstream preconception of a "standard" home, breaking prejudices about small mobile homes. "We didn't want it to be a shipping container... a caravan... [or] an American tiny house with a little gable roof and timber", said Lara, "We wanted it to have a bit of life and love but also be a bit modern".

Their resulting house, nestled in a Brisbane backyard since May this year, is immediately appealing with a surprising sense of space, aided by abundant natural light and a lofty ceiling. The main room efficiently encompasses 6 uses in one - living, dining, home office, kitchen, laundry and bedroom, changing from one to the other with minimal effort. An efficient bathroom houses a full-size shower and composting toilet and a loft above offers storage and a nook for Andrew to enjoy his vinyl collection. The elevating bed, engineered by an old housemate, frees up the living space by day but at night provides a safely accessible bed (no ladder needed). The home contains a surprising amount of storage; more than they've ever had in their 10 years of living in share houses. Open shelves of recycled hardwood, full depth kitchen cabinets, built-in seating, the loft and a full width, ceiling-height wardrobe swallow up Lara and Andrew's possessions with room to spare. While the internal spaces comfortably provide for all of their needs, Lara and Andrew love the 10m² deck which nearly doubles the living space. It also enables them to entertain friends, easily hosting dinner parties of up to eight using the home's two burner cooktop supplemented by Andrew's camp stove. "It's totally doable", says Lara, "And we have bigger gatherings in the local parks. That's a nice outcome".

Currently, the house is a "parasite" off the host house, connected by a garden hose and extension cord. However, it is built to be stand-alone with bottled gas, grey water filtration, a composting toilet and is photovoltaic-ready. Setting up at a new site involves reassembling the flat-pack deck, rolling out the greywater hose, fitting the composting chamber and setting up a small soakage trench – all in a matter of hours. In the near future, they will add photovoltaic panels and a rainwater tank.

Part of their brief was that the house could travel with a normal trailer license which meant fitting within an envelope of 2.5 by 7.5 metres and 4.3 metres height above the road. Above the custom-built trailer, the house has a conventional lightweight timber frame with one steel post between the glazed door and large window. The frame was then wrapped entirely in plywood and sheet cladding to provide stiffness, with the weight of every part of the fit-out carefully considered. While they agree that designing for a *trailer* was "very restrictive" they acknowledge that the small footprint has many practical advantages. "We couldn't have squeezed anything wider in here", said Lara, pointing at the narrow gap between the two Queenslanders where their house had been driven.

All involved are quick to admit that this house was not a budget build. As Greg explained, "It was a design-driven product, not so much budget-driven". While affordability was an initial aim, they also wanted to craft something of integrity and beauty in which they clearly succeeded. "It was difficult to down-spec as we didn't have this house anymore", says Andrew. The greatest cost is in the 600mm down each side along the edges (cabinetry, door and window joinery, external walls) so slicing down the middle and adding a metre to the width would not add much cost but it would reduce mobility.

The line between a registered trailer and a permanent dwelling is a hazy one but with a sympathetic council, it offers an opportunity for those who can't afford (or don't want) a huge mortgage to own their home and lease someone else's land. "That's a pretty amazing set up you can't do any other way than with a mobile dwelling", says Lara. This tiny house is currently under negotiation for more permanent residency in its current setting and Lara, Andrew and Greg are very keen to a movement around Brisbane and Australia allowing such dwellings. Lara says, "with infill development, the more creative we can get the better". Building approval is "a \$5-8,000 exercise and then it's sited permanently", says Greg. Once the building is fixed to the ground with footings, divisions of ownership is less clear.

Andrew says, "It would be nice to see more people living in smaller spaces or other people designing smaller homes". Their beautifully crafted new home is a perfect marriage of their conscience, community spirit, design skills and trade skills (Andrew too is doing a carpentry apprenticeship). It also reflects their desire to minimise embodied energy, energy consumption by living in the smallest footprint possible. It is the fruit of a team effort and hopefully will scatter some seeds.

Initially, the house was taken to various sites, including Woodford Folk Festival, for people to see and experience how pleasant a tiny house could be. According to Lara, Andrew and Greg, they can provide:

- A *studio space* for hobbies and visiting guests
- A space for dependant and semi-dependant *family members*
- More *independence* for members of the household
- A discrete, manageable *rental space* (Airbnb studio)
- A space in which to *downsize* from an 'empty nest' without having to leave the place you call 'home' (i.e. park the tiny house out the back and rent out the old house).

