



# Take notes of your world

Simply observing a tree, bird or frog will help the experts monitor climate change, writes **Keeli Cambourne**.

AUSTRALIANS will have a chance to collaborate with some of the world's top scientists and improve the understanding of climate change in a new initiative of Landcare Australia.

The ClimateWatch citizen science program will give people a chance to monitor the effects of climate change.

The chief executive of Landcare Australia, Heather Campbell, says the program will help scientists around the world add to their data in a way that has never been done.

"What we have also decided to do this year is to encourage people to use their natural observational skills and take note of what is happening in their local environment by registering as a ClimateWatcher," Campbell says.

"By doing things like watching what your local magpie is doing or the jacaranda in the school playground is doing, or even the white butterfly in the garden, and noting it down as a registered ClimateWatcher, scientists can then add it to their own data to help them see what is happening with

our climate."

In conjunction with Earthwatch – a non-profit group that connects scientists and the community – Campbell says the program will help scientists gather data they otherwise would not be able to collect themselves.

"Anyone can register as a ClimateWatcher," she says. "All you have to do is go to the Landcare Australia website and follow the links.

"You can choose a species that you would like to monitor – from magpies to willie wagtails to frogs – and there is information on the site on what to look for and how to observe them."

One of Australia's most respected scientists and a member of the Landcare Australia advisory council, Dr John Williams, says the citizen science program is a great partnership between the Landcare community and the scientific community.

"Landcare is a way in which we can connect the community and the policymakers to develop action on the ground and ClimateWatch is a way in

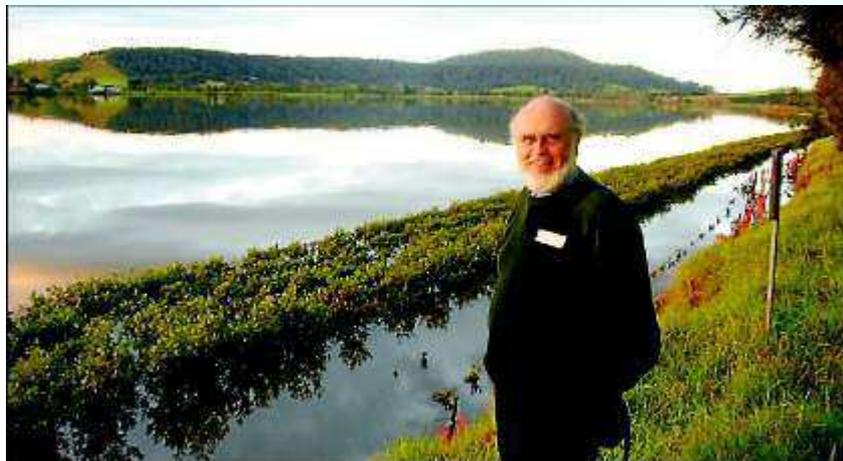
which communities can show how it is best to look after our natural assets and resources," he says.

"There is a lot of merit in communities monitoring their environment so they can see how their environment is changing and how it is responding to their actions.

"If they can make observations and bring this data together, it can be a very important component in how we understand our environment and how it connects people to what is going on."

Information on other citizen science programs is available at: [birdsinbackyards.net/surveys](http://birdsinbackyards.net/surveys); [waterwatch.org.au](http://waterwatch.org.au); [rabbitscan.net.au](http://rabbitscan.net.au); [earthwatch.org/australia/expeditions](http://earthwatch.org/australia/expeditions); [goearthtrek.com](http://goearthtrek.com); and [globeatnight.org](http://globeatnight.org).

*For more information about the Landcare Week ClimateWatch citizen science program, go to [landcareonline.com.au](http://landcareonline.com.au) and follow the links to the ClimateWatch section.*



Like-minded ... John Williams says ordinary citizens can do their bit.