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Network Notes

Autumn 2019



Is this a Climate Election? Hopefully all candidates for federal parliament will be mindful of the distress being experienced in rural and regional Australia by both people, animals and plants due to global warming.

Below is the Bureau of Metrology's analysis of eastern Australia for this winter and spring.

Short-lived El Niño remains likely

The Bureau's [ENSO Outlook](#) remains at El Niño ALERT. This means the chance of El Niño developing in the coming months is approximately 70%; around triple the normal likelihood.

Although sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean are still close to El Niño thresholds, the atmosphere is yet to show a consistent El Niño-like response. The Southern Oscillation Index, which typically drops when an El Niño pressure pattern develops across the equatorial Pacific, remains neutral and trade winds are currently close to normal strength near the equator.

While climate models forecast El Niño-like ocean temperatures during May, most models indicate a cooling through winter, with only three of eight models still forecasting El Niño-like warmth in spring. This indicates that if El Niño does develop it is likely to be short lived and weak.

El Niño typically brings drier than average conditions for eastern Australia during winter–spring, and warmer days across southern Australia. During the autumn months, the influence of El Niño tends to be weaker, but can bring drier conditions to the south of the country.

In the Indian Ocean, most climate models indicate the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is likely to be neutral for the remainder of the austral autumn, with the possibility of a positive IOD in winter or spring. A positive IOD typically means drier than average conditions for southern and central Australia during winter–spring.

How can farms manage climate change?

Get advice and inspiration at *Climate Risk in Agriculture 2019*. The conference will be held at the Warragul Arts Centre on Thursday, 20th June.

It's a one-day event that includes expert presenters and discussions about climate forecasts, practical actions to build farm resilience, carbon farming opportunities, legal and financial risks and more. It will also be a good opportunity to network with fellow landholders.

Details on the keynote speaker and presenters are on [WGCMA website](#) events calendar and the WGCMA Facebook page.

Tickets are \$35 and can be booked online at: www.trybooking.com/BAUZZ

Up and coming grants....

The West Gippsland CMA - Victorian Landcare Grants are now open.

These grants are for volunteer groups and networks to undertake projects that protect, enhance and restore our land and environment.

Please pass this information on to your Landcare groups and contacts.

Project Grants of up to \$20,000

These are available to eligible groups/networks for on-ground works to protect, enhance and



Board Update:

Gemma continues to keep mum, Kate, busy, check out the hair!

SGLN has been applying for more grants including one to the Victorian Government's Community Climate Change Adaptation program.

SGLN BOARD members have been busy representing the network including staffing a stand at Farm World with Melbourne Water and other Landcare networks.

The March Board meeting was held in Loch. Western cluster Landcare groups [Loch-Nyora, Poowong, Triholm, Arawata-Wild Dog Valley, Mt. Lyall] in the "western cluster" were invited to attend part of the meeting to discuss their projects and

restore natural assets (e.g. native flora/fauna, waterways/wetlands, soils), and for capacity building, community education and engagement projects.

Support Grants of \$500

These are available to eligible groups/networks of cover operating costs, e.g. insurance, incorporation, communications (e.g. websites or newsletters), events, and other types of operating costs.

Applications close: 5pm

Wednesday 12th June 2019

[Guidelines:](#) [Application Form:](#)

Questions: Kathleen Brack on (03) 5613 5966 or

kathleenb@wgcm.vic.gov.au

The 2019 Gallagher Fencing Landcare Grants 2019 are open to:

- Landcare, Coastcare and Junior Landcare groups
- Volunteer-based community groups
- Individual landholders, farmers, agriculturalists and graziers

Eligible applicants for Gallagher Fencing Landcare Grants are invited to apply for an individual fencing project grant for **up to \$8,000 (ex-GST)** including fencing materials –

challenges with the Board.