Enquiries to: **THE TINY HOUSE COMPANY**

Mob: 0400 132 303 | info@tinyhousecompany.com.au | www.tinyhousecompany.com.au

(Sourced from Sanctuary Magazine, 2016)

Advertising Rates

HOPE is keen to raise some much-needed revenue through the introduction of paid advertising in our newsletter.

At this stage, we are offering business card sized adverts for \$30 + \$3 GST per edition; OR \$300 + \$30 GST for a full year.

If interested, please send your advert to office@hopeaustrlia.org.au and your payment to HOPE Inc., PO Box 6118 – Clifford Gardens, Toowoomba QLD 4350.

(Direct debit banking details available on request.)

National News



[Playing For Change – www.playingforchange.com](http://www.playingforchange.com)

“Playing For Change” is a movement created to inspire and connect the world through music, born from the shared belief that music has the power to break down boundaries and overcome distances between people. Our primary focus is to record and film musicians performing in their natural environments and combine their talents and cultural power in innovative videos we call Songs Around The World. Creating these videos motivated us to form the Playing For Change Band—a tangible, traveling representation of our mission, featuring musicians met along our journey, and establish the Playing For Change Foundation — a separate 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to building music and art schools for children around the world. Through these efforts, we aim to create hope and inspiration for the future of our planet. For more information, please visit the [website](http://www.playingforchange.com).

[Greenpeace Australia](http://www.greenpeace.org/australia/en/)

Greenpeace is an independent campaigning organisation that uses non-violent direct action to expose global environmental problems and to force solutions which are essential to a green and peaceful future. Greenpeace's goal is to ensure the ability of the earth to nurture life in all its diversity.

Our core values

Independence: we do not accept money from governments, corporations or political parties because it would compromise our core values.

Bearing witness: Our peaceful protests work to raise awareness and bring public opinion to bear on decision-makers.

Non-violent direct action: we strongly believe that violence in any form is morally wrong and accomplishes nothing. Greenpeace takes non-violent direct action at the point of an environmental crime to expose an environmental problem.

For more information, go to <http://www.greenpeace.org/australia/en/>

Helpful Hint

Electrical appliances like TVs, computers and microwaves all use energy when plugged in at left on at the power point. Such standby power can cost as much as \$100 each year. So, switch appliances off at the wall when not in use. You'll save the environment and some cash!

Volunteers needed

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Queensland News

The Wild Mountains Trust

By Lizz Hills, Outreach Officer -Wild Mountains

"The Wild Mountains Trust" is an independent, community focussed, non-profit organisation providing leadership in environmental education and conservation.

The Trust has acquired land south of Rathdowney adjoining the World Heritage Border Ranges National Park for a nature reserve and venue for education. On this magnificent site, a world class Centre is being built. Here, using the unique purpose-built residential facility, quality experiential environmental education for the whole community is being provided.

In subtropical and eucalypt forests participants have the opportunity to discover an amazing natural world. At the same time, Wild Mountains can reinforce its educational programs with examples of renewable power generation, waste management and sustainable building practices.

Along with Wild Mountains education programs, which include Earthkeepers (10-12yrs old's), Shapers of Tomorrow (14-17yrs old) and a range of adult programs, Wild Mountains is committed to a large community volunteer program and runs monthly Volunteer Weekends and a number of annual events for the community. It a huge project that's hugely worthwhile, we'd love you to be a part of it!

Website – www.wildmountains.org

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ReconnectWithNature>

Email - info@wildmountains.org

Phone – (07) 5544 1377

About **WBPEC**

The Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council Inc (WBPEC) is an A-Political, Not-for-Profit Environmental Advocacy Organisation, based in Maryborough Queensland.

