



## 2023 WA Landcarer's Hall of Fame

### Ted Rowley

Ted Rowley was appointed as a wheat and sheep adviser in the WA Department of Agriculture in 1975. As Officer in Charge of the Agriculture Department at Jerramungup in 1976 through to 1983, low rainfall years coupled with developmental farming systems lead to unprecedented levels of wind erosion on the areas of newly cleared lands of the central south coast.

Teds was the strong voice that helped the South Coast farmers face the realities of what was happening, and how to take positive steps. He encouraged and supported establishment of early Soil Conservation Districts and then the landcare ethos, and then 'landcare' and other 'care' groups. This experience led him to form a 'resilience' view of land use and how agriculture could be more productive, be better market linked and be more sustainable with better protection of the natural resources it depended upon.

Ted became a champion of farmer self help groups and worked to help groups such as the Corrigin Farm Improvement Group and landcare groups achieve more caring and sustainable farming systems.

In 1988 Ted was appointed as the Department's Regional Manager for the Wheatbelt Region and supported an exponential growth in landcare and other NRM Care groups. Together with John Collett (Alcoa World Alumina Australia) he conceptualised and established the Alcoa Landcare Program and Avon Catchment Program, particularly its support for farmer managed and led salinity demonstration catchments. These were based on cross boundary commitments and collaboration between neighbours for salinity management, natural resource protection and economic sustainability outcomes. Many of these are still in operation today in different forms and have achieved positive outcomes for the natural assets and the farming businesses involved. Ted was also a key initiator for the establishment of

regional natural resource management groups, which still operate today in various forms in WA, and across Australia (54 regions in total).

After leaving the Department of Agriculture in 1996, Ted continued working directly for the Alcoa Landcare Program across Australia and supported the Victorian and WA Landcare Programs with adoption of cross boundary actions by farmers and more resilient approaches to supporting landcare and landscape-scale natural resource management (NRM) outcomes. This included becoming a member of the Woody Yaloak Catchment Group in Victoria. He was a Director for Greening Australia WA and in his Alcoa consultancy role helped Greening Australia develop and establish the Living Landscapes Project in the wheatbelt area of WA, which engaged farmers in appreciating and protecting their natural ecology.

Ted was also a specialist policy consultant for landcare, salinity, NRM and sustainable agriculture with both coalition and labour government ministers in Western Australia for ten years from 1996. He continued to support community landcare and NRM groups become more resilient and better able to report on their successes.

Ted was appointed National Landcare facilitator for South Africa in 2003 through Australian Government funding applying his Western Australian experience to similar but different challenges across the provinces of South Africa. He then took his experience and desire for wider change to Canberra in 2006 when he was appointed Director, Monitoring and Evaluation for the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) with the Australian Government NRM team – 450 people across two agencies. With his new team Ted initiated the design of the NHT and NRM, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) approach for this very significant Australian Government investment made bilaterally with all states and territories. Ted and his team worked with state and territory governments and 56 regional NRM community organisations to adopt and sustain the use of program logic (outcomes mapping) and MERI plans based around the logic. This directly supported landcare groups across Australia to be better able to tell their story of change – social, environmental and economic.

Based on the MERI landcare experiences Ted went on to practice and share the NRM MERI principles with people from and in over 26 countries, helping program teams design and implement programs and monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning (MERL) systems for national economic development policy/planning, agricultural value chain program development, strategy and policy for NRM and multiple agricultural research and development programs (such as those delivered by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research – ACIAR).

Countries in which Ted has shared his experiences include Mozambique, Pakistan, India for Afghanistan, China, Tibet, Bangladesh, Vanuatu, Nepal, Cambodia, Solomon Islands, Indonesia, Northern Indigenous Australia, South Africa, Malaysia, Laos, China and Singapore – with longer term NRM *resilience and landcare* activities in Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Republic Guinea in West Africa, and South Africa. Since 2013 Ted has lived in the Snowy Mountains of southeast NSW, running a high-country beef cattle enterprise in the wilderness. This endeavour led to Ted building partnerships to bring about two significant policy changes by the NSW Government towards protecting natural assets through better control of large populations of feral animals, particularly feral deer and feral horses. (Ted now lives in Western Australia and Central Victoria.)

Currently Ted is:

- Member Australian Institute Agriculture (MAIA)
- Governor World Wildlife Fund Australia (30 + years)
- Chair, New South Wales, National Parks Wildlife Services Southern Ranges Regional Advisory Committee (encompasses the amazing Kosciuszko National Park)
- Deputy Chair, New South Wales, National Parks Wildlife Services Advisory Council
- Chair, Australia Government National Feral Deer Action Plan Working Group