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2010 AARES Distinguished Fellow

David Pannell



David Pannell started his university studies in 1980 with plans to become a plant breeder. However, while at the University of Western Australia (UWA) doing a Bachelor of Science (Agriculture), he encountered Henry Schapper and discovered the excitement of economics. After graduating, David worked for 8 years at the Western Australian Department of Agriculture (completing a Bachelor of Economics and a PhD from UWA during that time). He worked on farming systems economics, particularly as a key member of the team that developed MIDAS, an influential whole-farm bioeconomic model that is still in active use after 27 years.

Since moving to UWA in 1991, David's research has included a wide variety of topics in agricultural, environmental and resource economics, including resource conservation, environmental policy, farmer adoption of new practices, risk and weed management. Particularly noteworthy has been his work on dryland salinity, for which he became the only social scientist to receive the W.E. Wood Award for salinity research in 2004, and the Investment Framework for Environmental Resources (INFFER), for which the project team received the Eureka Prize for Interdisciplinary Research in 2009.

Of his 160 journal articles and book chapters, six have received awards for excellence: three from AARES and one each from British, Canadian and

American societies. In 2007, he was awarded a prestigious Federation Fellowship from the Australian Research Council.

David's research combines theoretical rigour with a commitment to making a difference in the real world, mixing realistic complexity with pragmatic simplification and integrating economics effectively with other disciplines.

He is an excellent communicator of economic ideas to non-economists (as reflected in awards for Excellence in Teaching from UWA and for Quality of Communication from AARES). His Pannell Discussions, posted regularly online, are at least as influential as his formal publications. Since 2000, he has had a focus on assisting environmental policy makers and managers to improve programme design and project prioritisation.

David has made many contributions to AARES: conference and workshop organiser, prize committee member, councillor, web master, journal editor, various positions in the Western Australian branch and in 2000, national president.

Currently, David is a Winthrop Professor in the School of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Director of the Centre for Environmental Economics and Policy at UWA.