



## A Word from the President

Dear Colleagues,

It is nice to meet you again through this April edition of News & Views. It has been a busy couple of months since the successful AARES 2023 annual meeting in Christchurch. Our congratulations go to Alan Renwick and the crew from New Zealand for their splendid efforts. We made a financial surplus, and, more importantly, gained a new cohort of members who add to our pool of talented people and help in expanding our influence as a group.

The AARES 2024 annual meeting Local Organising Committee (LOC), led by Todd Sanderson, is well on to event preparations in Canberra. I congratulate them on their chosen theme 'Grand challenges at the frontier of applied economics'. It is no secret that climate change, geopolitical uncertainties, and rising costs are affecting economic activity and placing at risk many gains made over the past decades in improving social well-being.



Across the globe, agendas are shaping to seek greater benefits from collective actions and pursue solutions that minimise the exposure to future costs, both in production and consumption. This global ambit presents us new opportunities for collaborating with other economists and professionals. Our member database shows that while our interests are aligned to agriculture and natural resources, our scope is broadening as we seek new ways to apply our tools of analysis to complex policy issues such as in biosecurity, health and environmental well-being, renewable energy technologies, and new food industries. Surely, we are growing, and so we have new problems to work on.

As a profession, we have come a long way. Our founders and those who followed their lead have made our job more interesting and more valuable today. In this edition, we fittingly pay tribute to two of our heroes who led the way. Professor Clem Tisdell and Minister John Kerin were both eminent in their chosen fields and contributed to the profession immensely. We are better for them in numerous ways. We celebrate their successes and honour them.

Our goal this year is renewal and growth. The AARES Board is working on the process of developing our strategic plan. We are confident that the committee led by the President-elect, Sorada Tapsuwan, will have much of the work completed by the mid-year. Please convey your ideas to her and respond to the survey that will come to you soon.

As always, we are happy to hear from you and look forward to working together in making the value you gain from AARES even better. Thanks for volunteering your time and expertise for the common good we serve.

Thilak Mallawaarachchi  
AARES President

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## AJARE Updates

### **Five new Associate Editors Appointed**

AJARE Editors in Chief are pleased to announce the appointment of new Associate Editors:

**Stephanie McWhinnie**, University of Adelaide  
**Maksym Polyakov**, Landcare Research New Zealand  
**Derek Baker**, University of New England  
**Chunbo Ma**, University of Western Australia  
**Syed Hasan**, Massey University

The Associate Editors provide an incredibly important service to the Journal. We welcome and thank them for their commitment to the Journal.

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## **AARES 2024 Annual Conference**

The 68th Annual Conference of AARES will be held 6-9 February 2024 at the Australian National University in Canberra.

### ***Grand challenges at the frontier of applied economics***

The theme of the AARES 2024 conference, “Grand challenges at the frontier of applied economics”, will focus discussions on the cutting edge of applied economics. We endeavour to explore the grand challenges that are facing the Australasian region and beyond, such as biosecurity, climate change,

environmental degradation, energy systems, and food security. This conference will provide a forum for our Society to explore new opportunities for research and development, and policy practice that can address these grand challenges in securing efficient, effective, and equitable outcomes. Distinguished researchers and professionals will present keynote presentations to inspire and stimulate discussions at the AARES 2024 conference.

## Introducing the 2024 LOC

**Todd Sanderson**  
**Sorada Tapsuwan**  
**Tim Capon**  
**Mikayla Bruce**  
**Nikki Dumbrell**  
**Emily Dahl**  
**Matt Armstrong**  
**Helena Clayton**  
**Jenny Eather**  
**Tony Webster**  
**Abebayehu Geffersa**  
**Shokhrukh Jalilov**  
**Christian Creed**

## LOC member snapshot

### **Walter Okelo**

Research Scientist and Economist, CSIRO  
LOC Pre-conference workshop sub-committee

*The past AARES conferences have been valuable for networking and learning new frontiers in economics. I am looking forward to meeting my colleagues as well as gaining insight into what they are currently working on.*

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### **Mikayla Bruce**

Economic Analyst, Grains Research  
and Development Corporation  
LOC Social events



*Engaging with others who have a genuine interest in your work and also understand the importance and intricacies of your work have been valuable aspects of past AARES conferences. In other settings when you divulge information about agricultural and resource economics, you watch people's eyes glaze over. However, AARES brings together a unique subset of people who get more interested the detail you provide! I have really enjoyed being involved in the AARES ACT Branch, and it's exciting to be able to showcase Canberra and what it has to offer the AARES community.*

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**Abebayehu Geffersa**

Postdoctoral Researcher, CSIRO

*It is a pleasure to participate in organising the 2024 AARES conference. This is indeed my first in-person AARES conference after a few years of COVID interruptions, and a great opportunity for me to reconnect with the international research network.*

