



# Coastwatchers

*Eurobodalla's environment and climate action group*

ABN 66 003 550 939

**Newsletter November 2012**

## **SUSTAINABLE CELEBRATIONS**

It is coming up to that time of year when many of us want to exchange presents and throw parties. Unfortunately, in our modern era, this often leads to unforeseen and unwanted adverse impacts on the environment and our fellow humans. But it doesn't have to be that way. Please send us your tips by email [coastwatchers@netspeed.com.au](mailto:coastwatchers@netspeed.com.au) or facebook.

How much paper goes into gift wrapping and packaging world wide? World paper use has exploded by 400% in the last 40 years so every wasteful use means more trees are felled. And it's not just trees, 98 tonnes of resources are used to make 1 tonne of paper and around 70% of the world's paper supply comes from diminishing forests, not plantations or recycling.

*# If you need to wrap a present try using a colourful towel or tablecloth that can be part of the present or returned to the giver.*

*Keep the children's art to use for gift wrapping.*

Half of the plastic used in the world today is for single use items. From the plastic bags used to contain the groceries, to the disposable plates, cups and cutlery often seen at end of year parties, how much are parties adding to the problem?

*# No doubt this does not apply to you so perhaps your gifts to someone who should know better might include a set of re-useable shopping bags or non-breakable picnic ware that can be re-used.*

Urban rubbish has increased tenfold over the course of the twentieth century. You only have to look at the over-flowing bins lined up on the streets after Christmas to realise there must be a better way of celebrating the season.

Many charities such as Oxfam and Care Australia have novel ideas for things you can give to those who have everything. Gifts that will truly benefit someone who has nothing.

Eg. See [www.oxfamunwrapped.com.au](http://www.oxfamunwrapped.com.au)

## **A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!**

It is appropriate at this time to publish an enormous thank you to those who have donated to the Coastwatchers Tax Deductible Environment Fund. This has indeed been a good year for donations, and your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Up to September, this year's E-Fund donations have already totalled \$2,345. Thank you all very much.

Anyone wishing to make a donation should download a form from the Coastwatchers website, or contact Treasurer Keith Joliffe (Mobile 0427 546 156) or Bookkeeper Barbara Kidd (Phone 02 - 4471 7334).

*Keith Joliffe, Treasurer, & Convener Environment Fund Allocations Committee.*

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING AND SOCIAL MEDIA – Tactics for non profit organizations**

### **COASTWATCHERS CHRISTMAS BBQ PICNIC IN THE GARDENS Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December at noon BYO food and drink**

Our end of year get together will be at the **Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens.**

Come early for a walk around or join us at the barbecues at noon to catch up and share a picnic.

Please let us know if you need help to carry things to the picnic area and we will meet you in the carpark. Phone 4471 5032 prior to the 9<sup>th</sup> or 0400 310 903 on the day.

Social networking and social media can be used very effectively for social change. In relatively recent years, both platforms have led to very successful outcomes for the environment and causes. The most recent one that springs to mind is 'Stop the Super Trawler'.

Social networking platforms enable ordinary people who may have previously felt powerless to make a difference, empowered to make decisions about those things they feel most strongly about, and to see the outcome of their decision making translate into successful action. From a personal point of view, it has certainly made me feel that my voice has been heard, and it is this individual and collective action by those that are often outside of the decision making arena that has the ability to often sway opinion and debate with those that are in the decision making arena. Some would argue that social networking has been a cause of a breakdown in personal communication, but people are just communicating differently, and often in a way that strengthens community ties, and has the ability to make us feel more connected to others in all corners of the globe, particularly in relation to environmental concerns or causes.

For those who may be interested, it's useful to look at the work of Ivan Boothe, 'Using Social networks for Social change'. Boothe has a long history in Social Justice movements and started the 'Genocide Intervention Network' in 2004. He states, '...Social networking is a natural fit for an organization that wants more than an ATM of donors or a list of petition signers, but active and engaged organizers', (Booth, 2005).

