



*Proceedings of the Sixth International Permaculture Conference  
September-October 1996, Perth, Western Australia*

*© Copyright Permaculture Association of Western Australia Inc. and authors.*

## **Minding Your Permaculture Business**

*April Sampson-Kelly (Australia)*

*[Submitted Paper]*

The more professional and successful our permaculture efforts become, the more people, their businesses and workplaces will adopt environmental accountability.

“If we don’t know where we are going, we might end up somewhere else”

(Casey Stengel [Beckhard, Organisational Transitions 1987])

### **Permaculture business and projects**

The ideas expressed in this paper are applicable to both business and permaculture projects. The two are treated as interchangeable although funding for projects may come from outside sources and so the projects sometimes have more restrictions or rigid goals (imposed by the funding bodies) than a business which simply has to be sustainable.

### **Why do permaculture people go into business?**

Permaculture ventures can have a strong sense of purpose and tangible goals greater than money.

1. Profit to provide funding of other goals – reforestation, conservation, food forest, supporting third world projects.
2. Meet a community need for service or product.
3. Self development – building business, teaching, computer, design, organisational skills that can be utilised in other business projects (retain and development your education and use in community).
4. Self employment – increase individual productivity.
5. Build an organisation with ethical base and community value.

### Short and long term businesses to support permaculture

For short term, (first-stage) business activity, examine the business objectives. Some are not in keeping with all the goals of permaculture but act to promote some of these goals and are useful first-stage activities.

For example: Better farming practices encourage a shift in consumption to support fresh organic produce but does not meet long term aspirations of permaculture. That is, to encourage individuals to become responsible for their waste and needs. There is an opportunity to develop this special market. The consumers can be encouraged to become more active consumer/producers as the food will be even fresher and not have added transport costs.

Examples of businesses that promote permaculture for long term include Rainwater tanks, composting toilets, solar architecture, permaculture plants, seed banks, rare species breeders, onsite building material technology, and soft technology (water wheels, wind power etc).

Opportunities for environmental products and services [AUSTRADE 1990]:

- Waste management technology including nitrates from agri-food businesses.
- Noise management.
- Clean paper recycling technology.
- Light metal recovery.
- Steel recycling.
- Textiles – durability, reuse, recycling and redesign for ease re-use.
- Used solvent recovery.
- Alternatives to hazardous chemicals (cellulose and paper industry processes; CFC; cadmium etc).
- Compostable materials as alternatives to dwindling reserves of peat and soil conditioner.
- Energy from land-fills, waste tyres etc.

### Subsistence business

1. This requires *adequate long-term remuneration* for workers, not necessarily in the form of money or taxation advantages but also some self-development as mentioned above AND/OR improved lifestyle. This includes reduced stress in the workplace, adaptability to combine work with family (children and elders), self determination, pleasant surrounds, fresh organic produce, share of products and services produced by the business.
2. *Cash-flow*. If the business is not going to answer to conventional measures – it will need to be free of debt. In the way that permaculture promotes freedom

from debt, our businesses must also operate in the same way. Work out a business plan that starts with small successes and can grow in planned stages. Examples include setting up a newsletter, developing it into a magazine, selling books which cover the best of the magazine articles.

3. *Staff*. The primary organiser of a business must evaluate his/her personal skills and create a business that they will feel comfortable in. They should be creative and aim for clever design in the organising of business hours, position in the market place, relationship to the community and public, promotion tools etc. In the same way we use clever design to match the nature of elements in permaculture design, you can match the basic features and intrinsic characteristics of workers and product and market to create a sustainable and harmonious workplace.

### **The life cycle of a project or product**

Birth, development, decline and death. Most products have a shelf life, even services. It is important to recognise changes in the market place and keep improving your product if you want to stay in optimum operation. Example: watching market changes, adding value to your product (reliability, durability), promoting your business (demonstrating ethical practice, supporting local suppliers, attentive customer service, active in community).

