

## Bill Gammage

Bill Gammage is an adjunct professor in the Humanities Research Centre at the Australian National



University (ANU) studying Aboriginal attitudes to land management from a historical perspective. He grew up in Wagga, and later studied as an undergraduate and postgraduate at the ANU. He taught history at the Universities of Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Adelaide before returning to ANU to write several books. These include *The Sky Travellers* on cultural contact in PNG, and *The Biggest Estate on Earth* on Aboriginal land management. His other main books are *The Broken Years* on Australian soldiers in the Great War, and *Narrandera Shire*. Bill also served the National Museum of Australia for three years as Council member, deputy chair, and acting chair. He is a fellow of the Australian Academy of Social Sciences.

*The Biggest Estate on Earth* is history of the most readable kind: a fascinating amalgam of scientific enigma, bush lore and anecdote.

Across Australia, early Europeans commented again and again that the land looked like a park. With extensive grassy patches and pathways, open woodlands and abundant wildlife, it evoked a country estate in England. Bill Gammage has discovered this was because Aboriginal people managed the land in a far more systematic and scientific fashion than we have ever realised.

For over a decade, Gammage has examined written and visual records of the Australian landscape. He has uncovered an extraordinarily complex system of land management using fire and the life cycles of native plants to ensure plentiful wildlife and plant foods throughout the year. We know Aboriginal people spent far less time and effort than Europeans in securing food and shelter, and now we know how they did it.

With details of land-management strategies from around Australia, *The Biggest Estate on Earth* rewrites the history of this continent, with huge implications for us today. Once Aboriginal people were no longer able to tend their country, it became overgrown and vulnerable to the hugely damaging bushfires we now experience. And what we think of as virgin bush in a national park is nothing of the kind.

## **Alan Oxley**



Alan Oxley is one of Australia's most authoritative advisers on international trade. He has an enormous depth and spread of experience, drawing on more than 25 years of practice, first in government as a successful trade negotiator and then as an influential adviser to the private sector in the core competences of ITS Global.

Before establishing the consultancy in 1989, Alan was a career diplomat. He represented Australia in Singapore, at the United Nations in New York and in Geneva. He transferred to the Trade Department in 1985 and served as Ambassador to the GATT, the predecessor of the World Trade Organization, until 1989. He played a key role in creating the ground-breaking coalition of agricultural exporters, the Cairns Group. He was the first Australian to serve as GATT Chairman.

Alan has extensive experience advising government and the private sector on strategy and corporate affairs, managing multidisciplinary projects on trade and economic policy and delivering capacity building programs for developing countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Alan is Chairman of the national Australian APEC Study Centre, one of Australia's leading Asia Pacific Research Centres, based at RMIT University, Melbourne and is the founder and Chairman of World Growth, a free market NGO based in the United States. He is also a Senior Fellow of the European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE), Brussels.

## **Associate Professor Stewart Franks**



Stewart Franks is a Hydro-climatologist and Associate Professor in the School of Engineering at the University of Newcastle. He is currently the President of the International Commission on the Coupled Land Atmosphere System (ICCLAS), a commission of the International Association of Hydrological Sciences. His research interests include the development of frameworks for both flood and drought risk assessment.

Stewart is perhaps guilty of adopting a more philosophical approach to climate modelling than most. Stewart prefers to believe that if we don't understand the physics of climate, then we might be premature in building models of it and blindly believing their colourful output.

Stewart has been evaluating the predictability of natural climate variability across New South Wales. These studies have focused on the role of ENSO (El Nino/Southern Oscillation) processes in elevating inter-annual drought and flood risk. More recently, he has examined the role of multi-decadal variability of sea surface temperatures in modulating ENSO impacts. Whilst it is known that such variability modulates the magnitude of ENSO event impacts, he has recently demonstrated that ENSO events are also modulated in their frequency. This is of key importance as the results reveal marked differences on multi-decadal timescales in both flood and drought risk across Eastern Australia. One implication of these results is that traditional flood frequency estimation may be grossly over- or under- estimated, dependent on the prevailing climate state under which the data are collected.

## **Dr David Evans**



Dr David Evans has a background in mathematics, computing, and electrical engineering. He helped build the carbon accounting model for the Australian Government that tracks carbon in plants, debris, soils, and agricultural and forest products. He researches mathematics -- Fourier analysis, calculus, the number system, and multivariable polynomials.

Dr Evans consulted full-time for the Australian Greenhouse Office (now the Department of Climate Change) from 1999 to 2005, and part-time 2008 to 2010, modelling Australia's carbon in plants, debris, mulch, soils, and forestry and agricultural products. Evans is a mathematician and engineer, with six university degrees including a PhD from Stanford University in electrical engineering. The evidence supporting the idea that CO2 emissions were the main cause of global warming reversed itself from 1998 to 2006, causing Evans to move from being a warmist to a sceptic.

