



10 Years of Leadership - The Climate Change Issue

This issue of impact marks a change of format, designed to showcase the work of the alumni network and better connect you with one another through the issues you are passionate about. [Read more from Robbie.](#)

What's happening

The Leadership Symposium on Friday 28th November 2008. To mark the 10th Anniversary of the Sydney Leadership Program we will be hosting a full day of leadership dialogue followed by a Cocktail Party. [Read more about the event.](#)

In May, The Benevolent Society celebrated its 195th anniversary. The Society, established in 1813 – only 35 years after the first settlement in Australia – has placed additional emphasis on preventing child abuse and developing better options for housing and care for older people to mark the special milestone. A special report was published by the Sydney Morning Herald on 12th May 2008 to mark the occasion. [Read the report](#) which includes a story about Sydney Leadership on page 20.

The Alumni Scoping Project, aimed at determining how the Centre can best support the alumni network in your efforts to bring about positive change is still in development and will take place before the end of the year. More to come...

In brief

We are pleased to announce that our contract to deliver the **Ignite Program** for senior Managers of the **National Australia Bank** has been extended into 2009 and will now include Victoria. We are also extending our leadership development work with senior NAB Executives on the **Accelerate Program** and last week took our third group up to Alice Springs for a week, including engaging with a number of Indigenous communities and a 48 hour

retreat into the desert. Mark Yettica Paulson (SL03) is a key part of the project team for this project.

The Centre is currently seeking investment to establish a **Queensland Leadership Program** in 2009. For a copy of the prospectus please contact Geoff Aigner.

SLC has been funded by FACSIA and the Indigenous Coordination Unit to undertake the consultation phase of an **Indigenous Women's Leadership Program** targeting women in the Campbelltown/Macarthur area. The consultation will inform the design of a leadership program aimed at developing the leadership capacity of Indigenous women with a view to reducing family violence in their communities.

In partnership with the **Department of Housing**, the Centre will commence delivery of tailored leadership program for 70 young people from around NSW who have grown up in community housing. The program kicks off with an opening retreat at the end of June.

Introduction to Adaptive Leadership - This year's four day retreat will be held on the Central Coast from 19-22 August. Contact Kyrstie Dunn if you would like to nominate someone to attend. [Read more about this short program.](#)

The **UNIFY Youth Leadership Program** draws to a close in June. The program has taken an innovative approach to challenging racism in today's society. During the program, participants developed a comic strip to highlight how easy it is to judge other people because they are different. Comics will be distributed amongst schools. [Read the comic.](#)

Postcards from the Program

The 2008 Sydney Leadership Participants are fast approaching the halfway mark, marked by the Canberra Retreat this weekend. While in Canberra, participants will hear from alumni Allison Henry (SL05), Ministerial Advisor to Senator Chris Evans, the Federal Minister for Immigration & Citizenship and Leader of the Government in the Senate and Paul O'Callaghan (SL02), Executive Director of the Australian Council for International Development. They will also hear from The Hon. Justice Michael Kirby; Harry Evans, Clerk of the Senate, and Jeff Whalan, CEO Centrelink.

2008 Sydney Leadership participant Rohan McMahon is a Project Manager in the Enterprise and Government division of Telstra. [Read his reflections on the program so far.](#)

Who's in the Climate Change space?

In the interest of better connecting you with other alumni around issues of interest to you, this issue of Impact contains articles from Sydney Leadership Alumni working with the great adaptive issue of our day, Climate Change!

- [Adam Blakester SL2004](#)
- [Alice Cahill SL2003](#)
- [Christopher Saunders SL2005](#)
- [Joanna White SL2002](#)
- [Sam Robinson SL2004](#)
- [Simon Wright SL2003](#)
- [Simon Divecha SL2001](#)
- [The Benevolent Society & Climate Change](#)

Our next issue, due out in September will feature articles from Alumni working in the area of Education, Learning and Development. Be sure to [contact Nicole Hercus](#) if you'd like your story included.

Stay in touch!

April Pham (SL04) departs for West Darfur, Sudan, next week where she will be working with UNHCR as a Protection Officer. Wishing you the very best April!

We'd love to hear your news! To update your information, stay connected or include something in the next Sydney Leadership Alumni newsletter, [contact Nicole Hercus](#).

10 Years of Leadership



The Climate Change Issue..... This issue of **Impact** marks a change of format, designed to showcase the work of the alumni network and better connect you with one another through the issues you are passionate about. Read more from Robbie

Sydney Leadership was established ten years ago to foster a network of leaders with the capacity, understanding, skills and determination to take positive steps towards our future wellbeing as a society. Ten years on, the work undertaken by you, a network of over 300 SL graduates, in your communities and organisations, remains the strongest validation for our leadership development programs. You will see from our **What's Happening** section below the extent of the expansion the Sydney Leadership Centre is experiencing.

The articles included have been submitted by alumni working to address **Climate Change**. These articles demonstrate the strength that lies in the diversity of our network – on one issue alone our alumni are working to create change across a number of settings, working across difference, in a variety of ways, employing a host of strategies.

