

## AN INTERNATIONAL FIRST IN HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

### Inaugural International *Healthy Parks Healthy People* Congress 2010

With the increasing recognition of the value of nature to human health and wellbeing worldwide, Parks Victoria will host the first International *Healthy Parks Healthy People* Congress in 2010. This will be a unique opportunity to bring together delegates from all relevant sectors (i.e. planning, community development, physical and mental health, tourism, climate change, education, recreation, ecology and park management) to explore how we can take better advantage of the way nature significantly contributes to our wellbeing and broader societal benefits.

The Congress will raise awareness of recent research and practice by highlighting case studies and facilitate discussion regarding the advantages of, and opportunities for, future collaboration across sectors at local through to global levels. It will be a memorable event in all senses with inspirational speakers, innovative techniques to involve delegates, creative workshop and discussion sessions, enjoyable networking opportunities and social activities. With the focus on nature some sessions will be in outdoor settings.

By reinforcing the connections between the health of our community and the health of our parks, we can nurture a truly sustainable society, one which recognises its dependence upon and place within the natural environment.

The Congress will be staged at the new **Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (Australia) 11-16 April 2010** and **the call for proposals is NOW OPEN – see the website for details.**

The event already has the endorsement of IUCN (the world conservation body), the UN World Tourism Organisation, Natural England, the Australian Government, and *beyondblue* (Australia's national depression initiative). There are active discussions with WHO (World Health Organisation) and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

All in all this is an exciting opportunity not to be missed!

For more information go to: <http://www.healthyparkshealthypeoplecongress.org> or email John Senior, Manager Strategic Partnerships, Parks Victoria - [jsenior@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:jsenior@parks.vic.gov.au)