## **Professor Jeff Bennett**



Jeff Bennett is professor in the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University. He is a teacher, researcher and consultant in the fields of environmental, natural resource and agricultural economics with over 30 years' experience. Professor Bennett has published over 100 articles in refereed journals and more than a dozen books, including his latest release "Little Green Lies" (Connor Court Publishing).

Professor Bennett is a Distinguished Fellow of the Australian Agricultural Economics Society and has been president of that Society as well as editor of their journal. He is also a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, an elected member of the Mont Pelerin Society and a member of the academic advisory panel for the Centre for Independent Studies.

While teaching into the environmental management programme at the ANU he has successfully supervised twenty PhD graduates. Current research interests focus on the application of benefit cost analysis to ensure transparency in government decision making processes and the development of incentives for the private sector to engage in environmental conservation. Professor Bennett, as Principal of the firm Environmental and Resource Economics, acts as a consultant to the public and private sectors in Australia and overseas. Recent clients have included the World Bank, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Murray Darling Basin Authority and NSW Treasury.

## Dr Walter Starck



Walter Starck is one of the pioneers in the scientific investigation of coral reefs. He grew up in the Florida Keys and received a PhD in marine science from the University of Miami in 1964. He has over 40 years worldwide experience in reef studies and his work has encompassed the discovery of much of the basic nature of reef biology. In this process over 100 species of fishes, which were new to science, were found as well as numerous, corals, shells, crustaceans and other new discoveries.

In 1958, while still an undergraduate student Dr Starck began what was to become a 10-year investigation of the fish fauna of Alligator reef in the Florida Keys. As this was one of the first extensive uses of scuba diving for marine biological research it resulted in many new discoveries regarding reef biology. Over 20,000 scientific specimens were collected. This work recorded what is still the greatest number of fishes known from any single locale in the New World. The total was five hundred seventeen species, sixty of these had never before been found in U.S. waters and 19 were previously unknown to science.

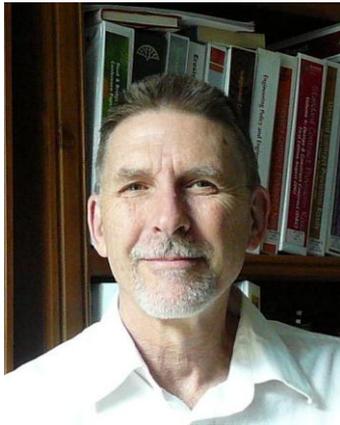
In 1968 he took delivery of El Torito, a purpose built 150 ton research vessel he designed and equipped specifically for coral reef research, exploration, and film work. Its facilities included a lab, library, machine shop, diving chambers, an amphibious ATV, a 2 person enclosed Diver Transport Vehicle, and an amphibious ultralight aircraft of advanced design which he built. With this vessel he conducted extensive reef work for the next 20 years ranging from the Caribbean to the South Pacific.

Dr Starck has participated in numerous other marine biological expeditions around the world including the Bahamas, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and the Eastern and Western tropical Pacific. Since 1978 his home has been in the far north of Queensland in Australia. From here he carried out ten years of work on the Great Barrier Reef.

In addition to his extensive coral reef investigations Dr Starck has also conducted long term studies on the biology of the lemon shark and on the worldwide distribution of the billfishes (i.e. the marlin, sailfish and spearfish family). His research has been carried out under grants and contracts from the National Science Foundation, the Office of Naval Research, the National Geographic Society, the Engelhard Foundation, the Marine Research Foundation and his own personal funding.

Dr Starck authored the AEF report *Australia's Unappreciated and Maligned Fisheries* which was recently distributed to all federal and many state politicians during the public debate on new Marine Protected Areas.

## Dr David Stockwell



David Stockwell gained a Ph.D. in Ecosystem Dynamics from the Australian National University in 1992. He specialises in statistical analysis in the environmental sciences, particularly methods for predicting the distribution of species from climatic and other variables, called ecological niche modelling.

Dr Stockwell worked from 1997 at the San Diego Supercomputer Centre at the University of California, San Diego until returning to Australia in 2007. He developed the GARP (Genetic Algorithm for Rule-set Production) system that has been used to make contributions in many areas, including the management of rare and invasive species, epidemiology of human diseases, the discovery of new species, and the effects of climate change on species. He now lives and works in Emerald, Qld. where he continues to have an interest in evaluating the statistical questions in endangered species management, drought modelling and homogenization of climate networks.