The September issue of Impact will focus on those alumni working in the areas of **Education, Learning and Development**. Be sure to let us know about your work in this area so we can include it in the next issue.

Congratulations and thanks to those of you who took the time to share with us your endeavors to bring about change on this critical and pressing issue. I hope the rest of you find as much inspiration as I have in reading about it!

Kind regards,

Robbie Macpherson
Head, Sydney Leadership Centre

Leadership Symposium on Friday 28th November 2008 9.00am-5.00pm

Cocktail party on Friday 28th November 2008 5.30pm-8.00pm

To mark the 10th Anniversary of the Sydney Leadership Program. The Sydney Leadership Centre will be hosting a full day of leadership dialogue on **Friday 28th November 2008, followed by a Cocktail Party.** Guest speakers are still being confirmed but **include** Australian academic and practitioner, **Dean Williams**, author of 'Real Leadership' and faculty member of the Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government. Many of you will be familiar with the work of Dean from Sydney Leadership readings but for those less familiar with his work, see

<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/about/faculty-staff-directory/dean-williams>

The purpose of the day is to bring the Sydney Leadership Alumni Network together in dialogue around the important issues we grapple with, to learn and think together. Most importantly, we want to come together to celebrate the ten years of Sydney Leadership and reconnect with the people and networks that have developed during that time. We invite you all to take part in the dialogue and join us for the celebrations afterwards. The event promises to be significant and engaging but that will only happen with your participation. We will keep you updated with developments as plans unfold but in the meantime keep **Friday 28th November 2008 free**, registration details to come.....

Postcard from the Program

Rohan MacMahon – 4 June 2008

By now you're not who you were, or at least who you thought you were. You are questioning everything, questioning the very premise of the questions you are asking yourself.

As we were processed for entry into Dillwynia Women's Correctional Centre, Liz Skelton asked if I had ever been to prison before. It is a remarkable question! For me personally, a couple of visits to Villawood Detention Centre were the closest I had come. While Villawood is no-one's idea of fun, Dillwynia was another thing altogether. On the one hand a facility purpose-built to be "kinder" to inmates than a traditional "Law and Order" approach, it is on the other an encapsulation of our unwillingness to engage with the hard questions in our society. 85% of women in Dillwynia are victims of abuse; 75% have a drug or alcohol problem; 60% are on remand so have not even been found guilty of the crimes of which they are accused.

Does anyone outside of the talkback radio feedback-loop really think our current approach to "Laura Norder" is going to work in the best interests of these women? Do we really believe that in an era of scarce employment skills we should be locking up more and more citizens every year? Do we really not want to know about or care about these people?

So far the Program has also taken us to visit community members at San Remo on the Central Coast, who have empowered themselves to solve community problems rather than waiting for governments to do so. We've also met the staff of Holroyd High School, which teaches basic skills (like road safety) to students, many of whom are new arrivals to this country from the most desperate backgrounds.

These experiences, together with our classwork and a small mountain of readings on Leadership, have brought us now halfway along a journey of external learning and inward reflection.

It would be easy, tempting to soak all this up and revel in introspection. It's the old human condition again: "How to be?" One could spend too long in such contemplations, but that's not a luxury available to me, or I suspect to many of the group. In my case I have three kids under 5 to look after, plus volunteer commitments with Amnesty International. Within the Program itself we are also getting our Syndicate Group together regularly enough as we work our way towards a potential opportunity to improve child welfare.

Intermingled with this for me has been a breakneck work schedule (I work in the Enterprise & Government division of Telstra, helping provide communications to corporate Australia). In early May I commenced a management review covering nearly 900 staff. As the Project Director I need to be sensitive to the needs of those around me – team members, senior managers on the Steering Committee, and assorted "subject matter experts" and "stakeholders". It has been interesting to bring some of the lessons of the Program into this review. It is as yet unfinished, but so far at least I have not been "assassinated"!

So what have I learned so far?

Firstly, that expressing my emotions is not just easier to do than I had thought, it can get better results than the alternative. My emotions are deep-seated and genuine, but have not been very easily expressed particularly in a work context. I face the challenge of a workplace like many which favours rationality over emotion, but I am learning to handle the balance and interplay between the two. So that connection between heart and head, so that one is acting with one voice, is an important opportunity for me to develop.

Secondly, that language is even more powerful than I thought. Some people use nomenclature as a weapon, others as a mask. Few use language to get the best outcomes. Program participant Maurice told me to “stop using the jargon” the other day. He’s probably right, but hey, I didn’t start it! Language is ubiquitous, yet it is under-discussed and poorly understood. One person’s “asylum seeker” is another’s “queue jumper”. And in Sydney Leadership, one person’s “work avoidance” is another’s “leadership intervention”. Getting on the same page for our Syndicate Group has (I think) involved getting past some of the language towards a place where we feel we have trust in each other and some shared values which can be the basis for action.

