

SUSTAINABILITY SNIPPETS



Helping councils towards sustainability

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EDITION 37

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Welcome to the 37th edition of Sustainability Snippets

Environment Awards Finalists

Congratulations to the [finalists](#) of the 2017 Excellence of the Environment Awards. It's 20 years since the awards began. Come and celebrate the amazing work of local government in managing and protecting the environment. Tickets are available for the Finalists' Forum only or for the whole event. All are welcome to attend. [Registration](#) closes 4 October.



Sunshine Coast Council 100% solar

The [Sunshine Coast Solar Farm](#) is now live and feeding electricity into the power grid, making Sunshine Coast Council the first local government in Australia to offset 100% of its electricity consumption with energy from a renewable source.

The \$50.4 million, 15MW solar farm, constructed at Vadora west of Coolumberrah over the past 12 months with 57,960 panels, will feed into the Energex network and is estimated to save \$22 million over 30 years after all costs are paid.

[Newcastle City Council](#) is also set to increase its renewable energy generation with a proposal to build a 5MW solar farm at the Summerhill Waste Management Centre.

Small-scale renewable energy hits record

There are now almost 2.8 million small-scale solar installations in Australia, with Queensland having the largest uptake of systems under the [Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme](#).

The installations have the capacity to generate or displace approximately 11.2 million megawatt hours of electricity each year.

More than one in five Australian households now have solar panels installed on their roof, and that's the highest rate per capita in the world. There is also a trend in larger systems being installed over the past few years, with the average capacity of a system increasing by 12 per cent from 2015 to 2016.

Share bikes: sustainable transport or illegal dumping?

The City of Melbourne is removing share bikes it considers illegally dumped. The oBikes service started in Melbourne less than three months ago. In that time, Council has received numerous complaints about reduced amenity, bikes blocking access to footpaths, trip hazards and reduced availability of designated bike parking spots. Read the full story in [The Age](#).

10 examples of urban food policies

This interesting article in the [Fifth Estate](#) looks at local government urban food policies around the world. Cities have developed policies to address a range of issues including access to nutritious food, economic development, sustainability, well-being, waste etc.



Consultations

LGNSW's recent [submissions](#) to a number of government initiatives are available:

- [Planning for Bushfire Protection: A Guide for Councils, Planners, Fire Authorities and Developers](#)
- [Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code and draft Bush Fire Protection for Existing Developments Guideline.](#)
- [NSW Travelling Stock Reserves Review](#)
- [Land Management and Biodiversity Conservation Reforms Submission](#)
- [NSW Litter Prevention Strategy 2017-2020](#)

Sustainable Choice

[Sustainable Choice](#) transitioned from LGNSW to Local Government Procurement (LGP) on 1 July. Under the LGP banner, Sustainable Choice will continue to assist councils to integrate sustainability into their procurement processes. If your council is yet to confirm Sustainable Choice membership with LGP but would like further information, please [email](#).

Members of Sustainable Choice enjoy:

- Access to comprehensive suite of online resources including; guides, factsheets, templates, example documents, case studies and links.
- General advice and guidance when required.
- Free attendance at Sustainable Procurement Forums.
- Free attendance at quarterly online video forums.
- Annual Sustainable Procurement Scorecard and performance report – a 'health check' against ISO 20400:2017 – Sustainable Procurement Guidance.
- Access to tradeshows of sustainable suppliers.
- Quarterly newsletters updating on innovation, technology, forums, events and case studies.
- Sustainable Choice database listing suppliers of sustainable products and services.

Invitation: recent ecological change in Australia project

The Department of the Environment and Energy, together with the CSIRO are undertaking an [investigation](#) to understand how Australia's biodiversity has been changing in recent years.

As a part of this investigation, they are seeking to understand how the 1°C increase in surface temperature experienced over the past century may have contributed to recent changes in biodiversity

across the Australian landscape. To this end, the researchers are very interested in hearing about the experiences and observations of people who are familiar with different parts of Australia.