### **Permaculture goals**

#### **True goals**

Assess the true goals of the project, this may include unstated goals such as social status, employment, managing others, love of outdoors, avoiding indoor work, avoiding dealing with people (some people like the fact that plants don't argue back). There may be a genuine need in the community for the project, product or service. There may not be a genuine need but a wish to generate cash or employment.

Goals in business are not just profit growth, even large companies can develop an identity crisis. Is the business working for the customer, the share holders, or the workers?

Permaculture businesses ideally work for permaculture principles; care of the Earth, people and wealth distribution.

#### **Consider all possibilities [Edward De Bono]**

Once you have identified the true goals of the project you can consider *all* the different ways to meet the goal, even if only to determine what your 'competitors' or followers may do, to determine the cleverest way to plan the project. Having a range of plans fits well with the permaculture concept that diversity builds resilience and sustainability.

Here is an example of diversity of paths to meet the goal. The goal is to set up a community food production system. Land is donated but turns out to be flood prone. An intensive community allotment garden is not as clever as a community woodland

with flood tolerant species, mobile species such as geese and silt collection areas to use on another flood free area or made available for people's home systems.

## **Co-operation vs competition**

Permaculture fosters co-operation rather than focusing on competition. Our main aims are for *global* efficiency and reduced waste (human and material resources). Competition is the major driving force in modern business and immediately isolates like businesses from one another. Co-operation exists in supplier/customer business relations where one company supplies parts for another. Co-operation is promoted by networking. As permaculture businesses aim to break barriers of isolation and build better networking and trust, then the forces fighting co-operation will wane. Isolation in permaculture today results from the perception that our market is small, and many permaculture businesses operation in geographical isolation from one-another. As permaculture itself becomes better known, and there are more demonstration sites, existing businesses will learn how better to meet existing markets and, as the number of businesses grows, these difficulties should lessen.

## **Support required from a global association**

A global association to support business in permaculture would reduce human and energy waste and offer the possibility of sharing useful tools and experience. These could include professional indemnity, course re-development or review with input by a teachers forum, contractual and legislation obligation, taxation offsetting (minimisation not avoidance), disclaimers. It should work closely with existing network bodies to avoid redundant efforts. Appendix 1 shows the contract that we currently use for designs in Australia.

## **Layering and succession in the workplace**

Permaculture uses *layering* or *stacking* in the garden system to increase the diversity and productivity of an area. Planting often involves *succession* which uses first plants that act to prepare the soil and micro-climate for more delicate species and eventually climax species.

This same technique can be applied to projects and business.

## **Pioneer people**

Birth of a product involves *pioneer* workers. In the same way that pioneer plants are used to regenerate an area in a permaculture site, pioneer people build ideas, are confidently deep rooted, great at mining information, collecting ideas that blow by, sensitive to needs in the market place and can forecast community response to a product or service. They are not necessarily the right people to deliver the service but can lead its formation and growth, they may be useful on the team of administrators and active in the review of a product. They are useful to prepare projects and nurture those people required to set networks and development in place in the same way that pioneer species prepare the soil for finer species, and shelter them from competitors.

## **Diversity and Leadership**

Product development requires exploration of the ideas, lateral thinking, looking for new and better ways to develop ideas. Permaculture links natural resilience to diversity. Aim to keep the workers and product lines flexible and diverse. Never criticise other worker's ideas, allow them to seed and watch them grow. *Canopy* people, as with canopy species in a mixed rich forest, must support the growth below them. *Supportive leadership* doesn't dominate its young but is strong enough to shelter other layers. Supportive leadership recognises its need of other layers and indeed other leaders. A tree alone is not a forest. Supportive leadership knows the wisdom of letting go. Permaculture designs and establishes a site to meet most human and nature's needs and then allows nature to determine much of the development of that system. We establish systems that benefit from self-propagation and self-determination. We work with existing forces (wind and gravity) rather than suppressing them. Supportive leaders can do the same, they can initiate systems which nurture strong leaders rather than weak followers. Canopy people challenge their young to grow strong, they set examples of strength and are ready to share the canopy with younger canopy species as opportunity determines their productivity or their role.