Thirdly, that politeness and respect are very different things. Often when I feel I am being respectful of others I am in fact holding back constructive criticism. We spend too much of our lives engaged in polite conversation. When we hold back from respectful criticism we allow untruths to fester without correction – and we hold people back from changing in their own best interests.

Finally, and most importantly, the Program has renewed my sense of courage to take further steps to change society for the good. I think it is giving all of us the tools to do so, and hopefully increasing our sense of initiative – that these things not just can but should be done. Personally I have my own bottom drawer ideas, and the work of our Syndicate Group is taking shape too. I hope to see these efforts as future leadership opportunities rather than mere “initiatives”.

How about you, SL alumni? As you read my words, are you reflecting on your own thoughts and feelings from your time in the Program? Are you looking back in wonder at the changes you successfully made – internal and external – through the Program? Are you still feeling “the passion for the change and the power to act”?

Or are you wondering what I am on about?

Changing Climate | Changing Needs | Changing Society – *we are all now living below the polders* –

Adam Blakester (SL'04) is a social change strategist with a particular passion for sustainability and wellbeing. Adam is a Director of the Antarctic & Southern Ocean Coalition, member of the Greenpeace Australia Pacific Finance & Audit Committee, Great Transition Initiative, Vibewire Advisory Council and Wellbeing Australia.

From the moment I was asked to write an article about climate change for Impact my heart-body-mind stirred with the healthy challenge of finding something usefully different to write for you, the alumnus of Sydney and Rural Community Leadership. Writing for you as an audience of leaders and peers was a little daunting too.

My article aims to shine light on the connections between climate change and several significant global paradigm shifts of environmental, social and economic change.

Dutch people have a saying about their culture which reflects a unique environmental need they have which goes something like 'whether you are rich or poor, black or white, man or woman, we all live together, in the same polder – below sea level'.

On the one hand this saying reflects that part of Dutch culture about everyone working together for the common good. On the other hand this saying reflects the environmental fact that many Dutch people live on land that is below sea level and so have a common need to work together to maintain the pumping systems and dikes to keep that land – the 'polders' – dry. If they don't do this their land, and perhaps too their lives, will be lost.

The polders are in fact land that has been reclaimed from sea, flood plains, river systems and wetlands. The majority of land in the Netherlands lies less than one metre above sea level, with a great deal being below sea level. Even the international airport at Schipol is 3 metres below sea level. The maps below show the Netherlands in full (left) and what would be left without dikes (that is without land that is in fact below sea level) (right).¹



This environmental need has influenced strong Dutch environmental values. For example, the public membership of Greenpeace in the Netherlands is very high – around 1 member for every 50 people. Other Greenpeace offices around the planet still use this membership level as a (very) aspirational target. Interestingly, Greenpeace in the Netherlands is viewed as a mature mainstream organisation – far from the radical green or fringe perception it still holds in Australia.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_the_Netherlands

The Dutch have good reason to be concerned about climate change too – you would be as well if you lived just above (or worse still just below) sea level given that the sea level is already rising due to global warming. No doubt the Dutch can relate to the many tens of millions more people around the world who also live with the growing threat of rising sea levels.

There is something very significant about this Dutch cultural phenomena which holds a key to understanding the social changes taking place and required for humanity to address climate change.

In the way the Dutch culture has been shaped by their common need to keep the polders dry, the social changes taking place to address climate change are arising from our common global need to keep the planetary carbon cycle healthy. This social change is the beginnings of a profound cultural paradigm shift – the emergence of global human culture and values; the foundations of a truly global village. Climate change is the first major environmental need which all of humanity is facing together.² When it comes to climate change, we are all now living below the polders so to speak.

This emerging global culture is as yet new and immature, and some people are more ready for it to happen than others. For example, despite the fact that this is the only accessible and habitable planet available to us some nation-states are still behaving as if they had an alternate place to go – such as demonstrated by the USA, China, India and until recently Australia resisting entering the Kyoto Protocol.

How much longer will the six and a half billion residents of our global village accept different carbon footprints for people of different nations? How much longer will they accept differing entitlements and access to other common resources such as oceans, air and minerals? The planetary carbon cycle does not care for national boundaries, and over time nor will we – and each and every one of the six and a half billion villagers on Earth has an equitable and common interest in it.

The pressure on these questions of equity and justness will rise with the growth of global culture which in turn will accelerate as the needs driving it increase. At the moment climate change does not appear to most as urgent as water trickling into the polders, however that is rapidly changing. Further, climate change is only one of many profound global needs we now share in common with each other member of the global village. Others include:

- The commencement of the Anthropocene Age, so called because we are witnessing the largest loss of biodiversity since dinosaurs became extinct 60 million years ago
- While more than half of the world is malnourished, obesity dominates other parts of the world and there remains only one, maybe two, viable commercial fisheries on the planet left
- One in three residents of the global village do not have access to safe drinking water
- Peak oil is likely to be reached around 2015 with peak minerals soon to follow
- One in four villagers don't have electricity and three in four have only enough for one lonely light bulb at night
- A quarter of the forest lost in the last 10,000 years has been destroyed in the last 30 years
- There is a growing pile of rubbish floating in the Pacific ocean that is now larger in size than Australia

It is perhaps not surprising that in the face of this fast, vast, voracious storm of multiple, simultaneous and profound changes that social and mental health problems are also increasing at alarming rates. Our emotional, psychological and spiritual reserves are under strain. As much as these are issues of social, environmental and economic concern, they are also crises of faith and lost purpose.