In the marketing world social networking is becoming increasingly used to connect people to brands and driving lead generation. Lead generation is a marketing term that refers to the creation or generation of prospective consumer interest or inquiry into an organizations products or services. Leads can be generated for a variety of purposes – list building, e newsletter list or for gaining support. Where Facebook is really coming into its own is through fundraising and its ability to help non profit organizations both expand their audiences as well as build stronger connections between their cause and their supporters. It is also a critical tool for non profit organizing because it is a great way to connect to other organizations who may have opted into similar interest groups, and supporters who may not have known about your organization previously. It allows organizations to collaborate, connect easily, and increase their network of volunteers and supporters.

Because generating interest and connecting with its entire support community is critical to a non profit's success, having an end-to-end promotional strategy that includes Facebook is critical to meeting a cause's financial goals. Persistence is the key to any effective promotional strategy, and Facebook allows you to be almost undetectably persistent for free. Assume that Facebook users not only want to know about the events you are involved in but also the history of the organization, current projects, team members, notable donors, beneficiaries of your hard work, the list can go on and on. Other tools can include connecting the organization to holidays and other special events such as World Environment Day, Clean up Australia day, NAIDOC week, and so on. People who have 'Liked' the page will see your posts in their News Feeds and viewable by that entire person's friends list.

Once Coastwatchers facebook site reaches thirty Likes – Insights will then become available to be used to track the activity on the Facebook page. By understanding and analyzing trends within user growth and demographics, consumption of content, and creation of content, Page owners are better equipped to improve the organization, and create better experiences on Facebook. One of the best strategies non profits can use is getting their members on board and active in social media. Having team members be active on sites like Facebook and Twitter to build a following and increase their network can help them stand out among the crowd. What truly works is allowing others to see the work that real people are doing and how they are making a difference.

*Candace Wirth*

## **KOALA PROJECT UPDATE**

With modest resourcing from the Coastwatchers Environment Fund (multiple applications for funds from elsewhere have been unsuccessful so far), the Eurobodalla Koalas project has completed its field surveys for 2012. Fifteen plots were originally planned, and twenty-two were achieved. The strenuous, sustained efforts of the volunteers deserve our highest commendation.

Ten of the surveyed plots were around Tinpot, in and above the Tuross River and Wandella Creek catchments. This location was chosen for its proximity to the 2011 National Parks and Wildlife Service Bega

Valley Shire surveys which found evidence of between 5 and 15 critically endangered koalas using the Kooraban/Gulaga area. The Eurobodalla surveys (as well as concurrent Forests NSW surveys in South-East Bodalla State Forest) found no convincing koala evidence, although some of the volunteer project's scats remain unidentified.

The other surveys were at Gulph Creek above Nerrigundah (the location of a Year 2009 sighting); Big Belimbla Creek; Turlinjah/Moruya-West on Dwyers Creek Road; Buckenbowra Road West of Mogo; Runnyford Road near Mundarlow Creek; "*The Lagoon*" near Merricumbene; and, Donovans Creek and Old Store Roads near East Lynne (the location of a Year 2000 sighting).

An August 2012 sighting at Cadgee has been treated as legitimate. Two plot surveys at the Cadgee location were insufficient to determine whether the sighted koala was a dispersing animal (the most likely scenario) or part of a resident group.

Because koala evidence in the Eurobodalla is now very rare (to the point we suspect localized functional extinction) the project has concentrated on the suitability of potential habitat, in case future community opinion supports sufficient protection for natural revival of a low density population, or perhaps reintroduction through translocation from one of the very few natural populations remaining in South East Australia.

