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To positive commitments

Compliments of the season.

Last year closed with an ominous sense that climate change is perhaps a more immediate issue than many really fully care to consider as we go about our routines. Its surreal implications and silent calls to responsibility make thinking about the possible situation at hand quite repelling. After all, this is probably the first time in history that all nations on Earth have been truly engaged to act cooperatively on an unavoidable issue of human survival. That takes some getting used to – it's as if the globe has suddenly shrunk.

But there is also a sense of individual responsibility beginning to permeate the thinking of individuals and households, as people acknowledge the newness, complexity and weight of decisions being wrestled with by global leaders – and the shared, expanding size of the challenge. As evidence accumulates about the increasing rate of climate change, and while we've seen that historic meetings between leaders have begun the reluctant process of international-scale change, in the background more nimble, quiet achievers have already begun cutting encouraging new paths and finding workable solutions to climate change. Some of these solutions are, ironically, turning out to be extremely profitable.

On page 8, 'The first cuts must be the deepest' discusses how the 60 to 80 per cent reductions in greenhouse gas emissions now being deemed necessary could be on course to really being achieved – economically – through innovative thinking and mechanisms. The article also outlines the sense in focusing more attention on the greenhouse gases other than carbon dioxide, and their



sources, given their dramatically higher potencies, persistence and smaller volumes. Most encouraging perhaps is that quite a few companies and industries have begun

employing deep emissions reduction practices that are making them big wind-falls. What an appropriate reward for such positive commitments, in what is frequently being held up as an economically challenging time.

And while government here also continues to wrestle with complex decision making on national conservation and biodiversity issues, our Focus on pages 18 to 27 profiles the significant achievements being made by Australia's land trust organisations in their efforts to privately conserve key habitat areas across the country. Aware of the vulnerability of dwindling biodiversity in the hands of private landholders, these dedicated organisations are pro-actively taking the responsibility of buying it up, for future generations. And swelling public support is helping – there's infectious power in such leadership from the community.

May it be another year of positive commitments. Enjoy your reading.

James Porteous
Managing Editor



Richard Mogg

Next, in issue 129

The February–March issue will focus on the rise of industrial ecology. We also continue a short series of articles on greenhouse gas reductions strategies, and Richard Mogg reports on Australian agricultural counter-narcotics tactics in Asia's golden triangle.