## **Evolving or transforming work roles**

Some people have strong specialist characteristics, they specialise and evolve in a field. Some may be likened to tubers (heads in research) others like vines, (able to view the whole picture, to see ahead, to think laterally, opportunists). Others can move from one role to another. They can happily adapt and change their work role like a period of transformation. Some people find that their pioneer qualities are needed for a short time and then, as the field changes, they rise to the challenge of either a new field as pioneers or develop a new role in the enriched territory. (Example: they establish a seed bank, then move on to specialise in raising a rare species for which they have a knack, then move on to again be pioneering a seed bank in another country)

## **Resource sharing**

In the same way that individuals can share resources through hire and lease and community recycling. Resource sharing enables businesses to use equipment optimally and, for small projects, the hire of equipment reduces debt.

## **Advantages of community recycling**

In some instances community recycling is preferable to individual recycling systems. For example, good woollen jumpers (pullovers) could be recycled for blanket filling, insulation in the ceiling or mulch in the garden. The best use of woollen jumpers and sweaters is to pass them on to others for re-use before recycling. Secondly the wool could be re-used for another jumper or jumpers could be re-designed to be modified easily for many purposes. Similarly in the home system organic material is more useful if re-used as mulch rather than recycled into compost.

Another advantage of community based recycling is that the item often gets re-used more frequently than if kept in storage by the individual. Community based recycling

can build a bigger collection of materials for large projects than the individual would be able to acquire for the same costs.

This applies to businesses and projects too. A network of businesses, re-using equipment, linking waste with resources (paper waste of one business becomes resource for paper-hungry business) builds co-operation.

## **Share of surplus**

Business and commercial projects are storing their surpluses in many forms, in real estate, equipment, staff, stock (forestry, food, animals, minerals, manufactured goods etc), technology.

Not only business but also people in general who aim to share surpluses, have an indicator, a trigger or measurement that tells them they have a surplus. This measurement indicator can be seasonally or even socially adjusted.

### **Surplus indicator model**

One model indicator could be: when the goods or services will not maintain peak performance and optimum use. (Fruit rots, seeds are not propagated, technology or equipment or skills under-utilised).

I know in our home system, that when fruit is over-abundant, at risk of decaying and becoming insect-infested then we definitely have a surplus. This indicator is quickly adjusted if I know that others around me would enjoy sharing the fruit (there is a demand) and so I share the fruit rather than preserve it for myself (which is also converting it into a non-optimum form as it loses freshness and nutrition).

### **The costs of storing surplus**

It is good business practice to maintain a cash flow in the event of something requiring funds or energy. It is also good business practice not to store too much product and have a high turnover of goods. So price is usually used to disperse a surplus (economists call it supply and demand).

There are two types of storage:

1. Flow equalising storage (short term security).
2. Stock piling – build-up (greed).

## **Five 'R's**

### **Re-design**

When researching and writing about waste reduction and the 'four R's' mentioned by Harrison and others we (April Sampson-Kelly, Paul Kelly and Megan Sampson) realised the importance of a 5<sup>th</sup> R – Redesign for durability; ease of maintenance and repair, use of materials that are easily re-used and re-cycled without high energy input or toxic by-products. The use of modules in equipment can be seen as a design feature to increase waste. Modules in many products such as white goods

and cars are self-contained, and can usually only be opened when broken. If we design for common parts, sizes and materials with ingenious combinations and application then the design has greater capacity for re-use and repair. Few cars or even computers have common parts from one brand to another, this has often been promoted as the uniqueness of the product, 'It's different, better, sophisticated and new'.

When consumers demand repairability, items will be promoted less on uniqueness but commonness or 'standards' and availability of parts.

Permaculture is mainly about re-design. Clever design finds multiple functions and use for the waste. Waste is unused output [Mollison]. We need to re-design our cities into self-reliant villages and our home and work systems into responsible multi-function productive spaces.

