

Finding your Network's Question Without an Easy Answer

Why find your Network's Question?

To provide leadership. Committees of Management protect the long-term future of their network by thinking ahead and anticipating how the Network needs to develop to stay relevant. Their Question is part of their search to strengthen their Network.

To pool our collective knowledge. Government should do more to support Landcare, but waiting for government support wastes valuable time. Landcare can help Landcare – let's get on with it!

To invent new models for Landcare. What worked in the last decade won't necessarily work in the next. We need to invent better ways to organise within communities, to collaborate and to influence decision makers.

Why Questions Without Easy Answers? Landcare is good at giving funders stories about what's working, but we also need to ask the difficult questions about Landcare in our communities, the ones that don't have easy answers.

- Questions Without Easy Answers *focus* inquiry, challenging us to broaden our conversations and look beyond what we take for granted.
- Difficult questions have many answers, all part of the overall answer. A sharp inquiry question give a CoM *a reference point* as they try out new approaches.
- And a good question provides *a starting point for conversations*. Don't do it alone. Talk with the experienced people around you, in Landcare and beyond.



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LVI's CLEA Project
Community Learning for Environmental Action

Four Steps

1 What have we strengthened over the last couple of years?

Look behind the projects and think about capacity to make a difference in your community. On the Four Roles of Landcare (next page), note what's getting stronger.

2 Where do we need to break new ground?

Given the contribution you want to make long-term, what needs to be strengthened. Go to your edge, to the tough challenges.

3 What is our Question Without an Easy Answer?

- A question that doesn't have a simple or obvious answer.
- A question with many answers, each one right in a different situation.
- A question that keeps coming back, even when you've answered it, and that leads you to other questions, deeply your understanding

4 Break down your QWEA into smaller pieces

Break down your big question into the different issues it raises. Decide on one to concentrate on first.

Go to the worksheet "Ask Around!"

What are the best ways to support knowledge sharing in the soft skills of community environment work? CLEA is jointly funded by the and the Natural Resources Conservation League.

The Four Roles of Landcare

Landcare *facilitates community learning and action*, engaging and inspiring landholders, and supporting practice change through peer-to-peer learning.

Facilitator of Community Learning and Action

Landcare *provides services to communities for government funders*. Networks combine community ownership with technical competence to deliver what funders and communities want.

Provider of Environmental Services

Governance

Responsibilities clear,
systems well-organised

Enabler of Partnerships

Landcare *builds relationships* between communities and organisations. It builds trust, goodwill and mutual responsibility. It negotiates roles in projects.

Planner

Landcare Networks are *planners in natural resource management* at local and landscape level. They integrate technical knowledge with social knowledge of what will and will not work in communities. They speak for the local agenda.