To participate, you would need to be able to select a natural area (e.g. your local region or farm, a Nature Reserve, urban bushland) that you have been familiar with for at least the last 10 years. The [survey](#) is made up of a series of observational questions and an open section for people to tell their stories. It would take about 30 minutes.

Resources

Sustainable Procurement Guide

LGNSW has launched a [sustainable procurement guide](#) and educational videos to help NSW councils consider the quadruple bottom line: environmental impact, social considerations, economic impacts and governance requirements. Local government spends more than \$10 billion on goods and services for the community each year. The [Guide](#) was developed in recognition of the need to connect and communicate sustainable procurement with the 50,000 council employees across the state.

Hazard maps

The Insurance Council of Australia has recently released the [Simplified Hazard Exposure Map](#) to highlight natural hazard risks data across Australia. This includes layers for floods, bushfire and cyclones.

Building Resilience Guide

This [guide](#) has been developed for residents by East Gippsland Shire Council, Vic. It includes tips on how to make homes more resilient to a number of hazards including heat, flooding, storms and bushfire.

Steps to zero carbon

Beyond Zero Emissions has released its [Zero Carbon Communities Guide](#) to empower communities and councils who want to see rapid local progress towards zero emissions. It provides a simple framework and key steps a community can take to achieve zero carbon status within ten years.

Improving biodiversity in cities

The Environmental Trust's [urban ecology renewal project](#) provided in-depth research into ways to improve biodiversity outcomes for major cities in NSW including Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle. The project produced four reports, including a summary report and a blueprint for action.



Urban green spaces: a brief for action

The World Health Organisation has released a [brief](#) for action on urban green spaces to support urban policy-makers and practitioners. The brief reviews current research evidence and practical case studies on urban green space interventions and implications for practice.

Case study

De-stratification system for Kyogle off-stream storage, Kyogle Shire Council

In 2016, a 200 ML off-stream dam was constructed as part of the Kyogle Water Supply Augmentation Project to provide greater water security during times of drought. Kyogle Shire Council's climate change risk assessment identified that projected temperature rises will increase the risk of algal blooms in the water supply. A de-stratification system, using renewable energy, was installed to mix and aerate the water to prevent algal blooms and maintain water quality.



Funding

Flying-fox grants program

[Applications](#) are invited for grants to assist councils to manage flying fox camps in their area. Applications can be made for Stream 1 (emergency measures) until 30 April 2018, for Stream 2 (preparing camp management plans) until 2 February 2018, and Stream 3 (implementing CMPs) closes 3 November 2017.

Events

Climate-ready revegetation: workshop series

Workshops to introduce a new publication [Climate-ready revegetation: a guide for natural resource managers](#) are currently being rolled-out to regional centres in NSW. The workshops provide practical advice to natural resource managers on how to incorporate the uncertainties associated with climate change when planning revegetation activities. New regional workshops are being planned for Dubbo and Cowra in October, and in Newcastle date to be confirmed. Please contact [OEH](#) to register your interest.

[Australian Association for Environmental Education 'Make the change' conference](#), 27-29 September 2017, Sydney.

[LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards](#), 11 October 2017, Sydney.

[NSW Local Government Flying-fox Forum](#), 26 October 2017, Sydney.

[Clean Air Society of Australia and New Zealand conference](#), 'The Critical Atmosphere', 15-18 October 2017, Brisbane.

[Beyond Plastic Pollution – Pathways to Cleaner Oceans Conference](#), 30 October – 1 November 2017, Sydney.

[26th Annual NSW Coastal Conference](#) - "The Next Wave", 8-10 November 2017, Port Stephens

AdaptNSW annual event, 27 November 2017, UTS Aerial Function Centre, Ultimo, [RSVP](#).

[Waste Conference 2018](#), 8-10 May 2018, Coffs Harbour

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