

SUSTAINABILITY SNIPPETS



Helping councils towards sustainability

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EDITION 35

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Welcome to the 35th edition of Sustainability Snippets

Save the date - 2017 Environment Awards

This year we will be celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards. The timing of the awards has changed this year, with entries opening in April and the Finalists' Forum and ceremony taking place on 11 October 2017. Now is a great opportunity to start thinking and planning for what projects you could celebrate and share with your local government colleagues.



Adaptation Grants Announced

Congratulations to the seven projects that will share \$497,156 worth of grants to respond to climate change risks and vulnerabilities. The Building Resilience to Climate Change program received 34 applications requesting \$2.4 million in grants. Round 3 focused on projects that built resilience of vulnerable communities or adapting priority infrastructure. The projects are:

- Cobar Airport climate resilient master plan, Cobar Shire Council.
- Dubbo CBD heat island amelioration, Dubbo Regional Council.
- Building adaptive capacity against rising coastal groundwater, Eurobodalla Shire Council.

- Building resilience into infrastructure assets, Northern Beaches Council.
- Adapting priority coastal recreational infrastructure for climate change, Sydney Coastal Councils Group.
- Developing and trialling a northern rivers emerging vector response plan, Tweed Shire Council.
- Adaptation action plans for priority infrastructure and vulnerable communities, Wagga Wagga City Council.

Further details on the successful projects are available on the LGNSW [website](#). The BRCC program is a partnership between the NSW Office of the Environment and Heritage and LGNSW.

Vegetsafe

Vegetsafe is a community science participation program run by Environmental Science staff at Macquarie University. The [program](#) aims to inform the community about metal and metalloid contaminants in their garden soil through a FREE soil metal testing program. Participants receive a formal report with their soil results and are provided with links to information and advice about "what to do next" in the event of soils containing elevated concentrations of metals and metalloids. Samples can be sent in from across Australia. For Sydney based councils, view the [latest findings](#) for contamination in your area.

Developing a NSW Koala Strategy

The NSW Government is seeking community input into the development of a NSW Koala Strategy and the Saving our Species Iconic Koala Project. The NSW Government is inviting comments on developing a



state wide framework to ensure koalas will continue to live and thrive in NSW.

To attend a community information session or participate in the webinar, register [here](#). The closing date for written submissions is **3 March 2017**

Please contact [Kirsty](#) or [Rod](#) if you wish to contribute to the LGNSW submission or share your council's submission.

LGNSW Position Vacant - Asbestos policy

We are looking for a Project Manager to assist NSW councils in managing asbestos, including adopting and implementing local asbestos policies based on the *Model Asbestos Policy for NSW Councils*. [Applications](#) close Wednesday 15 February 2017

Review of Australia's Climate Change policies

The Australian Government has announced a [review of its climate change policies](#). The review will involve close engagement with business and the community, beginning with consultation on a discussion paper. The review will commence in February 2017 and conclude by the end of 2017.

National Environmental Accounts

Commonwealth, State and Territory environment ministers have agreed to a national approach to environmental accounts in 2017. The decision follows the Wentworth Group's five year trial of regional environmental accounts, including in central west NSW. The purpose of creating environmental accounts is to enable society to take practical action to maintain healthy and productive land, freshwater and marine resources. [More details here](#).

Consultation

LGNSW have been busy in recent months preparing [submissions](#) to a number of government initiatives including:

- [Submission on Container Deposit Scheme draft Regulation 2016](#)
- [Submission to the Environmental Future Funding Package](#)
- [Submission to the Explanation of Intended Effect: State Environmental Planning Policy No 44 – Koala Habitat Protection](#)

- [Inquiry into flying-fox management in the eastern states](#)
- [Submission on the Review of the Load Based Licensing Scheme](#)
- [Submission on the State Environmental Planning Policy \(Coastal Management\) 2016](#).

In the News

World Chocolate Shortage - Don't Panic

Queensland scientists have [found](#) a potential solution to under supply of cocoa beans by using the husk of the cacao bean around cocoa trees. This increases the pollinator population, tripling the number of fruit on each tree on average.

Five innovations that shaped sustainability in 2016

From edible cutlery to drone vaccines.

Power to Council

A regional Victorian [Council](#) is calling for expressions of interest from parties wishing to lease land for a major solar farm.

Green Roof Competition

[Greater Geelong City Council](#) is encouraging green walls and roof top gardens through a design competition for commercial buildings.

5th ERF auction announced

The [Clean Energy Regulator](#) has announced a fifth Emissions Reduction Fund auction will be held on Wednesday 5 April 2017 and Thursday 6 April 2017.

Resources

Minimising the impacts of extreme heat: A guide for local government

This guide, available at [AdaptNSW](#), is designed to describe ways NSW local governments can manage and minimise the impacts of extreme heat on the community, assets and services. The objective of this guidance is to help ensure that communities are safe from, prepared for and resilient to current and projected impacts of extreme heat.

Case study

City of Parramatta R3 program - Resource Rescue and Reuse

The [R3 program](#) was initiated as a means to reduce waste from the relocation of the City of Parramatta's main administration building and library in late 2015. The program rescued redundant resources such as



stationary and furniture, reused them internally where possible and offered remaining items to local schools and community organisations to provide social and environmental benefits.

As a result, Council was able to divert approximately 70 ute loads of material from landfill, while at the same time providing much needed resources to 52 schools, charities and community organisations to help them in delivering valuable services to local communities.

The engagement of staff through this process has helped to strengthen a culture whereby staff recognise the value of materials and seek opportunities for re-use rather than disposal. This is evident through the increased number of staff-led initiatives to recover and reuse resources made redundant through relocation, refurbishment or re-branding.

Funding

Building Better Regions Fund

The Australian Government will invest \$297.7 million over four years in infrastructure projects and community investments to create jobs, drive economic growth and build stronger regional communities into the future.

Grants are available through two funding streams; Infrastructure Projects (closing 28/2/17) and Community Investments (closing 30/3/17).

Environmental Research grants

The NSW Environmental Trust is inviting EOI for applied research projects that help address environmental problems in NSW. Grants up to \$150,000 will be awarded to projects under the following themes:

- contaminants and pollution;
- biodiversity;
- climate adaptation; and
- mechanisms for social engagement.

EOIs close 3pm Monday, 13 March 2017.

Events

The **Sydney Sustainable Living Festival 2017** will be held from 8-26 March 2017. Sydney Sustainable Living Festival celebrates projects and organisations that are making a real contribution to creating a more sustainable city. Getting involved is a wonderful opportunity to raise the profile of sustainability education and create a groundswell for change.

The Nature Conservation Council of NSW 11th Biennial Bushfire Conference Fire, Fauna and Ferals: from backyards to bush is being held 30th - 31st May 2017, Sydney.

Clean Up Australia Day – Sunday 5th March

Register your own Clean Up site or volunteer at a site near you. Councils may want to assist by collecting bags at defined collection points.

SUBSCRIPTION

To subscribe to this electronic newsletter, visit lgnsw.org.au/policy/ecologically-sustainable-development/news

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