### **Reduce**

You should aim to reduce imports into the system. Packaging and transport costs are reduced when you grow your own foods. Furniture and white goods (if repaired to maintain efficiency) could be used longer. Buy less gadgets, or buy one that fits several functions. Share equipment. We don't see the justification for a paper copier in our office, it is more ecological but a bit more time-consuming to share/hire some office equipment. We also choose re-useable storage equipment such as computer disks rather than paper and have needed very little paper for printing. We re-use envelopes without needing to re-address them by simply including them with our return correspondence to the student, they then post the next item to us with that returned, unchanged envelope. They usually post back our envelope addressed to them.

### **Re-use**

Choose products that are able to be re-used. Avoid so called disposable items that cannot be recycled, much less re-used. Computer disks have a good life for re-use, rechargeable batteries are best but mains electricity means less toxins in soil on disposal. Writing on disks, files and large envelopes in pencil enables them to be re-used and remain tidy.

### **Repair**

Buy goods designed for repair. Less than 20 years ago you could buy even small items such as pencil sharpeners with replaceable blades. They cost more than the plastic ones, and hard to find. Choose office equipment and tools that are repairable with reliable service plans. In the long term they prove more economical.

### **Recycle**

Most organic items can be recycled in the home system and the office, plastic can be recycled too, but there may be harmful gases let off during the process. Get some worms onto the job if you only have a home unit, paper waste is best recycled, ensure your paper consumption is minimal. With the emergence of the so-called paper-less office more paper is being consumed and this grows at an alarming rate.

One option is print only originals, learn and use review software for others to add comments. Originals should only be printed when they are required as we are now entering the era of the evolving document. The document is rarely complete.

## **Environmental Management Systems (ISO/CD 14000)**

### **System aims**

- To implement or enhance existing systems for *Sustainable Development*.
- Environmental management is to be an integral part of an organisation's overall management responsibility.
- By having a standard, businesses and projects can examine the impact of changes in processes. Without standardising, it is hard to determine what may be the cause of unwelcome or even welcome outcomes.

### **Potential benefits**

The potential benefits associated with an effective EMS include:

- Meeting customer's environmental expectations.
- Maintaining good public/community relations.
- Satisfying investor criteria and improved access to capital.
- Obtaining insurance at reasonable cost (currently many businesses with QA enjoy lower public liability costs).
- Enhanced image and market share.
- Meeting vendor certification criteria.
- Ability to dispose of waste.
- Cost control.
- Liability limitation.
- Demonstration of due diligence.
- Conservation of input materials and energy.
- Easier site selection and permitting.
- Technology development and transfer.
- Improved industry-government relations.
- Improved environmental performance and state of the environment.

“To move from the view that environmental management is just another added cost to the view that it provides for competitive advantage requires new understanding and culture change.”



## **Measures of success**

### **Create wealth rather than just money**

You could 'invest' your time and energy in products or services that will serve you as well as your customer. For example you can start propagating plants that provide food, or worms, or other useful items and if you don't maintain a healthy link with the market, you can still use them in your home system.

### **Set and review expectations as product evolves**

Our measures of success in the teaching project are:

1. That the standard of graduates is high, they develop a confident application of permaculture and they become advocates of permaculture.
2. That the fees ensure further research and input.
3. That the market we serve gives us rewards immeasurable in terms of money – empowerment, building sense of community and sharing.
4. That our efforts encourage our own community to act ethically.

### **Business materials, supply and disposal**

Business as much as individuals are becoming conscious of the need to nurture the resources that their business depends upon. Businesses can make an extra effort to use recycled packaging, refillable cartridges and pens, biodegradable packaging manufactured without harmful by products. For many this has become their market edge.

They promote special unbleached, biodegradable, even reusable or returnable packaging as a special feature for their product.

As customers become responsible for the waste that their purchases contribute (some already pay for the waste collection by weight), you, the manufacturer, will be expected to bear the cost of disposal. Support suppliers with biodegradable packaging and set up systems that accept the return of packaging as well as used purchase items.

### **Care for people outside the market community**

Permaculture business should also consider their impact on the community in which they operate and in which their competitors operate. Product and service 'dumping' (subsidised price cutting) can erode the services of competitors and eventually it will ruin your own business. Community support is essential. Employ local people, use local supplies where possible. Aim to operate as an example to others.

