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# Seeing the glass half full

After considerable media coverage in February again scrutinised CSIRO's challenging position as the national research body balanced between industry, government and science, a recent letter from a reader, which incorrectly suggested that *Ecos* plays an active public relations role for CSIRO, has raised an important opportunity to reiterate this magazine's positive objectives, and clarify its relationship to CSIRO.

Originally reporting specifically on CSIRO's environmental research for 30 years, *Ecos* was re-launched in early 2003 under a new, broader mandate: to inform a wider audience of the emerging sustainability developments in the Asia-Pacific region; to stimulate education, thinking, debate and, therefore, direction on these issues; and to show the relevance of scientific research to advancing solutions to our challenges.

While *Ecos* is still published by CSIRO, one of the clear directives for the re-launched magazine was that, as a national title, it should no longer be singularly focused on covering CSIRO's research. Rather, it should be open to discussing a full range of issues, and seek to recognise relevant efforts from across any research, industry and community related organisations.

Coverage of CSIRO's contributions, therefore, appears according to its relevance to the sustainability discussion and readership. By sheer virtue of the size, variation and breadth of the organisation's collaborative research in sustainability areas – and *Ecos*'s direct access to news on developments – it should be reasonable to expect CSIRO's work to be frequently referred to. The magazine is certainly not in the business



of working to what would be a limiting public relations agenda.

Besides that, despite media criticism of the principles and direction of the organisation as it

wrestles with change, CSIRO continues to show that it is an international research leader. Because CSIRO is a publicly funded entity, we feel it is important to communicate any research solutions that are being developed in the sustainability spectrum as a result of that investment.

Overall, *Ecos*'s editorial policy is to publish to a positive, encouraging and progress-focused stance. Our many new readers are finding that refreshing. While the mainstream media often have a negatively leaning pre-occupation with the environmental and social problems we face, *Ecos* will remain set on its objective of covering the wealth of innovative solutions and efforts that are arising to meet these problems. The glass is half full if we take the right perspective.

I hope you find this issue's Focus on industrial ecology and news of agricultural successes in Thailand's Golden Triangle inspiring.

Enjoy your reading.

**James Porteous**  
Managing Editor



Luca di Filippo

## Next, in issue 130

The April–May issue Focus discusses 'cleantech', the emerging area of research aimed at developing pollution reduction technologies, particularly to combat greenhouse gas emissions.