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**AGROFORESTRY UPDATE**

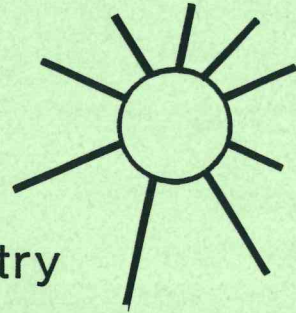
10 (May 1990)

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# Agroforestry Update



Newsletter for Agroforestry

Researchers and Practitioners



Department of Conservation and Land Management

Department of Agriculture

C.S.I.R.O

Western Australia

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ISSN 1030 - 7982



## Institute of Foresters backs Agroforestry as part of Land Degradation Programs

by Richard Moore

During 1989 the Institute of Foresters of Australia prepared a submission for the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts on "the effectiveness of land degradation policies and programs". The report of the Standing Committee, dated November 1989, includes several recommendations from the Institute's submission. I quote from the Standing Committee's report (P. 110 & 111):

"It is the view of the Institute of Foresters of Australia that neither punitive nor encouraging legislation is likely to be successful in the attack on land degradation. Rather the answer lies, in large measure, in the acceptance of agroforestry systems by landholders, and strategies for surmounting barriers to its implementation. Communication, research, education and extension will be at the heart of these strategies.

While the Institute of Foresters recognises that attitudes to current land management have been changing slowly in Australia, it believes much more must be done to create a social environment within which the seriousness of the problem and the magnitude of the task can be addressed. The Institute recognises that the National Soil Conservation Program, the National Tree Program, the National Afforestation Program, Greening Australia, whole-farm planning and work of many landholders throughout the country, have begun to develop new directions in rural land management. However the Institute considered that new initiatives by governments and communities are now needed to build upon this base. The Institute of Foresters saw the most important needs being met by:

- . projecting and evaluating the role of trees in land rehabilitation;
- . researching tree-based land management systems; and
- . educating a new generation of land managers.

There is a particular need for research into agroforestry but this is one of the areas identified by Professor Ferguson as at risk of being over looked because it was essentially multi-disciplinary in nature and out side of the normally single discipline funding channels.

The Committee sees merit in the Institute of Foresters of Australia's proposal and considers that agroforestry could have significant land degradation benefits in particular applications. This matter requires further investigation and much more widespread field testing but, as discussed in Chapter four, there are problems involved in funding agroforestry research. Therefore there needs to be more promotion of the concept and the Committee recommends that:

the proposed reforestation working party as a priority task investigate and develop ways to promote agroforestry."