

# ANUgreen Newsletter

## Issue 2, 2003

In this issue:

- ANU recognised for 'green' excellence
- ANU Transport Survey
- Recycling Update
- Water Restrictions at ANU
- Ongoing Water Conservation at ANU
- CERAMony
- Lower Sullivans Creek Catchment Ecological Survey
- Green Corps

### ANU Recognised for 'Green' Excellence

The Australian National University's commitment to the environment was recognised by three separate bodies in 2003. The ANU received awards from the Australian Greenhouse Office, the ACT Government, and the ACT Chamber of Commerce for three aspects of the ANUgreen program.



David Carpenter and Bart Meehan accepting the Greenhouse award on behalf of the ANU

The ANU won silver in the 2003 Engineers Australia/Australian Greenhouse Office National Greenhouse Challenge Awards. The University was one of 11 finalists nominated for the Gold, Silver and Bronze awards from the 800 signatories to the Greenhouse Challenge. Gold was won by the Perth Water Corporation and Bronze by the Swan Brewery Company.

The ANU was recognised for its achievement in reducing its Key Performance Indicator for greenhouse emissions, tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per Equivalent Full Time Student Unit (EFTSU) per year, from 9.12 tonnes in 2001 to 8.22 tonnes in 2002.

The Lower Sullivans Creek Catchment Ecological Survey, in which the ANU is a partner, received a 'Highly Commended' award in the 2003 Telstra Country-Wide Landcare Research category at the recent ACT Landcare Awards. The survey has a unique focus on urban ecological resources including terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates, flora, mammals, reptiles, frogs and birds. The ANU will use the results of the survey to plan how the urban ecological resources within the ANU campus can be conserved and enhanced.

The ANU was awarded the 'Management System Award' at the 2003 ACT & Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry Eco-Efficiency Awards. The award recognises the University's commitment, and in particular the holistic approach the ANU has adopted, to improving its environmental performance. This approach is enshrined in the University's [Environmental Management Plan \(2003-2008\)](#), which outlines objectives, targets and actions for improving environmental performance in the areas of energy conservation and greenhouse gas emissions, waste management and recycling, water conservation, pollution prevention and environmental risk reduction, transport, biodiversity, community awareness, and environmental management.

## **ANU Transport Survey**

The ANUgreen office recently undertook a comprehensive survey of ANU staff and students' transport-related behaviour. Over 700 people were interviewed about transport issues such as preferred travel modes, arrival times, modal sharing and barriers to using certain transport modes. The results are very interesting and reflect the diversity of the ANU community. On the day of the survey 41% of people arrived at campus alone in a private vehicle, 13.7% arrived as a passenger, 14.2% walked, 11.6% cycled, 14.8% caught the bus, and 1% rode a motorbike. Interestingly 49% of those surveyed indicated they used more than one type of transport to get to the ANU. The proportion of bus riders and cyclists was significantly higher among students in comparison to staff, who were much more inclined to arrive alone in a private vehicle.

To encourage more active modes of transport ANU will be implementing a Sustainable Transport Program over the next three years. The program will focus on providing a suite of incentives to encourage staff and students to adopt more sustainable forms of transport. ANUgreen will develop the program in consultation with the University community. One project already underway is the construction of new bike sheds, expected to provide secure parking for 350 bicycles.

## **Recycling Update**

The big recycling success of the past six months is steel recycling. Since July this year, when steel recycling began, ANU diverted 18.8 tonnes of steel from landfill. Recycled items have included furniture, scientific equipment and machinery. This has both environmental and financial benefits, as the University is paid for the steel instead of paying to dispose of it.

Installation of recycling stations is continuing, with new stations to be installed soon near RSC, FEIT and the Law courtyard. The recycling manager has also been talking to two companies regarding possible trials of organic composting systems on ANU campus.

A better picture of what the ANU community throws away is emerging through the hard work of Roger Burrit's Environmental Accountability class. Class members carried out waste audits of public recycling stations and some of the halls and colleges for a period of 4 weeks. The audits gave the class real experience of an environmental management project as well as providing information that will improve the ANU recycling program.

## **Water Restrictions at ANU**

As a Commonwealth-funded authority the ANU is not bound by the current water restrictions. However, the University is committed to being both a good corporate citizen and environmentally responsible. To that end the University has entered a voluntary agreement with ActewAGL to [reduce our water usage](#) wherever practical, and in particular to cut irrigation by 40% in 2003/2004.