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**Helena Clayton**

Research Fellow, Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University

LOC Pre-conference workshop sub-committee

*A confession: when I signed up for an ARE undergrad degree at the University of New England over 25 years ago, I had little to no clue what the course entailed! I was mainly following the lead of a friend. But I was quickly drawn in by the profound questions that our field grapples with—questions that have far-reaching implications for individuals, communities, and society as a whole. While my friend never ended up completing the degree, I have remained captivated by the challenges and questions explored by the AARES community. The annual AARES conference always impresses in showcasing the scope and depth of our research, and I am*



## Upcoming Opportunities

### **Crawford Chair in Agricultural Economics, ANU**

The Australian National University is seeking an outstanding leader in the field of agricultural economics to fill the position of the Crawford Chair in Agricultural Economics. The Professor will undertake internationally acclaimed research in the field of agricultural economics, with a particular focus on Asia and the Pacific. The Professor will also provide leadership to the discipline and university and will engage externally to shape and influence public policy. The successful candidate will conduct research, education (teaching and supervision) and policy engagement for the Department, School, CAP and the wider University. Access to some start-up research funds will be available for the successful candidate.

[See the full job description.](#)

**Applications close 26 May 2023**

### **PhD Scholarship Available at UWA**

Benefits from environmental policies are often unpriced “non-market values”. Environmental agencies struggle to know how best to measure these relatively intangible benefits, but doing so is important to ensure value for money from public investments. Environmental economists have developed and applied a wide range of methods for quantifying non-market values. The methods vary in their comprehensiveness, accuracy and cost, so environmental decision makers face difficult trade-offs when deciding how to tackle this issue. The student will work closely with environmental managers from a range of Australian agencies to understand their needs and preferences for obtaining information about environmental values, their perceptions about the trade-offs, and opportunities to improve their approaches to environmental valuation.

Supervisors will be Dr Abbie Rogers and Associate Professor Michael Burton. This PhD project is part of a larger project on environmental valuation funded by the Australian Research Council and UWA, led by Professor David Pannell and including collaboration between researchers at UWA, Griffith University and Clark

University (USA).

\$35,000 per year stipend, plus funds for operating, travel, and equipment.

**For more information or to apply, contact [Abbie.Rogers@uwa.edu.au](mailto:Abbie.Rogers@uwa.edu.au)**

## Crawford Fund Student Awards

Students seeking to gain experience by bringing an international component to their studies and research can apply for a Crawford Fund 2023 Student Award.

Awards are open to students undertaking a degree in agriculture, animal production, fisheries, forestry, natural resource management or any area related to food and nutrition security. [More information can be found here.](#)

**Applications due 15 May 2023**

## Donna Brennan International Travel Grant

The 2023 Donna Brennan AARES International Travel Grant was awarded to Disha Bose, who provides a reflection on her AARES experience below.

This grant honours Donna Brennan, who worked extensively in developing countries, and who was a wonderful mentor of young researchers. To ensure this award can be sustained into the future, donations can be made at any time, through:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/aares-donna-brennan-travel-award>. Any questions can be directed to Michael Burton at [Michael.burton@uwa.edu.au](mailto:Michael.burton@uwa.edu.au).

I had the opportunity to attend and present one of the papers based on my dissertation work at AARES 2023 Conference held in Christchurch, New Zealand. I sincerely want to thank the selection committee for this opportunity as it was my first presentation at an international conference. I was also the recipient of the prestigious Donna Brennan International Travel Grant award that helped me immensely in making the long journey from India to New Zealand.





Not only did it offset some of the costs incurred during travelling, but it also boosted my confidence levels for further growth. The conference provided a perfect platform to demonstrate my research skills as well as interact with like-minded individuals, providing collaborative opportunities for the future. The plenary sessions and some of the parallel sessions that I attended showcased innovative and relevant research in the field of agriculture and food systems. I would like to extend my gratitude to the organizing committee for making the conference a success.



Disha Bose

PhD candidate at the Centre for Management in Agriculture  
Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad

## In memoriam

### **Clem Tisdell: 1939-2022**

**Emeritus Professor Clem Tisdell from the School of Economics at the University of Queensland died in Brisbane on 14th July 2022.**

Professor Clem Tisdell was one of Australia's most prolific publishers in the economics discipline who continued to be extremely active and engaged in academic work long after his retirement. I first came to know Clem when he was a professor at the University of Queensland in 1986 when I returned to university for my honours year – a decade later Clem was one of my PhD examiners. He was always brimming with enthusiasm and ideas, and already a publishing machine when I first knew him almost 40 years ago.