To that end, a Geographic Information Systems mapping exercise has been undertaken. Eucalypt species found on the survey plots are being cross-checked against vegetation type polygons in the regional map known as SCIVI. The floristic descriptors for each polygon are being compared with research on preferred browse species by koalas in low density circumstances, and plotted to enable tentative conclusions about the continued existence of sufficient home ranges and connectivity corridors. At this stage the GIS model and its theoretical underpinnings appear sound, so it should provide the basis for a comprehensive future effort incorporating additional habitat factors such as topography, weather and disturbance history.

All the volunteer Eurobodalla Koalas project work is being written up as a pilot study. Following a final peer review in late November, the study is expected to be published by uploading to the Coastwatchers website in January 2013. After that, an effort will be made to obtain agency cooperation for a joint application to the NSW Environmental Trust, with the aim of funding follow-through research over the next several years. A minimum of \$100,000 will be needed. Agencies we will invite include Eurobodalla Shire Council, Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Forests NSW, University of Canberra Applied Science Faculty and the Local Aboriginal Lands Councils. In the meantime, an April 2013 expedition to the remote Dampier Mountain area is envisaged, conducting ten plot surveys in the higher country to test the capacity of the escarpment to support connectivity between South Coast koalas and those on the Southern Tablelands.

*Keith Joliffe, volunteer project coordinator  
Mobile 0427 546 156*

**Koala: Origins of an Icon** by Stephen Jackson

Jacana Books, an imprint of Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 2007.

*Review by Dierk von Behrens*

This cute, cuddly cousin of the wombat, successfully coexisted for millennia with Australia's Aborigines, but was brought to the brink of extinction by the fur trade as late as 1927. In 1924 alone 'the colossal total of over two million were exported from the eastern States.'

As one of the joint custodians of *Black Ridge* - a 1922 ha private conservation property adjoining *Mt Clifford Nature Reserve* (located some 100 km South of Canberra in the extension of the Tinderry Ranges) - I was naturally attracted to the book that describes the fate of these iconic animals that are now so highly regarded. Why? We have a thinly scattered population of them on the property and have been studying their strange bark-chewing behaviour, only so far documented on the Monaro, since 1992. Initially very few people, including scientists, would believe us. We were eventually able to visually demonstrate it with the aid of **Chris Allen**, the NSW National Park Service and infrared cameras installed last year. To view the evidence, please google: 'bark chew koalas *Canberra Times*.'

Bark chewing behaviour is not described in **Jackson's** otherwise comprehensive and engaging tome, which comprehensively tackles the fascinating evolution, ecology and behaviour of the species, its Aboriginal dreamtime status, discovery by Europeans, and its transformation both into a cultural ambassador and from cartoon character to chocolate bar icon. The work also discusses the politics and costs of managing koalas, threats to them, focusing on habitat loss and, finally, discusses the highs and lows of the conservation controversy surrounding this extraordinary animal with its two thumbs on each hand.

The book achieves its aims of highlighting both the variety of complex issues associated with the koala that are not normally discussed, as well as this animal's important role in Australian culture.

'Ultimately' the author concludes 'let us aspire to the conservation of the forests of Australia for future generations ... No doubt the animal with the spoon-shaped nose will have an important role to play in this endeavour.'

In their own, limited way the co-owners of *Black Ridge* and our bark-chewing koalas are doing their bit.

I recommend that all those interested in Australian nature read this authoritative work.

### **CULLENDULLA "ECO-TOURISM" DEVELOPMENT**

A proposal for an "eco-tourist" facility on the cleared land at the end of Myamba Pde, adjacent to the Cullendulla Nature Reserve, is on exhibition until 14 November. It comprises 13 two bedroom and 25 three bedroom serviced apartments, a building containing the manager's residence, reception, store and office, and some platforms with interpretive signs. The buildings near the beach will mainly be single storey, others have two storeys. There will be on-site parking for 50 vehicles.

The location is very vulnerable to coastal inundation and is undergoing beach recession. The state government's new policy will allow sea-walls to be built but at what cost to the beach and public access.

