



Merging Experience and Science for Innovation and Educational Outcomes

John Taylor; University of Queensland; Contact Author Email: john.a.taylor@uq.edu.au

This paper reports on a national (Australian) initiative to engage rangeland stakeholders in defining future educational needs, and the development and delivery of products to meet these needs. The process has changed participants' perceptions of other stakeholders, and highlighted the poor alignment between the supply of courses and stakeholder-expressed demand. A new rangeland management postgraduate coursework program and a series of 12 rangeland-specific courses have now been developed through the participative process, which has engaged over 250 experienced managers, extension officers and scientists, and effectively merged experience and science. Market response has been very positive, with strong growth in student numbers over the past 3 years, in stark contrast to the significant decline in other postgraduate programs over the same period. Importantly, student ratings for the relevance of courses to business and their future in the rangelands are very high. The lessons learnt and emerging challenges in rangeland education in Australia will be highlighted.

2009. 62nd Society for Range Management Annual Meeting. Paper No. 40-1.