Our motto is 'Protecting the region's biodiversity for the future' and we aim to achieve that via a range of advocacy based approaches including:

- Community education campaigns highlighting the importance of environmental protection via television/radio/print/and social media, publications, workshops, public information sessions, documentary screenings, information stalls and interactive presentations at a variety of education and early childhood centres;
- Providing expert advice to all levels of government via participation and representation on various technical working groups, planning committees, Ministerial Roundtable conferences and providing submissions on proposed, and/or amendments to, relevant government policies and legislation;
- Responding to community requests to initiate investigations into potential impacts to the environment from unlawful activities, proposed development, breaches of approval conditions/environmental legislation from existing development and/or land and resource uses; and
- Facilitating communication between multiple local community/landcare/catchment care/wildlife protection groups, the Environment Council and the broader Conservation Sector across Queensland.

Contact Us

If you have an environmental concern, wish to become involved in our organisation or would like further information, contact us via the details below:

EMAIL: admin@wbpec.org.au or manager@wbpec.org.au

MOBILE: 0423 932 431 (Regional Engagement Coordinator) or 0411 360 074 (Admin Officer)

POST: PO Box 97, Maryborough QLD 4650

WEBSITE: <https://wbpec.wordpress.com>

Resources

Interesting Websites

[WWOOF in Australia](#)

Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOF) is a worldwide movement linking volunteers with organic farmers and growers to promote cultural and educational experiences based on trust and non-monetary exchanges, helping to build a **sustainable global community**. Volunteers have the opportunity to work 4 – 6 hours per day on a host farm of their choosing, while getting their meals and accommodation provided. There is a small cost for a 12 or 6month membership with WWOOF, and both volunteers and host farms can use the website to connect. WWOOFing is a hands-on way of learning about organic farming while undertaking eco-friendly tourism around Australia and many other places.

Members are able to search for opportunities in their area of interest and then reach out to desired connections. The website also provides lists of agents in each state through which you can join WWOOF, a blog and a limited shop. Go to <https://wwooof.com.au/>.

[ACFCGN \(Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network\)](#)

The ACFCGN is a community-based organisation linking people interested in city farming, community gardening and community food systems around Australia. The network's mantra promotes growing good food while growing convivial communities. The website provides the opportunity to search for and connect with a community garden near you as well as a great deal of information about starting your own community garden. There are event directories in every state, as well as social networks, a blog and a large publications section containing useful resources about community and sustainable gardening. There is the opportunity to become a member of the network and receive the latest Enews, join email discussion groups and promote your events. This website is packed with information, news and resources and is a great meeting point for the community garden fellowship. Go to <https://communitygarden.org.au/>.

[Earthwatch Institute – Expeditions](#)

The Expeditions section of the Earthwatch Institute website promotes ecotourism for people with a passion for protecting our planet and its wealth of species. Volunteers are invited to join respected scientists in the field where they're investigating critical environmental issues. You can search for expeditions by location, date or research type – Archaeology and Culture, Climate Change, Ocean Health or Wildlife and Ecosystems. Costs and details of the expeditions are clearly listed, making it easy to find what you need to know. The Earthwatch website in general also contains a great number of scientific articles covering every facet of their environmental research and education, links to publications by their scientists, many news articles and the opportunity to donate to Earthwatch's research. Earthwatch's mission is to promote a world in which we live within our means and in balance with nature; and their website is an extension of this objective. Go to <http://au.earthwatch.org/expeditions>.

[Climate and Health Alliance](#)

The Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA) is a coalition of health care stakeholders who work together through policy action to address the threat that climate change and ecological degradation pose to human health. The membership of CAHA incorporates individuals and organisations from across the health sector; which has a particular responsibility to the community in advocating for policy to protect human health. To that end, health care professionals and organisations are invited to join CAHA, as well individuals generally interested in promoting human health through addressing environmental threats. The website outlines current campaigns and projects that you can get involved with, and contains many resources about climate change and its' health impacts, and policy information. This information is vitally important for everyone to know, as it affects all of us, so even if you don't feel the need to become a member of CAHA to take action, the website is a wealth of useful information for the average person as well as health care stakeholders. Go to <http://www.caha.org.au/> to find out more.

Interesting Book

[Practical Self Sufficiency](#)

By Dick Strawbridge

Practical Self Sufficiency is a wonderfully useful and accessible book that contains something for absolutely everyone! With authoritative advice, step-by-step guidance, and fascinating illustrations, Practical Self Sufficiency will help you make simple changes that can have a major impact on your life and reduce your impact on the planet.