

APPENDIX 13

ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Under section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the ARC is required to report on ecologically sustainable development (ESD) and environmental matters.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The major impacts of the ARC's operations on the environment are in relation to its consumption of resources such as energy, paper and water.

The ARC is located in the Geoscience Australia building in Symonston in Canberra. The building was designed with a strong emphasis on the principles of ESD, including the use of natural light and an array of other high-efficiency design elements. The major energy-saving feature of the building is the air-conditioning system, which is based on a series of geothermal heat pumps that carry water through loops of pipe buried in 350 bore holes, 100 metres deep, to exchange heat with the earth.

The ARC encourages recycling of paper products through the provision of appropriate bins and collection services.

The ongoing development of the ARC's information technology systems seeks to enable as far as possible the electronic delivery of its grant management processes, reducing the previous need for extensive paper-based arrangements.

RESEARCH ADMINISTERED BY THE ARC

Funding is provided for a range of research relevant to ESD under programs administered by the ARC. Due to the diverse nature of the research, it is difficult to quantify the funding provided. A study carried out in 1995 noted that a wide range of disciplines contributed to ESD objectives, including agriculture, engineering, earth and biological sciences.

As part of the budgetary framework, the ARC's intended outcome is Australian research advancing the global knowledge and skills base leading to economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits for the Australian community.