

September 2013

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I have been back to the USA again this year to present at the AACC Conference with an attendance in the order of 2000 delegates. The work I presented was in relation to the USA Renewable Energy delegation which was seen as a good example of collaboration between Australia and the USA. Mr Mark Darby, Counsellor (Education & Research) Washington from Australian Education International (AEI) and Mindy Feldbaum from the Collaboratory were the two other presenters at the session. Click here to view the [presentation slides](#).

A recently released [Sustainable Australia Report 2013: Conversations with the future](#) has described 'sustainability' as having a set of core elements which feature in most definitions:

- *Sustainability is concerned with the future and with the ability to maintain certain values, assets or capabilities over the long term.*
- *Sustainability involves decisions that address the interaction between environmental, social and economic domains.*
- *Sustainability requires choices considering equity within society and across generations.*

The report is large but broken into readable chunks and has some great information in it around innovation, business growth, social issues, education and climate change to name a few. Some of the graphs are very interesting and could be useful.

The network is growing with our first private VET provider, [Sustainable Advantage](#) joining us recently. We have another two Institutes joining this month and another three Institutes developing their application from Victoria, NSW and Queensland.

Linda Condon

Director, International Green Skills Network

“Every good movement passes through five stages, indifference, ridicule, abuse, repression, and respect.”

Mahatma Gandhi, *All Men are Brothers, Autobiographical Reflections*

NEWS

TDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Our recent TDA Annual Conference (1 -3 September 2103) was very successful with over 320 delegates attending. The International Green Skills Network arranged two sessions for the conference – one a pre-conference session and another concurrent session.

The pre-conference session had asked the following speakers to present:

- **Arthur Blewitt**, Agrifood Skills, Australia presented on their sustainability agenda.
- **Leeza Boyce** and **Annie Nolan**, Sunshine Coast TAFE, outlined their approach to sustainability at the Institute.
- **Dr Fabian Sack** discussed the results of Gen Green Surveys over the past four years and the up-coming one.
- **Win Scott**, Sunraysia, presented on the sustainability achievements at Susraysia Institute of TAFE.

The papers associated with their presentations can be found [here](#) .

The concurrent session was called Green Growth, Innovation and Education for Sustainability. The speakers included:

- **Andrew Petersen**, CEO of Sustainable Business Australia
- **Linda Condon**, Director of the International Green Skills Network
- **Elizabeth McGregor**, CEO of North Coast Institute
- **Nigel Hill**, CEO Wide Bay Institute of TAFE and **Keith Simpson**, Operational Manger of Score

The papers for these presentations can be found [here](#).

GREENS SKILLS BUILDING

NMIT has a Green Skills building which now has a video on all its features found on the [SkillsOne](#) website. It is an excellent example of a sustainable building.

EVENTS

AUSTRALASIAN CAMPUSES TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY (ACTS) CONFERENCE

25-27 September 2013, Novotel, Sydney Olympic Park

The ACTS conference is fast approaching and is not to be missed! Themes relating to 'Shared learning: lessons from the Sustainability Community' and how to achieve this will be discussed.

For more details, [click here](#).

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE

Co-hosted with:

AUSTRALIA ALL-ENERGY EXHIBITION & CONFERENCE 2013

9-10 October 2013, Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

For more details and to register visit the [Australian Sustainability](#) website or the [All-Energy](#) website.

GRANTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

PROMOTION OF EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING & TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Australian Government has committed \$58.65 million in program funding over four years towards the Promotion of Excellence in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education which is administered by the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) in the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE). In 2013, \$8 million (indicative) has been allocated to grants programs to provide funding for academics and professional staff to investigate, develop and implement innovations in learning and teaching. Grants are available through the [Office for Learning and Teaching](#).

GRANTS LINK

GrantsLINK makes it easier to find suitable and relevant grants from the many government grants that are available. GrantsLINK also helps you find the best source of funding and assists you to complete application forms. Click here for a [list of education and training related grants](#).

CASE STUDY

GREENING SUNITAFE



The driver in our quest for the greening of SuniTAFE was the need to integrate sustainability into everything that we do. One of the early challenges was moving sustainability away from being a political debate about climate change to language that moved the Institute forward. We began by talking about the need to conserve resources for future generations. Later we were able to demonstrate that there was economic development potential or green growth in alternative energy and other projects.

We could see that there was a real need to introduce green skills in to trades training and we wanted to do this in a 'real' setting. We are members of the National Centre for Sustainability and through our NCS Swan Hill Project Officer we sourced a grant from Sustainability Victoria to build an Eco Demonstration Centre. We had several partner organisations including the council and the state development office.

