



CONSERVATION NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

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*A tree's a tree.
How many
more do you
want to look
at? If you've
seen one,
you've seen
them all.*

Ronald Reagan

*(Quote courtesy of New Internationalist
Almanac/Desk Calendar)*

This picture depicts a forest in East Gippsland which is no longer there. It was clear-felled one month ago. ACF's major appeal for 1990 is for the forests. We do not want to see Australia lose anymore of its old-growth heritage. National Parks and National Estate forests must be protected. Please help us run this campaign. Please donate to this Appeal. Details on page 3.

□ Photo by David Tatnall

INSIDE

Climate Conference in Cairo	----- 2
Campaign for the forests	----- 3
Qld under Labor	----- 4-5
ACF Greenhouse submission	--- 6
VFT endangers Potoroos	----- 7
Farming an old land	----- 8-9
Aid and the environment	----- 11

Nations meet for Climate Change conference in Cairo



by Bill Hare
ACF Research & Policy
Analyst

Climate Change is universally recognised as the most alarming environmental problem facing the world today. Bill Hare, who until recently held the position of ACF's Deputy Director has now been appointed to the new position of Research and Policy Analyst, and as such will travel extensively examining Climate Change and other international environment issues and policy developments on ecological sustainability.

Late last year he attended a World Conference on Climate Change, in Cairo. This is his report from that Conference.

'Humanity faces threats, real and growing, to the world we live in and even to life itself. ... The scale and magnitude of these problems do not lend themselves to treatment issue-by-issue or by one nation or even a group of nations acting alone. All nations - north and south, east and west - will have to cooperate on an unprecedented scale. They will have to make difficult commitments without delay to address this crisis.' So states the Cairo Compact, an agreement reached at the World Conference on Climate Change held in Egypt in December last year. The meeting was organised by the Climate Institute (a Washington based, non-government policy organisation), the United Nations Environment Programme and the Government of Egypt.

Over 400 participants from six continents attended the Conference. I was invited by the Climate Institute to be among the strong contingent of Australians there, which included the Australian Ambassa-

All nations - north and south, east and west - will have to cooperate on an unprecedented scale. They will have to make difficult commitments without delay to address this crisis.

dor for the Environment, Sir Ninian Stephens, the Victorian Minister for Planning and Environment, Tom Roper, David Stokes of Victoria College and Margaret McCleod, Phil Noyce and Gil Freeman of the Commission for the Future Greenhouse Action.

The Conference was opened by Suzanne Mubarek, wife of the Egyptian President and widely acclaimed for her activities in human welfare in Egypt. In her address she conveyed the great sense of urgency with which this issue is being felt across the globe. The keynote address was given by Mustapha Tolba, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. He stressed the need to resolve questions of global poverty and inequalities if the international community is to deal effectively with the problem of climate change and the deterioration of the global environment.

The Cairo Compact emphasises the role industrial countries should take in tackling the climate problem, which they have largely caused, and in making available to poorer nations significant financial and technological resources to assist them in avoiding increases in their Greenhouse gas emissions.

It also calls for the establishment of a global framework climate convention, and for protocols to be initiated containing very specific commitments to this convention. These should be in place no later than 1992. In this sense, the Compact builds upon the Noordwijk Declaration on Climate Change from the Ministerial Conference in the Netherlands in November 1989.

The Cairo Conference is expected to have a significant impact on developments during 1990 in which the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will be producing its final report. The recommendations of this report will be discussed at the Second World Climate Conference in October/November this year. This Conference should prove a springboard to international negotiations of the global framework climate convention and protocols. □

Bill Hare is currently attending an IPCC Responses Strategies Working Group Meeting in Washington. During this trip he will also meet with scientists and government officials on a range of issues including global change, sustainable development and biodiversity in Washington, Boston and New York, before proceeding to London and Europe. In Amsterdam he intends to meet with representatives of Greenpeace International and Friends of the Earth International, the Climate Action Network and other environmental groups. He has also arranged to receive an extensive briefing from representatives of the Netherlands Government on their environment policy and their moves towards sustainability.

The position of Research and Policy Analyst is one of the new senior positions at ACF created by the implementation of the Forward Plan. Throughout 1990 this page will contain reports from ACF's President, Director and other members of the National Management team. □

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The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Australian Conservation Foundation.
Contributors note that it is the policy of Conservation News to use non-sexist, non-racist language.

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NEW CAMPAIGN FOR OLD FORESTS

The conservation movement is seeking, in East Gippsland as in other parts of Australia, a balance between the need for sustainable development and the protection of our valuable environmental heritage.

The cause of the current dispute over logging in East Gippsland is unclear to some, and the timber industry is trying to cloud the issue by playing down the significance of forests on the National Estate register.

According to the Australian Heritage Commission, National Estate forests are selected because they have "aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance or other special values for future generations as well as the present community".

The decision as to which forests are placed on the register is made by the Commission, a Federal Government agency, which undertakes extensive study beforehand.

The ACF is not opposed to all logging in East Gippsland. However, it would be shirking its duty if it did not try to stop the destruction of the National Estate forests. The areas threatened by logging are all old-growth forests with trees over 200 years old. The prospect of clear-felling these forests has alarmed the conservation movement, because they are an important habitat for many rare and endangered animals and plants, such as our most endangered mammal, the Long-footed Potoroo. Yet logging will take place very near to where the Potoroo has been observed by scientists. ACF is also concerned that no archaeological or heritage studies have been done in the National Estate areas to be logged this season. Findings in comparable country in Tasmania have uncovered twenty sites, and it is believed that such findings would be true of the East Gippsland region.

It may also be that local Aboriginal groups are unaware of sites which could be destroyed by logging activities. The ACF believes it is imperative that the impact of logging on any sites found be thoroughly assessed.

Other areas outside the Gippsland National Parks and National Estate are avail-

able to begin by logging the most environmentally significant areas. Particularly when recent history and a number of studies have shown that plantation timbers are likely to reduce demand for timber from our virgin forests in the coming years.

Stephen Guest of the Victorian Association of Forest Industries accused conservation groups such as the ACF of paying lip service to other environmental problems. Anyone who suggests we are not giving equal attention to problems such as ozone depletion, soil salinity, pollution and waste disposal is not well informed. To suggest that we are neglecting tree decline and species extinction is to miss the whole point of our fight for National Estate forests.