² Addressing the ozone hole could be argued to have been an earlier global environmental need facing humanity, however the solution required was much simpler than that for climate change. Essentially substitute technology was available to address ozone depletion.

To address these needs humanity is embarking on its greatest transition yet. A profound paradigm shift and new direction is afoot – to sustainable global wellbeing. In blunt terms sustainability means works for all people and the planet and wellbeing means quality of life more than quantity of stuff.

Wisely, Benjamin Disraeli, a British Politician who lived in the 1800s said: “The most dangerous strategy is to jump a chasm in two leaps.” Humanity it is now time to jump!

In closing, here is Today's Top 10 initiatives that embody this pursuit of sustainable wellbeing for all people, whether they are black or white, man or woman, rich or poor, and the creation of this global village nestled in the polders on a small blue planet.

I urge and encourage you to choose two which resonate most strongly with your purpose, Dogpile search them on the internet, and integrate them into your leadership work.

1. The baby-child-youth friendly movement of parenting, services and community development: growing up emotionally healthier, happy on the inside, tread lightly on the Earth people
2. The one laptop one child project: a revolution in education, connection and participation
3. Renewable energy. The sun alone supplies 15,000 times the daily energy usage on Earth. Plus there is wind, wave, geothermal and more. All new power stations, homes and buildings should be powered by renewable energy. Period. Transport must be next.
4. Cuba: the only country in the world to meet the requirements for sustainable development (meaning high living standards with low resource use)
5. The quality of life movement that is sweeping the world and includes cultural creatives, sea changers, tree changers, sustainability shifters and the blessed unrest
6. The Free and Open Source Software movements (OpenOffice was used to type this article)
7. The United Nations Environment Program which planted 2 billion trees last year and aims to plant 7 billion – one for each villager on Earth – by 2009
8. Construction of Masdar City, United Arab Emirates, which will be the world's first zero carbon emissions city
9. The global Freecycle Network of re-users of everything. Waste not, want not
10. And the first sighting of short-snouted sea horses having returned to the River Thames, London: proving regeneration of healthy habitat is possible in even extreme settings

Selling Climate Change to the Middle East

Alice Cahill (SL 2003)

When the phone call came through from my brother who was working in Dubai, that Dubai Properties, the organisation he was working for would like me to present my 'An Inconvenient Truth' slideshow presentations – the first thought was 'talking about climate change to the Middle East is like trying to sell ice to Eskimos'.

In September 2007, I was privileged to be among 170 other Australians personally trained by Al Gore, Nobel Peace prize and Academy Award winner, to become one of his Climate Change Ambassadors and spread the word about the causes and impact of global warming through Mr Gore's Climate Project.

I was excited and a little nervous about talking to the local Dubai population – Emiratees - who are one of the largest producers of petroleum in the world – about how their livelihood is one of the major contributors to global warming.

I also wondered whether, despite the invitation to talk to the Senior Management of Dubai Properties, that there would be a simmering underlying resentment about being told by a representative of the "West" that things were going to have to change if we were going to be able to stave off serious climate change.

How differently things turned out. At all my meetings and interactions with the Emiratees, I was constantly surprised at how keen they were to be seen as being part of the global community and how they wanted to play a positive role in world affairs. They, like us, are interested in Climate Change, and are keen to leave their children a positive legacy of a healthy planet.

Why should this surprise me? I think of myself as an open, well read person who is easily able to discern the media bias about Arabs and the Middle East. On an intellectual level I know that the images we are constantly bombarded with of the Middle East are extremely narrow and only focused on the extremes. However what struck me again and again how surprised I was about the modern, moderate Arabs who despite dressing so differently in the dishdasha - the traditional white robe - they share many of the same aspirations as most Australians.

The longer I spent in Dubai preparing my presentations the more I found in common between Australia and the Emirates. We both come from countries with very dry landscapes, both heavily reliant on fossil fuels to 'fuel' our economy – us coal and them oil – and we are both at the top of the global emitters of carbon per capita of population.

I used these connections in my "An Inconvenient Truth" presentations to talk how with our new Government we are hopeful that we can not only overturn decades of inaction on this issue but can show some leadership and possibly bridge the huge gap between the developing and developed world. I finished by challenging them to think about their role and to think of themselves as part of the solution.

What role the Middle East will play in trying to solve the Climate Change issue is still undecided. How will they invest the billions of dollars they are making from the seemingly unstoppable increase in oil prices? Will they use their wealth to create the next generation of renewable or low carbon energy supplies?

