



## Common Property Sustainable Agriculture

### Background

Historically, environmental policy for agriculture presumed that conservation was a government responsibility. Since the 1980s, this responsibility has increasingly been devolved to farming communities. One strategy consistent with this trend is the establishment of common property management of resources formerly under government or private ownership.

Little research has been done into common property arrangements within Australian agriculture. The aim in this project is, by studying actual cases of common property management in Australian agriculture, to develop a practical understanding of the factors contributing to the success and failure of this approach to fostering agricultural sustainability.

### The study

The framework for this study will be the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) approach which has served to structure research conducted internationally. This framework will be applied using the case study method typically applied in this research. This will involve maintaining a record of the interplay of the various elements of the 'action arena' within which the farmers involved in the case study arrangements operate. The recording process will involve various techniques including in-depth-

interviews, structured questionnaires and diary keeping. As the information collected is organised according to the IAD approach, it will become possible to identify guidelines for successful common property governance under Australian conditions.

### Applying the lessons

The guidelines developed for succeeding with common property governance in Australian agriculture will provide a much-needed platform from which to begin to translate the philosophy of community-based natural resource management into practice. The study will also make a distinctively Australian contribution to international investigations into how governance responsibilities can be devolved appropriately and effectively to rural communities through common property institutions.



### Project Details

**Project Title:** "Institutional transitions to sustainable agriculture"

**Funding Organisation:** Australian Research Council

**Budget:** \$202,225

**Completion Date:** June 2005

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