

MANAGEMENT PLANNING NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE ANBG'S DIRECTOR

Welcome to the second edition of our 'E' Management Planning Newsletter.

In February, the first part of the 'Have Your Say' process was completed. We received a number of written submissions in response to our call for people to comment on issues that the Australian National Botanic Gardens should consider as it sets its direction for the next 10 years.

As part of our comprehensive approach to consultation, we will explore further the issues highlighted in the written submissions in a series of focus groups to be conducted in April. Details of these are outlined in this newsletter.

We will also be consulting with the state botanic gardens and stakeholders in each of the major capital cities and will undertake an e-survey of regional botanic gardens. People outside of Canberra will also have an opportunity to participate in a focus group. The planning for this part of the process has already begun.

This month, we also report on progress in our review of Communication and Visitor Services. Botanic gardens are important centres for education. The Australian National Botanic Gardens is uniquely placed to teach people about the importance of Australian flora in our lives and its value in maintaining Australia's ecosystems. The review aims to ensure that the ANBG is providing a variety of vibrant and interesting learning opportunities that will encourage and inspire social and environmental awareness into the future.

Anne Duncan
Director



IN BRIEF

Important dates / reminders

- 'Have your say' focus groups between 6-9 April 2009
- Meeting with the Friends of the ANBG Guides for consultation on gardens management on 21 April 2009
- National consultation to commence in April

If you would like to take part in the stakeholder consultation workshops in April, please contact:

Planning Officer
ANBG Management Plan
GPO Box 1777
Canberra, ACT 2601
Email: anbgplan@anbg.gov.au



Australian Government
Director of National Parks

AN UPDATE ON THE BIG PICTURE – SETTING A VISION FOR THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Last month we reported on the Future Vision Making workshops held with staff from the ANBG and the Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research. The ideas raised in these workshops were further considered during a meeting of the ANBG Management Team, along with Judy West (Director, Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research) and Peter Taylor (Assistant Secretary, Parks Australia, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts).



Continuing the ANBG's work in alpine conservation is considered to be very important

A key focus was the role of the ANBG as a national institution. Being a national institution signifies being a national flagship, taking an innovative approach to work, being an authority and receiving recognition as a national leader. The ANBG Management Team agree that the role of the Gardens as a national institution should continue to emphasise inspiring and connecting people to Australia's unique botanical heritage. The Management Team also feel that strengthening the horticultural research and biodiversity conservation work at the ANBG is a priority.

'HAVE YOUR SAY' FOCUS GROUPS

Meeting people face to face will give us an opportunity to hear the views of the community so as to help shape the vision and role of this vital institution. We invite you to take part in a focus group discussion on ANBG's management and its future. The focus groups will be conducted in April 2009 at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. There will be individual focus groups addressing the following topics:

- a) The visitor experience / expectations of a national botanic garden (6 April, 1.30-3.00pm)
- b) Communication with our Canberra Community (7 April, 10.00-11.30am)
- c) Economic sustainability (7 April, 5.30-7.00pm)
- d) The living collection (8 April, 1.30-3.00pm)
- e) Attracting the 18-30 year olds to the ANBG (9 April, 10.00-11.30am)
- f) Scientific and conservation role (to be advised)
- g) Education and learning (to be advised)
- h) Environmental sustainable management (to be advised)

Bookings for focus groups **must** be made as places are limited. To register your interest, please email: anbgplan@anbg.gov.au and indicate if you are representing yourself or a community group and which focus group you would prefer to join.

REVIEW OF COMMUNICATION AND VISITOR SERVICES – LEARNING FROM THE PAST, FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE

From school programs to community events and visitor services to marketing, the Communications and Visitor Services team plays a leading role in linking the Australian National Botanic Gardens with Canberra, national and international communities. Be it a guided walk, a welcoming smile from visitor centre staff or a targeted marketing campaign, the team works towards attracting visitors to the Gardens and ensuring visitors have an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

The preparation of a new management plan for the ANBG is an opportunity to reflect on the success of the past and map out the future for the Communications and Visitor Services unit.

Currently the team is evaluating the programs and services delivered during the past seven years (2002 – 2008 Plan of Management). This process involves benchmarking ANBG's school programs, visitor services, public programs, events, marketing and media liaison against other botanic gardens and national institutions. The self reflection and evaluation process is due for completion in early March and benchmarking towards the end of March.



The Children's Discovery Walk is one of the activities that will be evaluated at the ANBG

The next step of this review is consulting with stakeholders to map the future direction of programs and services. What new partnerships and opportunities exist through innovative school and community programs to deliver ANBG's key messages? Should we aim events and public programs at attracting new audiences – and if so, what audiences? – or should we be more focused on revenue raising?

Focus groups and interviews will allow stakeholders to have input into the future direction of the communications and visitor services the Gardens provides. Sharon Willoughby, the Public Programs Manager from the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, will oversee this process.

If you would like to help us refocus our communications and visitor services, please contact the Planning Officer on email: anbgplan@anbg.gov.au