I don't have the answers, although I came away from my visit to Dubai feeling hopeful that this part of the world, if engaged properly, could play a significant role in dealing with the biggest challenge the global community has ever faced.

Alice Cahill undertook the Sydney Leadership program in 2003 and currently works for Zurich Financial Services as their Corporate Responsibility Manager. She has made 17 An Inconvenient Truth presentations to a diverse range of community and corporate audiences, most recently to 25 employees of The Benevolent Society. She is now part of a group of over 2,000 Climate Change Ambassadors from US, UK, Canada, and most recently India who are spreading the word about the impacts of Climate Change.

Big hART – GOLD

Christopher Saunders (SL2005)
Big hART

Christopher Saunders is the Creative Producer of Big hART's cultural intervention *Gold - Water is the New Gold*. *Gold* is exploring issues and relationships with Australia's first Climate Change refugees - farming families.

Over the last 18 months, young people and photographers, filmmakers, designers and producers, have spent time talking with farming families on rural properties across the Murray Darling Basin - sharing and collecting stories of hardship, resilience and hope during the worst drought in the region's history.

The young people involved are from Griffith NSW and have been experiencing difficulties with mainstream education. By encouraging their participation in this project Big hART hope to re-engage them in education and the community.

Bringing together these two unlikely groups has facilitated an exchange that is both reflective and productive, with young people now taking the lead in raising community awareness of the impacts of drought on farming families.

The primary aim of *Gold* is to include in the national debate on climate change, the perspective of farming families who are experiencing the effects of these changes first hand, thereby ensuring that the human cost of these issues is not lost. Big hART is to doing this in a number of ways:

- Photographic exhibitions of the work of these young people are being toured to rural centres;
- Packages including photos and films are being sent to CEOs, heads of departments and opinion formers nationally;
- A documentary of the project is being made for ABC Television;
- An outdoor performance piece is being put together, to be performed in dry dams on properties in the Murray Darling Basin;
- All the works made by families, young people and artists are being showcased on the project website www.au.org.au;
- An acoustic musical will be staged and tour both regional and urban theatres in 2010.

One of the biggest leadership challenges with this work is coordinating the interchange between the two groups. The young people can have very high needs such as mental health issues, family conflict and homelessness. The farming families are facing similar issues, but are also often taking huge risks, both financially and emotionally in terms of sustaining crops and stock. In terms of an intervention, it is easy to invest large amounts of energy and time in dealing with these issues on an individual basis. While there is great value in doing this, the work is most effective when the two groups come together and are able to interact and look respectively beyond their immediate predicaments thus giving focus to a broader perspective with the propensity for change.

The *Gold* team would welcome links to or partnerships with other organizations working in a similar field. SL alumni are invited along with other interested parties to visit the website and register as a contributor. Respond to blog posts made by the young people and farmers by leaving a comment, or participate in the forum discussions. The project welcomes the addition of narratives (written, audio, photographic or filmic) from a global audience experiencing similar issues.

Further information www.au.org.au

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NAB and the Challenges of Climate Change

Joanna White (SL2002)

Group Manager, Corporate Responsibility at NAB

As a global financial services organisation, with operations spanning Europe, North America and Australasia the National Australia Bank Ltd (NAB) recognises the need for organisations to actively respond to the risks and opportunities posed by a changing climate.

A key first step has been to understand how climate change may affect NAB, and where and how our actions may contribute to climate change. This understanding is critical to achieving our objective to reduce our carbon footprint and develop knowledge and experience that will enable us to help our customers and employees respond to change.

Our Group-wide climate change strategy identifies five elements that will help us achieve our stated objectives. These elements are managed by geographical region with oversight provided at a Group level:

- **Leadership through our own actions** – establishing our carbon inventory, making our operations carbon neutral, publicly reporting our progress and helping lead the debate and development of solutions to climate change.
- **Engaging and assisting our people** – providing office, energy, and resource reduction awareness as well as volunteering opportunities, and support for our people that wish to personally take action on climate change.
- **Understanding and backing our customers** – through advice, as well as product and service offerings, to appropriately support local markets.
- **Building key partnerships** – with a range of stakeholders to help identify and implement solutions that assist our people, customers and communities to take action on climate change.
- **Continuing to grow our understanding of climate risks and opportunities** – to consider the impact of climate change in our lending and investment decisions, as well as other areas of relevant operational policy.

Our journey to carbon neutrality is a clear example of *leadership through our own actions*. It incorporates a number of diverse strategies to reduce or avoid emissions.

Embracing 'Ecological Sustainable Design' principles in new and refurbished buildings has resulted in a 5 Star rating¹ for the design of one of our New Zealand operation's commercial buildings. Another 5 star rating² is expected from the refurbishment of our Group headquarters at 500 Bourke St, Melbourne. In this refurbishment the use and disposal of resources is part of the rating process.

Our technology teams are working to further improve their energy efficiency. To date they have performed a monitor replacement program and XP rollout, ensuring computers "sleep" after 15 minutes of inactivity. In addition, a computer server virtualisation process has been implemented in New Zealand and has commenced in Australia. This involves fewer but more sophisticated servers reducing both the energy and physical space requirements.

