

A Word from the President

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the Spring issue of News & Views. Here we celebrate successes, share information on events, and update you on what we do at AARES. Congratulations to Claire Doll and her team for their excellent work.

In recent weeks, two publications caught my attention. [OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2023-2032](#), released in July, notes that with the war continuing to add uncertainties to food, energy, and input prices, growth in global food production is likely to remain subdued at 1.1% a year over the next decade, while food consumption is to grow slightly to 1.3% a year. Foreseen slowdown in population and per capita income growth remains the key drivers of this subdued outlook. The Outlook recognises that raising agricultural productivity remains the key pathway to produce more food, but with virtually no growth expected in investment in technology and infrastructure and with projected increases in climate risks, achieving sustained increases in food supplies remains a critical global challenge. This outlook has serious Implications. It is particularly concerning for our neighbours in South Asia, where 1 in 4 people remain impoverished and many find it difficult to ensure adequate food supplies. Poor and the vulnerable are forced to make difficult choices and may still fail meeting their basic consumption needs. Resulting uncertainty is making myopia the norm in decision-making, adding to many social ills, many with lasting consequences.



While this is occurring, a trend that emerged with the ICT revolution means that the global economy has reorganized along customer needs, while improving competition and quality of services, where that is feasible and occurring. The Ecosystem Economy (Atluri and Dietz, Wiley), reckons that the dismantling sectoral barriers that characterised the traditional economies are offering new possibilities. Businesses sharing assets, information, and resources, are creating value beyond what they could have achieved individually. Many such activities involve addressing inefficiencies in production and consumption including prevention of losses and waste in value networks – careful consideration of opportunity costs. Could this be the new wave of productivity growth and what would be the role for economists?

Both these insights are of value for our profession. Although farming may be diminishing as a way of life, across the world, in all economies rich and poor, the business of providing food and ensuring adequate nutrition for a healthy population remains a higher order goal. Agri-food system today has no boundaries: it cuts across all layers from land to plate, and hence encounters issues of resource allocation, consumption, and externalities thereof, that affect the environment and people. Decisions need to be made to ensure sustainable production and consumption. The role of agricultural economists is much wider than in a traditional department of agriculture or a university faculty of agriculture.

Our influence grows when we work with others across traditional boundaries, and there are ample opportunities to help people realise their consumption needs, most of which are related to the way we manage land and the other resources linked to land.

The call for submissions for [AARES 2024](#), our 68th annual conference, is open. The chosen theme 'Grand Challenges at the Frontier of Applied Economics' provides opportunities to discuss issues of the agri-food system in its entirety as it connects to every other sector in our economies. When you are considering your submission— for a contributed paper, special session, a pre-conference workshop, or any other segment —my invitation to you is to think outside the box and explore the cross-boundary issues that will define our work and our influence. It could be at any of the numerous scales over which decisions are made including at the farm, processing outlets, factories, logistic hubs, laboratories, marketplace for inputs and the levels of governance from local to international stage.

Good luck.

Thilak Mallawaarachchi
AARES President

Social Media Update

AARES is now on LinkedIn!

We look forward to engaging with our membership on this new (to us) platform. Our new LinkedIn page can be found [here](#).



AARES is also on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter/X](#). Many thanks to Maruge (April) Zhao for managing these accounts.

In the News

War on Waste Feature: Trang Nguyen

Trang Nguyen, the inaugural recipient of the AARES Quality of Research Communication Award for early-mid career researchers, was recently featured on ABC's War on Waste.

War on Waste is an award-winning documentary series looking at the scale of waste produced by Australian businesses and consumers. The highlighted Episode 2 of Series 3 delved into our intricate relationship with food waste, emphasising the critical role each individual plays in preventing and reducing it. Trang's findings distinctly categorise households into three groups: the Food Waste "Warriors", "Strugglers", and "Slackers". By understanding these groups, interventions can be tailored to address food waste in specific segments of the urban population. Highlighting these insights in mainstream media can spark a shift in viewers' consumption and disposal practices. The episode can be found on ABC iView.

Congratulations, Trang!



Have you or your team recently been in the news? Let us know!

Upcoming Events

NZARES-NZAE Joint ECR Virtual Workshop 2023

NZARES and NZAE are holding an Early Career Researcher (ECR) workshop on **6 September 2023**. This workshop offers a platform for ECRs to connect, receive feedback on their work, and build connections, albeit virtually.

The day-long workshop will be divided into three parts. Part one will comprise a keynote presentation by Dr. Ana Manero, Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU, highlighting the Opportunities and Challenges of publishing as an ECR. Part two will have three consecutive sessions with contributed papers. Part 3 will conclude with a panel discussion on the future of publishing academic papers, followed by the AGM of NZARES for 2023.

