

SustainableInsight

Promoting the development and implementation of sustainability

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Sustainable Insight is a monthly publication focused on the development and implementation of sustainable practices and technologies related to Australia. The newsletter is distributed by email free-of-charge. Readers include representatives of government, industry associations, professional associations, academia, private enterprise and specialist interest groups.

Disclaimer: The content of the newsletter does not necessarily represent the views of the publisher. The publisher does not accept any liability to any person or organisation for the information provided in the publication. Information and advice published is provided in good faith to promote the development and implementation of sustainable technologies and practices in government, business, industry, and the general community.

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In Brief

Agriculture

New partnership addresses effluent re-use

New South Wales

The New South Wales Government has announced piggeries and feedlots are set to cut their environmental impact under a new government-industry partnership focussing on how effluent and waste solids are re-used on land. The New South Wales Environmental Protection Agency, Australian Pork Ltd (APL) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) have been working together on the research project which will monitor the impact effluent and solid wastes when reused on land as fertilisers. It is hoped the project findings will be able to guide and assist NSW piggeries and cattle-feedlots on how best to reuse effluent while still protecting the environment. A draft research report will be released to stakeholders for comment.

Land Protection Council announced

Queensland

The Queensland Government has announced the chairman and members of the new Land Protection Council. The 15-member board will provide strategic advice to Government about the management of weeds, feral animals and Queensland's 72,000km stock route network. Members include Rolleston farmer and AgForce Grains president, Mr Murray Leonard Jones; Mr Jones; Murray Leonard Jones (chairman) - Rolleston farmer and AgForce Grains president; Cr Peter John Huth - Mayor Gayndah Shire Council; Dr Tony Pressland - General Manager, Catchment and Regional Planning, Department of Natural Resources and Mines; Michael James Harris - Environmental Protection Agency; Karyn Nina Olson - Department of Primary Industries; Cr Dougal Burns Davidson - Mayor, Tambo Shire Council; Cr Margaret Anne Portess - Mayor, Herberton Shire Council; Cr Judy Harvey - Deputy Mayor, Beaudesert Shire Council; Rosemary Anne Burtenshaw - Mt Garnet farmer and member Lower Herbert Catchment Group Inc; Christine Mary Donaldson - AgForce Central Queensland chair, Capella; Stephen Patrick Tully - station manager and AgForce chair, Quilpie; Michael John Cantamessa - Proserpine canefarmer and chair Proserpine Canegrowers district executive; Lindsay Frederick Volz - Peranga dairy farmer, executive committee member Queensland Dairyfarmers Organisation; John Bentley Bishop - Lockyer Valley farmer and board member Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers (QFVG); and Tim Low - environmental consultant specialising in invasive weeds and feral animals.

Projects to boost Douglas water quality

Queensland

The Queensland Government has announced a \$75,000 funding scheme for sustainable farming projects to reduce sediment and nutrient flow from farms into local waterways and the Great Barrier Reef Lagoon off the for north Queensland coast. The funding will be provided by the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency and administered by Douglas Shire Council.

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Ecology and Environmental Management

Envirofund funding announced

National

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$11.4 million has been approved for 765 projects across Australia in the first round of the Envirofund for 2003-04. Grants approved this year include \$25,600 to transform degraded farmland into a wildlife corridor in the Wolgan Valley, 50km NW of Lithgow, NSW; \$24, 385 to monitor Great Barrier Reef sites off Port Douglas, Queensland; \$30,000 to restore the Murray Mouth Estuary near Goolwa, 60km SE of Adelaide, SA; and \$10,500 to train indigenous and pastoral land managers in erosion control near Tennant Creek, NT. Applications for the next round of Envirofund close 5pm on Friday 30 January 2004. For more information visit www.nht.gov.au or phone 1800 065 823.

Land use mapping has Australia's catchments covered

National

The Australian Government has announced Australia's catchment managers and landholders can now tap into 'Land Use Mapping' to address natural resource management issues such as salinity and weed control. The land use mapping shows how our land is being used, including where crops are being grown, the location of horticulture production, where irrigation is occurring and where forests lie. For more information visit the Bureau of Rural Sciences website www.brs.gov.au.

