

**NORFOLK**



**ISLAND**

## **THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND**

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Progress on natural resource management and environment schemes**

Discussions with island residents have vindicated the decision to proceed with a Natural Resources Management Plan for Norfolk Island, according to visiting Australian Government Facilitator Michael Schultz who has been assisting the government with moving the planning process forward.

The Norfolk Island Government will enter a partnership arrangement with the Australian Government to complete a “futures blueprint” for natural resource management. The document will create a unified approach that provides a clear pathway into the future. The overall “matters for target” include biodiversity conservation (terrestrial, freshwater, and marine systems); the sustainable use and management of resources; and community capacity building to promote conservation and resource use.

The blueprint or NRM Plan will consider resource assets and put forward on-ground management actions. This will be complemented by an “investment stream” which directs funding to projects to target outcomes. The plan and investments will rely on community input and in many cases be community driven.

The Minister for the Environment, Hon Stephanie Jack MLA, said that all members of the community as well as interested groups would have the opportunity to play a part in the development of the plan. She said that the process will be transparent and publicised in advance and that she urged all interested parties to take the opportunities on offer. While this process might take some time, in the meantime some projects would commence. Discussions to date have indicated that areas for consideration include soil conditioning (green waste management), water resources, revegetation, and threats to rare species.

Mr Schultz has also promoted two programmes directed at benefiting the community and individuals, referred to as the Envirofund and the Australian Communities Waterfund. He said that the Envirofund had proved to be a very popular vehicle for land holders to embark on projects such as fencing off remnant vegetation; planting native species; protection of instream habitats; weed control with replanting; protection of ecological communities; monitoring of water quality, species presence and habitats; and activities that build the abilities of people to be involved in natural resource management initiatives.

Mr Schultz said that discussions with local people have indicated that several applications might be forthcoming for the next round of applications in November 2005.

The Waterfund programme also supports on-ground activities with high public benefit. Activities are directed towards recycling, and more efficient water use. This new programme will be launched in June this year. Mr Schultz hoped that productive discussions with the Central School would lead to a submission for inclusion this year.

These opportunities might be new to members of the Norfolk Island community. Anyone interested may contact the Conservator, Fred Howe (23588), or Michael Schultz (0061 2 62723305 - [michael.s.schultz@deh.gov.au](mailto:michael.s.schultz@deh.gov.au)). Several websites contain information on these programmes and are available at [www.nht.gov.au](http://www.nht.gov.au).

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