Clem was born at Taree in NSW in 1939, completed his undergraduate degree at the University of New South Wales in 1961, and his PhD at the Australian National University in 1964. He worked at several universities, including the Australian National University, University of Newcastle and the University of Queensland.

Clem had a wide variety of interests in economics and research. He essentially worked in micro-economics, and wrote several text books in this field. His research interests were varied, but largely involved application of his micro-economic skills to issues in environmental economics, development economics

and tourism issues, just to name a few. He was very interested in the Asia Pacific countries, as this meshed a lot of his interests in development and environmental issues. Clem seemed to be particularly effective at working with international students from the Asia Pacific area, and enjoyed the diversity of cultures involved.

The most notable things about Clem for me was that he was interested in the economics of ecology and environment long before these were popular issues, and guided some of the development of the fields that are now categorised as ecological economic and environmental economic disciplines. While he had a sharp eye for gaps in the literature where yet another article might be published, he had almost an obsessive interest in how one could analyse ecological assets and pressures in economic terms for more than half a century, and introduced a lot of academics and students to what has become a major field of analysis and study.

Vale Clem Tisdell.

Professor John Rolfe

## **John Kerin: 1937-2023**

**Vale Hon. John Kerin A.M., C.M., FTSE, FAIST**

**21 November 1937 – 29 March 2023**

John Charles Kerin, a reformist who inspired the transition to modern agricultural industry in Australia, was Australia's longest-serving agricultural minister who held the portfolios of Primary Industry (1983–1987), and Primary Industries and Energy (1987–1991). He was also Treasurer (1991), Minister for Transport and Communications (1991), and Minister for Trade and Overseas Development (1992–1993).

He cherished his farming background, growing on a family farm raising poultry, cutting wood and orcharding in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales. He was a life-long learner and voracious reader. He gained a Bachelor of Arts from UNE majoring in geography and economics, which led him to a research role in 1971 at the then Bureau of Agricultural Economics (BAE), now the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES). Kerin entered Parliament in 1972 as the Member for Macarthur but returned to BAE in 1975 after the defeat of the Whitlam government. Studying part time, he completed a Bachelor of Economics at ANU and commenced a Master of Economics. He began his journey of agricultural policy reform in the Hawke Government (1983), by removing self-defeating industry protection that had led to surplus production and inefficient resource allocation.



Creativity and innovation were foremost in his strategy, and he then began to transform publicly funded agricultural research to mitigate the risk that individual farmers face but cannot address themselves. Driven by a conviction that privately funded agricultural research can only succeed where there are large, discrete markets, he found a way to combine private and public interests in rural research. His institutional innovation, the Primary Industry and Energy Research and Development Act, 1989 (PIERD), which enshrined Australia's agricultural research and development corporations (RDC) model, is one of his inspiring achievements. It transformed the Australian agricultural research strategy and promoted natural resource management as a public good, with the creation of a dedicated RDC (LWRRDC, the Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation) to address cross-cutting issues in resource use in agriculture.

The constructive thinking it provoked was to make the agricultural sector more resilient and to pursue economic and technical efficiency, as a basis to achieve productivity gains and profitability in agriculture for everyone's benefit. By giving farmers the incentive to contribute to research through matching Commonwealth funding and bringing expertise-based representation on RDC boards, an enduring model of public-private cooperation in public good agricultural research was created.

Kerin, a Distinguished Life Member of AARES, will be remembered for dismantling protectionist systems —including reforming the highly controlled wool, dairy, and wheat marketing systems as well as the sugar and fishing industries— and embracing natural resource management for greater public good. In these endeavours he relied on research and analysis from agricultural economists and other professionals, that were supported by public agricultural research leveraged through the RDC model. Throughout, Kerin did not ignore the human cost, particularly when many producers were exiting an industry, and implemented follow up adjustment measures, including for drought management to bring a focus on managing distress and building self-reliance.

Kerin's approach was emphatic that research, analysis, and sound judgement should inform public policy. His broad tenet was to find policies to effect more efficient national production and better ways to allocate resources to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and farm profitability.

Thilak Mallawaarachchi and Trish Gleeson\*

\* Trish Gleeson is a close friend, and a former staffer of John Kerin

For additional insights see Kerin's memoirs:

Kerin, J. C. 2017. *The Way I Saw It; The Way It Was: The Making of National Agricultural and Natural Resource Management Policy*. Melbourne: Analysis and Policy Observatory. <https://doi.org/10.4225/50/590fe72f12dd9>

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ECP NZ *To be named*

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Comments, suggestions? Would you like to make a contribution to the next News and Views issue?

Please contact the News and Views Editor at: [claire.doll@uwa.edu.au](mailto:claire.doll@uwa.edu.au)