## **Dispersal of surplus**

Dispersal of surplus is a permaculture ethic that may appear to go against the grain of modern business operations. Share of surplus with workers is a recognised boost to business, large businesses supply workers with productivity bonuses or share issues. Permaculture businesses would naturally share bumper harvests with workers and community. Dispersal of surplus is also a keen guard against theft. You are most likely to be robbed if you appear wealthy and insensitive to the surrounding people's needs. You will also probably worry about it more. What good is there in setting up a very rich and diverse permaculture system, let alone a permaculture business, if outside your boundaries there is hunger, sickness and pollution? Energy will be spent in treating the symptoms (building security measures) rather than treating the illness (unequal distribution of wealth).

## **About debt**

### ***Money for permaculture business or permaculture projects***

“If enough people lead the leaders will follow”

[Earth Repair Centre, Hazlebrook]

The best funding comes not from above but at the grass roots level. In fact, if the project is worthwhile, and meets the grass roots needs, then have confidence that it will succeed and connect well with the customers. Plan the project to start small and grow. History shows that splashing a lot of money about doesn't solve fundamental environmental problems or world poverty. Permaculture offers people a way to get involved in the repair of the world and encourages westerners to ease up on their consumption. When people start to direct money away from degenerative, energy consuming gadgets and wasteful, fashion driven purchases, they can put that same money or energy into pro-creative investment. Then they will have more money to fund projects – their own and their community's.

### ***Appropriate technology***

Some projects such as video are high-technology input and suited to the grass roots level. Russ Grayson (Permaculture Extension, Sydney) believes that video is a very useful tool for demonstrating permaculture in action, and would like to see more video projects. He writes:

“Our (APACE) project worker (in the) Solomon Islands is back in Sydney and he said how useful video is there, where there is a high level of illiteracy. Tony uses the Indian instructional video – Growing Together – which you have most likely seen, as an instructional media for workshops in the Kastom Garden Project.

Tom Jumeraii of the Lae (PNG) based South Pacific Appropriate Technology Foundation, with whom I work as project officer for the CanCare Lae non-ferrous metals recycling project, would be interested in producing a video version of the Lik Lik Book, a well respected volume of appropriate technology, village agriculture, cooking and small scale production used extensively by development assistance and extension workers in PNG. Tom also supports the practice of using video as an instructional media. It would be good to find

funding to enable Tom to realise his proposal. The video could form part of a book/video instructional kit.”

In many cases, old technology still produces good material. The video filmed in India didn't require high technology and is very useful. Older-style technology includes cartoon and stills. Our project is dependent on an office computer. The computer was privately subsidised and shared. The publications are only printed when ordered and all advertising material is minimal and modest.

### ***Customer's debt – your responsibility***

Permaculture teaches freedom from debt. We know that debt contributes to poverty and this is most noticeable in third-world countries. The western world benefits greatly from their debt to us. The realisation that debt is not good in western culture comes fastest to those in the lower economic threshold. We aim to reverse this economic decay. Permaculture encourages people to free themselves from debt and develop investments and savings which builds more control over their needs and resources.

To promote the use of debt processes to acquire products should be reviewed. We should *avoid promoting the convenience of credit cards* in our businesses, and support the alternative processes which can be just as fast such as Eftpos in Australia, cheques or the use of trust by sending an account (these are some of the older style proven methods).

### **LETS as a business resource**

Lets (Local Energy Transfer System) should be offered and its use maximised in business, using the customer LETS dollars to pay suppliers and workers. There was some concern when we started up that accepting LETS payments from overseas would defeat the main aims of LETS – that is to keep money local. After some deliberation we decided that the customer benefits in that they are required to work for their own community for the 'energy' used for the transfer to our business, and in turn we are employing people in our own community to support the service. This requires further research and discussion.

I am concerned that the international exchanges would defeat the primary aims of LETS, that is to be a local currency. Currently, our LETS accepts other LETS currency and sends a letter of acceptance to that body. Students have to check with their own body if this is acceptable. Their LETS body benefits from the students commitment to the local LETS body, in that they get energy injected in the form of services or other items offered.

