

SUSTAINABILITY SNIPPETS



Helping councils towards sustainability

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Welcome to the 22nd edition of Sustainability Snippets. Local Government NSW and the NSW Environmental Trust helping councils towards sustainability.

LGNSW's Asbestos Management Training

This training is to assist councils to understand their role in managing asbestos and to adopt the Model Asbestos Policy issued to council under section 23A of the *Local Government Act 1993*. The first session for 2014 will be held in Sydney CBD on 10 April.

Urban Greening Master Class

The NSW Office of Environment, in partnership with the 202020 vision, are holding a master class on urban greening 9:30am to 1pm on Tuesday 6 May 2014 at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney. This forum aims to build awareness of the need to increase green space and share best practice, skills and case studies. To register your interest please contact Lauren or online.

The role of Local Government in renewable energy

The UNSW is surveying councils nationally to better understand the current and potential future roles of Local Government in renewable energy deployment by councils and local community energy groups. The survey is part of a PhD project which is concerned with community renewable energy in Australia and Germany. The online form can be found here UNSW Online Survey - Role of Local Government in Renewable Energy. Closes 5 April 2014.

Could your town unplug from the grid?

Regional towns and new housing estates could function viably and economically off the electricity grid, a new report reveals. The report, What Happens When We Un-Plug: Exploring the Consumer and Market Implications of Viable Off-Grid Energy Supply, found many Victorians could unplug from the grid by 2020 and use renewable energy systems with battery storage.

Case Studies

Staying on the map

Bingara in the Gwydir Shire Council area faces many challenges similar to rural towns across NSW. It is situated at the heart of one of Australia's most productive agricultural areas but maintaining the town's prosperity and longevity requires new strategies. In 2005, Bingara & District Vision 20/20 group was formed and immediately embarked on a program of community consultation to develop a vision for the town's future. This culminated in the publication of the "regeneration" vision. The Bingara Town Strategy encompasses regenerating all of the community's assets including its people, ecology, economy and infrastructure. It identified the four pillars of agriculture, tourism, education and regional conferencing.

It was out of this process that the Living Class Room project was conceived. To fulfil this purpose, 150 hectares of degraded town Common are to be fully regenerated into a highly productive forest of food by combining a wide range of complementary agricultural



activities with horticulture, aquaculture and forestry. The Living Class Room project has a key focus on nutrition, productivity, profitability, health and the natural environment. This work is an exercise in broad collaboration and integration, being designed and created by the collective efforts of the many participants of the modern food system as well as harnessing the best knowledge from traditional through to scientific and other contemporary farming methods. The Living Classroom is pivotal to Bingara's own regeneration.

Resources

Australian State of the Climate – 2014

This [State of the Climate](#) is the third in a series of reports produced by CSIRO and the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, which provides a summary of observations of Australia's climate and analysis of the factors that influence it. It discusses the long-term trends in Australia's climate. The report shows further warming of the atmosphere and oceans in the Australian region, as is happening globally.

Australian attitudes to climate change

Effective action on adapting to climate change needs to be based on current and reliable information about what Australians think about climate change. A [CSIRO research project](#) is undertaking a systematic research project to better address public perceptions and understandings of climate change. It shows that most Australians consider climate change is happening and the majority consider that human activities play a role. There was strong evidence that people overestimate the prevalence of their own views on the nature of climate change.

Climate Impacts and Mining Communities

The [Climate impacts and adaptation in Australian mining communities: industry and local government views and activities](#) report describes the findings of two surveys conducted simultaneously in early 2013, one of local government authorities and the other of mining companies, investigating their perceptions and actions in relation to adapting to climate change. The surveys were designed by CSIRO to explore the likely impacts of future climate variability and change on the

Australian mining industry and its associated communities to inform efforts for improving their adaptive capacity.

Climate Council report reveals Australia's Angry Summer

A new Climate Change report, [Angry Summer](#), describes the significant number of records broken over the 2013-2014 summer, which included heatwaves, drought and bushfires across Australia. The report highlights the increasing risks and costs associated with extreme weather and notes that urgent and deep reductions in our greenhouse gas emissions are required to limit the impacts into the future.

Green Star – Communities

Developed by the Green Building Council of Australia in consultation with industry stakeholders, the [Green Star – Communities](#) Guide explains how councils can use the national framework and the Green Star – Communities rating tool to achieve better economic, social and environmental outcomes across the built environment. The rating tool sets benchmarks that enable community development projects to be assessed and rated against the framework's five principles. The framework can be used on its own to guide local government planning or in conjunction with the rating tool to indicate and measure success in delivering sustainable development.

Upcoming Events

[Hunter Region Sustainable Roads Forum, Cessnock, 1 April 2014](#)

LGNSW's [Asbestos Management Training](#), multiple dates and locations.

[Setting up Expanded Polystyrene Recycling Services, 10 April, Randwick Community Centre, Pat Armstrong, 0419 381 790.](#)

IPWEA's [Sustainability in Public Works Conference in Tweed Heads, 27th – 29th July 2014.](#)

[Climate Adaptation 2014 – Future Challenges, NCCARF & CSIRO, Gold Coast, Australia, 30 September-2 October 2014](#)

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