

MEDIA RELEASE

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Goondiwindi takes up green challenge

With all this talk about climate change, 'being green' and alternative energy sources, it is easy to forget about the people that will actually be dealing with these issues in the future – our children.

So, in August, Goondiwindi will be hosting a two-day forum promoting 'sustainable thinking' to young people.

The event is being organised by natural resource management group, the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC), who has joined forces with Landcare groups, the Border Rivers Catchment Management Association, Heritage Building Society and schools across southern Queensland.

The Discovering Landcare Forum, will be held on 19 and 20 August at the Goondiwindi Cultural Centre, and QMDC Education Officer and event organiser, Pip Bagshaw, said that she expects around 400 students and teachers will attend from across the Border Rivers catchment and South East Queensland.

"The forum, with the theme 'Science To The Rescue', aims to increase students' awareness and knowledge of science and sustainability in our region," said Pip.

"It will promote the cultural, social and environmental importance of managing our natural resources by involving students in a variety of interactive workshops, field days and hands-on presentations."

Pip said that such educational experiences are vital in reaching young people and informing them in ways they can relate to. "Increased knowledge and understanding through interaction and 'real life' examples outside the classroom often stay with a child longer than those lessons learned in the classroom, or from a text book," she said.

QMDC has also planned some free teacher professional development sessions around sustainable science topics for the afternoon of the 19 August. "We want to equip teachers with the tools to support their teaching of sustainability topics", said Pip.

The event won't just be for schools – the wider community will also get the chance to be involved. "A community-based evening event will also be held to involve the general public in the forum. It will provide an opportunity for the Goondiwindi community to hear some inspiring guest speakers talk on sustainability topics," said Pip.

Pip also said that support from the community will be very important to the success of the forum to keep the costs to a minimum for schools.

"Bringing this event to Goondiwindi will make it easier for smaller regional schools to access speakers, activities and information for their students," she said.

"But bringing these services out to a regional area can be costly. We already have the support of the Australian Government, through their National Science Week grants, for which we are very grateful, and a number of local Goondiwindi businesses, including Batesy's Bread Basket, Goondiwindi Coop and Tait Toyota," said Pip.

If you would like more information about the Discovering Landcare Forum, or can offer some support, please contact Pip Bagshaw on 07 4671 7900, or Renee Fletcher on 07 4637 6270.

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Roma College student investigates water quality at the Discovering Landcare Forum 2007.



Crows Nest State School students take a closer look at waterbugs at the Discovering Landcare Forum 2007