

Biography: Dr Noel Preece

Academic Qualifications

- **Doctor of Philosophy** Ecology, Charles Darwin University
- **Master of Science** Zoology, University of Queensland and NTU
- **Bachelor of Science** Earth Sciences Geography, major in Environmental Law, Macquarie University

Professional history

- Director, Principal Environmental Scientist, Biome5 PL 2006 – on-going
- Principal Environmental Scientist & Director, EcOz - 1990 – 2006
- Reg Mgr (NT/SA) & Principal Environmental Scientist - EcOz-VDM – 2006-08
- Science Director, Biocarbon 2006 – 2013
- Science Director, Degree Celsius JV, 2006 – 2012
- Adjunct Principal Research Fellow, James Cook University, current
- University Fellow, Charles Darwin University, current.
- Conservation Commission NT 1984-1990 – A/Reg Mgr
- NPWS NSW 1974-1984 – Ranger & Snr Ranger

Areas of Expertise

- Environmental Impact & Risk Assessment, Mitigation, Legislation & Policy
- Ecological, Flora & Fauna & Resource Research
- Restoration Ecology & BioCarbon Project Development
- Indigenous Ecological Knowledge
- Fire & Land Management Planning & Practice
- Certified Environmental Practitioner EIANZ CEnvP0225.
- Environmental Auditing (Environmental Lead Auditor)
- Project Management
- Ecotourism

Publications

1974-2016 – 200+ scientific papers, book chapters, books and technical reports

Community & advisory work:

Editorial Board member, J. Ecological Management & Restoration, ESA, 2003-current; NT Councillor, EIANZ 95-8, 06-07; Founding Pres., Ecotourism Ass. Aust ~1991-2; President Tree-Kangaroo & Mammal Group 2012-13; NQ Nats committee 2016; NT Minerals Council member (mid 1990s to mid 2000s, ret'd).

Professional experience

Noel is a conservation ecologist and environmental scientist working in northern and central Australian ecosystems, fauna, vegetation, fire, pests and landscape restoration. Noel has overseen many environmental assessments of major and medium industrial projects, including natural gas pipelines. He has long involvement with Indigenous enterprises, rangeland and natural resource management. He has conducted many biodiversity surveys in WA, NT and nth Qld.

Noel is Lead Researcher and Linkage Partner in the Thiaki ARC Linkage rainforest reforestation project and is a Chief Investigator on a JCU ARC Linkage project on secondary regrowth in Nth Qld. Noel is studying the causes of faunal declines across the savanna region and means of reversing these declines, and diseases of mammals, and a range of other research projects.

Dr Noel Preece

Motivation for serving on Council

The Ecosystem Science Council is one of the best initiatives of the ESA and its associates, and I wish to offer my more than 40 years of diverse experience and expertise to contribute to the objectives of the Council. I believe that the Ecosystem Science Council can play a valuable role in influencing these policy changes through policy proposals and inputs, and through advocacy. As a Councillor, I would aim to achieve several goals:

1. to influence environmental policy through advocacy at national and state levels;
2. to help correct some of the imbalances and poor strategic thinking at federal and state government levels; and
3. to help map out a more sustainable future for Australia's ecosystems.

In particular, I believe the Council can and should provide alternative positions to the strong development, mining, agriculture and 'growth' lobbies, such as the Northern Development lobby.

What experience I would bring to the Council

My long career has led me through many paths, including active field management of ecosystems, conservation policy and management at a senior government level, consulting to large business and federal and state governments as an environmental consultant for over 25 years, and as a researcher addressing some of the vital issues in ecosystem management. I believe that my experience, particularly as Director and Principal Environmental Scientist running several environmental consulting businesses which advise a wide range of industries, could provide the Council with solid first-hand knowledge of how business and industry think, function and work. This experience covered a wide range of people, from the top levels of government through to the most remote people in Australia.

My direct working knowledge of Australia has spanned the southern alps and coastal areas to the arid centre of Australia, and north Australia including Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland. For the past 30 years I have worked in northern and central Australia with many indigenous peoples, pastoralists, land managers, miners and developers, as well as government officers, and MPs in a range of capacities. First-hand experience includes managing projects related to the impacts and management of major industrial projects such as gas pipelines and mines, industrial developments, and agricultural enterprises, through to small-scale projects directed at restoration or rehabilitation, education and enlightenment about the natural world.

I am passionate about our natural world. Most of my working life has been dedicated to improving environmental outcomes. I have a strong interest in producing better outcomes and understanding for people on the land, both indigenous and non-indigenous, through the work I do. I have become increasingly disturbed at the limited action on ecosystem and biodiversity declines, and at the repeated failures and immense wastes on recovery and management programs which have been poorly planned or considered, were not based on sound science and management practice, and were inadequately funded or had funding cut short. I am also concerned about the pressure to increase 'productivity' of agricultural and range land, at the expense of the long-term sustainability of the ecosystems which sustain them, and the consequent loss of biodiversity. I have experience with many of these programs, and can bring to the table some of the insights learnt from these experiences.

What expertise I would bring to the Council

My expertise includes biodiversity conservation, fire management and policy, environmental impacts and legislation, weeds and feral animal management, environmental policy at the state and federal levels, and landscape restoration. I have studied many of the fauna and flora which now attract national attention, from the Corroboree Frog which has gone extinct in the wild, to Northern Quolls and Golden-backed tree-rats in northern Australia. I have also made contributions to federal government policy on Climate Change and modelling, environmental assessment, and biodiversity conservation. I have also worked closely with the NT government at various times through such bodies as the NT Minerals Council as a member, and now work as an advisor to three NRM bodies in the north Queensland region. This breadth of experience and knowledge may contribute to better thinking about strategic directions and policies.

I have worked throughout my career in cross-disciplinary areas, including environmental practitioners, researchers, landholders, Indigenous people, miners, graziers, and agriculturists.

I am formally affiliated with James Cook University College of Tropical Environmental and Sustainability Science as an Adjunct Principal Research Fellow, and with Charles Darwin University as a University Fellow. I am active in research, and was a Partner Investigator in an ARC Rainforest restoration project which my wife and I established in 2009 on our property with five universities (LP0989161), and a Chief Investigator on another ARC project 'Accelerating species richness gains and carbon sequestration in secondary regrowth in north Queensland', with James Cook Uni, Wet Tropics Management Authority, UQ, and Biome5 Pty Ltd (LP110201093).

As an adjunct, I am leading a project through James Cook University (with Dr Sandra Abell) on disease-related causes of declines of northern mammals. I am also researching soil nutrient uptake in restoration species, carbon sequestration factors such as growth rates and survival, weed effects on restoration, biogeographical effects of flood barriers across Australia, ants as indicators of restoration progress, decomposition rates of vegetable matter in restoration, impacts of restoration on faunal recovery, conservation and biogeography of northern eucalypts, and a range of other research projects. Currently, I am managing a research-oriented large-scale restoration project in the Wet Tropics of northern Queensland. I believe that this range of research interests and the discipline associated with them will contribute to the functioning of the Council.

Capacity

I am self-employed and independent, and can contribute a reasonable amount of time to the Council and feel that this effort will be worthwhile.

Statement of commitment

I support and subscribe to the Council's responsibilities, and strongly support and commit to the guiding principles of the Council.

I am willing to commit the required time and energy to the work of the Council.



Dr Noel Preece
Director, Biome5 Pty Ltd
9th October 2016