The major environmental concern of the Australian people is the greenhouse effect, caused in part by the worldwide destruction of mature forests. Part of the solution is a move away from cutting virgin forests to a greater reliance on plantation timber.

Governments would do well to heed the will of the public on this issue. A poll conducted last year in south-eastern NSW showed 77 per cent support for protecting the National Estate from logging (including a majority of timber industry workers).

It is time for the Government and the timber industry to draw back from the ongoing forest confrontation and to accept the view of those who are responsible for National Estate listing. Only six months ago the chairman of the Australian Heritage Commission, Mr Galvin, called for an end to the logging of old-growth forests, saying "none of us knows the extent of old-growth forests in Australia, except that it is small and diminishing".

by Peter Allan
ACF Campaign Officer, Victoria



A protester takes time out on the reject pile on Brown Mountain in East Gippsland.

□ Photo: David Tanall

able for the timber industry to log in a carefully regulated manner - in fact about 45 per cent of East Gippsland's forests.

The timber industry is at pains to point out that there is regrowth in National Parks and National Estate areas such as bushfire regrowth and some from selected logging in the past. But this is hardly an excuse for clear felling old-growth forests. These areas are often on the register to maintain geographical or biological integrity in larger sections of virgin forest.

ACF believes it is unnecessary and pro-

PLEASE HELP

You can help save what is left of our old-growth forests. Please give what you can to the ACF Forest Appeal. Send your donations to ACF Forests Appeal, 340 Gore Street, Fitzroy, 3065. Or call (03) 416 1455 (toll free: 008 338 928) for credit card facilities.



One week before the Old election 5000 people marched through Brisbane streets in a rally led by Peter Carroll, Alla Keto and Jack Murnley.
 □ Photo: Mark Crocker

What will Labor do to Queensland

As the dust settles, the euphoria subsides, and normalcy returns to Queensland after December's historic state election. The ACP is hopeful that sustainability and environmental protection will be the by words of the new Labor Government. After all, the National Party was in power long before ecology became a commonly used term and conservation a mainstream issue.

The Green Challenge campaign run by the Queensland conservation movement attracted widespread interest and support in an election dominated by corruption issues. A log of claims, comprising 102 proposals for the minimum agenda of an environmentally responsible government, was distributed to all the political parties. On the basis of their responses, Green

Challenge publicised the opinion that of the major parties, the Labor Party had the best environment policies for rainforest preservation, coastal protection, and Cape York Peninsula. 80,000 leaflets were distributed in fifteen marginal electorates by hundreds of volunteers working in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville and Cairns.

Although the Labor Party scored well in the theoretical exam, giving commitments to 55 of the proposals in the log of claims, they appear to be having difficulties with the practical test. Their honeymoon of the last two months has seen the emergence of three key issues—planning, energy use and production, and National Estate logging—which will prove to be the acid test of the new Government's green credentials.

Cape York Peninsula

Just before Christmas, the Federal government announced its endorsement of the Cape York Space Agency's proposal for a commercial spaceport at Temple Bay. The Goss government was quick to add its support, echoing the Federal statement that support for the project is conditional upon the satisfactory resolution of a range of issues that would be addressed by a joint land-use plan for Cape York Peninsula.

A valid land use study of Cape York Peninsula would place the maintenance of natural and cultural values as a priority, and redress the current paucity of essential baseline information on a regional and biogeographic scale. Comprehensive land use planning should precede, and set the

It is ironic that an issue similar to the Franklin River – a dam in a World Heritage area – should face Queensland in a decade which the Premier has declared as the "end of the Bjelke-Petersen era".

parameters for full social and environmental impact assessment of future development proposals.

However, it has been revealed that the intention of both governments is to include the environmental impact study for the spaceport as "an integral part" of the land-use plan. Such a shortcut makes a mockery of proper planning processes. It would preempt the consideration of alternative sites for the spaceport, which at its present location would divide the National Estate in two.

It would be unfortunate if the Federal Government's hasty approval of the spaceport compromised the Queensland government's public commitments to planning for Cape York Peninsula. These include a full and comprehensive land-use plan that emphasises wilderness and Aboriginal land, a moratorium on all major development proposals for the Peninsula until this is completed and implemented, and to reject the spaceport if it is found to be incompatible with the land-use plan.

Tully Millstream

The Tully-Millstream hydroelectric scheme is a plan to flood 4000 ha near Ravenshoe in North Queensland by dam-

ming the Tully River. The previous government's Minister for Mines and Energy, Bob Katter, did not consider the scheme seriously until the Wet Tropics were listed as World Heritage. It now threatens to inundate 1400ha of World Heritage forests.

Members of the Tully-Millstream Action Group have researched energy use in Queensland and come up with some startling figures on electricity wastage. More efficient domestic appliances, better building design and insulation, use of new technologies such as energy-efficient light bulbs, switching to gas for home cooking, can together create electricity savings equivalent to three times the proposed 550MW output of the Tully-Millstream scheme. The campaign aims to demonstrate that energy conservation and nature conservation are inextricably linked and to have the proposed scheme withdrawn.

Prior to the election, the Goss Government promised to reconsider the \$600 million scheme in the light of energy conservation alternatives and to give these measures priority over investment in extra power stations. However, due to "contractual obligations", the Government claims to be powerless to stop the excavation work that has already commenced. By assessing the project in terms of power

consumption trends and demands, the Government maintains it is completely in line with undertakings made during the election campaign.

Conservationists are arguing for a public inquiry into the Queensland Electricity Commission and energy consumption, investigating how much electricity can be saved rather than how much can be used. It is ironic that an issue similar to the Franklin River – a dam in a World Heritage area – should face Queensland in a decade which the Premier has declared as the "end of the Bjelke-Petersen era".

Fraser Island

The rainforests and tall forests of the world's largest coastal sand mass, Fraser Island, have been logged for 130 years, and virgin old growth stands are now rare. In 1897 the Australian Academy of Science called for the whole of Fraser Island to be declared a national park. Yet, by the early 1970's, only the northern third of the island had been protected.

The conservation movement felt assured that a Labor government would move quickly to phase out the heavily subsidised island hardwood industry. However, recent extensions to the national park have done nothing to prevent the logging in National Estate forests of satiny, brush box and blackbutt. Nor has there been any investigation of the ecological impact of such logging. Although these forests are unique in the world 90 per cent of their area remains available to the Forestry Department, and more than half of the island is under logging or sand mining tenures.