Counting on our natural assets**National**

The CSIRO has announced the release of a new report showing how one regional community can better manage its ecosystems may have implications for regional areas not only across Australia but around the world. CSIRO researchers have recently explored 'ecosystem services' in the Goulburn Broken Catchment and found that Australians are developing a new and deeper understanding of how the environment underpins human activities. Activities affected by the environment include regulation of climate; maintenance and regeneration of habitat for native species; provision of shade and shelter; water filtration and erosion control; maintenance of soil health; provision of healthy waterways; and regulation of river flows and groundwater levels. The ecosystems services project was supported by the Myer Foundation, CSIRO, the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and Land and Water Australia. For more information visit www.ecosystemsproject.org

Underwater environment to be mapped**National**

The Australian Government has announced a new project to map Australia's underwater environment and the impact humans have on it. The project will be undertaken through the Coastal Cooperative Research Centre.

EPA report available**New South Wales**

The New South Wales Environmental Protection Agency Annual Report 2002-03 can be viewed by visiting www.environment.nsw.gov.au/corporate/annrep.htm

Conservation canopy over tropical rainforests expanded**Queensland**

The Queensland Government has announced it will add nearly half a million hectares of tropical rainforest in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area to the protected area estate. Under the move, almost all of the 480,889 hectares of state forests and timber reserves in the Wet Tropics of north Queensland would become national park.

Fish habitats to be protected**Queensland**

The Queensland Government has announced two additional fish habitats - Elliott River near Bundaberg and Annan River near Cooktown - would be protected from further development. This would increase the marine and freshwater fish habitats protected by Fish Habitat Area (FHA) declarations to almost 800,000 hectares.

Four catchment ecologists to be appointed**Queensland**

The Queensland Government has announced for new senior positions of catchment ecologists will be appointed to continually assess the of major catchments and implications for natural resources in Queensland. One task will be to assist in reduce the impact of agricultural production on the Great Barrier Reef and Murray-Darling Basin.

Grey Nurse sharks now endangered**Queensland**

The Queensland Government has announced Grey Nurse Sharks are officially endangered under Queensland law.

Sustainability initiative for coastal groundwater**Queensland**

The Queensland Government has announced is will provide nearly \$1 million towards a rescue package to protect coast groundwater resources and reduce the threat of saltwater intrusion in the Burnett-Bundaberg region. Funding will be provided under the Burnett Coastal Goundwater Sustainability Initiative.

Changes to logging in State Forests**Victoria**

The Victorian Government has announced VicForests will take over management of logging in Victorian State Forests from 1 January 2004.

Draft greenhouse strategy released**Western Australia**

The Western Australian Government has announced the release of its draft Western Australian Greenhouse Strategy for public comment. The draft Greenhouse Strategy is available from the Chair, Greenhouse Taskforce, Locked Bag 104, Bentley Delivery Centre, Bentley 6983, by telephone on 9334 0520 or on the internet at <http://www.greenhouse.wa.gov.au>. Submissions can be made by email to info@greenhouse.wa.gov.au, by facsimile to 9334 0327 or by mail to Chair, Greenhouse Taskforce, Locked Bag 104, Bentley Delivery Centre, Bentley WA 6983. Comments should be received by March 15, 2004.

Related Articles

New publication showcases best environmental practice
Projects to boost Douglas water quality

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Energy and Power

Vestas Wind Systems and NEG Micon to combine

National

The Boards of Directors from Vestas Wind Systems and NEG Micon (two of the largest wind turbine manufacturers in the world) have announced they have agreed the terms of a combination of the two companies by way of a Share Exchange Offer. The combined group will be named Vestas Wind Systems A/S.

Energy association launched

National

The Chairman of ESAA, Mr Greg Martin, today officially launched the Energy Supply Association of Australia in Canberra. The new ESAA will come in to being on 1 January 2004. Mr Brad Page has been appointed the foundation chief executive.

Construction of \$20 million Sliver® solar power plant

South Australia

Origin Energy Limited have announced construction is underway on its \$20 million solar photovoltaic (PV) manufacturing plant in Adelaide. The new plant will make solar power panels to demonstrate Origin's revolutionary Sliver® Solar Cell technology developed with the Australian National University's Centre for Sustainable Energy Systems. Designed to produce up to 5MW of PV modules per year initially, the plant will be readily expandable to 25MW per year should it meet all design objectives and prove Sliver® technology can be applied at a mass produced scale. Solar PV modules incorporating the new Sliver® technology are expected to be available to market by January 2005. An A\$1million grant from the Australian Government, through the Australian Greenhouse Office, contributed to the project.