Our own body, Illawarra NSW Australia, already spends currency with other bodies, mainly for organic produce from the next-door LETS body, occasionally for holiday accommodation and I have received currency from several other bodies.

I can see where this may become a problem when a richer LETS body coerces an indebted LETS body to repay in some way. Also George of Austria Permaculture wrote:

“Very recently I encountered another problem with this: between us here in Austria and a LETS body in Switzerland there is quite a **difference in the**

**amount of unit** (Talents) that are asked for a similar **time-unit** of a similar service. Around here most LETS bodies do not have time-currency, but are still being linked to the local money value of the respective service. And of course, Switzerland is a high income country compared with Austria.”

[George – Permakultur Austria,  
c/o Institut für Freiraumgestaltung und Landschaftspflege.]

Many Australian LETS systems have a minimal wage of 10 units per hour, and all transactions are negotiable, allowing inter-exchange freedom of negotiation and choice of supplier. In the same way so many tourists to our country enjoy a good exchange in the money market, this could be used for the LETS system. Then there is the problem of being regulated by government policies on the exchange.

### **A professional permaculture image**

- Decide upon the market you wish to serve, set up a business plan and image etc that fits this market.
- Be consistent. Set up a structure for dealing with customers that can be maintained. (This requires a degree of honesty and long term planning – we operate predominantly by mail and Internet and explain why to our customers.)
- Be reliable. Being punctual and reliable means that you do care about the customer, that the business and, for that matter, permaculture, are important to you.
- Practice what you preach.
- Work on *quality* not *quantity*.
- Aim for business to grow via word-of-mouth.
- Be grateful to all those customers who write a complaint, there are many others who didn't. Deal with all complaints.
- Accept that permaculture is a highly complex field and fast growing. There is much new research daily. Team up with, or refer to, specialists where required.

### **The nature of wealth**

Wealth is an abundance of energy provided as vegetable, animal and other materials and or services. Energy stores potential wealth. A community can aim to contain its wealth by buying local products and services. It can also maximise its natural resources such as solar and wind, clean water and soil. Through the passive use of free energy sources our energy supply is not limited. We can increase the storage of the energy supplied by the use of natural stores such as trees (which store water and sun through photosynthesis) We can increase storage of rain water with dams and swales and soil cover (mulch) and we can increase the capture of condensation with canopy on food gardens.

By ensuring that all persons in the community are valued and well employed we also maximise the community's wealth. When we view wealth as that which comes from

energy, especially natural energy sources, we can see that we all have the potential for greater clean wealth. One of the current abuses of wealth is the use of ancient stores of wealth to our own detriment – ie. pollution from fossil fuels, loss of diversity from forest destruction, loss of soil from broadacre farming and more.

Future generations are going to have two major debts to carry before they can even store wealth:

1. They will be accustomed to the false wealth levels enjoyed by the generations which used up fossil fuels (stored wealth).
2. They will be spending wealth cleaning up the mess (and many today are already doing this).

We can aim to both enjoy clean wealth and store it for future generations. We can establish and develop cultures that are in tune with the resources they depend upon. We can all aim to be productive in a wide range of skills including being responsible for our food on the table. [These views also supported by Carmela Leone (Email: cleone@ozonline.com.au) and Dean Robertson (Email: SOLARROB@aol.com).]

### **Wealth, community and business – internet responses to the issue**

Here's the scenario. Once you establish a permaculture village, people start to interact socially and economically. People work for one another as well as for their own systems. Community banking, co-ops, dairies etc are dependent on shared wealth, and likely to play a major role in the lifestyle of the community.

How should permaculture businesses or co-operatives operate, how should we apply the *Care of the Earth* (eg. Environmental Management Standards) and *Care of People* (Management, leadership) ethics in our management of the business systems. And just how should we address *Share of Surplus* (some use the term dispersal of surplus)? Given that many global stresses are linked to unequal distribution of wealth, our businesses must be designed to be accountable.

