

SUSTAINABILITY SNIPPETS



Helping councils towards sustainability

16 DECEMBER 2015
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Welcome to the 31st edition of Sustainability Snippets:
Local Government NSW helping councils towards sustainability.

Best practice projects recognised at LGNSW's Environment Award



Congratulations to all the winning councils at the 2015 LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards. Eurobodalla Shire Council won the Local Sustainability Award with the prize of \$10,000 for an overseas study tour. The judges were impressed with the way sustainability measures were incorporated into the integrated planning and reporting framework of Council and the ease of implementation of these projects as a result.

Kelly Williamson from Campbelltown City Council received the Louise Petchell Award for Individual Sustainability for her contributions to advancing forwarding sustainability at council. For a list of winning projects and case studies, visit the [environment awards website](#).

Global climate change agreement

For anyone who missed it, 195 countries from around the world have agreed to act together to address the threat posed to humanity from climate change.

The [Paris Agreement](#) signals the end of the fossil fuel era as the world rapidly replaces coal, oil and gas with clean energy sources. Read the [Climate Council](#) analysis.

Decline in carbon dioxide emissions

Despite global economic growth in 2015, worldwide emissions from fossil fuels are projected to decline by 0.6 per cent this year. This is the finding of the [Global Carbon Project](#) who has released their annual Global Carbon Budget. This result is driven by changes to China's energy portfolio. Read further analysis in [The Conversation](#).

Third Emissions Reduction Fund auction announced

The [Clean Energy Regulator](#) has announced that it will hold the third Emissions Reduction Fund auction for carbon abatement contracts on 27 and 28 April 2016.

Three Local Government managed projects were successful in the second auction, including two in NSW: Byron Shire Council's Capture and Combustion of Landfill Gas at Myocum Landfill and Kimbriki Environmental Enterprises Pty Ltd's Kimbriki LFG Flare Project. If you are considering entering the next auction, Ironbark Sustainability has developed the [Emissions Reduction Fund \(ERF\) Guide for Australian Councils](#).

National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy

The Australian Government recently released a [National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy](#) with the aim of setting the path for future climate resilience.

The strategy was launched at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris and highlighted the adaptation and resilience-building activities

developed by Australian businesses, communities and all levels of government. It also proposes a set of principles to guide future choices and includes some ideas for further enhancing the resilience of communities, businesses, biodiversity and landscapes.

The Government has established an interagency working group to consider the cross-cutting impacts of climate change and disaster risks, and to lead future consultation with business and communities about the strategy.

Social network analysis

Mapping formal and informal social networks to see how the community accesses and then shares information was the keynote presentation at the 2015 LGNSW's Environment Awards Finalists' Forum.

The [Institute of Sustainable Futures](#) and OEH have mapped two regional NSW communities - where people get their information from, and who they communicate with - to improve our understanding of the community structure as well as the community's specific needs, concerns and views in relation to climate change and adaptation.

Using [online polling software](#) the audience at the Forum was asked a few questions to demonstrate how Social Network Analysis works. When asked who was the easiest team to work with within council, the environment team won out closely followed by the engineering team. However, take that with a pinch of salt as most self-selected their own team and there were more environment people than engineers in the room.

On the greatest challenge facing the environment, development and politics were rated as the highest. Engineers were more likely to select politics, and waste officers thought people and behaviours such as consumerism were the biggest challenge.

Councils and ROCs were listed as organisations people work closely with, followed by the EPA and OEH.

When people are looking for information relating to their work, they will go to the internet; mainly using internet search engines but also specific sites including other council websites. People also ask their colleagues.

When asked what LGNSW could do more of the audience top picks were advocacy, providing grants, case studies and workshops.

LGNSW advocacy for local government

In [2014/15](#), the LGNSW Environment team made 16 submissions on environment issues to NSW and federal governments on legislation, policies and programs that affect local government. We thank you for sharing your advice and experience with us, as it helps us to take stronger, well-informed positions to Government and also share that knowledge within the sector.

The Building Resilience to Climate Change grants provided \$432,500 across 6 projects around NSW, involving 21 different local government areas. There are 21 new case studies available on the LGNSW website covering a plethora of environmental issues. Plus two Sustainable Choice workshops and the Environment Awards were held during the year. We look forward to working with you more in 2016.

Coastal management reform

The NSW Government's [coastal management reform package](#) is open for public consultation. The proposed coastal management reforms include:

- A draft bill for a new Coastal Management Act
- Key elements of a new Coastal Management Manual.
- Proposal for a new Coastal Management State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP).

The draft bill redefines the coast using four distinct zones identifying each zone's unique management requirements. The new Coastal Management Manual is intended to provide guidance to councils with step-by-step instructions on how to manage their coast using the new Coastal Management Act. The new SEPP is intended to help manage the legacy of existing coastal hazards and ensure new hazards are avoided. LGNSW will prepare a submission looking at the reform package on behalf of NSW councils. Please [get in touch](#) to share your thoughts, issues and submissions.





Case studies

Eurobodalla working towards sustainability

Eurobodalla has delivered on a wide range of sustainability projects in response to community expectations for the environment. Council's proactive role in managing invasive species, planning pressures and fostering community partnerships for natural resource management has played an important part in maintaining the unspoilt nature of the region. Over 9,000 hours of bushland management community volunteer work was completed with about 7,000 natives planted in 2014/15. With over 630kW of solar power installed and greenhouse emissions dropping, Council plays a leadership role in reducing its own environmental footprint and supporting the community to do the same. View the award winning case study [online](#).

Light years ahead

A major [LED street lighting replacement](#) project involving nine Western Sydney councils has passed the halfway point. The Western Sydney councils participating in the project are Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Hills Shire, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith.

At the end of October, crews had installed 8,188 LED street lights, approximately 63% of the 13,000 earmarked for replacement on the Light Years Ahead project. Six of the nine councils involved in the project have already installed half of their allocation of LEDs.

The project is estimated to save participating councils \$20 million and 74,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions over the next 20 years.

Resources

Towards Resilient Sydney

The Office of Environment and Heritage has released the latest [Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessment](#) (IRVA) looking to build a shared understanding of the Sydney Metropolitan Region's vulnerability to climate change and catalyse adaptation through responses that are sensitive to the reality of regional systems. [IRVAs](#) are also available for the South East, Riverina Murray and North Coast.

Funding

Finance for energy projects

The Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) is offering tailored finance to help councils invest in clean energy technologies that reduce energy costs and lower emissions.

The \$250 million program is targeting major investment projects with the potential to make a significant difference to a council's energy consumption.

Some examples of eligible projects include energy from waste, solar PV, street lighting upgrades, building upgrades, low emission vehicles. [Expressions of Interest](#) close Sunday 28 February 2016.

Upcoming events

[NCCARF Climate Change Adaptation 2016 Conference](#), 5-7 July 2016, Adelaide.

Wishing you all a wonderful, safe and sustainable festive season!

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