## **Ongoing Water Conservation at ANU**

The ANU has recognised that it is a significant consumer of water in the ACT and continues to achieve substantial water reductions. For the first 9 months of 2003 ANU reduced its water use by 67 million litres compared to the same period last year, a reduction of 12.5%. Whilst some of this can be directly attributed to specific water conservation activities, the majority has come from a general reduction in water use across campus. Well done to everyone for their efforts this year to date.

As water consumption in the ACT will continue to be an important issue for many years to come the ANU is currently developing a water conservation strategy for the next 5 years. Some of the actions already underway or being investigated include:

- Installation of process cooling and flow control in laboratories
- Replacement of stills with reverse osmosis machines
- Replacement of water aspirators with electronic diaphragm pumps in laboratories
- Installation of low flow showerheads and dual flush toilets
- Trial of waterless urinals
- Use of recycled effluent to irrigate ovals
- Capture and reuse of rainwater in buildings

Process cooling installed in the Electron Spin Resonance laboratory at RSES has now been running for three months and has already had a substantial impact on water use in the School. This project, alongside several other water saving initiatives, has led to a reduction in water consumption at RSES by 38% compared to the same period last year.

If you have any suggestions for water conservation on campus we would like to hear from you - email [energy@anu.edu.au](mailto:energy@anu.edu.au) with your ideas.

And remember, water conservation is something we can all do. Some easy things to do at work include:

- Take shorter showers
- Turn off taps and water-using equipment when not in use
- Report leaks to Facilities and Services on x54000

## **CERAMony**

The ANU has reduced stormwater pollution risk by 28 per cent in the last two years thanks to a new and unique way of identifying environmental risk issues and setting pollution prevention priorities. The tool allowing these targets to be set, assessed and achieved — the Comparative Environmental Risk Assessment Method (CERAM) — was developed at ANU, and is now being successfully used in a number of organisations around Australia.

CERAM allows users to quickly and easily calculate the likelihood and consequences of pollution occurring from any site, and to see how this changes over time. Developer of the method, Dr Su Wild River, has developed a professional CERAM course, targeted primarily at business and government departments subject to environmental protection legislation.

The inaugural course members from the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, Brisbane City Council, the CSIRO, and ANU received their certificates at a CERAMony on Tuesday 25 November. "The hope is that CERAM might provide a framework for assessing environmental management across the nation," Dr Wild River said. "With wide-scale adoption I'm confident we could lift the bar to new heights."

## **Lower Sullivans Creek Catchment Ecological Survey**

Field survey work for the fauna component of the LSCCES is now complete. The project team extends their appreciation to the many volunteers and academic staff who assisted with the extensive fieldwork schedule over the last twelve months. The assistance of volunteers including Green Corps, Work for the Dole, students, staff, local residents and members of community groups has been an important contribution to the project, without which field surveys could not have been completed.

In the new year the survey will enter its second phase, in which the project team will assess and map data to determine the distribution of fauna communities and areas of significant biodiversity, habitat and conservation value.

The project team will work with the University community and project partners to

maintain and enhance the ecological resources of our campus and surrounding lands, and to develop a greater understanding of our urban ecology. The findings of the survey will inform the University's Biodiversity Management Plan, in addition to informing the environmental management plans of partner organisations.

## **Green Corps**

The ANU has successfully hosted the first Green Corps team on an Australian university campus. The team of 10 local youth assisted ANUgreen undertake a range of projects to enhance the environmental performance of the campus.

The team helped assess campus waste management initiatives by conducting waste audits of selected recycling stations, contributed to the organisation of the ACTS Conference held in September and undertook revegetation projects on campus in conjunction with Grounds and Maintenance staff.

The team also provided invaluable assistance to the Lower Sullivans Creek Catchment Ecological Survey. The team received training in invertebrate and frog call identification and provided team leadership to volunteers assessing biota during the spring surveys. ANUgreen and the LSCCES project team extend their appreciation to Green Corps for their enthusiasm and professionalism in assisting achieve the outcomes of the survey.

The Green Corps team will conclude their works program at Kialoa Coastal Campus, where they will undertake riparian restoration work on Butlers Creek.