

EXPERIENCES IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING WOODLAND CONSERVATION PROJECTS IN NORTHERN VICTORIA

Geoff Park

1. Effective woodland conservation must be supported by high quality ecological data, collected and applied at an appropriate scale.
2. Achieving tangible improvements in the extent and condition of woodland ecosystems requires substantial and sustained resource allocation.
3. Increasing demand for funding and a requirement to demonstrate the effectiveness and value-for-money of past investment has led to greater sophistication in program design.
4. Ecological assessment, analysis and planning at a relevant ecological scale, the bioregion, has supported improved targeting of investments.
5. Sustained and respectful involvement of local people including farmers, 'lifestyle' land managers, and Landcare and community environmental groups, is fundamental to woodland conservation.
6. It is important to recognise, value and maintain landscape memory from a diversity of people with an interest in woodland conservation.
7. Moving towards spatially explicit approaches to engagement, planning and implementing is required to underpin future woodland conservation efforts.
8. Understanding and harnessing scientific and social networks is crucial to effective sharing of knowledge and information.
9. The key ingredients of successful programs are:
 - a grassroots approach to planning and governance;
 - stating a clear vision for the creation of healthy, resilient and productive landscapes;
 - a focus on community engagement;
 - building habitat connectivity; and
 - the use of planning, good science and monitoring.