Initiatives like these, which target our property and technology emissions, are being complemented by reduction targets for our business-related air travel and the introduction of hybrid vehicles in our car fleet.

In addition to emissions reduction we are increasing our purchase of renewable electricity to further reduce our emissions. Carbon offsets will be purchased for the remaining, unavoidable emissions.

The means by which we deliver our strategy will continue to evolve, particularly as new climate change challenges arise and emissions trading schemes develop and mature.

On this journey we have and will continue to encounter challenges. But, by continuing to work closely with our stakeholders we not only create transparency in our decision making and facilitate sharing of best practice climate change thinking and experience.

It is through sharing our experience, and knowledge that we can help foster similar responses from our customers, employees and suppliers and deliver a ripple effect.

¹ Rating according to the New Zealand Green Building Council rating tool

² According to the Australian Green Building Council Green Star Rating tool

After changing your showerhead and your light globes, what next?

Sam Robinson (SL2004)
Corporate & Government Affairs Manager
Conservation Volunteers Australia

Climate Camp

In February this year I was fortunate to be sent to San Francisco for the WWF Climate Camp, funded by our corporate partner Hewlett Packard. It was an amazing week with 170 'campers' from over 30 countries brought together to discuss Climate Change Adaptation and to collaborate on projects to address Climate Change. After the first day of presentations by eminent climate scientists, it was very clear that the projections are (still) bleak, and that immediate action needs to be taken by us all.

Climate Change is an anthropogenic problem i.e. human cause/related and it became glaringly obvious to me during the camp what a powerful role Conservation Volunteers has to play in this issue. Conservation Volunteers works across all sectors with corporates, government and community and as an apolitical not for profit, we have extensive and influential networks in Australia and around the world. Each year we facilitate over 100,000 volunteer days and assist over 2000 practical conservation projects. Through our work we are able to raise awareness, build capacity and help influence behaviour change, which can assist in expediting the mobilization of our communities to take positive and immediate action on climate change.

Action for Climate Change

Recent times have seen almost unanimous opinion around the world that our climate is changing to an extent that it will continue to have serious ramifications on the health of all species. As a practical organisation Conservation Volunteers has responded to this issue by establishing the Action for Climate Change program.

Action for Climate Change builds upon the 26 years of experience Conservation Volunteers has in actually doing something on the ground. Action for Climate Change is based upon practical, simple actions in which all of us can participate.

This new program is managed by Conservation Volunteers and is a range of initiatives to assist businesses, and individuals to reduce their impact on the environment. Action for Climate Change will also develop a series of carbon forests which will act as carbon sinks using native vegetation across Australia and New Zealand.

Supporters of the Action for Climate Change program are helping us build the capacity of Conservation Volunteers to do the following:-

- Creating the ability to support a series of carbon forests across the country
- Ongoing development of further sites including pest weed and animal control as required
- Practical support to threatened species under threat due to dangerous Climate Change
- Provide regular updates showing the progress and results of the program
- Provide ongoing invitations to visit carbon forest sites and participate in revegetation as a volunteer.
- Provide regular reporting of each site via the Action for Climate Change website in regards to the biodiversity and carbon storage outcomes.
- Provide information on actions you can take to reduce your carbon emissions.

In the financial year 2007/08 Action for Climate Change aims to deliver a set of activities that will result in a potential 5,500 tonnes of carbon being stored in native vegetation. There will be several species currently being threatened by climate change conditions which will be protected by practical action involving volunteers and supporters of the Action for Climate Change program. Progress towards these targets will be reported to supporters via the website.

All supporters' funding is used to support the following -

- Provision of seedlings on accredited sites.
- Site preparation on accredited sites.
- Land manager / owner maintenance support.
- Site coordination, mapping, record keeping and sequestration estimation
- Covenanted (or other form of permanency guarantee)
- Covering costs of community and volunteer plantings (transport, catering, tools, insurances, protective equipment and supervision etc)
- Direct costs of threatened species projects (these projects do not result in carbon storage but rather assist species suffering from issues caused by dangerous climate change such as rising temperatures, sea levels etc)
- Ongoing development of educational support to Action for Climate Change supporters aimed at reducing initial emissions

The Action for Climate Change program at all times uses the calculations and formulae available to the general community on the Department of Climate Change website together with specific regional sequestration rates determined using the Department of Climate Change National Carbon Accounting System (NCAS) Fullcam Software.

The Action for Climate Change carbon forest sites are being identified on an ongoing basis. Sites are, first and foremost selected based upon their positive outcomes to the natural environment. Of course all sites will also meet the Kyoto compliance principles of additionality, permanence, and verification. Action for Climate Change sites are selected initially on their positive contribution to biodiversity outcomes (which means that in some cases the carbon storage rate may be low).

