

NEW VEAC COUNCIL APPOINTED

May 2009

For immediate release

The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's (VEAC) new council has been appointed and includes four new council members and the reappointment of former Chairperson, Duncan Malcolm.

The council appointments were announced by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Gavin Jennings following the end of the previous council's three year term. The new council's appointment is also for a period of three years.

New VEAC council members include:

Barry Clugston, a farmer from Stawell and current chairman of the Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water Corporation and board member of the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority.

Ian Harris, a public land planning and management consultant and current chairman of the Victorian National Parks Advisory Council and a director of the Parks Forum, the peak body for park management agencies across Australia and New Zealand.

Ian Munro PSM, a consultant for the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development (DIIRD), board member of the Growth Areas Authority and the former Deputy Secretary and CEO, Invest Assist for DIIRD.

Airlie Worrall, Executive Manager at the Victorian Farmers Federation, is a rural policy analyst with a background in built heritage assessment. She has worked in the Victorian food, textile, wool processing and timber harvesting industries and served as senior adviser to several Agriculture Ministers.

VEAC's reappointed chairperson, **Duncan Malcolm AM** lives in Boisdale, Gippsland and is currently the Chairperson of the Gippsland Coastal Board, a member of the Victorian Coastal Council and former Chair of Lakes and Wilderness Tourism and The Irrigation Association of Australia Ltd.

The first public land use planning body was established in 1971 and known as the Land Conservation Council, later succeeded by the Environment Conservation Council and then in 2001 by the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council. Victoria is the only Australian state or territory to conduct planning for public land use through a council of this nature.

In welcoming the new council members, VEAC Chairperson Duncan Malcolm emphasised the council's role in providing independent advice to government on the sustainable use of public land in Victoria. "VEAC's model of using sound scientific data and community participation for balanced land use decision making has been highly successful and we look forward to continuing our investigations with new challenges such as climate change and increasing population growth," he said.

VEAC is currently carrying out two new investigations. The Metropolitan Melbourne Investigation is considering Crown land and public authority land in 29 municipalities in and around Melbourne and the Remnant Native Vegetation Investigation, which will assess remnant vegetation on public land to identify opportunities for ecological linkages between intact landscapes.

For more than three decades, VEAC and its predecessor organisations have conducted a total of 30 investigations with the vast majority of recommendations approved by government and subsequently implemented by public land managers.

Some of VEAC's well-known activities include the recently approved River Red Gum Forests Investigation through to investigations of the Otways, Victoria's marine waters, Box-Ironbark Forests, and historic areas, wilderness, and rivers and streams.

For more information visit www.veac.vic.gov.au