

Publishing Update

Connections – Autumn 2003 Edition Published

Following on from the 4 earlier Volumes, the Autumn 2003 edition of Connections presents some challenging, insightful and enjoyable reading.

The aim of Connections, a joint project between the Agribusiness Association and Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society (AARES), is to bring a different light to issues that relate to the management of natural resources, in particular those related to economics – which is of direct relevance to the rest of the agribusiness sector. The 5 volumes of Connections comprise a valuable collection of alternative thought on natural resource management and economics – alternative to recognised lobby and interest groups and independent from current government policies.

An underlying theme of the contributions to Connections is the need to apply sensible economics and established science to a set of issues clouded by emotion and misinformation. There is general agreement that the policies and positions taken by governments and interest groups need to more rigorous and holistic if we are to meet the myriad issues that relate directly and indirectly to the management of our natural resources.

Common to almost all of the contributions, including those in the latest volume, is recognition that natural resource management presents the agribusiness sector with its greatest social and economic challenges.

More water for irrigation and the environment? Some problems and prospects for worthwhile investments.

Oliver Gyles. Dept of Primary Industries, Tatura, Victoria.

Arthur Mailey, a great Australian leg spinner of the 1930s once bowled all day in a Test match, taking 0 wickets for 365. He later explained that he remembered the experience well, as his figures coincided with the Book of Hymns Ancient and Modern, Hymn No.365 'Art thou weary, art thou languid, art thou sore depressed?' Ollie Gyles, weary and sore depressed by the prattling of water saviour and cranks - but a long way from being languid - introduces technical and economic sense into water saving debates that have much characterized hitherto by more nonsense than sense. This querulous economist thinks it is not very clever to advocate investing resources to achieve outcomes where the benefits have no hope of exceeding the costs.

<http://www.agrifood.info/Connections/Autumn2003/Gyles.htm>

Selfishness or Altruism? An historical perspective of sustainable development, economics and science.

Sarah Lumley, The University of Western Australia.

Sarah Lumley, in an historical perspective of sustainable development, economics and science, provides the timely reminder that concerns about improving commercial outcomes, environmental conditions and social equity are not discoveries the intelligentsia, and others, have made in the past week or two, but such concerns, together with rounded views of the role of market solutions, were prominent concerns of intellectual discourse over two hundred years ago.

<http://www.agrifood.info/Connections/Autumn2003/Lumley.htm>

Have the scientists got it right this time?

Tony Gleeson, Synapse Research and Consulting, South Brisbane.

The so-called 'Blueprint for a Living Continent' of the Wentworth group of scientists left Tony Gleeson feeling somewhat underwhelmed. In his article 'Have the Scientists got it right this time?' Tony kicks off the questioning of this report by agricultural and resource economists, taking a provocative swipe at the limited scope of the Wentworth Groups rationale' and questioning the value of all the focus on water property rights.

<http://www.agrifood.info/Connections/Autumn2003/Gleeson.htm>

Managing climate risk in agriculture.

Hon. Kim Chance, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, WA.

Finally, The W.A. Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Kim Chance has provided his opening address to the workshop on Managing Climatic Risk in Agriculture at the annual AARES conference in Freemantle. Some possible measures for managing climate risk that are worthy of a closer look are signalled.

<http://www.agrifood.info/Connections/Autumn2003/Chance.htm>