Western Australia to boost renewable power

Western Australia

The Western Australian Government has announced Western Power would spend \$80-\$100 million over the next decade supporting renewable energy projects.

Mining and Resources

New publication showcases best environmental practice

Western Australia

The Western Australian Government have announced the launch of a new publication that showcases best practice in Western Australia's resource industry. The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia Inc publication, 'A Sustainable Environment', may be a useful reference tool for teachers and the wider community in providing excellent case studies showing how the resources industry contributes to sustainability. For more information visit www.cmewa.com.

Strategy maps out sustainable future for timber industry

Western Australia

The Western Australian Government has announced the released of its strategy for the timber industry. The strategy complements the sustainable management framework set down in the new Forest Management Plan for 2004-2013. For more information visit www.fpc.wa.gov.au and www.calm.wa.gov.au/forest_facts/index.html.

Related Articles

Changes to logging in State Forests

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Property and Construction

Thiess releases its first Sustainability Report

National

Thiess has announced the release of its inaugural Sustainability Report for 2002/03. The theme for this year's report is 'working towards sustainability everyday'. It reflects the company's commitment to the principles and practices of sustainability in its daily work. To view an online copy of the report, please click through to the Thiess website, www.thiess.com.au. Alternatively, you may request a hard copy by emailing sustainability@thiess.com.au or phoning +61 7 3002 9661.

Ecological Homes Showroom

New South Wales

Ecological Homes has announced their Enmore office and showroom will be closed from Monday 22 December 2003 and will reopen Monday 5 January 2004.

River Murray Act comes in force**South Australia**

The South Australian Government has announced The River Murray Act is now in force. The Act gives the Minister for the River Murray power to ensure developments and activities do not harm the river.

Related Articles

Planning our future communities 5

Tourism**Related Articles**

Call for comment on transport strategy 5

River Murray Act comes into force 5

Transportation**Sustainable transport plan available****Australian Capital Territory**

The ACT Planning and Land Authority has made available their Draft Sustainable Transport Plan for public comment. For more information visit www.actpla.act.gov.au/plandev/transport/index.htm.

BP move on ethanol-blended petrol**Queensland**

The Queensland Government has announced its support to BP Australia to resume supply of ethanol-blended petrol at various outlets in regional Queensland.

Call for comment on transport strategy**Queensland**

The Queensland Government has announced it is developing a cutting edge strategy to improve safety, increase efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of transport in Queensland's future. It is calling on industry and tourism groups, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders to provide comment on the draft strategy. For more information visit www.transport.qld.gov.au or www.mainroads.qld.gov.au.

Urban Planning**Planning our future communities****New South Wales**

The University of Western Sydney reports one of their academics believes a mix of housing styles on new estates will prevent them becoming urban ghettos in future decades.

New chair appointed to planning commission**Western Australia**

The Western Australian Government has announced the appointment of Mr Jeremy Dawkins as chair of the Western Australian Planning Commission. The appointment is for five years.

Related Articles

River Murray Act comes into force 5

Waste Management and Recycling**Funding for Townsville public recycling plan****Queensland**

The Queensland Government has presented a \$13,750 cheque to Townsville City Council to help fund Queensland's largest public place recycling program. Under the program, Townsville City Council would incorporate recycling infrastructure into the CBD and on The Strand.

\$1.8 million boost to kerbside recycling**South Australia**

The South Australian Government has announced South Australian Councils will receive cheques worth \$430,000 for their efforts to develop the best kerbside recycling services for their communities.

Port Hedland to reduce plastic bag waste**Western Australia**

The Western Australian Government has announced the approval of a \$50,000 grant to the Town of Port Hedland to go towards the reduction of plastic bag waste. The aim is reduce plastic bag use by 40 per cent by the end of 2004.

Water and Waste Water

Condamine-Balonne draft Water Resource Plan release

Queensland

The Queensland Government has announced the release of a draft Water Resource Plan for the Condamine-Balonne catchment in South-West Queensland for public comment. Copies of the Condamine-Balonne draft Water Resource Plan area available in the “Topical Issues” box at www.nrm.qld.gov.au.

Funds for Emu Park wastewater reuse

Queensland

The Queensland Government has announced it has approved a \$61,000 subsidy to the Livingstone Shire Council towards wastewater reuse works. The Council will be expanding their irrigation system so treated effluent can be pumped to the surrounding parklands and other public facilities.

