

Funding Approved for Brushwood Project Extension

Moore Catchment Council is very pleased to announce that funding has been approved for an extension of the successful Brushwood Industry Development on Saline Land Project. The Federal Government has made \$224,000 available for the Increased Adoption of Sustainable Brushwood Production Project, under the highly contested Caring For Our Country Open Grants scheme. Moore Catchment Council was among very few Western Australian projects to receive funding. The total amount allocated throughout Australia was \$28.5 million, with Western Australia receiving \$2.8 million.

The Adoption of Sustainable Brushwood Production Project has been managed by Project Officer Georgie Troup and has planted over 1.25 million Melaleucas throughout the Northern Agricultural Region since 2006. Melaleucas planted by the project are destined for the brushwood fencing market.

Brushwood production offers farmers diversification of farming enterprise and economic return on previously unproductive agricultural land affected by salinity. There are many additional benefits associated with brushwood plantations including amelioration of land affected by salinity and protection of valuable cropping land. Sustainable production of brushwood in plantations ensures the protection of naturally occurring stands of Melaleuca in remnant vegetation. The harvested plants have the ability to re-sprout, providing a renewable resource.

An additional 475,000 seedlings will be planted through the new project and most of those have already been allocated to farmers, who expressed a keen interest to adopt or expand brushwood production on their land. There will be seedlings available to landholders in the Moore River Catchment and Yarra Yarra Catchment at the heavily subsidized cost of 10c each. For more information on growing Melaleucas for brushwood or to receive a copy of the Melaleucas for Profit and Land Protection booklet, contact the Moore Catchment Council on (08) 9653 1355.