It is aimed to have a series of Action for Climate Change sites which will be accredited formally by the Department of Climate Change Greenhouse Friendly standards. Under the formally accredited Greenhouse Friendly sites there is a guaranteed verification process where carbon storage in Action for Climate Change carbon forest is independently verified and approved Greenhouse Friendly. These results will be reported to supporters via the Action for Climate Change website.

Action for Climate Change is not looking to compete with other abatement providers in the carbon offset market. Rather, Action for Climate Change is looking to receive financial support from businesses and individuals that allow it to deliver its aims of emission reductions, carbon forests and increased biodiversity outcomes, as well as supporting threatened species.

The Action for Climate Change program will be reporting directly to its supporters via the web page and will report on each individual site as well as the total outcome of the program. Carbon storage together with the biodiversity outcomes will form the main sections of all reporting. Supporters will be able to visit the sites and participate in voluntary involvement. Community volunteer days will be promoted for the sites and will be promoted via the Action for Climate Change and Conservation Volunteers websites.

All programs of this type have points of difference. Action for Climate Change provides a credible and transparent program which links biodiversity outcomes to true carbon capture and storage.

So, you have changed your showerheadand your light globes, and you are at home watching TV with images of polar bears scabbling around on dwindling icecaps and feeling powerless. Visit www.conservationvolunteers.com.au

What is Conservation Volunteers?

Conservation Volunteers is Australia's leading practical conservation organization and is independent, not for profit and apolitical. In 2006 Conservation Volunteers also commenced operations in New Zealand. Conservation Volunteers is independent, not for profit and apolitical.

Since 1982 Conservation Volunteers has fulfilled its mission to attract and manage a force of volunteers in practical conservation projects for the betterment of the environment.

Key information about Conservation Volunteers:

- Welcomes more than 10,000 volunteers a year.
- Works in partnership to assist more than 2,000 priority conservation projects.
- Real conservation results, including planting more than 1 million trees per annum.
- Provides training to more than 1,000 individuals and groups per annum.
- Works in partnership with all levels of government.
- Partners with many top businesses to tackle conservation priorities.
- Has a network of more than 20 offices and 150 full-time employees.
- Member of the IUCN (World Conservation Union).
- Federation of Youth Travel Organisations.
- Founding member of the International Alliance of Conservation Volunteers.
- Winner of numerous Banksia Awards.
- Winner of the PM's Award for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships
- Winner of United Nations Global 500 Award.

Simon Wright (SL2003)

Sustainability Manager
Direct Insurance IAG

I have been working in Sustainability or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for the past four years. For me, sustainability was a confluence of a personal passion for social and environmental issues with a belief that business still has both the potential and resources to be a positive and significant agent for change.

Having completed my Masters in CSR/Sustainability in the UK, I remained there for a further 12 months consulting to business, Government, NGOs and Universities on areas as diverse as disclosure and assurance, ethics and codes of conduct, community engagement and supply chain/SMEs.

On returning to Sydney some twelve months ago, I joined IAG as the Sustainability Manager working across the Direct Insurance (DI) business. The role of my small team is really as broad as we want to make it. Our key objective is to consult to all areas of the business and translate much of the rhetoric around sustainability into tangible benefits for the DI business and its key stakeholders. On any given day, we might be straddling issues related to product, supply chain, brand, property, customers or the more strategic issue of emissions reduction.

Whilst there is an enormous commitment to sustainability at both a corporate and staff level at IAG, implementation is always challenging due to a range of constraints, more often than not imposed externally by the short term expectations of investors and financial markets. However, it is clear that the language of business is slowly broadening to include social and environmental concerns. Due to internal pressure from staff and external pressure from communities, NGOs and Government, most of Australia's largest corporations are waking up to the need to proactively manage their licence to operate and the obligations that accompany this, once companies start out along this path.

Sustainability is an exciting 'space' to be in at the moment. Not only is interest growing from all corners, it is truly evolving on a daily basis as we discover new opportunities and challenges and are being forced to think about how we address them as individuals, community members, employees, investors or holders of superannuation. Networking across the space remains critical because we are all learning. Listening to how others are grappling with similar, challenging issues is a major source of ideas and a platform for one's own innovation. Given the challenge of climate change and the inevitable impacts on those least able to respond, my kids would never forgive me if I wasn't working in this area !!

Climate Change and Values

Simon Divecha (SL2001)

In 2001, when I was participating in the Sydney Leadership program, environmental work was largely regarded as peripheral to the mainstream. My involvement with advocacy organisations pushing for change was seen as laudable by some, quixotic or worse by others. The 7 years since then have seen a phenomenal growth - climate change and associated issues are now mainstream. You can't go a day without reading or hearing about the latest development.

Just one example is the recent McKinsey analysis. Inquiring into the cost of cutting emissions the company reports that a significant reduction in Australian emissions is achievable - 30 percent by 2020 and 60 percent by 2030 'without major technological breakthroughs or lifestyle changes'. Importantly such a radical fast reduction is affordable – it would cost about \$290 per household to hit the potential 2020 reduction.¹

It's also in our interests to act. Professor Ross Garnaut, who is undertaking a review for Australian governments into the climate change impacts and options for Australia, states clearly that it is in Australia's best interest for the world to adopt a 'strong and effective position on climate change'. Australia is both exceptionally sensitive to the impacts from climate change and extraordinarily well placed to benefit in a world that takes effective steps to address this challenge².