In a recent meeting with Premier Wayne Goss, and the Minister for Environment and Heritage, Pat Comben, the ACP agreed to participate in an independent study of the Fraser Island timber industry. We trust that following this, the Government will rapidly implement Labor Party policy – declaring and managing Fraser Island and Cooloola as national park, and promoting a joint nomination with the Commonwealth for World Heritage listing of the Great Sandy Region.

by Mark Horstman
 ACP Campaign Officer, Queensland



Stockpiles of felled satiny and brush box trees on Fraser Island. 400 ha. of these unique National Estate forests are logged annually in a heavily subsidised, small scale industry.
 □ Photo: Mark Horstman

ACF report presents Greenhouse solutions

A research report on policies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from Australia has been prepared by Bill Hare and Sian Prior for the ACF. The paper was originally prepared for a submission to the Senate Industry, Science and Technology Committee Inquiry into the Greenhouse Effect in Australia. The research report covers a whole range of policy developments that are necessary if Australia is to achieve major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

The policy areas covered by the submission include economic planning and management, energy efficiency, renewable energy systems, least-cost energy planning, research and development programmes, transport policy, urban development, land use and agriculture as well as foreign aid programmes and international measures. Emphasis is placed on energy efficiency and least-cost energy planning, as major programmes in each of these areas would have early impacts on greenhouse gas emissions.

Electricity is the largest single source of CO₂ followed by petroleum products, and natural gas. In terms of end-use, industry is by far the largest emitter of CO₂, particularly in the mineral processing sector. Road transport contributes over one fifth of CO₂ emissions – a figure which is rapidly accelerating because of the escalation in road-freight instead of rail or water transport systems. Private car use is also increasing and the rate of improvement in vehicle efficiency has diminished owing to a lack of regulation and direction.

Homes produce nearly as much CO₂ as road transport. This reflects the highly carbon-intensive and often inefficient and inappropriate use of electricity for many domestic purposes, such as water heating. Many cost effective and energy efficient technologies exist which can significantly reduce the energy required

Graphic by Ian McLachlan, courtesy The Age

to do common tasks. However, there are many barriers to the widespread introduction of the latest and most efficient technologies which go beyond the question of price, affordability and economic efficiency. The research report canvasses a number of these issues and proposes policy solutions. A major programme of minimum national energy efficiency standards for all consumer goods, motor vehicles, industrial processes and building is advocated. A major reform of the electricity commission is also considered necessary before Australia can see the widespread introduction of the most efficient energy practices.

Australia has the dubious distinction of being one of the most intensive emitters of greenhouse gases per head of population, producing nearly 1.6 per cent of global CO₂ emissions. Strong economic advantages exist for Australia in moving towards an energy efficient economy and in developing technological know-how.

The seventy-six page research report can be obtained from the ACF for \$9.95 plus \$1.50 postage. Your comments are invited on the policy ideas proposed in this report.

by Bill Hare
ACF Research & Policy Analyst



PM invites US energy expert back to Australia

Australia could save approximately 75 per cent of its present electricity consumption by using electricity more efficiently according to the US energy expert, Amory Lovins. Dr Lovins visited Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra in late November 1989 with the assistance of the ACF, Friends of the Earth and Movement Against Uranium Mining.

With a suitcase full of electrical gadgets he was able to demonstrate how new energy-efficiency technologies could reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, at a profit, if they were retrofitted throughout the domestic, commercial

and industrial sectors.

At large public meetings in Sydney and Melbourne, Dr Lovins explained how complete use of the best retrofit lighting technologies in the USA could provide the same amount of useful light as is currently needed, using only 8 per cent as much lighting electricity.

In Canberra, he met with senior Federal Ministers who were so impressed with his information, that he has been invited by the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, to return to Australia this year to discuss global warming abatement strategies with environment and energy ministers around Australia.

by Sian Prior
Resources, Industries &
Employment Campaign Officer

VERY FAST TRAIN Gippsland route could wipe out Potoroos

Studies carried out by the CSIRO have shown that the proposed Very Fast Train (VFT) route through the East Gippsland region of Victoria could threaten some native animal species, including the Long-footed Potoroo, with extinction.

The claims were made in a report prepared for the VFT Consortium by the CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology in June last year. The CSIRO warning was apparently ignored by the consortium, which released a Progress Report last November confirming its strong preference for the East Gippsland route. This was despite the CSIRO's clear evidence that the alternative inland route posed less environmental problems. If the project proceeds it will be an environmental disaster for the uniquely Australian forests and animals of East Gippsland.

A major problem is the creation of a continuous barrier fence which will divide one of the largest and least disturbed areas of forest in south eastern Australia in two. The CSIRO has warned that the 'barrier effect' of the VFT corridor would fragment native fauna populations and possibly lead to extinction of species such as the rare Long-footed Potoroo.

The CSIRO report stated that 'the extent and significance of the barrier effect will be impossible to determine with any cer-

tainty, at least in the short-term. This may be sufficient to make the project unacceptable.'

The report indicated a key problem would be to provide a sufficient number of appropriate crossings to enable fauna movements across the barrier created by the track corridor. The CSIRO doubted whether it would be possible to determine satisfactorily what is a sufficient number of crossings or what style of crossings would be effective. The necessary studies would be both expensive and would fall "outside the time frame of the (VFT) project development." There is also serious concern about whether animals would use the crossings, and that these would become a focus "of activity for exotic predators such as foxes and cats". Such crossings would also not be effective for arboreal marsupials.

The report lends strong scientific support to conservationists' arguments that the East Gippsland route is totally unacceptable and must be abandoned. ACF and the Australian railways union, supported



cartoon by Patrick Brennan

by approximately 70 community, conservation and trade union groups have called on the Commonwealth to set up a Commission of Inquiry into the VFT proposal and alternative high speed rail options. The ACF is not opposed to high speed rail provided it is established in an environmentally sensitive way. Put simply, a massive, fenced scar through the wilderness of East Gippsland would be pure environmental vandalism.

by Paul Rutherford
ACF National Liaison Officer, Canberra

See also Paul Rutherford's article on the VFT, in HABITAT, February 1990.

