



Introducing the Australian Environment Foundation

The Australian Environment Foundation (AEF) is a not for profit organisation dedicated to informing and educating Australians about environmental issues and solutions to environmental problems.



In doing so the AEF is strictly non-partisan and scrupulously avoids political affiliations, which it believes are inimical to sustainable solutions to environmental problems.

People are an integral part of the natural environment and provide the means to protect and enhance it, recognising that the health of each depends critically on the other.

The AEF is therefore focused on identifying and promoting 'people friendly' solutions to environmental problems.

Don Burke, Chairman of the Australian Environment Foundation *"Decisions for the environment must be based on science and evidence – not ideology"*

Our Key Goals

The AEF seeks to:

- Protect and enhance the natural environment in ways that are consistent with the overall interests of the community;
- Promote and disseminate research into the natural environment and ways of protecting and enhancing it; and
- Participate actively in debate on issues affecting our environment to achieve a better informed community

Our Core Values

In conducting its activities, the AEF members share the following core values:

- Solutions to environmental problems should, as far as possible, reflect the aspirations and needs of the people.
- Environmental policies and management programs should be based on sound science and reliable empirical evidence.
- Environmental policy and management choices should be prioritised on the basis of economic cost-benefit analysis with a rigorous assessment of the risks involved.
- Solutions to environmental problems should make full use of available technologies, as and when appropriate.
- An active approach to the environmental management of landscapes and ecosystems should be used, as and when appropriate.
- Environmental policies and management programs should seek to maintain biological diversity, as and when appropriate.



THE AEF

The foundation is a membership based environmental organisation having no political affiliation. The foundation will take an evidence-based, solution-focused approach to environmental issues. As an environmental organisation, the foundation's principal purposes are:

- (1) The protection and enhancement of the natural environment or of a significant aspect of the natural environment.
- (2) The provision of information or education, or the carrying on of research, about the natural environment or a significant aspect of the natural environment.

AEF VALUES

The foundation will base its work on the following six values:

- (i) **Evidence:** The environment is best served when policies and decisions are made on the basis of science and evidence.
- (ii) **Choice:** The need for prioritisation based on risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis.
- (iii) **Technology:** Technological innovation and its contribution to environmental protection.
- (iv) **Management:** Active management of the environment is often necessary, as landscapes are dynamic.
- (v) **Health and Biological Diversity:** A healthy and biologically diverse environment.
- (vi) **People:** The needs and aspirations of people should receive due consideration.



Professor Mike Archer addressing the 2006 AEF Conference in Brisbane on the concept of Conservation through Sustainable Use



Our Vision for the Environment

The AEF wants to redefine what it means to be an environmentalist as well as the approach to environmental policy and practice.

In our vision of the world, solutions to our environmental problems would ideally reflect the preferences of each community following informed constructive debate and timely decision making.

Our vision minimises the reliance on regulation, particularly the prescriptive 'command and control' variety that is often favoured for environmental regulation. Legislators and bureaucrats generally have neither the incentive nor the knowledge to design highly detailed, highly prescriptive regulatory regimes. The persistent and extensive problems with the environmental management of public land are a good illustration of these shortcomings.

Our vision maximises the reliance on voluntary action to solve environmental problems. Voluntary solutions are not limited to the relative few that can command a political majority. Australia already has numerous businesses that are commercially successful precisely because they are environmentally responsible. These include businesses that operate in environmentally sensitive sectors, such as the fisheries, forestry and mining industries.

What does the AEF contribute

Many members of the AEF are practical environmentalists. Many earn their living by using the natural environment and care for it in very practical and personal ways. They live in rural and regional Australia and are employed in a wide range of rural enterprises and sectors, including the agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries and their suppliers.

This practical knowledge and experience has given the AEF a unique ability to contribute to public debates on the full range of environmental issues. Such issues include:

- Access and adoption of genetically modified crops
- The more sustainable use of water and fisheries resources
- A more sensible management regime for Invasive Native Scrub
- Active forest management
- Exploring all options in energy production



For further details about the AEF and making a positive impact on the Australian environment contact

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Or see our web site at www.aefweb.info for updates on environmental issues, AEF annual awards and AEF member activities.

Tax deductible donations of \$2 or more can be made to the AEF at the above address or direct to our bank account:

Australian Environment Foundation

BSB No: 013 308

Account No: 4978 00416

ABN: 22 112 894 872



"We need to better understand our part in the environment and bring an open minded public along with us, to make sense of the science, promote reason over emotion and remove the irrationality in dealing with environmental issues".

Don Burke addressing the 2006 AEF conference