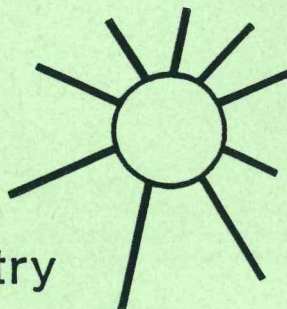




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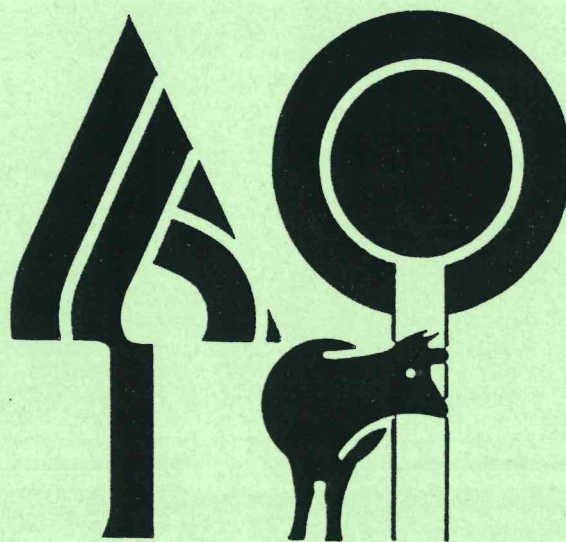
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NATIONAL AGROFORESTRY WORKING GROUP BACKS DECADE OF SOIL CONSERVATION

by Richard Moore

The National Agroforestry Working Group recently considered its role in connection with the 1990s being a "Decade of Soil Conservation". The Australian Forestry Council had asked the Group to develop a strategy to promote trees on farms as an integral part of the soil conservation initiative. "Trees on farms" are recognized to be a vital element in soil conservation, particularly in the prevention of soil erosion and the control of salinity.

In its report to the Standing Committees on Agriculture, Forestry and Soil Conservation the Group strongly supports the soil conservation initiative. The report also outlines ways in which the Group considers it can assist the Department of Primary Industries and Energy in implementing the initiative. They include:

- (i) having agroforestry representation on State steering committees set up to co-ordinate the initiative;
- (ii) incorporating expert agroforestry advice into the whole-farm planning process when developing strategies with farmers to tackle soil conservation problems;
- (iii) establishing on-farm agroforestry demonstrations directed at the particular concerns of the regional community;
- (iv) holding a National Agroforestry Conference in 1992 to provide a focus for those interested in technical developments which support the soil conservation initiative;
- (v) strengthening the advisory services by formal in-service training on agroforestry for advisers in agricultural and forestry organizations;
- (vi) encouraging States to set up a committee (where this has not already been done) to co-ordinate State and private agencies involved with agroforestry development;
- (vii) assisting with publicity for the initiative; and
- (viii) by encouraging tertiary institutions with agricultural and forestry programmes to introduce agroforestry courses.

As a first step, the Working Group has provided the Department of Primary Industries and Energy with a list of agroforestry case studies which could be used in publicising aspects of the initiative.

The involvement of agroforestry in the Decade of Soil Conservation highlights the importance of "trees on farms" in the development of strategies to control land degradation.