

Media Release

13 MAY 2009

Regional teachers talk tactics on global issues

Inspirational scientist John Long, Head of Sciences, Museum Victoria will motivate regional Victorian school teachers and educators to take local action in schools. His keynote address on Friday 15th May will set the scene for the **Regional Toolbox for Environmental Change** forum at the Narmbool Environmental Discovery Camp, at Elaine (30 minutes south of Ballarat).

This inaugural sustainability forum will provide an opportunity for over 80 regional teachers and educators to focus on the biodiversity and sustainability education issues facing our schools and communities today.

Sovereign Hill deputy chief executive officer, Tim Sullivan, refers to the forum as an opportunity to combine arts with teaching to make learning as engaging for the students as we can. "*There's a desperate need for innovative approaches to science and environmental education in classrooms*", he said.

Greening Australia and Sovereign Hill are partnering to deliver the first Regional Toolbox for Environmental Change forum in Victoria, building on the success of the Melbourne Toolbox forum over the last 9 years and responds to the identified need to support biodiversity and sustainability education in regional schools.

Other presenters include Greening Australia, Narmbool Education Services, CERES Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative, Department of Primary Industries, CCMA Waterwatch, Central Highlands Water, BREAZE, Global Education and Puppetability who will talk about and engage teachers in whole school sustainability and biodiversity projects and activities.

Jess Baillie, Greening Australia's school programs coordinator, said the forum has attracted educators from across Victoria.

"The forum equips teachers with knowledge, contacts and resources for teaching sustainability in schools. We ask teachers what other support they need to integrate sustainability education into their current curriculum. We encourage teachers to strategically apply for grants and take time in planning and provide them with practical information on technological applications within the environmental and school setting."

The **Regional Toolbox for Environmental Change** forum encourages teachers to share their sustainability experiences and network with other schools.

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Notes to editors

Media are welcome - the morning will be the best for photo opportunities.

Program:

9.00 - 9:50 am	Plenary Session (photo opportunity) Key note address, John Long
9.50 – 10.20am	Morning tea and displays from 7 organisations (further photos opportunities) Interactive displays featuring energy in schools, school projects, web based support tools
10.35 – 12:35pm	Workshops
12:45 – 1:30pm	Lunch
1:45 – 4:00pm	Workshops

Keynote speaker

The keynote inspirational scientist John Long, Head of Sciences, Museum Victoria and winner of two national children's book literacy prizes, will open the day's proceedings. He will offer global perspectives on how we are now able to measure rates of climate change showing how CO₂ and methane contribute to increased temperatures, threatening human sustainability. He will also offer clear solutions to mitigate and alleviate such threats if we downscale our energy use, and economically develop alternative energy sources for the long term. His new book *The Big Picture Book of Environments* will also be featured as a way to engage students and families on the facts and intricacies of our precious planet.

For media enquiries please contact:

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