*Jenny Edwards*

### **NEW PLANNING LAWS FOR NSW**

The NSW government is intending to release its White Paper and draft bill on planning for comment over the summer holiday period. Despite promises when in Opposition to improve public confidence in the planning system, it is looking more and more like the only public that will have confidence are the developers -- confidence that they will not be inconvenienced by pesky local guidelines, community objections and legal challenges.

Coastwatchers has joined the Better Planning Network, an affiliation of over 70 community groups across NSW established with the aim of advocating for communities and community rights through the NSW planning review process.

The Green Paper (the first discussion paper on planning reforms) proposed:

- allowing developer initiated rezoning proposals and increased rights of review of decisions concerning rezoning proposals,
- introducing strategic compliance certificates that, in essence, will allow development to proceed before strategic planning has been completed and environmental assessment has been carried out,
- introducing an enterprise zone, which will be characterised by minimal controls,

The Independent Commission Against Corruption found that the new laws are likely to increase opportunities for corruption. Some of the concerns are:

- The new laws will increase corruption risks and deliver improper windfall gains for developers.
- Some have the potential to be misused by developers and undermine any certainty and community support that would have come out of effective strategic planning.
- They concentrate a significant amount of power in the Minister for Planning.
- The laws must require decisions makers to be accountable and improve transparency in decision making or there will be continued disenchantment within the community.

Since the release of the ICAC report the Better Planning Network has alerted members to the undermining of Development Control Plans (DCPs). Already laws are passing through parliament, without any community say. The new laws will make existing DCPs effectively worthless by:

- Allowing developers leeway not to comply with DCPs and ignore any that 'unreasonably restricts development'.
- Requiring Councils to be 'flexible' in allowing development that breaches a DCP; and
- Removing the ability of Councils to take into account the cumulative impact of allowing a type or style of development in a locality.

*Jenny Edwards*

### **TIME TO DEFEND THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OFFICE (EDO)**

Over the years Coastwatchers and other community groups throughout the state have often had to rely on legal advice from the NSW Environmental Defenders Office, most recently in our successful fight to improve conditions on the Dargues Reef gold mine. We have also benefited greatly from the workshops held by the EDO to explain state planning and environmental laws and policies.

Now the EDO is under attack by powerful vested interests, conservative media commentators, The Shooters and Fishers Party and the NSW Minister for Mines and Energy. The EDO's principal funding source has been substantially reduced, and may be withdrawn altogether by March.

EDO Executive Director Jeff Smith has warned that this "damaging uncertainty makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to maintain a strong, independent EDO, that can offer ongoing help to clients, and serve the wider community, while operating free of the politics of the day". **These attacks on this vital community service should not go unchallenged.**

The EDO provides essential, free information and advice to ordinary people trying to understand their legal rights and responsibilities;

- The EDO helps people from all walks of life protect the natural environment and keep our air and waterways clean; and
- These attacks are being driven by powerful vested interests, including the mining and coal seam gas industry.

**Express your opposition to EDO funding cuts. Call the Premier's office to: (02) 9228 5239 (most effective) or email [office@premier.nsw.gov.au](mailto:office@premier.nsw.gov.au)**

### **THE URBAN SPRAWL CONTINUES**

Despite what is claimed to be a poor real estate market and a construction industry in the doldrums, the development proposals keep coming and the forests keep disappearing.

Two proposals currently being negotiated with council are:

- a 138 lot urban subdivision at Rosedale Farm, west of George Bass Drive, mainly on hills that are currently forested between North Bevan Road and Saltwater Creek ; and
- a 300 lot urban subdivision proposed for forested land adjoin Nelligen Creek.

Because even larger Asset Protection Zones are now being required, very little of the vegetation will remain.

