



STEP Inc

## President's Report for the year to October 2007

As STEP approaches the ripe old age of 30 we seem to be just as vigorous as ever as we attempt to make a difference in those areas that we see as important.

### Committee

Your committee continued to meet monthly except for January when we have a well-deserved break. Following the amalgamation with TABS, Barry Tomkinson and Graham Jones joined the committee which brought the number to 11. We continue to make submissions, to serve on other committees and to do all those things required to make STEP an effective voice in the community.

### Accounts

STEP continues to be in a strong financial position. Our solid membership base and sale of publications keeps us profitable and sufficiently liquid to be able to make grants and fund projects such as the publishing of Sydney's Natural World. Jim Wells continues to do an excellent job as treasurer.

### Grants

We awarded Warrawee Primary School a grant of \$2,250 to assist with maintenance of its bushland area and we continue to provide a cash prize for the Young Scientist competition. We have some trouble, however, in getting schools to submit applications for grants despite writing to many of them with invitations to apply.

### Bushwalks and Talks

Walks were organised in March, April, May, June, August, September and October. Talks were held in March, May, August and the final talk for the year is Alan Fairley at the AGM.

### Newsletters

We publish five newsletters every year. Normally these have been four pages but the last three have been expanded to eight because of the number of issues that we believe is worth addressing. The newsletter and the walks and talks programmes are the main ways we communicate with members.

### The Internet

We are now able to communicate with many of our members by email. This is useful for reminders of talks and bushwalks and for matters that won't wait

until the next newsletter. STEP's website is expertly maintained by Tim Gastineau-Hills and we shall continue to add new features.

### Issues

We have dealt at length in the newsletters with the issues of the year as we saw them and I don't propose to summarise them all here. All the newsletters are on the website. Suffice to say that the biggest threat to our environment is unrestricted growth. This drives everything from global warming to the loss of bushland and urban amenity in Sydney. No Australian government or opposition or major environmental group has a policy to deal with never ending exponential growth. That is shameful.

### Neroli Lock

I note with regret Neroli's resignation from the committee. Neroli has worked very hard for a many years and deserves a break! She deserves our gratitude for her considerable contribution.

### Sydney's Natural World

STEP's latest publication is now on sale before the official launch in November. John Martyn has produced a masterpiece that will help us demonstrate just why we are conservationists where urban bushland is concerned.

### The Year Ahead

It would be nice to know that many of the problems, UTS Ku-ring-gai, the Adventist Hospital development proposal and the like, are going to be resolved easily and satisfactorily. They won't be, and so it will be more of the same over the next twelve months as we provide a voice for those who would like to see urban bushland preserved, finite resources conserved and who would like to see Australia's vast environmental problems better handled.

### Finally

Thanks again to our loyal members. There is strength in numbers and those who support us by being members are essential to the viability of STEP. We look forward to continuing to work for a better world in the year ahead.

John Burke  
October 2007