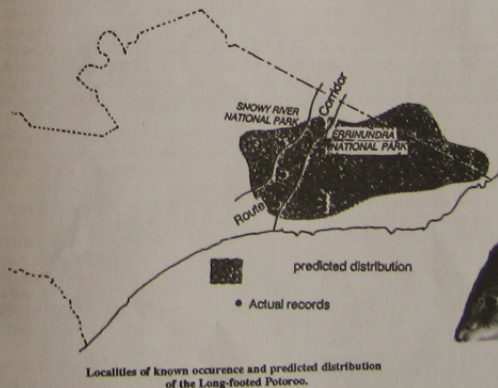


Photo by John Seebach

The price of farming an old land

In July last year, the Prime Minister Bob Hawke declared the 1990's as the Decade of Landcare. Land degradation has been cited by many as Australia's most chronic environmental disease, with huge tracts of land rendered useless by the devastating effects of salinisation and erosion. John Stevens, journalist with The Age newspaper, spoke to Jason Alexandra, ACF's Victorian Rural Liaison Officer, when writing a feature article which appeared in The Age in the first week of January. Part of that article is reprinted here.

THE Federal Government's acknowledgement of soil degradation as our biggest environmental problem carried with it a rather painful corollary.

What it means is that in the 200 years of white-man impact, the chief destroyer of the Australian landscape has been not the rapacious miner, the predatory woodchipper or the hungry developer, but a battling folk-hero, the farmer.

It is not the farmer's fault; rather it is something for which we must all take responsibility. We depended on the farmer to pioneer the land and make us prosperous. But in doing so he inadvertently exacted from the soil a terrible price.

Our agricultural history is a chapter of mistake, miscalculation and ignorance. Farmers were positively encouraged to clear the scrub, chop the trees, plough the semi-desert and settle on blocks too small to yield a living. In their struggle to survive, many flogged their farms to exhaustion. Much of our land is now worn out. Even more is in decline.

Says the federal Minister for Resources, Senator Peter Cook: 'If the problem is not tackled, more and more of our highly productive land will become marginal and ultimately cease to be productive. It would be a devastating blow to the economy and the viability of many rural and regional communities. It has the potential of dropping Australia as the producer of quality agricultural goods right down the ladder to the level of a Third World exporter.'

There is, in fact, no recent measure of the extent of Australian land degradation. Proposals for such a survey were abandoned when it became clear that the expected cost of \$4 million would be exceeded by \$26 million. The last comprehensive Government study, done in 1978, concluded that 51 per cent of agricultural and pastoral land required treatment.

CSIRO scientists paint a disturbing pic-



Current agricultural systems are basically an extractive industry. We are mining our topsoil.

□ Photo: Jason Alexandra

ture. The CSIRO's principal issue analyst, Mr Richard Eckersley, in a paper released last June called *Greening Australia*, cited the following examples of decline:

- In Western Australia 250 square kilometres of agricultural land are going out of production each year because of salinisation caused by over-clearing.

- In the Murray-Darling Basin rising water tables have surfaced in some areas bringing with them dissolved salts at rates of 3000 tonnes, or more, per hectare. Salt flows over the South Australian border in the Murray at 2.5 tonnes a minute.

- In Queensland, 20 million tonnes of topsoil, containing \$100 million worth of nitrogen and phosphorus, is washed away each year from the Burdekin catchment, the huge export beef cattle area. Each year the prime, wheat-producing Darling Downs loses four to eight millimetres of its rich, black topsoil—a rate which will see it all gone in 30 to 50 years. The value of nutrients in soil washed from the Downs in the drought-breaking rains of 1983 alone

has been estimated at \$2 billion—almost enough to pay for two parliament houses.

- In western New South Wales and southwest Queensland, half a million square kilometres are so degraded by woody shrub invasion and erosion that half the area could become unproductive within 30 years.

After 200 years we are still learning, still adapting, probably still making mistakes. Dr Smiles, head of CSIRO's Soil Division says 'the problem is we brought in the farming systems of the northern hemisphere. The northern hemisphere landscapes are relatively recent, the products of glaciation of the last 150,000 years. Australia's are many times older. It was old when the Grand Canyon was a rivulet—landscapes five to 10 million years old. Not surprisingly they are very strongly weathered.

'The nutrients that remain tend to be associated with the organic matter within the topsoil and its exactly those nutrients that are put at risk with cultivation.'

'It was very clever to cultivate', Dr Smiles said, 'as a means of water penetration and storage. But what was not realised was the effect on soil structure and the effect of clearing on salinity and the equilibrium of the land. Under new techniques of stubble management, cultivation is restricted and crop residues retained.'

'Everything we have done in wheat production has had a benefit and then an unanticipated penalty,' said Dr Smiles.

Most Australian farms are slowly running down hill, he believes. 'We don't have the measurements of the present rates of degradation to say how much we are going to have left in 100 years. I suspect if we are going to talk about sustainable agriculture in a lot of areas we need a clearer idea of the numbers.'

'Most of the changes are very insidious. A deep gully erosion—alright, the farmer can see that. But losing 0.1 per cent of organic matter every year of twenty or thirty years they don't realise it. Most don't realise they've lost maybe ten centimetres of topsoil because it's happened slowly over the years.'

Another scientist has estimated that

every tonne of wheat produced costs between three and sixteen tonnes of topsoil. In some areas of Queensland the topsoil loss can be sixty tonnes per tonne of sugar. 'We are certainly mining our agricultural lands,' said Dr. Smiles.

Dr. Smiles points out that the primary concern of farmers to make a living and any change that threatens that, is going to be resisted:

'They will need to be persuaded that the required changes are both sustainable and profitable. The social difficulty is what to do with people scraping out a living but who don't know they are close to disaster. How do you transfer a family that has worked a farm for perhaps two generations?'

But changes there must be.

The Eckersley paper described Australia as among the most degraded of developed countries, adding that in some areas the degradation matched that of the worst developing nations. 'There will not be another time to address the environmental problems facing Australia and the rest of the world,' it declared. 'The crunch time has come.' □

Land degradation in all its forms is symptomatic of the mismanagement of most fundamental natural resources.

Throughout his recent lecture tour, Dr Paul Erlich stated that the most critical non-renewable natural resource currently being over exploited, is the world's good quality top soil.

The solutions to many of the world's pressing social, economic and environmental problems are dependent on the development of sustainable agricultural systems which provide people's needs without degrading natural resources.

In recognition of the importance of the problems associated with land management, ACF is now devoting two pages of *Conservation News* to sustainable agriculture.

John Steven's Article is a good overview of the problem of our current agricultural systems. However, in this column we do not want to just concentrate on the problems but rather emphasise solutions in land management.