### **CHANGES TO COASTAL PLANNING**

The NSW Government has announced significant changes to the way the NSW coast will be managed. The new legislation will allow landowners to take 'appropriate' actions in managing the risks with locally focussed solutions and Councils working with communities to achieve them. Stage One includes the following changes:

- The NSW Sea Level Rise Policy Statement, which contained state-wide sea level rise planning benchmark (40cm by 2050 and 90cm by 2100) has been abandoned.
- Councils will now adopt an interim sea level rise policy until they formally adopt local sea level rise benchmarks based on local projections.

- Property owners will be allowed to install temporary protection works, such as sandbags, on private land to protect their property from immediate threat of inundation and erosion, without requiring prior approval.
- The maximum fines for illegal protection works on public land will be halved
- Information on s149 planning certificates informing of future hazard risks, including projected sea level rise will no longer be a requirement.

Coastwatchers has many concerns with the changes and the way they were introduced without the opportunity for formal public consultation or to make submissions. Clearly the Government has bowed to pressure from owners and developers of property identified as being at risk from coastal hazards, claiming that 'draconian' sea level rise benchmarks and hazard risk notations on s149 certificates were responsible for declining property values and sales. The changes now favour property vendors over the rights of purchasers who should be entitled to know of potential hazard risks, including projected sea level rise, prior to purchase.

Allowing property owners to install temporary works to protect beachfront properties from inundation and erosion was a contentious issue at the recent coastal conference at Kiama and there are now moves afoot to have this overturned. Coastal councils were concerned that such ad hoc measures would deflect the problem to neighbouring properties and impinge on the amenity of beach users, with the potential to create community conflict and legal action.

The onus is now on Councils to determine their own sea level rise benchmarks, based on information and support from the Government's Coastal Ministerial Taskforce, established across several government portfolios, to ensure NSW has the most appropriate plans, legislation and other arrangements to manage coastal erosion and other coastal hazards, now and into the future.

This is despite the fact that most Councils had already commenced their hazard mapping and Coastal Zone Management Plans, with preliminary hazard studies that recognised NSW SLR planning benchmarks already completed. Progress will now be set back for at least another year, with Councils facing an additional financial burden and an increased likelihood of legal liability.

The Government attributes the coastal reforms to advice from the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer Professor Mary O'Kane, who reported that there is, "*Uncertainty in the projected rate of future sea rise levels, in that they are complex and more specific predictions could be made as the science evolves.*" Yet, her Report also states, "*the way science has been used to determine benchmarks for sea levels is **adequate**, in light of the evolving understanding of the complex issues*". **However, the Report does not recommend the removal of either sea level rise benchmarks or the requirement to include this information in s149 certificates.**

In making the changes to coastal protection the NSW Government has demonstrated they do not respect the IPCC and its scientific reporting, even though scientists overwhelmingly report on the basis of their findings and endeavour to make clear statements about uncertainties.

The IPCC, because of its scientific and intergovernmental nature, is able to provide rigorous and balanced scientific information to decision makers. By endorsing the IPCC reports, governments acknowledge the authority of their scientific reports. The scientific and consensus nature of IPCC assessments mean they provide a vital reference and evidence base, which underpins government policy decisions. Uncertainty regarding climate science and climate change impacts can be resolved over time and policy or guidance material used by Councils can be adjusted to reflect current knowledge.

There has been no reference to the Precautionary Principle in the advice from the Government informing of the changes, but it should still be the guiding principle for coastal protection management.

Ecologically Sustainable Development is a stated objective of the adopted *Eurobodalla Interim Sea Level Adaptation Rise Policy* in that it provides a precautionary risk based approach to managing the impacts of sea level rise, and facilitates economic and residential use of the coast and foreshore over the maximum period allowable under conditions of sea level rise.

The Report to the Ordinary Meeting of the Eurobodalla Shire Council on 23 October concluded that, *Until such time as further direction is provided by the State Government, and, or the actions to support the coastal reforms occur, it is in the public interest to maintain the status quo with regard to Councils' consideration of the impact of sea level rise on development consistent with the adopted policy.* Adoption of the Report was deferred until after the workshop arranged by the Office of Environment to inform of the changes to the legislation and Stage One of the coastal reforms. The Report also recommended that Council prepare a new interim sea level rise policy based on advice provided by the NSW Government.

