



## Chair's Report for 2009

### MEETINGS

One meeting of CWEC was held in 2009 (April). The 2009 AGM was postponed until February 2010 due to non-availability of key committee members.

**ASSESSMENT OF RED GUM FORESTS IN THE RIVERINA (Oct 09):**  
CWEC submission to the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) on the assessment of red gum forests in the Riverina.

The main focus of our submission was that (and I quote): the Natural Resources Commission should concentrate on arresting the decline of biodiversity and ecosystem function in the study area. This can only be achieved through the gazettal of large new Red Gum National Parks in the region as a core for rebuilding the landscape through restoration of key linkages.

Our submission is shown separately on the website (not lumped together with other 'environment groups' indicating the depth and detail in our submission). Thanks are due to Bev Smiles who contributed most to this submission. We were also able to get some scientists at CSU and elsewhere to support our submission.

Key findings arising from the NRC's assessment of the river red gum forests included the need for the following: significant water reforms to maintain ecosystem health; active interventions to manage forests; trans-border national parks with coordinated adaptive management; new funding models for forests; engagement with local communities; and maintaining human and social capital. So, it sounds like the NRC was listening, at least to a certain extent.

## BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE PLANNING

Considerable time and effort was spent organising a conference with the working title: Landscapes for Wildlife and Productivity. CWEC has some funding set aside for this purpose and a grant was also raised through CSU (for \$1000) to assist. Unfortunately due to shortage of time of CWEC key members, it was decided to postpone.

## LOGO

Some designs were tabled for discussion by members, but this has still to be finalised. The designs were created (free) by Lara Cowling (CSU, friend of the Chair).

## THE FATE OF TRAVELLING STOCK ROUTES AND RESERVES

Some members of the committee attended TSR Futures Unlimited Dubbo meeting in March, wearing Orange Field Naturalist & Conservation Society hats. This led to a letter being sent (from OFNCS) to the LHPA State Council raising concerns that TSRs have high biodiversity value and should be kept in public hands. Follow up phone calls have indicated that the process is still continuing, but we (CWEC) have not been kept very well in the loop.

## CARBON POLLUTION REDUCTION SCHEME

CWEC signed the joint statement, organised by the Nature Conservation Council, to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd about the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme amendments deploring the reduced target cuts (5% by 2020), the flaws in the scheme (eg outsourcing of emissions reductions) and the 'token effort', which would do nothing to address the serious issue of climate change.

## GROSS FEED-IN TARIFF

CWEC also signed the joint statement in support of a gross-metered New South Wales Feed-in Tariff. This would provide a much higher incentive than the existing net feed in tariff by providing 60 c per kw/unit for all energy created by alternative energy by householders with less than 10 kw where the energy is fed back to the grid. This was successful and conversions are now taking place to replace the meters with appropriate gross feed-in meters.

## ASSISTANT TO OTHER ENVIRONMENT GROUPS

CWEC (in particular, Bev Smiles) provided valuable input into other group's submission. For example, there was input (verbal or otherwise) into the

submissions of the Orange Field Naturalist & Conservation Society in respect of the following proposals:

- South Orange housing development
- Expansion and modification of the Moolarben Coal Mine
- Gowan Motocross sports park  
Note: this DA has been withdrawn (December 2009, Cabonne Council notices).
- Cadia East
- Common myna control program (a CW CMA grant has been successful to commence a trapping program).

I've no doubt that Bev also provided input into other group's submissions and projects.

VALE John Hoile

It is with sadness that I need to report the death of John Hoile, who had been an active member of CWEC for many years. I had considerable contact with John during 2009 as I was helping him to edit his book on plants suitable for revegetation in the Cowra district, into which he had put so much effort and knowledge. I sincerely hope that it will still be possible for this book to be published now that it is so close as it will be a permanent reminder of John's love and commitment to the environment.

GENERAL

This was my first year as Chair and I would like to thank the committee for its forbearance with any difficulties that arose and Bev Smiles, in particular, for her extremely valuable input into and her knowledge of environmental issues, especially considering her many other important commitments during 2009. This council, and the environment of the Central West, owes her a huge debt.

Cilla Kinross

CHAIR

Central West Environment Council  
18th February 2010.