Integrating trees and agriculture—the hope for farming in the future. □ Photo: Jason Alexandra

NEW BOOKS

Conservation-Books was inundated with new titles at the close of 1989. A number of these are given below. If you are interested in purchasing these, or other books on conservation issues which are not listed here, contact ACF's Bookclub Co-ordinator, Gary Wardrope. Where possible, include the book's author and publisher in your request. In purchasing these books you are helping to fund ACF campaigns throughout Australia.

Please note our new address and phone number: 340 Gore Street, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065; tel: (03) 416 1455 (toll free: 008 338 928; FAX: (03) 416 0767.)

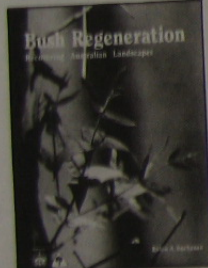
Don't miss out on your 1990 Calendars and Diaries. Conservation Books still has in stock the ACF Wilderness Diary and calendars depicting some of the most beautifully photographed areas of wilderness in Australia.

Tasmanian Wilderness Calendar - 1990.

Featuring outstanding colour photographs by Peter Dombrovskis - \$12.95.
Contemplation Australia - 1990 Calendar

A collection of Peter Ewing's serenely artistic black and white photographs of Australia's wild areas - \$17.95.
ACF Wilderness Diary - 1990

With over fifty colour photographs of Australia's magnificent wild places and wildlife - \$16.95



Bush Regeneration - Recovering Australian Landscapes

R. Buchanan, *Tafe NSW*, 1989, 272pp, \$24.95

Offers constructive techniques and strategies for the recovery of our landscapes, whether in a rural or urban setting. Every plant community included. Chapters are well illustrated in colour, supplemented by clear diagrams and tables.

New Ways with Old Money - A Guide to Ethical Investment

S. Doust *act, Action for World Development*, 1989, \$7.50

An information kit for people seeking ways

to invest their money in areas in which their life values are not being contradicted.

Organic Control of Common Weeds

J. French, *Aird*, 1989, 123pp, \$13.95 and
Organic Control of Household Pests

J. French, *Aird*, 1988, 126pp, \$13.95

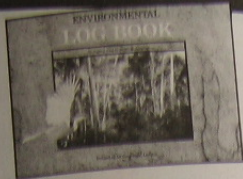
Two books which look at the health, vigour, richness and variety of the whole garden as the only effective means of managing individual problems like weeds, insects, fertility, drainage or plant disease.

Australian Reptiles & Frogs

R. Hoser, *Pierson*, 1989, 238pp, \$49.95

Detailed descriptions of more than 200 species and more than 600 colour photographs - will make identification of most reptiles easy. Among the photos are pictures of types of reptiles that have never previously been photographed.

Environmental Log Book



P. Mason *et al*, *Gould League*, 1989, 80pp, \$12.00

Aimed to encourage the regular recording of any interesting environmental happening. Includes monthly predictions of some flora and fauna events.

Raparapa-Kularr Martuwarra

P. Marshall (ed), *Magabala*, 1988, 288pp, \$29.95

Stories of the lives of 9 Aboriginal Fitzroy River drovers. Incident and humour filled lives that brought some of them back to rural pastoral stations where they were born and raised as little more than slaves.

Worms to Wasps

M. Harvey *et al*, *OUP*, 1989, 201pp, \$17.95

An illustrated guide to Australia's terrestrial invertebrates.

Living in the Greenhouse

Dr. I. Lowe, *Scribe*, 1989, 179pp, \$14.95

Up to date and comprehensive information on this subject, from rising sea levels to the rise of the Greens; from national trends to practical domestic advice; from 'cold fusion' to the spread of renewable energy applications.

Dying Inside

D. Graham, *A & U*, 1989, 203pp, \$14.95

Why are so many black Australians in gaol? Why do Aboriginal Australians continue to die in custody? These and other questions are examined, together with a background to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Black Deaths in Custody.

To order these books, send cheque with order to ACF Conservation Books, 340 Gore Street, Fitzroy, 3065. ACF members may deduct 10% discount on books only. Discounts do not apply to other ACF products.

Please add postal and packing charges to your payment when ordering ACF Conservation Books.

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Up to \$5.00	\$1.60	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00
Over \$5.00 up to \$50	4.00	5.30	5.90	6.90	4.50
Over \$50 up to \$100	4.40	6.80	8.40	10.40	5.00
Over \$100	6.80	15.80	23.00	30.00	9.20

WATCHING BRIEF

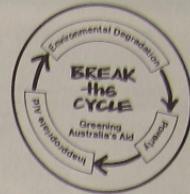
WATCHING BRIEF is Australia's only national current affairs programme covering peace and the environment. For one hour a week on over thirty public radio stations around Australia, WATCHING BRIEF examines the issues, the campaigns and the political context of the conservation movement.

If you are concerned about the environment, tune in to WATCHING BRIEF.

BROADCAST TIMES

Canberra	2XXZ	Thur 10.00am
Sydney	2SER-FM	Tues 1.00pm Fri 9.30pm(2/r)
Albury/ Wodonga	2REM-FM	Fri 12.00pm Sun 12.00pm(r)
Bathurst	2MCE-FM	Sun 6.00pm
Bellingen	2BBB-FM	Tues 12.15pm Fri 6.00pm(r)
Lismore	2NCR-FM	Tues 2.00-4.00pm*
Moruya	2BAR-FM	Tues 12.00pm
Newcastle	2NUR-FM	Tues 12.30pm(1) Thurs 9.00pm(r) Fri 1.30pm(1)
Taree	2BOB-FM	Fri 1.30pm(1)
Wagga Wagga	2AAA-FM	check local guide
Melbourne	3RRR-FM	Mon 5.00pm(live) Mon 7.00am(1) Mon 5.30pm(2)
3CR		
Ballarat	3BBB-FM	Fri 12.00pm
Bendigo/ Castlemaine	3CCC-FM	Fri 10.30am(1) Fri 7.00pm(2)
Inverloch	3MFM-FM	Wed 6.00-8.00pm*
Melton	3RIM-FM	Sun 9.00am Wed 9.00pm(r)
Morwell	3GCR-FM	Fri 12.30pm
Portland	3RPF-FM	Tues 1.00-2.00pm*(1) Fri 4.00-5.00pm*(2)
Adelaide	5MMM-FM	Mon 6.30-8.00pm* Sun 12.00-2.00pm* Fri 12.00pm
Mt Gambier	5UV	Thur 3.00pm
Perth	6NR	check local guide
6FM		check local guide
100FS		check local guide
Darwin	8TOP-FM	Mon 8.30am Sun 6.00pm* Sun 9.00am*
Alice Springs	8KIN-FM	Sun 2.00pm
8CCC-FM		Sun 7.00-9.00pm*
Hobart	7THE-FM	PMO
Launceston	7LTF-FM	Tues 9.00am(1) Wed 9.00am(2)
Brisbane	4ZZZ-FM	PMO
Townsville	4TTT-FM	Mon 9.00-9.30pm*(1) Thur 3.00-3.30pm(2)