Coastwatchers is hopeful that councillors will adopt the recommendation to retain the Eurobodalla Interim Sea Level Adaptation Rise Policy (40cm by 2050 and 90cm by 2100).

## **FORESTRY, WOODCHIPS AND BORAL SAWMILLS**

Structural change continues in the Australian forestry industry. Nationally more than 85% of Australia's sawn timber and wood panels is now produced by a prosperous plantation industry which is also rapidly displacing native forest chip exports.

In contrast the NSW forestry industry is weak and financially vulnerable. If economics was the only factor to be considered, native forest logging would have ceased by now. Environment Minister Robyn Parker is determined to keep it going and will not rule out logging in our National Parks. The industry is applying pressure to both the State and Federal Government to prevent closure of native forestry. Governments don't want to rock the boat and are worried about the compensation bill.

Eurobodalla's state forests are now more intensively logged to fill wood supply contracts, including for the SEFE chip mill at Eden owned by JV Nippon Paper and Itochu. The Nippon Paper Group has recently restructured to concentrate on higher grade products favouring plantation products. Attempts by SEFE to find alternative markets outside Japan have revealed lower prices for the native forest woodchips. Their exports are significantly down, staff has been reduced from 72 to 46 and the mill has been closed for several weeks in July and August.

New outlets for native forest products are still being sought. A trial wood pellet plant is already operating at Eden to supply domestic space heaters and commercial boilers both in Australia and overseas. SEFE is seeking to further expand pellet production and integrate it with a proposed native forest power station.

Boral recently closed its Batemans Bay sawmill which processed green hardwood from South Coast native forests. Boral blamed the declining construction industry and the wider economic downturn. The CFMEU agrees with Dr Mike Kelly that the high Australian dollar and an influx of cheap, illegally sourced timber are contributing factors. The Blue Ridge sawmill at Eden which produces floorboards is considering a different supply option because they would have to retool to work the smaller native forest logs that FNSW is now having to cut.

There are now less than 200 forestry employees (excluding FNSW staff) between Ulladulla and the Victorian border. Plantations offer good job prospects but NSW has few. A State level solution is difficult.

Research shows that a better choice is to develop nationally the plantation processing industry, provide adjustment assistance for native forest workers and restore native forests for biodiversity and climate change benefits. Another alternative, driven by State forestry corporations, is to open native forests to the energy market.

*Sheila Monahan*

## **NEWS IN BRIEF**

### **Pied Oystercatchers are nesting**

Once again the Durras Lake entrance area is proving to be a significant nesting area for the listed as endangered Pied Oystercatcher with the recent hatching of chicks. There is overall along the NSW coastline a low number of Pied Oystercatchers and a continued decline in the population. The conservation of local Pied Oystercatchers and the success of the state-wide species recovery program relies on the efforts of dedicated and passionate locals who want to provide a helping hand for the survival of this most endearing coastal shorebird

## **HuntFest**

Eurobodalla Council set a precedent for the state by granting a five year licence for a hunting festival to be held in Narooma each June. People from all walks of life were disgusted by this deliberate move to attract hunters to our region but the mis-named Game Management Council was delighted. Recreational hunting does not assist in eradicating feral animals and in many cases makes removal of ferals more difficult.

This photograph of a kangaroo with an arrow embedded in it was taken a few weeks ago by a camper in a South Coast National Park. The big concern about the decision to allow recreational hunting in NSW National Parks is that some hunters now think that they have a free reign in parks. They don't. The Minister says hunting of feral animals will only be allowed in selected parks and not until guidelines are prepared.

Meanwhile the Shooters Party is urging people to ask for fewer restrictions on guns – see next item.

