

# SUSTAINABILITY SNIPPETS



## Helping councils towards sustainability

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## Welcome to the 34th edition of Sustainability Snippets

### Recognition of environmental excellence

Ten councils and four council networks have been recognised for environmental excellence at Local Government NSW (LGNSW)'s Environment Awards. Congratulations to Ballina Shire Council for taking out the coveted Local Sustainability Award which comes with a \$10,000 prize for professional development. The leading individual award, the Louise Petchell Memorial Award for Individual Sustainability, was presented to Brendan Govers for his work at the former Holroyd Council. Check out all the winners on the [awards](#) page.



2016 Excellence in the Environment Winners (Photo: Eventpix)

### Sunshine Coast Solar Farm

As mentioned in Eubodalla's presentation of their study tour at the Environment Awards, [Sunshine Coast Council](#) has started construction of its 15 megawatt Solar Farm in Valdora. It's on track to be operational by mid-2017.

Sunshine Coast Council will become Australia's first local government to offset 100 percent of its electricity consumption across all its facilities and operations.

This includes administration buildings, aquatic centres, community and performance venues, as well as holiday parks, libraries, art galleries and sporting facilities.

The solar farm will provide \$22 million in savings, after costs, over a 30-year period based on today's electricity costs, which are anticipated to increase substantially in the future.

### Fourth Emissions Reduction Fund auction results

The [Clean Energy Regulator](#) has announced that over 34 million tonnes of carbon abatement has been purchased for an average price of \$10.69 per tonne. Prices are consistent with the previous auction and remained significantly lower than the first two auctions. As a result, the cumulative average price across all auctions has again fallen and stands at \$11.83.

Tamworth Regional Council had a successful bid for a landfill gas project. It was the only local government project nationally to get up in this auction.

### Resilience Awards

Two local governments have been recognised in the 2016 NSW 'Get Ready' Community Award and the [NSW Resilient Australia Awards](#). The NSW 'Get Ready' Community Award and the NSW Resilient Australia Awards 2016 recognise the communities who proactively engage with their local emergency services to be better prepared for when a natural disaster occurs.



Warrumbungle Shire Council in conjunction with the Baradine & District Progress Association have won the 'Get Ready' Community Award. Ku-ring-gai Council took out the Government Category of the NSW Resilient Australia Awards for building upon its pioneering disaster resilience program, Climate Wise Communities, into a suite of resources that can be used by councils in any location and any hazard.

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## 10 tips for eating sustainably

This [guide](#) from University of Wollongong researchers suggests ways to eat locally and cut energy used to produce your food, including buying from local farmers, growing your own and eating less processed food.

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## Climate Change Fund Consultation

For the first time in 11 years, the NSW Government has released a comprehensive [Climate Change Policy Framework](#). The Framework outlines two aspirational objectives:

- Achieving net zero emissions by 2050; and
- NSW being more resilient to a changing climate.

The Framework will be implemented through the Climate Change Fund Strategic Plan, the draft of which is now open for comment. The Climate Change Fund will provide \$500 million over 5 years. Only a small proportion of this will be directed to local government through targeted grants to accelerate replacement of inefficient public lighting, supporting pilot projects that demonstrate best practice adaptation and green cover demonstration projects. If there are other types of projects councils would like fund or other information and tools required, you are encouraged to include those ideas in a submission. Don't forget the [local government adaptation survey report](#) to provide evidence for your submission.

Submissions close 16 December. Please contact [Denise](#) if you wish to contribute to the LGNSW submission, especially if your council is unable to make a submission due to the Christmas recess.

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## Clean Air for NSW Consultation Paper

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is seeking community and stakeholder feedback on whether you think NSW is proposing the right actions to improve air quality. The [Clean Air for NSW Consultation Paper](#) presents a proposed approach and actions for government to meet its goal of improving average air

quality results across NSW. Submissions close 20 January 2017.

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## Review of the load-based licensing scheme

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is currently reviewing the [load-based licensing](#) (LBL) scheme. The scheme has been in operation since 1999 and this review of its effectiveness and efficiency aims to ensure it is fulfilling its potential. The EPA has prepared an issues paper for the LBL review and is currently seeking public feedback.

Submissions close on 23 December 2016. Please contact [Susy](#) if you wish to contribute to the LGNSW submission.

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## Coastal Management SEPP

The Department of Planning and Environment is seeking feedback on the draft [Coastal Management State Environmental Planning Policy](#) (SEPP).

Once published, the Coastal Management SEPP will be the single land use planning policy for coastal development and will bring together and modernise provisions from SEPP 14 (Coastal Wetlands), SEPP 26 (Littoral Rainforests) and SEPP 71 (Coastal Protection).

Submissions close 23 December 2016. Extensions can be sought from the Department. Please contact [Denise](#) if you wish to contribute to the LGNSW submission.



Example of draft Coastal Management SEPP maps

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## Resources

### Getting buy-in and support in your organisation

This [Manual](#) was developed for the NCCARF CoastAdapt tool and discusses approaches and tools that can help you get things done. It was developed for adaptation projects but can be widely applied to many local government projects and programs.



## Case studies

The LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards unearthed some great projects. Check out the following case studies in full on the [LGNSW website](#).

### **Ballina Shire Council – Sustainability: serving the community of today whilst preparing for the challenges of tomorrow**

As a coastal council in an area experiencing ongoing population growth, Ballina is continuously managing the balance between environmental, social and economic outcomes, while addressing key environmental issues such as sea level rise, estuary health, coastline management and biodiversity retention.

Council's approach to environmental programs is to integrate activity across the Council and achieve positive environmental outcomes as part of existing programs.

### **MIDWASTE - Frugal forest**

MIDWASTE Regional Waste Forum, a voluntary organisation of eight Councils located on the Mid North Coast, created the Frugal Forest, a community arts project involving artists, musicians and scientists.



The Frugal Forest is an intricately detailed forest installation created entirely from materials diverted from landfill.

The project facilitated community engagement through a touring exhibition, 25 workshops in 8 council areas, artist talks, an online kit for local schools, short films, a website and Facebook page.

### **Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Holroyd, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, The Hills, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith Councils - Light Years Ahead**

The Light Years Ahead project in Western Sydney replaced close to 14,500 high emission mercury vapour street lights with energy efficient LED lighting. With \$5.2 million funding from the Australian Government, the 9 Western Sydney councils and the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils contributed a further \$2.8 million.

This has achieved a 77 per cent saving in electricity costs and it is estimated that over the 20 year life of the lights, the 9 councils will save \$19.4 million. The estimated reduction in carbon emissions over 20 years is 91,000 tonnes.

### **Blacktown City Council - Cool streets**

Blacktown City Council's Cool Streets project was initiated to adapt residential streets to rising temperatures. With a population of 350,000 increasing by approximately 10,000 people each year, entire suburbs are being constructed in Blacktown to house new residents. Many new and existing streets are not designed to mitigate or adapt to climate change or urban heat.

Blacktown City Council engaged with the community about the benefits of street trees, especially in streets without trees.

Following community consultation, a whole street was planted with a tree design to lower surface temperatures, reduce home energy usage, sequester carbon and foster positive attitudes to urban vegetation.

## **Wishing you all a wonderful, safe and sustainable Christmas!**

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To subscribe to this electronic newsletter, visit [lgnsw.org.au/policy/ecologically-sustainable-development/news](http://lgnsw.org.au/policy/ecologically-sustainable-development/news)

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