WATCHING BRIEF is one hour long, except: (1) - first half hour only, (2) - second half hour only, (1) - repeat, * - included in the local programme, PMO (Programme Material Only) - material is played at unspecified times throughout day. WATCHING BRIEF can be contacted on tel: (03) 417 7304.
ACF supports WATCHING BRIEF



How green is Australia's overseas aid

The future of Australia's policy on Environment and Overseas Aid is due to be decided within the next two months.

In February 1987 the Senate Environment Committee was asked to consider the Environmental Impact of Australia's Development Assistance. Their report, tabled in Parliament in December last year, has highlighted concern held by conservationists for some time. For example, it was found that nearly half of the potentially environmentally significant AIDAB (Australian International Development Assistance Bureau) projects were passed through the planning stage without consideration of their environmental effects. Over 30 per cent of these resulted in negative impacts that substantially affected the well-being of the people the project was designed to assist.

To its credit, the Committee has recommended significant changes to avoid these problems. It states that more environmental aid is needed, and that an environmental section should be established within AIDAB. Other recommendations include a formal accountability network between AIDAB and the Environment Department, greater involvement and comment on AIDAB projects from non-government organisations (NGO) and an AIDAB audit of the environmental impact of aid projects.

ACF praises these recommendations, but believes that a proper framework must be established within an Aid and

Environment Act, if they are to be successfully implemented. Such an Act would set out the basis for Australia's Aid programme, and if so worded, would impose an obligation on AIDAB to carry out the Committee's proposals. ACF considers such an obligation essential.

The report is a positive response to the deficiencies in Australia's Aid programme. However, ACF maintains that a greater emphasis should be placed on sustainable community based projects, rather than a large infrastructure. ACF also feels that funding for AIDAB's Environmental Assistance Programme should be expanded and that there should be more accountability from Papua New Guinea regarding their untied aid.

If the Senate report is to have a long-term impact, these issues must be addressed. However, time is running out. The report is expected to go before Cabinet in late February.

Readers are urged to support this issue by writing to Senator Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Senator Graham Richardson, Minister of the Environment, (both c/- Parliament House, Canberra, 2600). In your letter call for further consideration of those areas in which the report is deficient, and for a formalising of the Committee's recommendations within an Aid and Environment Act.

Remember, AIDAB is funded from our taxes. We have the right to ensure that overseas aid is used effectively to assist communities, and to protect their environment.

For further information contact Paul Davenport, at ACF's Melbourne Office (see p.2 for address and phone number).

by Paul Davenport
ACF Assistant



NOTES

PM opens new ACF head office

Over 200 people, including the Opposition Leader, Andrew Peacock, media representatives, ACF staff, members and Councilors were present when the Prime Minister, Mr Bob Hawke opened the ACF's new headquarters in Fitzroy, Melbourne, on the 11th December last year.

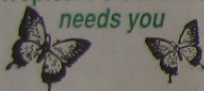
The need for the new premises is a reflection of the considerable expansion of the Foundation, and the overall growth of the environment movement. In his opening address, the Prime Minister paid tribute to the ACF as a constructive and sophisticated organisation. He described the protection of the environment as central to



Bob Hawke, Peter Garrett and Alison Waters speak with young people at the opening of the new ACF head office. □ Photos by Janusz Molinski

Australia's sense of investment, stating that it is better to 'protect, rather than spoil' some places and things. He advocated developing our natural resources, 'but in a careful, environmentally sensitive way, and not exploiting them indiscriminately for the short-term gain at the expense of long-term damage'. He urged the ACF 'to go on encouraging a wide ranging public concern about the environment, so that any political party attuned to the views of the electorate will give weight to the environment in its policies.'

Tropical Forest Group needs you



The tropical forests of Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific have reached a crisis point, as logging, clearing and large scale developments threaten their existence.

Over half the world's species of plants and animals live in tropical forests. If they are to survive we must act now. The ACF Tropical Forest Campaign Group needs you. The group meets each Wednesday evening from 6 pm to 9 pm at ACF's Melbourne office. Be involved in saving these forests by writing letters, learning political lobbying, setting up market stalls, media events and much more.

For more information, contact Felicity Wishart
(340 Gore Street, Fitzroy, 3065. tel: (03) 416 1455).

ACF hits the 20,000 mark

ACF is now more than 20,000 members strong. ACF President, Peter Garrett, welcomed the Foundation's 20,000th member, Sarah Wilson, at the opening of the new Melbourne office. 'I joined the ACF because there's strength in numbers, and the need is urgent' said Sarah. 'People have to wake up to waste and pollution. The earth can no longer sustain our western lifestyle. The destruction of our environment cannot be justified in terms of economic gain', she said.



Peter Garrett meets Sarah Wilson, ACF's 20,000th member

CFC could save the earth!

Prompted by her young son and some conscientious friends, Jo Brazil, of ACF's Diamond Valley Branch has established a Children for Conservation group, which aims to alleviate the alarm felt by young people for the future of our globe. Here is her story.

'Can't we do anything?'

My son asked for the third time that week. He had just seen an exceptionally depressing programme on TV about the hole in the ozone layer.

It was in June last year, and I was at my wits end, the whole guilt trip was in motion and as I looked around my home with all its mod-cons I wondered what the future held for my children and what sort of example was I setting? It occurred to me that in the hierarchy of values, our children do not have much future without a planet.

It was this double burger that shot me out of my somatic state and into positive action resulting in the first 'Children for Conservation'

group (CFC) in Australia.

The group aims to assist children in setting about to repair the earth. The children are made to feel that it is within their power to stop the downward spiral of events that may lead to the destruction of our planet.