Key Challenges: Succession planning; Management of weeds by recalcitrant landowners

Successes: Poowong received a grant to start a Bass River walking trail; Loch-Nyora cleaning up a roadside dump spot and old rail line, Arawata and Wild Dog Valley groups merged forming a stronger, more active group.

Board members Andrea Clifford and Rosemary Knox are working with Landcare groups to update their membership lists on SGLN's database so both groups and SGLN have the same data.

Libby Anthony

SGLN Chair

Welcome to the **Friends of Stockyard Creek** - the newest group to join SGLN. Auspiced by SGLN, the Friends obtained a grant which allowed them to develop a management plan for Stockyard Creek. SGLN is looking forward to supporting the Friends action this plan. Any Landcare member who would like to be involved with the Friends can contact Jane Oram on 0429629753.

up to 12 grants are planned for 2019. Grant submissions **close on Friday, 31st May.**

For more info goto [here](#)

Poowong and District Landcare River Walk Proposal

This is a partnership between the Poowong Landcare Group (PLG) and Melbourne Water, who are the managers of the land concerned.

There may be other partners in the future to finish the project.

The Bass River Reserve between the Loch/Poowong Road and the Bena Road Caravan Park is an iconic area for native species of flora and fauna. It is currently covered in environmental weeds, which have been sprayed this year. PLG intend to create a walking track for the use of Walkers, Bike riders, Disabled Groups and the general Public. The public is already using the Bena Road for these purposes for these activities, and it is most dangerous as the road is narrow and windy with poor visibility.

PLG intends to make a track through the reserve to the Caravan park, with signage showing the natural attributes of the area with log seating placed along the length of the track.

There will be no allowable motorbike access. A small parking area will be

Landcare groups in the Network have expressed a desire to know more about what other groups are doing. So please email information and photos of your group's projects for Network Notes to glennb@wgcm.vic.gov.au.

We are looking for more people to get involved in Landcare?

With so many exciting activities going on throughout our network we would like to encourage you to get more involved. This could be voluntary for as much time that suits you. We are also seeking people interested in part time, small project work in a paid capacity. So please let Glenn know of your skills and interests and we will get you more involved.

Loch-Nyora Landcare Group

The Loch Garden Club and Loch Nyora Landcare Group have teamed up to assist John Kennedy develop an appealing native vegetation frontage at his property on the Loch Wonthaggi Road, just out of Loch. It is the site of the metal salvage depot, which has generated over \$100,000 for the Loch CFA, over 20 years. Initial work entailed clearing some the old, scrappy vegetation along the frontage and John plans to

set aside for users with an area for the disabled bus parking.

The track will be all weather smooth gravel and be as level as possible.

There will be six info signs covering Safety, Sponsors and iconic species.

It will be maintained by the community. Melbourne Water will undertake the weed control into the future and Landcare will replant indigenous species as needed. The track will give access to Melbourne Water contractors to reach from the roadside to the riverbanks.

The area is home to the Giant Earthworm, Strzeleckii gums, Flying possums and the true Gippsland Genus of the Koala. It is a beautiful stroll along the river, and as it is usually quite shallow it is not dangerous. There are many indigenous fish and water dwellers in the river. It has a wide variety of native birds as it is all native bushland.

This track will end at the Caravan Park which has toilets and eating facilities. The park is heavily patronised most of the year. And we would hope that some of the travellers would come up to Poowong for meals and supplies to assist our local economy.

The Poowong Landcare Group would like your feedback on this project, and if you wish to help in any way it would be welcomed. We do

realign the fence during summer so the two Loch groups can clear the remaining scrub prior to planting in the autumn. About eight people attended the first working bee and we are hopeful of attracting a similar number for the final stage of clearing in autumn.



LVI Annual General Meeting

When: 10:30am, 29 May 2019

Where: Monash University Law Chambers, 555, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC

All members and stakeholders are invited to the 2019 LVI AGM. Lucinda Corrigan, Chair of Farmers for Climate Action will be our Keynote speaker. Lucinda runs a large multi-property cattle genetics enterprise with her husband in the

need sponsors to complete this project. Please ring Jeff Clark 0419 542 203 or 5659-2384

A first in Victoria! Come and see our bumper crop of summer forage sorghum produced from liquid injection of biosolids under dryland conditions.