The grant was successful and the building achieved an energy rating of 9.0. The building supervisor was a qualified builder who was also a SuniTAFE trades' teacher and we involved apprentices from all of the trades in the build. Initially we were not sure how the local employers would respond to having their apprentices involved in green building but they all granted permission enthusiastically.



The feedback from the apprentices involved in the Swan Hill project was positive and we could see that they were becoming change agents so we began to wonder how we could replicate the experience for future groups once the eco-demonstration centre was completed. This led to the idea of developing plans for a portable energy efficient building. Like many other TAFE Institutes, our trade students build portable buildings – cubby houses, offices, toilet blocks and bungalows and so we found a grant to fund the development of a sustainable bungalow.

We worked with a local designer to come up with a modular building that achieved an energy rating of 7.5 – pretty good for a portable building. We called it a SuniPOD and the design has now become one of the ways in which we integrate green skills into trades training. We adapted the first SuniPOD to become a desperately needed nursing laboratory and so the students in health programs also learn about the benefits of a green building on an ongoing basis.



In Mildura we have also developed a successful partnership with the local council and sustainability group - the Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC) and the Sunraysia Sustainability Network. The MRCC has made a parcel of land available at the Mildura landfill which will become the Mildura Eco Village

over the next few years. Our first project was a joint submission for a grant to build an Environmental Education Centre which was successfully completed recently and has just won a design award.



The Education Centre is the first building and other projects that have been funded (and will begin this year) are a community garden, the retrofitting of an old house that will be moved to the site shortly and a solar distillation project which will recycle waste water using solar energy to drive the process. All of these projects will involve staff and students and eventually we will have created a green tourist attraction with a café, viewing platform, community garden, green buildings and renewable energy projects.

In many ways the Greening of SuniTAFE has been assisted by our location. Our institute is in the top corner of Victoria, it's on the edge of the outback and it is remote – 550 kilometres from Melbourne, 400 kilometres from Adelaide and 1000 kilometres from Sydney. Water is precious and electricity is expensive so community awareness about the value of conserving resources is heightened. SuniTAFE is one of the smallest TAFE Institutes in Australia and there will be many institutes that deliver more green courses than we do. We believe that our strength has been in the integration of green thinking into everything that we do.



PERSONAL STORY

TRISHA DRIOLI

Lecturer, Sustainability and Carbon Management, TAFE SA

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING AT YOUR INSTITUTE/ ORGANISATION? AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

I am relatively new to TAFE and to formal teaching. I have been with TAFE SA since February 2011 after 18 years in local and state government sustainability roles.

WHAT IS YOUR WORK AND EDUCATION BACKGROUND?

I have a degree in economics and accounting from Monash University. And I have a Master of Environment Studies from Adelaide University. But I have also studied tertiary level psychology and philosophy. Most of my formal study was in the 1980s and early 1990s before I started working for the government. My first role as a professional sustainability practitioner was as the first Environment Officer at the City of Burnside in 1993.

This was a wonderful experience in community engagement and government strategy, policy and project management at the local level. I thoroughly enjoyed this time and have a fondness for local government. In 2000 I moved in to the state government via the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) where I managed a cleaner production/eco efficiency training and project team.

From the EPA I worked in various government agencies, including the inaugural Office of Sustainability which brought together sustainability practitioners from across government to implement the government's Greening of Government program and others. One exciting project was working with the first Thinker in Residence, Herbert Giradet, a world renown sustainability advocate.

I also had the honour of working with the late Professor Stephen Schneider, a world leader in climate change and an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scientist.

My final role in government was with SA Water, a government business enterprise, as the Sustainability Manager.

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME INVOLVED IN ISSUES RELATING TO SUSTAINABILITY?

I first became interested in sustainability issues when I studied in California in the 1980s. I had not heard of Earth Day and was keen to join the activity (and the celebration). The severe drought in southern California in the late 1980s brought climate change and sustainability issues firmly to the forefront.

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS HAPPENED? WAS IT A PERSONAL CHANGE DECISION? AN ACCIDENTAL MOVE OR ONE YOU WERE ASKED TO TAKE ON? PLEASE EXPLAIN FURTHER.

My exposure to sustainability activity and activism sparked my own interest. I was particularly concerned about nuclear proliferation and being surrounded by nuclear power plants whilst living in California. I began to investigate the issues. Through the process of research and conversation, I learnt about the connection between energy issues and many other issues. Interest in sustainability also comes from a long held love of the outdoors, particularly walking and camping, where one has the opportunity to reflect on life and commune with nature.

HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN YOUR ENTHUSIASM?

Maintaining a network of colleagues is crucial. Through sustainability networks I have met and worked with (and celebrated with) many wonderful people. When we see the great work that so many of our fellow sustainability advocates and practitioners are doing, and the level of commitment they have to the issue, it keeps you going through the times of negativity (because it can be a negative subject when we look at what we've lost already and what we risk losing if we don't change our way of life). But the great thing about sustainability is that it presents a positive alternative. A "good news" story for those that see that our current trend is not providing the quality of life we want.

IS THERE ANY ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE OTHERS ABOUT HOW TO INFLUENCE CHANGE?

Be creative, stay engaged both locally and globally and grow your own food. I see it as the responsibility of every individual on the planet to do their bit to both reduce their own personal impact, but also to contribute to the social and political systems which govern our lives. Democracy is crucial to sustainability. As our resources diminish, there will be greater demand (and competition) for what's left. In order to ensure that we do not disintegrate into a state of chaos and cruelty, we need to ensure our institutions remain honourable and focused on caring for the community.

We must never take our freedom for granted, and recognise that many individuals have been stripped of all freedom and are struggling to meet basic needs. We need to practice sharing more.



LATEST RESEARCH

CAMPUS CARBON FOOTPRINT MANAGEMENT IN VET: SPARKING ACTION AND BUILDING CAPACITY

This is a paper researched and written by Penny Johnston from TAFE SA and is well worth reading. It explores how TAFE SA Regional Institute is engaged in initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of its operations. The research particularly focused on: the extent of carbon footprint data collection, analysis and reporting in TAFE SA Regional Institute; the initiatives underway to reduce the campus carbon footprint; and what motivates staff in attempts to reduce the footprint. The author interviewed ten staff, from lecturers and managers to institute directors, to gather their perspectives on carbon footprint management. Click here to view the [paper](#).

PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

A paper about the pre-service training of teachers in Australia. The outcomes of the research were used to inform course content, structure and pedagogies with the intention of more adequately preparing pre-service teachers to implement education for sustainability. Click here to view the [paper](#).

INTEGRATING SHARED ACTION LEARNING INTO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

This article looks at the innovative approaches to sustainability education. It acknowledges the limits of conventional coursework and explores courses based on "shared action learning" – a process in which students, faculty, and community sponsors share learning experiences while working on sustainability projects for a specific community. Click here to view the [article](#).

TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

LEARNING & TEACHING SUSTAINABILITY

Learning and teaching sustainability [website](#) hosts a range of resources including lecture notes, slides and articles to explore on EfS, energy efficiency, sustainable business, water, waste and many more.

ARIES

Click here for some more useful links at [ARIES](#).

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

More information for educators (mostly for the secondary school system), [click here](#).

THE CLIMATE DEBATE

The Competing Discourses of Climate Change is a great discussion paper on the issues around climate change and the debate associated with it. It examines the range of views in the public domain and explores their views. A very useful tool to generate discussion in the classroom. Click here to read this [paper](#).

A THOUGHT:

A woman once came to Mahatma Gandhi with her little boy. She asked, "Mahatma-ji, tell my little boy to stop eating sugar." "Come back in three days," said Gandhi. In three days the woman and the little boy returned and Mahatma Gandhi said to the little boy, "Stop eating sugar." The woman asked, "Why was it necessary for us to return only after three days for you to tell my little boy that?" The Mahatma replied "Three days ago I had not stopped eating sugar."

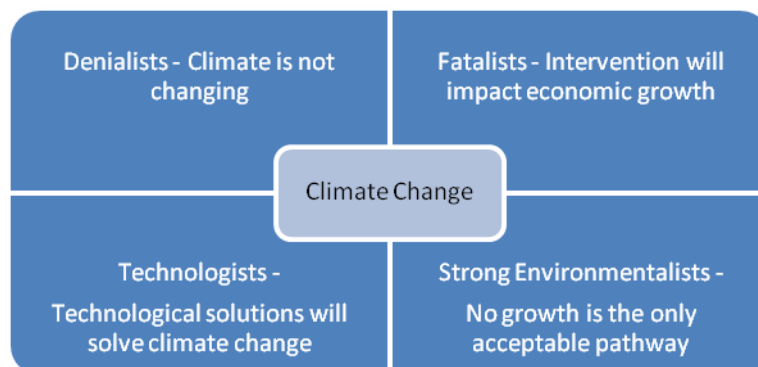


Figure 1. Climate change discourses