

NELR editorial

From the editor and the NELR editorial network

In this issue we bring you some inspirational articles about communities willing to take action to protect their local/global environment – including from canal estate development at Ralphs Bay in Tasmania, and from water pollution in the Upper Coxs River near Sydney.

The lead theme article – ‘Ralphs Bay Saved – A Tasmanian Story’ tells of community mobilisation, persistence and ultimately victory. It is the story of a campaign built on a shared sense of history and identity. It benefited from a broad diversity of skills and knowledge, networking abilities, good information flows, technical competence in relevant law, science and politics, and essential amounts of scepticism, humour, intelligence and resilience.

The Coxs River story is also about committed action and determination, and the importance of protective costs orders in facilitating access to justice in some circumstances. The NSW Court of Appeal recently rejected an appeal against a protective costs order obtained by the Blue Mountains Conservation Society. This decision in *Delta Electricity v Blue Mountains Conservation Society* [2010] NSWCA 263 means that the Blue Mountains Conservation Society can continue its water pollution case against Delta in the NSW Land and Environment Court, and if it is unsuccessful, it will not be required to pay any more than \$20 000 towards Delta’s costs.

In other articles, the interests of forest communities more broadly are discussed in relation to greenhouse gas absorption and the operation of the clean development mechanism under the Climate Change Convention’s Kyoto Protocol. Evidence-based arguments are also presented about the costs to the planet of grain-fed livestock industries and how they contribute to the erosion of the fundamental human right to live free from hunger.

This issue also includes an overview of the policies that communities in and represented by political parties took to the voters in the lead up to the August 2010 federal election. In the hung Parliament these will be subject to the inevitable negotiation processes that will characterise the new, more democratic paradigm for Parliamentary business.

There is also a broad ranging review of recent developments and cases, with the operation of tree protection legislation, and statutory and policy responses to climate change common to two jurisdictions.

Producing such topical material involves significant effort, and NELA is fortunate to have a conscientious network and editorial team willing to contribute what’s needed. There would be no NELR without authors’ painstaking effort to write readable and accurate text. But topic and author spotting, text editing, and design and layout are also needed, and these require a range of other skills. This issue was meant to mark Wayne Gumley’s escape from design and layout but it hasn’t quite worked out that way due to the challenges of learning new design software whilst copy-editing content. Thank you Wayne for not only contributing content but also for helping to pull the issue together in its final stages with your assistant Kaye.

Hanna Jaireth
Editor