- Challenge your thinking about novel ways of using valuable resources in biosolids.
- Let's talk about latest technologies and future interventions.
- Network with water industry, soil and environmental professionals, farmers and regulators.

Where: [Longwarry Water Recycling Plant, Cathcart Rd, Modella, VIC](#)

When: Tuesday 14 May

Time: 10 am – 12.30 pm with lunch provided

RSVP: Places are limited so let us know by **Tuesday 7 May**

Contact:

aravind.surapaneni@sew.com.au or phone **0427 409 491**

Finding innovative use of biosolids in agriculture is always challenging. Current regulation for application of biosolids is to surface broadcast followed by shallow incorporation. At South East Water, we recently


Murray Valley and has a long involvement in local Landcare. Lucinda's leadership on has been recognised by the National Climate Change and Research facility as the 2012 Climate Adaption Champion and is Commissioner of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research.

Registration and morning tea from 10.30 am, Program from 11 am, including the AGM and Committee Elections. Please RSVP via email, phone 03 9207 5527, fax 03 9207 5500 or mail.

International Day for Biological Diversity 2019

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is pleased to announce that the theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity 2019 is:

“Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health”

The theme aims to leverage knowledge and spread awareness of the dependency of our food systems, nutrition, and health on biodiversity and healthy ecosystems. [Read more](#) 

Value of Fungi for Biodiversity

Fungi contribute greatly to Australia's biodiversity in terms of sheer

received approval from the Victorian EPA to trial soil injection of liquid biosolids (treatment/stabilisation grade T3) for improving soil structure, fertility and function at our Longwarry Water Recycling Plant. Soil injection of liquid biosolids in agriculture has been practiced in Australia since 1998; the majority of which has occurred on farms in the Sydney region only. Liquid food wastes have also been soil injected into agricultural land for over 20 years in New South Wales, and more recently in northern Victoria.

The farm at our plant is under recycled water irrigation (80 ha) for the production of fodder crops (maize and pasture). Around 20 ha is dryland farming.

Want to know more?

Get in touch with South East Water's Senior Research and Planning Scientist, Aravind Surapaneni on email

aravind.surapaneni@sew.com.au or phone **0427 409 491**.

There will be a short farm walk so wear your best walking shoes. You're also welcome to bring a chair for the talking session.

This is a collaborative project between South East Water and Global Centre for Environmental Remediation (University of Newcastle), supported by Cooperative Research Centre for

numbers as well as their essential role in providing ecosystem services such as soil fertility, crop protection and litter decomposition. Ninety per cent of terrestrial plants have a mycorrhizal (symbiotic) relationship with one or more species of fungi without which they are less viable. The seeds of native orchids cannot germinate without a fungal partner. Fungi are also important for a range of pharmaceuticals (including antibiotics), edible foods, and yeasts. Australia has many times more fungi than vascular plants – estimates are as high as 250 000 species. The economic potential of fungi is significant. Fungi represent around nine per cent of Australia's biodiversity, yet are not well understood, with just 12,000 of an estimated 50,000 species so far described and fewer still studied for their ecological importance. Around 5 000 larger (macro) fungi such as mushrooms, puffballs, coral fungi, earthstars, and truffles occur in Australia. Australia has a high number of truffles – estimated between about 1 200-2400 species that are endemic and are mycorrhizal plant partners with only about 10- 25 per cent of species known so far. Many fungi are principal foods for, for instance, rare and endangered species of Potoroos and Woylies and many invertebrates

High Performance Soils (Soil CRC) and Commonwealth Government.