In an informal and fun environment they are learning the skills they will need to save the globe. We are lucky to have mentors who are active environmentalists to encourage and teach us. We've already become involved in several projects, such as tree planting and a community festival. We've also been on tours of logging areas and on a possum prowling and we hold great hopes for 1990. □

If you are interested in setting up your own CFC group, or require more information, Jo Brazil will be working in ACF's Melbourne office on Fridays, between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm and will be happy to hear from you.

50,000 letters sent to save NSW forests

At a meeting at Kirribilli House, in early December, the ACF's NSW Forest Campaign Group and Sydney staff members presented the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, with over 8,000 letters from Australians concerned for the future of NSW's beleaguered south-east forests.

In 1989 the campaign group directed more than 50,000 letters to both State and Federal Governments through its letter-writing stalls. This activity has been an invaluable component of the campaign to save the old growth forests, bringing in much needed donations as well as drawing public attention to the issue.

At Kirribilli, the group also presented Mr Hawke with a copy of the South East Forest Alliance Peace Plan. The SEFA Peace Plan was launched in Sydney on 19th November in conjunction with Australian Business for the Environment. It offers viable economic alternatives to logging old growth and National Estate for-

ests in the south-east of the State, through job creation and the establishment of eucalypt plantations on previously cleared land.

You can help save our forests by signing and posting the enclosed postcard to the Japanese Prime Minister. This card, funded by the Forest Campaign Group, highlights the role of Japanese woodchipping companies in the destruction of Australia's forest habitat and heritage. With an election due in Japan this year, now is the moment to stress that time is running out on their exploitation of the world's natural areas. For further information contact Bridgid Dowslett, at ACF's Sydney office.

PLEASE POST THIS CARD TODAY AND HELP SAVE OUR FORESTS.



Forest Campaigners at Kirribilli House with sacks of letters for the Prime Minister. L-R Noel Plumb, Chris Connolly, Bridgid Dowslett, JoAnne Bragg and Bridget Berry. □ Photo: Gary Cane



Victory turns sour in Victorian highlands

In the October '89 issue of *Conservation News*, it was reported that the Victorian Conservation Forests and Lands road-widening project in the Central Highlands had been scrapped. Well put away the champers; the Minister has sold us a lemon.

At that stage, the Minister, Kay Seiches had announced a moratorium on a 50 metre wide, 2000 km road network being carved through the central highland forests. She promised a new process of public consultation over forestry issues in Victoria and a proper study of the impact of the proposed roads.

All efforts by the Department to address concerns have to date been merely token gestures and now the green light has been given to the bulldozers. For further information and background details contact Peter Preuss at ACF's Melbourne office (see p. 2 for address and phone number).

FILL THE MINISTER'S OFFICE WITH LEMONS

Send your protest in the form of a lemon, to Kay Seiches, Minister for Conservation, Forests & Lands, Electoral Office, 44 New Street, Ringwood, 3134.



LETTERS

Immigration means more than simple environmental analysis

Allstair Phillips
Nth Carlton, Victoria

The immigration debate has raised its ugly head in the environmental movement. This issue possibly has the capacity to divide members and abstract the conservation lobbying power of groups like the ACF. The issue is discussed as one of the most important topics facing the 'movement' at the present (it is not), yet there is a crucial element missing from the dialogues so far, especially from those people advocating a reduction (ceiling) on Australia's immigration levels. We are talking about peoples' lives, not just figures on Immigration Department's computer screens, and due to this the situation requires social analysis, not just a simplistic environmental analysis.

Maybe the planet is suffering at the moment under the strain of over population—there are many who believe this is not categorically true (due to the way resources are presently unnecessarily and wastefully used). The real question to be faced up to here is not so much where, or how many people live—but how they live?

Of the 230 States and Territories of the world we in Australia have the dubious honour of being one of the highest per capita consumers of energy. This fact alone points to the real social issue facing true environmentalists today—the wasteful and destructive lifestyles we lead, particularly in Paul Spencer's so called "civilised countries" (*Conservation News*, December, 1989).

If the human population of the planet is a problem we in Australia are not going to solve anything by collectively 'sticking our head in the sand' and closing our doors to other peoples. Any immigration debate will be stormy and emotional and perhaps best left to the 'Bruce Ruxtons' of the country to make fools of themselves over. But if the ACF wants to enter the issue, as a member I sincerely hope we have both our social and environmental assessments in order. The planet's social and environmental responsibilities must not be divided! If they are, the conservation movement will incur enormous costs in wasted time, energy and support. □

'the present unsatisfactory nature of the EIS process where developers lay down guidelines to consultants in their pay to produce what they (the developers) want to hear.'

We called for more time to be given for independent assessors to contribute to the EIS, more consideration to be given to the *no action alternative*, and for more time to be given for public comment. In particular we criticised the brief fortnight period allowed for public review of the latest updating of the EIS. We commented that 'it may become standard practice for developers to first submit an inadequate EIS in the knowledge that the final one will be dealt with summarily, so minimising effectual public comment.'

Poor economics root cause of conservation problems

Clive Hackett
Kenmore, Qld

Impressive as the activities listed in the annual report are, I feel that the ACF is still not addressing the root cause of conservation problems.

This is the type of economic methods being used by business advisers and staff of government departments and still being taught widely to students.

Somehow, the time horizons of these methods have to be lengthened from the typical six to twelve months to a generation or more. ACF should support research into resource economics and the blending of it with conventional economics. ACF staff should also learn about the newly developing approaches so that they can show the true costs to society and the environment of project proposals it is concerned about. □

Politicians worried about the economy, balance of payments, winning votes and staying in power may consider these requests unrealistic, but Pivot Group is intent upon extracting minerals to sell for profits from a scenically beautiful, relatively pristine area of Crown Land; in other words consuming the property of the common weal for personal gain, whilst degrading, if not destroying, our inheritance of natural ecosystems. The parabolic high dunes in the proposed leases, for instance, have been thousands of years in the making.

We believe that the very survival of the human race is being threatened by our haste to gobble up resources while degrading the natural world, and spewing out all manner of toxic and hazardous wastes in the process. We need to tread more lightly upon this earth and take time to consider every step if we are to survive into the future. The EIS system must be overhauled if it is to perform the task correctly and to the satisfaction of the general public, conservationists, politicians and developers. □

ACF BRANCHES AND CAMPAIGN GROUPS

Dear Members,

In the December issue of *Conservation News* we gave you brief details of the Campaigns Groups in Melbourne and Brisbane. In this issue we will conclude by outlining the groups existing in the other capital cities.