Question posed to the permaculture mailing list: What alternatives are there to sustain the business except planning for growth. How can we gently shift the patterns of greed?

Two striking responses were:

**“Distribute the net profits equally.** No one is an employee, everyone is a stakeholder. That has an amazing way of ‘leveling the playing field’ of class differences created by hierarchies of authority and wealth. Rotate tasks so everyone learns how to do everything and no one is excluded from doing the yucky stuff as well as the pleasant work. As far as the people who made the initial start up investment, the entire community could create and agree upon a payment plan so that over time, and according to the amount of profit, the initial investor could be repaid.”

[Danielle Hyatt. Email Giannora@emf.net]

**“Cultural method of ensuring wealth sharing.** Pressure to foster the morals of generosity and self sacrifice can be developed and is seen in some societies.”

[Vasilakes, Neil (MN10). Email: Neil.Vasilakes@HBC.honeywell.com]

### **Ethical accountability**

Many businesses today are feeling the effects of ethical accountability. (Including cigarette companies, hazardous chemical manufacturing companies.) Accountability is good business practice as it reduces the risk of litigation. If we act out the basic principles to care for *all* people (within and outside of the immediate market or business) and for the Earth on a global as well as local basis, then we are well on the road to accountability. Increase our awareness and research all possible pitfalls is improves standard of accountability.

### **The web of wealth and nature**

Some argue that there is finite wealth [Bell in *The Permaculture Way*] and whilst one person accumulates wealth another loses this energy, definitely some resources are limited but a small few are not finite (pro-creative energies have potential growth and expansion). Natural energies such as solar energy are only limited by our capacity to harness the energy.

Good business practice, including those with *Environmental Management Systems* ISO14000, investigates all links of the business and staff, manufacturing and service providing with the immediate and global environment.

## **Appendix 1: Example contract**

The following is an example of a contract used by designers at *Leisure Coast Permaculture Visions*:

---

### **Contract**

#### **Copyright:**

The designs are the copyright of the designer. To photocopy or alter the actual design is illegal and unethical. Additional Copies will be provided at minimal cost. We do not seek rights regarding the implementation as it is your own project, (but do expect acknowledgment for the design). We intend the design as a guide for implementation.

#### **Professional Indemnity:**

For any major earth works such as pools or water courses we advise that you seek input from a professional engineer. Many of our designs have had professional engineer advise, but this you must confirm for legal reasons.

#### **Confidentiality:**

All personal records are treated with strict confidentiality. We aim to publish these designs for permaculture conferences, teachers and students, as they are of interest to many persons. Your street number and name will be suppressed in the publications unless you advise us otherwise.

**Interview times:**

The initial consultation will require approximately 90 minutes with interested members of your family.

**Design Portfolio and Support:**

Our Design Portfolio will be available for your perusal, and a Video explaining permaculture concepts will be loaned for a short period.

Our demonstration garden is open on appointment. Telephone 042-729619

**To be Signed upon commission of design:**

I/We understand that the design is a conceptual guide for implementation of a permaculture system and will respect the designers copyright.

Thank you for supporting our service,

April Sampson-Kelly

**Leisure Coast Permaculture Visions**

280 Cordeaux Rd., Mt Kembla Village Australia 2526

---

*April Sampson-Kelly ADPA, BCA, PDC, Grad DipBioSci, MCA has a family history in small business and has developed two of her own businesses. After she started in gardening and nutrition she gained her PDC with Jude and Michel Fanton. She and her family live on their second permaculture site, one acre in an historic village surrounded by rainforest. Her business, Leisure Coast Permaculture Visions researches and teaches permaculture to isolated persons all around the world by mail and the Internet. Her projects are constantly evolving under a dynamic review team. She designed the workplace and gardens for 'workers' and children, employs others part-time including disabled people, and is currently Head of the Illawarra LETS system. April Sampson-Kelly has designed for a variety of sites [inner city through to 6000 acres]. Her designs will be on display during the poster sessions. Her business home page address is "<http://www.permaculturevisions.com/>".*