

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## New course identifies women as “Naturally Resourceful” land custodians

Whether being land managers, partners in farm businesses, community leaders or teachers of their children, rural women have a pivotal role to play when it comes to sustaining our land and natural resources.

A group of eight rural women from the Border Rivers region recently participated in a pilot course called “Naturally Resourceful”, developed by the Queensland Murray Darling Committee (QMDC) with the support of the Queensland Office for Women.

Course Coordinator Amanda Bremner, from QMDC, said that the workshops focussed on increasing the women’s knowledge of natural resource management (NRM) issues that are impacting on the production and profit of agriculture.

“The four workshops covered a number of topics, including: understanding the global environmental issues that are impacting on the productivity of agriculture; how water quality can impact on plant growth; understanding the native vegetation legislation; as well how to develop NRM project ideas,” Amanda said.

The course also focussed on developing the participant’s communication and leadership skills.

Course Facilitator Emma Taylor, from Sustainable Connections, said enormous value came from what the women learnt about their own communication styles and how this can impact on the outcomes achieved when they work with others.

“The participants were able to learn more about their preferred way of communicating and how their style differed from others involved in their business or groups they work with,” Emma said.

“This knowledge is really the key to communicating more effectively on a daily basis.”

Since completing the course, the aspirations of the women are varied.

Natalie Fisher, Director of Bellona Beef Pty Ltd, is already a member on the board of South West NRM, but attended the course to increase her grassroots knowledge of NRM issues.

“Before delving into any other political commitments, I want to make sure I have a comprehensive understanding of NRM issues affecting agriculture in Australia,” Natalie said.

“In the future I hope to further my links with conservation groups such as Australian Conservation Foundation and Australian Environmental Foundation in order to influence a change in attitude that will help to establish a good working relationship between the conservation sector and land managers.”

Teaching the next generation about sustainable NRM practices is a legacy Tammy Small, mother and land manager, would like to leave in the future.

"I would like to involve school children in environmental activities that they can practice on a daily basis in the hope that this would give them an understanding and belief that they play a huge role in sustaining our natural resources," Tammy said.

For Mandy Sprott, mother and farm business partner, one of the greatest outcomes came from just being a part of the course and taking home new information she could share with her husband.

"My husband actually read the information and found a lot of it useful, even down to the 'gardening with bore water' guide!" Mandy said.

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**Caption: "Naturally Resourceful" Group** *From left to right*  
Tammy Small, Anna Tait, Sophie Elsley, Amanda Bremner (QMDC), Ngare Davidson, Emma Taylor (Sustainable Connections), Megan Donovan, Mandy Sprott, Natalie Fisher, Jenny Fisher



**Caption: "Naturally Resourceful" Group** out in the field