The *Sydney Forest Group* is actively involved in public awareness and fundraising activities to protect our forests. The group is especially active in stalls at community events and shopping centres.

The *Atmosphere Group* is engaged in a wide range of programmes including parliamentary Greenhouse briefings, running public information stalls, presenting talks to groups and preparing submissions.

The *Urban Group* covers such issues as planning legislation, urban bushland, transport, toxic chemicals, urban tree planting, waste disposal and medium density housing.

In Perth the *Lesueur Campaign Group* aims to save the Lesueur region from mining and a power station proposal, focusing on lobbying and information dissemination, use of the media, research and submission writing.

The Adelaide ACF office has recently launched the *Women for the Environment Campaign Group*, in response to questions posed by women on environmental issues.

Keep in touch with us. You are encouraged to join these groups, thereby strengthening ACF's campaigns on a local level. News and meeting times of Branches and Campaign Groups are published in the State updates; otherwise ring the relevant person listed below, or contact Trish Brawn or Julie Davie in Membership at ACF's Melbourne office about starting up a group of your own. Telephone numbers and addresses of all ACF's State offices are on page 2 of this newsletter. □

VICTORIA

Albury-Wodonga

Marty Greig (060) 215 837 (bh)
or Environment Centre (060) 212 627 (bh)

Ballarat

Barry Golding (053) 456 343 (ah)

Diamond Valley

Jann Lauri (03) 439 3460 (ah) or

Gerald Sutton (03) 439 4298 (ah)

Gippsland

Linda Harris (056) 348 316 (ah)

Mullumbidgee

Dorothy McLennan (03) 726 7117 (ah)

North East Victoria

Geoff Conway (057) 218 667 (ah)

Portland

Max Phillips (055) 233 023 (ah)

Sunraysia Mallee

A. Hymer (050) 234 554

Wimmera

Daniel Waffler (053) 823 009 (ah) or

Barry Clugston (053) 582 831 (ah)

Central Coast

Greg Roberts (043) 822 483

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Bunbury

Adrian or Wendy Colley (097) 215 384

Collie

Paul Lavers (097) 343 512

Perth

David Bennett, (09) 387 2126

NEW SOUTH WALES

Blue Mountains

Terri Hamilton (047) 82 4554 or

John Thompson (047) 51 1519

Central Coast

or Greg Roberts (043) 822 483 (ah)

Hunter Region

Nav Brah (049) 528 542 (ah)

Illawarra

Cheryl Aldrich (042) 291 625 (ah)

Sunraysia Mallee

A. Hymer (050) 234 554

Sydney

Ian Landon-Smith (02) 487 3411 (ah)

Shoalhaven

Sonja Orford (044) 430 977

Northern Riverina

Wendy Avery (069) 723 093

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Central Australia

Matthew Guggisberg (089) 526 782 (bh)

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Adelaide

Nele Findlay (08) 276 8652 (ah)

QUEENSLAND

Atherton Tablelands

Virginia Simmons (070) 958 302 (ah)

Brisbane

Paula Newman (07) 397 0647 (ah)

Mary River

Magdalena Steffens (071) 29 2211

Gold Coast

Greg Owens (075) 386 877

ACT

Canberra

Kathryn Kelly (062) 825 366 (ah) or
(062) 893 191 (bh) or Mike McGrath
(062) 571 860 (ah) or (062) 474 822 (bh)

CAMPAIGN GROUPS

Melbourne

Antarctic Campaign Group

David Westlake (03) 416 1455 (bh)

Kakadu Campaign Group

Angela Hill on (03) 484 1678 (ah)

Membership Campaign Group

Trish Brawn (03) 416 1455 (bh)

Tropical Forest Campaign Group

Felicity Wishart (03) 416 1455 (bh)

BRISBANE

Cape York Campaign Group

Mark Horstman (07) 229 7715

Coast Campaign Group

Phillip Cosser (07) 341 4440

Greenhouse Campaign Group

Tim Easton (07) 378 8364

SYDNEY

Antarctic Campaign Group

Bridget Berry (02) 247 1497 (bh)

Atmosphere Campaign Group

Sue Salmon (02) 247 1497 (bh)

Forest Campaign Group

Bruce Dover (02) 234 4220

Urban Campaign Group

Harvey Sanders (02) 262 3200

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Lesueur Campaign Group

Colma Keating (09) 368 1562

Independent assessors needed for Environmental Impact Statements

Molly Crawford and Jeff Simmons
Wildlife Preservation Society Queensland-Capricorn Branch

The Four Corners program shown in Central Queensland on 27th November, 1989 confirmed our Society's branch view that defects exist in the present Environment Impact Study system.

In his summing up, the Four Corners commentator said, 'The present EIS system clearly has serious faults. We should be thinking hard about how to strengthen this system.'

In letters to Senator Graham Richardson dated 3rd October, 1989 and 30th November, 1989 regarding the bid by the Pivot Group to sandmine the Shoalwater Bay Army Training Area, we remarked upon



TAKE A STAND FOR THE FORESTS

You can support our campaign to save the forests by encouraging a friend or member of your family to join ACF. Please give someone the form below and help us save our environment.

As a Member of ACF you receive

- our monthly newsletter *Conservation News*, ■ discounted subscription to *HABITAT*, our full colour, national environment magazine, ■ voting rights in ACF Council elections, ■ opportunity to purchase books and merchandise through ACF Enterprises, ■ access to our extensive environmental library,
- contact with like-minded people through ACF Branches and Action Groups, ■ an active role in protecting the environment, ■ satisfaction of knowing you are part of a national body that works to protect the environment.



I would like to be a member of the Australian Conservation Foundation

Please sign me up:

Name

Address

State Postcode

Phone (ah)

(bh)

Join by phoning toll free 008 33 8928
If ringing from Melbourne (03) 416 1455

Date

I choose the following option:

- \$63.00 Membership and Habitat Magazine
 \$45.50 Concession membership and Habitat
(full time student/pensioner/ unemployed)
 \$35.00 Membership
 \$17.50 Concession membership
 \$36.00 Subscription to Habitat magazine only

Plus \$ Additional donation
(donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible)

Total \$
enclosed is cheque/money order

OR charge my: Bankcard Visa
 Mastercard

Card No: (16 digits required)

Signature expiry date

Membership corresponds to the current financial year (1st July to 30 June)
Membership paid from 1st February 1990, remains current until 30th June 1991.



Send this form to the
Australian Conservation Foundation
340 Gore Street
Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065