Registration closes on **4 September 2023**.

WA Branch 2023 Local Conference

The AARES Western Australian Branch is holding their annual conference on **5 September 2023** on the University of Western Australia campus. The conference will feature presentations from several early career researchers, and a virtual keynote presentation from Dr. Bethany Cooper, Senior Research Fellow at UniSA Business, and AARES South Australian Branch Councillor.

If you're in Perth and interested in attending this in-person event, please email AARES WA Branch President: Curtis.rollins@uwa.edu.au.

AARES 2024 Annual Conference: 6-9 February 2024 at the Australian National University in Canberra

The [AARES Annual Conference website](#) is live! Regular updates will be posted on the website in the lead-up to the conference.

Call for submissions: Now open

Proposals for pre-conference workshops, special sessions, contributed papers and posters will be accepted until **9 October 2023**. More information about how to submit proposals or abstracts plus a link to make submissions via Oxford abstracts is on the website.



Crawford Fund Conference Scholar Program Awardee Announced

Bisakha Dewan, PhD student at the University of Queensland, was selected as this year's Crawford Fund Conference Scholar. Bisakha concentrates her research on gender-responsive agriculture, agricultural value chains, and making contributions to sustainable development endeavours. She is an agribusiness graduate from Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Dhaka, Bangladesh, a Bangladesh Prime Minister Fellow, and a former AWARD Fellow. In Bangladesh, she holds a position as a faculty member at the Department of Agribusiness and Marketing at Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University.

Remarkably, she is the country's first indigenous female academic staff member. Originally, she is from Rangamati, Bangladesh, a small, beautiful hill district home to several ethnic groups, and she takes pride in her indigenous heritage.

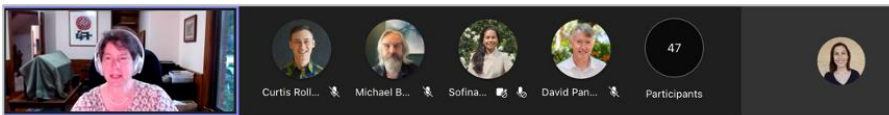
Bisakha sincerely thanks QLD AARES for funding her to attend the Crawford Fund Annual Conference 2023 in Canberra. She is confident that this conference experience will enhance her research journey through valuable tools and knowledge, enabling her to make meaningful contributions to agriculture and development. Bisakha aims to improve

her networking abilities, stay informed about development trends, and build essential collaborations for her career growth.

Branch Updates

WA Branch Environmental Policy Lecture

The Western Australian Branch held their annual Environmental Policy Lecture on 13 July 2023. This year's speaker was Professor Amy Ando, Chair of the Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics at Ohio State University. Dr. Ando delivered a thought-provoking lecture, titled: "Environmental and Resource Economics and Systemic Racism". She puts forth a call to environmental and resource economists to carefully consider how to better integrate environmental justice into our work. A recording of the presentation can be found [here](#), and her working paper can be found [here](#).



Looking Forward

- There is a lot of energy in ENRE to do better work on EJ
- What can we do?
 - Don't just focus on describing inequitable patterns in exposure – think about why things are how they are and what to do
 - Adjust valuation methods to avoid biases
 - Build equity into CBA
 - Put policy-relevant complexities into our models
 - Adopt more nuanced approach to thinking about management of commons

Strategic Plan Update

Workshop Progress

The current AARES strategy cycle (2017-2021) is complete and needs renewal to set the direction and inform the Society's actions over the next 5 years. The AARES Strategic Plan Sub-Committee has engaged two past AARES members at Acil Allen to assist us with the development of the new Strategic Plan. We have recently completed a workshop with representative members from each Branch Committee.

The objective of the workshop was to clarify AARES' vision and mission, identify key drivers (challenges and opportunities), establish values/unique propositions, partners and strategic themes. Findings from this workshop will be used to provide content for the member survey. The aim of the survey is to understand who existing and potential members are and what they look for and value from AARES.

The next stage is to hold a 4-hour workshop with the Board and interested/selected stakeholders to develop the strategy and build ownership of the strategy and resulting implementation action plans. Following the workshop, the strategic summary and implementation action plans are compiled and circulated for feedback before being finalised. We've had excellent engagement so far from our Branch representatives and we look forward to our members helping us complete the survey and circulating the survey among their network of non-AARES members.



Dr. Sorada Tapsuwan

AARES President-Elect & Strategic Planning Sub-Committee Chair

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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 & Views issue?
Please contact the News & Views Editor at: claire.doll@uwa.edu.au