**MEDIA RELEASE**

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Attention: News Editor

**Four in the running for GSDC Medal**

A diverse shortlist of four has been announced for the prestigious GSDC Medal, an award by the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) to honour exemplary contributions by people working in the management of natural resources.

Darryl Outhwaite, Dr Harriet Paterson, Bill and Jane Thompson, and Ian Walsh were shortlisted for the award following the initial assessment of nominations.

Darryl Outhwaite was nominated for his contribution to managing timber resources and instigating the formation of WA Biofuels. The company aims to develop new markets for the region’s plantation forest biomass.

Plastics crusader Dr Harriet Paterson is a marine scientist who has developed programs to monitor the impact of plastic fragments and pellets (nurdles), an international issue which is affecting beaches on the south coast.

The Thompsons are former orchardists from Queensland who took up a 1500-hectare property near Ongerup and have dedicated it to conservation values connecting the Stirling Range and Fitzgerald River National Parks.

Ian Walsh has taken innovative approaches to addressing salinity on his property near Cranbrook. He has built a healthy farm ecosystem by using salt-tolerant plants to reclaim land degraded by rising salt.

Each finalist will now be interviewed on site by the assessment panel to select the recipient of the medal.

The 2018-19 GSDC Medal will be presented at a gala dinner on Friday 7 June. To register an interest for tickets to the presentation dinner, contact the GSDC on 9842 4888.

The GSDC medal, which was established following the official opening of the Centre for Excellence in Natural Resource Management, was first awarded in 2002.

The recipient receives a sterling silver medal and a grant to support further work in their field.

Since its inception, the honour has been bestowed 12 times and the recipients have included environmental educators, research scientists, farm innovators and community leaders.

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