

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Environmental Change? We'll Manage!

Associate Professor Robyn Bushell from the Centre for Cultural Research, together with Bruce Simmons from the School of Natural Sciences, the Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils (MACROC) with members of the Macarthur Business Enterprise Centre and the Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living are developing environmental management systems (EMS) for small businesses in the south-west region of Sydney. This research is funded by AusIndustry\*.

'Environmental management systems (EMS), though developed all over the world, have not been widely adopted by small businesses with usually 10% or less having taken them up', says Associate Professor Bushell. 'Though some inroads have been made recently in the Australian tourism industry, other areas of small business such as retail, manufacturing and services have yet to seriously implement them. Elements of EMS that have been previously proven in the tourism industry to be successful will be used to inform the structure of EMS for the small businesses involved in this project, aiming to build their capabilities in improving their business and environmental performance through training, assessment and mentoring.'

In the growing south-west area of Sydney, 210 small businesses will be given a "tool kit" to help identify areas of improvement in their environmental practices, including workbooks, group learning sessions and networking, mentoring, and assessments of their EMS implementations. The EMS for the businesses include: increasing energy efficiency, business planning with environmental considerations, determination of ecological and environmental business footprints, change management skills and marketing based on the environmental credentials of the enterprise.



With an understanding of the elements forming an environmental management system relevant to a specific industry or area, programs can then be developed for successful uptake of EMS by small business in general. This will make for "cleaner, greener" small businesses in alignment with evolving Australian community environmental principles, policies and practices.

**Project Title:** Development of Environmental Management Systems in Small Business in the Macarthur Region NSW

**Funding has been set at (up to):** \$20,000

**Contact Details:** [r.bushell@uws.edu.au](mailto:r.bushell@uws.edu.au)

<http://www.uws.edu.au/ccr>

**December 2009**

\*This is an Australian Government funded initiative under the Building Entrepreneurship in Small Business program.