## **'Cutting red and green tape'**

The NSW Government has a target of \$750 million in reducing 'red tape' costs for business and the community by June 2015. One of the first areas being focussed on by the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is reforming licensing arrangements in NSW. This suggests that the natural environment could suffer as a result.

There has also been talk throughout NSW and rest of Australia of cutting so-called 'green tape', usually with the idea of decreasing safeguards for healthy natural environments.

At first glance IPART's request for comment suggests that only current licence holders are invited to comment, but IPART has advised that comments from everyone are invited, as environmental issues are to be considered along with economic matters. For more information see Reviews [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au)

Please consider emailing or writing to IPART to state your concerns that economic issues should not take precedence over the natural environment.

IPART Licence Reform  
PO Box Q290  
QVB POST OFFICE NSW 1230

[LicenceReform@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:LicenceReform@ipart.nsw.gov.au)

## **Rural Lands Strategy**

When land-owner and developer discontent with environmental protection zone E3 forced Council to remove rural areas from the latest LEP it set up a steering committee, stacked with those objectors, to develop a Rural Lands Strategy. This committee has endorsed a draft project management plan and is finalising a plan on how to consult and engage with the community. Many on the committee want the E3 zones and overlays removed and are asking for funding from the Minister for Planning so that expert consultants can consider whether E3 zones could be removed from the planning template.

## **CMA Focus Changes**

Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) are being merged with the Agricultural Extension Section of the NSW Department of Primary Industries and The Livestock Health and Pest Authority. The new body will be renamed Local Land Services (LLS). As a result of the merger there will be staff cuts and currently the announcements from the Minister appear to give greater focus to the provision of services for farmers rather than on the broader scope of environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, the second Catchment Action Plan which is currently being prepared by Southern Rivers CMA (in consultation with stakeholders) will be the guiding document for the regional LLS and so its completion to the highest standard is critical to the future of the landscapes and livelihoods of our region.

## **Local Food Production**

Sustainable Agriculture and Gardening Eurobodalla (SAGE) has established community gardens and is making gradual if slow progress in trying to establish sustainable local food producers and local markets for the organic produce. The best soil is on the flood plains but planning policies make it very difficult to carry out horticultural activities by prohibiting any structures (such as tool sheds or loading ramps) in these flood zones. SAGE is trying to develop a template to facilitate approval of small scale food production enterprises, including sites on flood plains. Visit <http://sageproject.org.au> to find out more.



Meanwhile SAGE is working with South East Producers (SCPA) based in the Bega Shire who have developed a South East Food Plan and a South East Food Discussion Paper. You can see the full text of both these document on the website [www.southeast.food.com.au](http://www.southeast.food.com.au)

### Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH)

What was the Dept of Environment was demoted to an “office” and brought into the Premier’s Department when the Coalition won the last election. In October this year the OEH was restructured with some new executives appointed and others losing their jobs.

The aim of the restructure is explained as being required to make a “shift into a new regionally-based model with an emphasis on delivering customer service, cutting red tape and generally making it easier for the community to look after and enjoy their own environment and heritage. “ Time will tell what this actually means.

Horse riding has just been allowed on “old pack-horse trails” in wilderness areas from the Clyde to Cobargo. Will 4WDs with horse floats be allowed to bring the horses in?

### COASTWATCHERS COMMITTEE 2012-13

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### COASTWATCHERS CO-OPERATES WITH:

Broulee-Mossy Pt Community Association  
Congo Area Association  
Conservation Council ACT Region  
Climate Action Network Australia  
Eurobodalla Landcare / Dunecare  
Friends of Durras  
Friends of the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens  
Long Beach Landcare  
Maloneys Residents Association  
Malua Bay Residents Association  
Nature Coast Marine Group  
South East Region Conservation Alliance  
Tomakin Community Association  
Tuross Lakes Preservation Group

Coastwatchers is a member of -  
The NSW Nature Conservation Council and  
The Better Planning Network