

# SUSTAINABILITY SNIPPETS



## Helping councils towards sustainability

12 FEBRUARY 2015  
EDITION 26

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Welcome to the 26th edition of Sustainability Snippets: Local Government NSW helping councils towards environmental sustainability.

### Wollongong achieves Australian first with Green Star rating

Wollongong City Council's Administration Building has become the first building in Australia to achieve a 5 Star Green Star – Performance rating, signifying 'Australian Excellence' and the highest Green Star – Performance rating achieved to date.



The 13-storey Administration Building was first occupied in 1987 and houses 660 Council staff. Over the past 10 years, Council has introduced a range of building upgrades and management practices to improve the building's sustainability performance, replacing ageing equipment to meet modern building compliance standards. In 2014, Council began a project to improve the building's operational performance, from a sustainability perspective, using the Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star – Performance rating tool.

The upgrades and altered practices have resulted in energy efficiency gains of 55% and water efficiency gains of 85%. Council estimates that the energy efficiency gains alone in the building are saving

\$200,000 in electricity costs each year when compared to 2007-2008 consumption.

### Sea level rise from 1990 to present higher than previously thought

A recent paper published in *Nature* states that previous estimates had placed sea level rise at 1.5–1.8 millimetres annually over the 20th century. The new study suggests that from 1901 until 1990, the figure was closer to 1.2 millimetres per year. But scientists agree that global sea level has risen by about 3 millimetres annually since that time, so the new study points to a larger acceleration in global sea level rise. Read the full story in CSIRO's [ECOS Magazine](#).

### Planning for sea-level rise

There has been a few interesting developments in other jurisdictions. US President Barack Obama has issued an executive order directing planners, developers and local consent authorities to factor in increased flood heights and frequency due to climate change.

Controversially, prior to the Queensland election Morton Bay Regional Council was directed by the Queensland Government to remove consideration of sea level rise from its planning schemes, thereby passing future liability from council to the state. This will be a watch and see development depending on the outcome of the Queensland election. Read the stories further in [The Fifth Estate](#).



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## Seeking solutions to risks associated with Urban Greening

OEH and 2020 Vision are looking for council case studies where risks associated with urban vegetation have been managed for inclusion in the next urban greening masterclass. This could include addressing vandalism to trees, community perceptions to new applications, overcoming safety risks or biodiversity issues, or responding to asset management challenges. If you have experience in these or other areas of managing urban vegetation, and would be prepared to present your story to Local Government professionals, please contact [suzanne.dunford@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:suzanne.dunford@environment.nsw.gov.au).

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## Heat stress campaign

WorkCover has launched a Heat Stress Campaign which will run from 19 January – 27 February 2015. Workers who are exposed to extreme heat or work in hot environments (both indoor and outdoor) may be at risk of heat stress. WorkCover has a number of useful heat stress resources on their [website](#).

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## Sydney Sustainable Living Festival

Have you got a sustainability event, workshop or activity you were planning to hold during the week of 21-29 March? Become part of the [Sydney Sustainable Living Festival](#) to make the festival bigger and better and, of course, to boost publicity of sustainability education.

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## Ecosystem-based approaches for disaster risk reduction

UNEP and University of Cologne are offering a free online university course on [Disasters and Ecosystems Resilience in a Changing Climate](#). The course will cover issues such as resilience and transformation, sustainable development, ecosystem management, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and how they can be operationalised. It will benefit disaster managers and practitioners, climate change adaptation professionals, development planners, project implementers and policy makers.

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## Funding

### Coastal and Estuary Management Grants

The next round of funding is now open. Applications close on 12 March 2015 for the [Coastal Management Program](#) and the [Estuary Management Program](#).

### Salty Communities

Funding is available to Sydney metropolitan councils through [Sydney Coastal Councils](#) to support on-ground projects to build the resilience of coastal habitats, foreshore and intertidal areas in response to urbanisation and climate change. Funds of between \$5,000 and \$150,000 are available. Applications close 30 March 2015.

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## Resources

### Communicating Climate Change Adaptation

[Adaptation Scotland](#) has produced a guide to communicating climate change based on people's values, with summaries of the principles of engagement and practical examples of how organisations tailor these principles in their work.

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## Case Studies

### Environmental Friendly Seawall, Kogarah City Council

[Dover Park East](#) foreshore, Kogarah Bay, was a major Council habitat enhancement project involving the removal of an existing low habitat concrete seawall, and the construction of an environmentally friendly seawall focused on emulating the habitat variation present on a natural rocky foreshore.

This foreshore includes constructed rockpools at varying intertidal levels and lower foreshore grades to develop a habitat range for all intertidal organisms present on natural foreshores. Since its completion, over 25 species of marine organisms have utilised the provided habitats.



### ESD Best Practice, North Sydney Council

The [Ecologically Sustainable Development \(ESD\) Best Practice Project](#) aims to improve the sustainability performance of new development by identifying and implementing best practice planning provisions. The project resulted in planning amendments which came into force after adoption of the project in September 2013. The amendments:



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- Utilise a broad range of mechanisms, applying them in such a way that is commensurate with the scale and likely impact of the development;
- Set ambitious, although not unreasonable, performance criteria where appropriate; and
- Incorporate provisions that are clear and easy to understand.

**Regional sea level rise planning, Eurobodalla and Shoalhaven Councils**

South Coast Regional Sea Level Rise - Planning and Policy Response Framework was developed as a climate change response partnership between Shoalhaven City and Eurobodalla Shire Councils to:

- Develop regionally relevant sea level rise projections for the Shoalhaven and Eurobodalla coasts; and
- Develop a “Risk Assessment and Policy Response Framework” to address sea level rise for use by the Partner Councils in strategic planning, development control and consent activities.

This project was a response to the NSW Government decision to rescind the Sea Level Rise Policy Statement for NSW and provide councils with the

flexibility to consider local conditions when determining future hazards within their Local Government Area.



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**Upcoming Events**

Changeology: Project Makers’ Master Class, 5-6 May 2015

Enabling Change’s Facilitation Skills, 8 May 2015

NCCARF Climate Adaptation Conference, 5-7th July 2015

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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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**PROGRAM CONTACTS**

**Denise Anderson**  
Senior Policy Officer – Environment  
Local Government NSW  
E [denise.anderson@lgnsw.org.au](mailto:denise.anderson@lgnsw.org.au)  
P 9242 4056