

A course developed by ...



RANGELANDS AUSTRALIA

# PROPERTY, CATCHMENT AND REGIONAL PLANNING

**Postgraduate Course – AGRC7031**

Available Semester 2, biennially (even years)

In External or Intensive Mode  
(Subject to minimum numbers)

## OVERVIEW

Through a range of planning processes set down in various State/Territory legislation and associated regulation or policy, governments seek to influence the management of natural resource and economic development processes. Effective planning at property, catchment and regional levels are fundamental to ensure better use and sustainable management of resources as well as achieving economic and social outcomes.

Plans of one form or another are also increasingly required for investment purposes, by financial institutions and governments, in rangeland properties and regions respectively. They may be required for accessing assistance under government programs (local, Territory, State and Commonwealth). Increasingly, planning schemes and policy influence or even restrict what landholders can do in the rangelands and how it can be done.

Regional planning (especially for natural resource management (NRM)) has become a requirement for government investment under National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) and Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). This provides important context which will flow down to catchment, sub-catchment and property planning.

Furthermore, natural resource management plans, vegetation management plans, water/river management plans coastal/reef plans, biodiversity management plans, pest management plans, property resource management plans, etc., are now part of the scene.

This course aims to develop capacity of rangelands landholders, regional managers, financiers and others responsible for aspects of management of the rangelands through building knowledge, skills and capacity for stakeholders to:

- Achieve more integrated and efficient planning across all levels in the rangeland;
- Recognise the existence of a need for detailed planning process as a result of new government requirements.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course you will be able to:

- Advocate integrated planning as a mechanism leading to better management in the rangelands
- Analyse the key drivers and impacts on planning
- Access and utilise physical information, systems, resources and tools relevant to property, catchment and regional planning and management
- Assess land capability and health and anticipate the positive and negative consequences of management options

- Demonstrate awareness and knowledge of where to find and access socio-economic information relevant to planning for the health and sustainability of the rangelands
- Examine and interpret the rights and responsibilities of landholders and catchment/regional bodies with respect to legislation and government policy
- Apply planning principles, practices and processes in developing plans, goals, targets and outcomes for property, catchment and regional planning and management
- Understand the value and the importance of seeking better integration of planning systems across scales in the rangelands
- Identify and evaluate options, strategies and tools to achieve economic, environmental and social goals in relation to property, catchment and regional planning and management
- Integrate conservation principles and production goals into management practices in the rangelands
- Demonstrate skills in communication (i.e. verbal, report writing, community consultation), online learning, information acquisition and management, critical thinking, community involvement and networking that assists in solving issues at property, catchment and regional level through planning.

## COURSE STRUCTURE

This course is divided into five modules:

- Planning as a mechanism for better management in the rangelands
- Physical Information and Systems
- Socio-economic Information Systems
- Social Capacity and the Operating Environment
- Bringing it all together - Planning Principles and Practice

## LEARNING FACILITATOR

**Dr Tony Pressland** (CPAg, B.Agric Sc., M.Sc, PhD). Tony has a long professional interest in the rangelands and in catchment management and planning from the dual viewpoints of sustainable natural resource management and involvement of local people. He has led research into the impacts of changes in land use on catchment hydrology and productivity; studied rainfall-runoff-pasture-erosion relationships under livestock production; has been involved in woody - weed management research; and has also researched the use of fire in management of rangelands.

Tony has until recently had responsibility for Queensland government programs in weed and animal pest management, vegetation management for sustainable production and maintenance of biodiversity and landscape health, and for sustainable land and regional planning.

Tony is a past Co-Chair of the Australian and Queensland Government Joint Steering Committee for Natural Resource Management which administered the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality, and the Natural Heritage Trust in Queensland.

## REQUIRED TEXT BOOKS

There is one book required for this course.

Productivity Commission (2004). Impacts of native vegetation and biodiversity regulations. Report No. 29, Melbourne. ISBN 1-74037-145-3 (Cost \$20)

Students are also supplied with a book of readings that includes articles and other materials required for completion of learning activities and assessment items.

## ASSESSMENT

There are no 'examinations', just four (4) assessment items for this course.

### Assessment 1: Participation in online activities - 25%

Throughout the course you will be expected to complete a number of learning activities online. These will involve responding to readings and other stimuli, reading and responding to the postings of other students, and reflecting on your experiences in planning processes.

### Assessment 2: Resources assets audit and targets analysis – 30%

Consider a rangeland property or region with which you are familiar. Conduct a resource asset audit and identify targets for critical analysis.

### Assessment 3: Approaches to integrated catchment management - 5%

Analyse the differences between Landcare, ICM and regional catchment approaches in addressing the inter-dependency of issues important in planning.

### Assessment 4: Integrated planning in the rangelands - 40%

Outline the institutional framework that applies to your area for natural resource and related planning, undertake a SWOT analysis of the current institutional arrangements, identify key NRM targets and develop a monitoring program that will allow recording of progress towards defined targets at various planning levels.

## BACKGROUND TO THIS COURSE

The need for this course was identified by a national survey of education and skills needs for success in the rangelands. The course was developed by Rangelands Australia to provide a unique, rangeland-specific view of the need for integrated planning, from the regional to property levels. The structure, content and resources used in this course were influenced by producers from Queensland; consultants; policy makers at Local and State government levels; regional managers from Q Department of Natural Resources & Mines; and researchers from CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems and The University of Queensland's School of Agronomy and Horticulture.

A draft of the course was reviewed by officers of Greening Australia, Western Catchment Management Authority, Q Dept Natural Resources & Mines, Qld Murray-Darling Committee, SA Dept Water, Land & Biodiversity Conservation, the Local Government Association (Q), and CSIRO and University researchers working on improved planning processes.

## REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

External reviewers have provided the following general comments on a draft of this course:

- *"It is very encouraging to peruse a course where a great deal of thought has gone into the 'big picture'. Finally a course that answers our needs for a balanced perspective of rangeland management"* (Regional manager, Greening Australia, Dalby Q)
- *"The material is very comprehensive – it is the first time I have seen such a good synthesis of the many levels and directions of planning"* (NRM Officer, Longreach Q)
- *"The learning tasks are set in real, not simplified, management settings giving a very real feel for the planning problems currently faced by policy makers and managers in the rangelands – they would certainly challenge many people working in the field"* (CSIRO Scientist, Brisbane Q)

- *“The subject of this course is a complex one and is an area that is continually changing in the ‘real world’. The authors have done extremely well to develop a content which is comprehensive and which provides students with a sound basis and framework for their understanding and future involvement in planning and management from property to regional level”* (Lecturer, University of Queensland, Gatton Q)
- *“This course provides a comprehensive view of the key issues and clearly links planning from the property level through to the regional level. This course will greatly benefit anyone who is interested in the long term sustainable management of Australia’s rangelands”* (DNR&M Officer, Brisbane Q)