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A new decade

2005 has begun promisingly. The commencement of the UN's landmark Decade of Education for Sustainable Development is official international recognition that the principles of sustainability now need to be woven into our fundamental learning processes. It acknowledges that we require globally coordinated changes in thinking and action, carried out regionally. The Focus on page 8 profiles the rousing objectives and intentions of the Decade, and what they might mean for Australia. Macquarie University's Professor Daniella Tilbury is integral to the planning and application of the Decade's framework.

Last November's IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok welcomed the commencement of the UN's Decade in light of increasingly complex conservation and development challenges being faced. It also highlighted very positive progress and a spreading willingness to achieve more gains. Some of the key priorities and outcomes of the Congress are covered on page 4.

On page 22 Wendy Pyper describes the inspiring *Plants for People* project that is helping Aboriginal communities build small business enterprises, and confidence, around their intimate knowledge of bush tucker and local ecosystems. The project is also making Australia more aware of the inherent value of Aboriginal knowledge and its contribution to understanding and developing sustainable practice in this country.

Objections to Misima mine reports

On page 4 of the last issue we reported on the concerns being publicly raised by the mining watch organisation the



Mineral Policy Institute, about the effects of Misima Mines Ltd's gold extraction operations on the island of Misima, Papua New Guinea. Misima Mines Ltd, part of the Placer

Dome Group, have since contacted *Ecos* to formally object to the reported assertions, charging that they were unrepresentative and not in keeping with the facts of the situation. They were also disappointed that their views couldn't be adequately represented.

Ecos is committed to covering important, emerging sustainability issues in the public interest, but we do not represent or affiliate with the views of particular organisations or individuals. We aim to fairly cover the related inputs of all parties, since this is in the interest of the public's understanding of issues. Where the Misima mine case is concerned, *Ecos* will be providing Misima Mines Ltd with the opportunity to contribute material to additional discussion of Misima Mine's operations, in issue 124 (April–May). We hope that this encourages further constructive consideration of the complexities of mining practice in the region.

James Porteous
Managing Editor



About the January–March issue and changes to the bi-monthly publishing schedule

Ecos 123 is being run unusually as a January–March issue to enable the bi-monthly annual publishing schedule to better accommodate the Christmas and New Year holiday period. This January–March issue adjusts the schedule so that the end-of-year edition will now be dated December–January. *Ecos* still publishes six regular issues.