

## Case Studies

**Name of School:** Adelaide River Primary School

**School Context:** Adelaide River Primary School is a small rural school located approximately 80 kms south of Darwin. The school is part of the Top End Group School (TEGS). Adelaide River Primary School has a strong history of environmental education. The approach to Environmental and Sustainability Education is holistic and is incorporated in all facets of learning and school life. The school participates in a wide variety of activities including gardening, reduce, reuse and recycle concepts in all areas, resource management, Tidy Towns, Waterwatch and rehabilitation projects in the wider community involving groups such as Landcare and Greening Australia.

### Issues:

- develop whole school understanding of sustainability
- school energy consumption
- continuing maintenance and improvement of school grounds

**Aims:** At Adelaide River Primary School, Environmental and Sustainability Education aims to:

- develop a whole school approach in all areas including curriculum organization, teaching and learning, school ethos, management of resources physical surrounds and networks and partnerships.
- give students a greater understanding of both natural and human systems through a range of immediate environmental experiences which engage their senses, emotions and thinking.
- enable students to develop a life ethic which values all people and the natural environment, and to become aware of the actions that they can pursue in order to live a more sustainable life both now and in the future.

**Vision:** At Adelaide River Primary School, Environmental and Sustainability Education is a central part of our school's mission. The school strives to be a focal point of good practice with teachers, students, parents and the community interacting and learning together. We seek to live, work and play in such a way that we:

- enhance the environmental, economic and social well-being of our school community.
- minimise our use of natural resources and our environmental impacts and educate ourselves and others about the roles and responsibilities of citizens in a sustainable world.

### What we did:

#### Learning

- Work on developing a whole school curriculum plan has begun – a school culture curriculum unit will be developed with staff based on school values
- Some teachers have written programs focusing on sustainability concepts related to school identified issues and used them in term 2,3 and 4

#### Resource management/school grounds

- Increasing native vegetation in school grounds to attract more birds

- Expanding bush tucker garden
- Energy audit to determine future strategies

#### Governance

- Vision established and will be presented to the school council
- School policy has been developed and will be presented to the school council
- School Environmental Management Plan 2005 has been completed

#### Community Links

- Waterwatch activities with the community ongoing at Robin Falls
- Ongoing work with Greening Australia, seed collection and growing

#### **What happened**

##### Educational benefits

- Development of whole school curriculum mapping commenced
- SEMP completed to provide school with an overall focus

##### Economic Benefits

- Grant money received from Waterwatch
- Some savings made on resource bills – energy, waste

##### Social Benefits

- Whole community involvement in Robin Falls rehabilitation project
- Students participated in Water Week activities at the Territory Wildlife Park, mentoring and presenting information to other groups of students

##### Environmental benefits

- Tree planting of native, bush tucker, species completed.
- Removal of dangerous tree limbs and identification of future problem areas
- Funding for shaded areas approved. Shade cloth will be placed over basketball court area
- Funding for improved community recycling collection point approved

##### Energy

- Energy audit completed. Currently awaiting results before action can be formulated

##### Water

- Irrigation system being extended through school grounds. Shade house to be completed Term 4.
- Student participation in Waterwatch Program continued throughout 2005. Students were involved in monitoring sites and presenting.

#### **What you learnt:**

Environment and Sustainability Education is an ongoing process. It should be approached as a series of small steps and expectations should be kept as realistic as possible. A strong understanding of what sustainability involves within the context of school and wider community is essential.