

SUSTAINABILITY AT UNE

UNE was one of the first Australian signatories to the International Talloires Sustainability Declaration, under which universities around the world aim to incorporate an awareness of sustainability issues in all aspects of their work – teaching, research, business operation, and community engagement.

"We really want to support the community's aspirations towards sustainability," said Dr Robyn Bartel, Chair of the Talloires Committee for Sustainability at UNE.

"There's a growing appreciation of the intimate relationship between the natural and social environments," she said. "And at UNE we have a unique capacity for the interdisciplinary work necessary to investigate that relationship. UNE's regional location is an asset, and its relatively small size fosters interdisciplinary endeavour among its many researchers interested in aspects of sustainability."

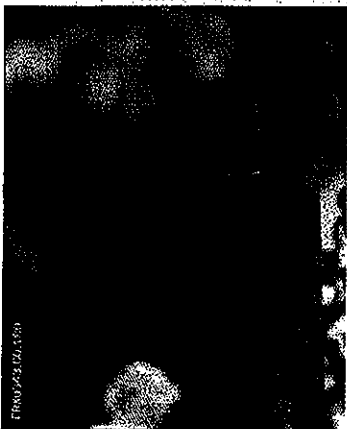
UNE's Master Plan outlines strategies for using alternative energy sources, providing sustainable transport options, and enhancing the built and natural environments. On campus the UNE Landcare group is active, thanks to the support of the High Country Urban Biodiversity (HiCUB) project and UNE's Facilities Management Services (FMS). UNE Landcare's main aim is to protect the bushland remnants on campus by promoting the recovery of threatened species, populations, and ecological communities. This is consistent with the environmental strategies of the UNE Master Plan which aim to improve the biodiversity along Dumaresq Creek and to establish wildlife corridor connections between the creek and North Hill. To achieve this, FMS and HiCUB are



Pedal power at SLEX 2010

developing management plans, and UNE Landcare is conducting bush regeneration activities in a number of high-profile bushland sites on the University's campus. Some of the sites identified include the remnants of ribbon gum/mountain gum/snow gum grassy forest woodland endangered ecological communities on North Hill (above the University's Ring Road) and below Mary White College, as well as the riparian zone along Dumaresq Creek. University staff and students have been contributing to the improvement of biodiversity in the bushland remnants at UNE by volunteering with UNE Landcare for a series of working bees. This year saw the launch of UNE's new Bachelor of Sustainability degree program, which provides students with

the opportunity to study sustainability in a holistic and multidisciplinary manner. The course integrates the social sciences and humanities with ecosystem and natural resource management in order to equip graduates with the knowledge required to meet the challenges of building and maintaining the ecological and social resilience of our communities. UNE's commitment to operational sustainability won it a 10-year Sustainability Achievement Award from the NSW Government in the 2010 Green Globe Awards. This achievement was the result of a comprehensive policy framework and continual improvement to operational performance, and through the efforts of an innovative and energetic staff.



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