Cassie's corner: SGLN Project Update

Hi everyone, another busy period or me. Here's a quick update to the projects I'm working on:

1. **Demonstrating sustainable farm practices in Western Port** Charles Massy (author of Call of the Reed Warbler) has just completed a speaking tour of our region, organized by this project. I was one of 80 people at the Poowong session yesterday, which was organized by Bass Coast Landcare Network, supported by SGLN. I found it inspiring, especially his comments on the huge potential for regenerative agriculture to play in storing carbon and helping address climate change. It was also great to meet some SGLN folks at the event, I hope you enjoyed it too. Another exciting event coming up is our field day 'What can dung beetles do for you?' on Saturday 29th of June. John Feehan, world renowned dung beetle expert, will be coming to

that, in turn, disperse fungal spores. About 83 genera and 300 species of truffles are currently known in Australia, compared to 50 known genera in Europe and 18 in Africa. Case Study 1 from *Australia's Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, May 2014*

Pest animal management - Bunurong Coast (Fox & Rabbit Control)

Work has been going on in the background to develop a works plan for the three year fox & rabbit program. Local groups and key land managers have contributed to the early stages of the plan.

Here is more about the project: [update](#)

Landcare Staff training:

Glenn & Cassie spent a few days at Wilson's Prom learning new techniques in facilitation and promoting projects. Read [more](#)

Have you seen **Just-a-Minute Illustrated Flora & Fauna of Victoria?**

To access go [here](#)
Username: wgcma1

Kernot to share how dung beetles can make soil healthier and more productive - including interrupting parasite life cycles, aerating soil, cleaning paddocks and reducing fertilizer requirements. We'll also discuss how to look after beetles on your property, including best practice management of pesticides and herbicides. Lunch will be provided, followed by a farm walk in the hills south of Loch to watch the release of a winter-active colony of dung beetles. The flyer will be coming soon, or visit <https://whatcandungbeetlesdoforyou.eventbrite.com.au>

To register by Monday 24th of June (registrations essential).

2. **Corner Inlet citizen science water quality improvement project** We've been busy identifying the best water testing methods to use in the four creeks we'll be monitoring (on the north-western side of Corner Inlet), and are now working on a community seminar which will look at how water quality in these creeks affects Corner inlet, and what we can do about it. The

Password: marsdenia

Tutorials:

Event:

Citizen Science Turtons Creek Water Quality Day - 19th May –, Friends of Turtons Creek

More details [here](#)

Fishcare

Established in 1998, Fishcare Victoria is a community based not-for-profit organization promoting responsible and sustainable fishing practices. More information about the organization can be found on their website: <https://fishcare.org.au/>

It relies on the work of volunteers; but unfortunately, current volunteer numbers are low.

We are therefore conducting a widespread survey of Victoria to better understand volunteering; why people first volunteer and keep volunteering their time for various causes. Out of this data, we hope to make some recommendations to Fishcare Victoria to improve their recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Survey:

seminar will be held in July in Foster, and I'll be in touch soon with more information about it. If anyone is interested in volunteering to assist with the water monitoring (for a 12 month project) please contact me at cassiew@wgcm.vic.gov.au

3. Threatened invertebrates

We're waiting for the rains to come (along with all of you), so we can get out to the two demonstration sites where a modified revegetation technique was used, and see how the Giant Gippsland Earthworms are going. A field day will be held (likely to be in August) where we'll share the results, plus help landholders learn how to tell if you have these worms at your place, and how to protect them. We'll also be launching an expression of interest calling for landholders with Giant Gippsland Earthworms or threatened burrowing crayfish sites who wish to undertake on ground works to protect this species. More information coming soon.

4. Growing Southern Gippsland (climate change adaptation)

The project team (including RMIT and Federation Uni) have been busy interviewing

**For people who volunteer
for [Fishcare](#): [Anyone else](#)**

innovative farmers, and are starting to develop 12 detailed case studies which will be available on a new website later in the year. Six field days will be offered as well, starting later this year. We'll keep you informed!



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