

VOICES

newsletter from ALM Group



Number 22 November 2014

Momentum building for continuous improvement through voluntary farm certification

In their *Blueprint for a Healthy Environment and a Productive Economy* **report** released 6 November, the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists put its weight behind the use of voluntary farm certification to enable communities and consumers to reward land managers for improving land condition. Importantly, the report concludes that it is in the public interest for governments to create the conditions necessary to enable environmental impacts to be built into the business of business.

These points are fleshed out in the WWF-Australia **report** *Changing Land Use to Save Australian Wildlife* released 10 November. A key recommendation is that the Australian Government promote the establishment and uptake of credibly certified, ecologically sustainable and low biodiversity impact agriculture by helping develop a certification system, assisting certified agricultural operations and supporting the marketing of products from certified farms.



The WWF recommendation is set in a comprehensive overview of certified sustainable agriculture, including reference to support from industry organisations, case studies of Certified Land Management in Queensland and Victoria and to the need for government support illustrated by the Western Australian Government providing \$14.56 million towards securing Marine Stewardship Council certification of its fisheries. The authors lament short-termism and point to the need for enduring improvement combined with an enduring system of benefits to participating landholders.

Dusty –‘it could happen in my dogtime!’

The ALM Group honorary dog Dusty was but a pup when the ALM Group was established in 2003 to improve environmental and animal welfare management in ways that recognise and reward achieving landholders. Having spent a substantial part of his life under the ALM group desk he is encouraged by the growing acceptance of the ALM Group vision and by the fact that we have a proven tool to give effect to that vision. He is concerned, however, about how long it might take to establish an effective voluntary, national, on-ground program. After all, neither visions nor dogs can last forever.



Help build the momentum

If you have completed our short Verifying Land and Animal Welfare Credentials **survey**, thank you. If not it would be great if you could do so now. We will include in the analysis any responses we receive by close-of-business Friday 21 November 2014. It does take only a couple of minutes.

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