For me this means taking a leadership role on climate change. I draw inspiration from the sort of shifts we have seen on climate change over the last years. While the need to act decisively and quickly increases by the day, so does the awareness and arguments that point out that it is at least technically possible to meet these challenges.

It's the technically possible part that I think forms a major leadership challenge. Take an area I currently focus on – energy efficiency. If you carry out the same activity, using less power, you can contribute to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and saving money at the same time. For a business, significant increases to productivity - through cutting power costs - are possible. Where I live, a 2002 study by Energy SA found that South Australia business had the potential save \$100 million a year simply by using energy ten percent more efficiently. This is likely to be a conservative estimate as similar studies in the United Kingdom have identified potential savings of approximately 30%. In the United States the Rocky Mountains Institute has routinely identified potential for 50 to 80% in energy savings. The catch is that while we have been able to realise these productivity dividends for at least the last 2 decades, action on change has been slow. It has not occurred at anything like the rate you should expect in the face of the demonstrated economic results.

This is where I've developed my work. Without a doubt, we have to address the market failures and financial barriers to that inhibit action on climate change. But putting a price on

¹ An Australian cost curve for greenhouse gas reduction, February 2008
<http://www.mckinsey.com/client-service/ccsi/>

² Garnaut Climate Change Review Interim Report, February 2008,
<http://www.garnautreview.org.au/CA25734E0016A131/pages/reports-and-papers>

carbon, through carbon trading or other means, is not a panacea. Most recent significant investigations, such as Nicholas Stern's review for the UK government, acknowledge these limitations and highlight the need for individual and society wide behaviour change.³

For me this means that the tools we are using, objective environmental and economic measures are only part of the story. For example, I've consulted for major corporations on their Ecological Footprint. This tool measures sustainability in terms of how much land is used to produce resources and absorb waste (such as greenhouse gases). Clearly, there is only a limited amount of sustainable productive capacity in the world – there is only so much productive land and ocean. As a result, you can measure any activity in terms of the amount of land needed for the activity to be sustainable. Importantly you can also measure potential reductions. For example, in the energy efficiency cases mentioned above the balance between extra resources needed for equipment (such as insulation) is measured against the reduction in waste through reduced power use and hence lower greenhouse gas emissions.⁴

Such measurement produces a compelling picture of human impacts. For example, in a real world case an ASX 100 financial service company's direct activities would need about half of Sydney's land area – the company's direct footprint – to supply the resources necessary for its activities and absorb the waste from them. But the company's influence extends much more broadly than its direct impacts. Just one of the changes it is contemplating to its policies – to encourage sustainable outcomes for people using its products - potentially results in an Ecological Footprint reduction twice as big as the company's direct impacts.

Having an objective measure of sustainability and, the comparative impacts a company can have, is powerful. However, I've found that people are looking to such tools as support for their decision making processes. Just like the experience with energy efficiency, such objective measures are insufficient motivators. The desire for change and improvement rests on far more subjective values and decisions. In my experience when people working on climate change focus as much, if not more, on understanding these values positive outcomes are far more likely.

Simon Devicha

Director, GreenMode

I have two decades of experience creating environmental change, addressing climate change and, leading programs that today create the conditions for the growth of sustainable organisations and societies. I've worked for non profits and business including with Greenpeace and, as CEO of the Conservation Council of South Australia. With business, I recently played a leading role in the successful bid (by a consortium comprising BP Solar, Origin Energy, Lend Lease, Big Switch Projects, ANZ Bank and Salisbury region government) to establish Adelaide as Australia's first Solar City. I'm also a PhD candidate – my thesis explores the impact of climate change on business strategy, culture and collaboration.

³ Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change, http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/sternreview_index.cfm

⁴ To calculate your personal footprint try this online calculator:
<http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/ecologicalfootprint/calculators/personal/introduction.asp>

The Benevolent Society and Climate Change



The Benevolent Society recognises that our direct service delivery is vital to the wellbeing of communities, but to bring about positive social change we also need to secure resources and influence policy and practice and across a range of social and political arenas. We do this by:

- using research to inform and provide evidence
- engaging with government and key opinion leaders
- raising awareness, public commentary and making submissions.

We've identified 12 broad social issues that impact on economic and social inclusion and will drive our advocacy efforts. One of these areas is climate change. We're concerned that the effects of climate change, and attempts to redress it, will be felt disproportionately by disadvantaged communities. We are developing a position statement on the issue and will be working to reduce the negative consequences of climate change experienced by vulnerable families and communities.

We would be interested in exploring opportunities to partner with SL Alumni around our advocacy agenda. For more information about The Benevolent Society's Social Issues and Advocacy Agenda go to:

[The Benevolent Society - Social Issues Agenda - August 2007.pdf](#)