45 million litres of water saved every day

South Australia

The South Australian Government has announced the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative, a project jointly funded by State and Commonwealth Governments has resulted in water savings of 45 million a day. The project encourages landholders to reduce evaporation and seepage of water by rehabilitating bores and replacing open drains with polythene pipes. The South Australian Government claims since the project began in 1999 more than 65,800 megalitres of water has been saved in the outback of South Australia.

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Feature Articles

Year of Built Environment Sets Agenda for Next 100 Years of Sustainability

Media Release from the Royal Australia Institute of Architects. 15 December 2003.

The President of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) David Parken today welcomed the opportunity for his organisation to be a partner in the forthcoming Year of the Built Environment (YBE) program.

With an environmentally conscious building as a backdrop at this morning's Sydney launch, guests including YBE Patron-in Chief the Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffery, Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Heritage Dr David Kemp and others heard how 2004 will unfold as a 'unique' year.

David Parken today said the next twelve months provided an opportunity to create a foundation to showcase sustainable building in Australia.

Mr Parken said, "Year of the Built Environment" should provide a turn key to consolidate the reforms taking place in energy , water and use of environmentally sustainable products in all areas of construction".

"As a YBE partner with the Australian Government and West Australian Government we see the vital importance of improving the design of buildings especially where governments are increasing densities within existing suburbs or where building is taking place in environmentally sensitive areas such as the coastline".

"This year also comes at a time when housing affordability is a key issue for Australia and well designed homes, with the use of refined structural techniques and new visual designs have the potential to ensure the built environment is within the reach of more Australians."

"It will be an opportunity for all members of the community to take part in the celebration - from those in planning, design and building professions, through to community leaders and literally all those who live, work and play in the built environment" David Parken said.

The six themes that will guide all YBE 2004 activities are:

- · Towards Sustainable Communities
- · Healthy Environments
- · Excellence in Building
- · Our Built Heritage
- · Imagining the Future
- · Design for All

Celebrating seventy five years as an Institute in 2005, The RAIA is proud to be a partner in the Year of the Built Environment.

For more information on the Royal Australian Institute of Architects visit www.architecture.com.au.

Concrete-recycling scheme ideal solution for waste

Media Release from the New South Wales Environmental Protection Agency. 12 December 2003.

A world-first Australian concrete waste separation unit is making concrete recycling a reality across the building and construction industry.

Eastern Sydney based company Pumperdump Australia is the first in the world to introduce a concrete separator, which dramatically reduces the amount of waste concrete the construction industry sends to landfill, and stops concrete wastewater from entering stormwater drains.

Richard Amadio, Pumperdump proprietor received \$75,000 in matched funding from the NSW Government's Industry Partnership Program, to kick-start his recycling scheme and trial it at construction sites throughout Sydney for a period of six months.

"The project has proven to be a great success with concrete companies and has achieved significant environmental and industry benefits," said Mr Amadio.

"The device has been successfully trialled in over 20 sites throughout Sydney including, Church St, Parramatta, Philip Street North Sydney and Sailors Bay Road North Bridge.

"To date over 18,000 litres of contaminated water has been collected and safely disposed of in an environmentally friendly way. A further 344 tonnes of solid concrete waste has been recycled and companies trialling Pumperdump have identified more than \$10,000 in cost savings per annum," said Mr Amadio.

Director-General of the Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW)*, Lisa Corbyn said there are many advantages to adopting a cleaner production initiative like Pumperdump.

"Not only is the concreting industry making a positive contribution to the environment, they also have the opportunity to improve their own profitably," said Ms Corbyn.

"Cleaner production focuses on minimising the use of resources, avoiding pollution and reducing costs which improves companies' overall business efficiency and competitiveness.

"Industry is becoming increasingly interested in learning more about the environmental considerations of their work and what needs to be done to protect and sustain the environment.

"This initiative has been a great environmental step forward for the concreting industry."

* The EPA is now part of the Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW).

For more information on the New South Wales Environmental Protection Agency visit www.epa.nsw.gov.au.

Sustainable Development Study progressing

Media Release from the Western Australia Government. 16 December 2003.

Housing and Works Minister Nick Griffiths has described a sustainable planning study on a 30ha site in Forrestdale as having the capacity to reshape urban development in Western Australia.

Mr Griffiths said the Department of Housing and Works' development arm, Landstart, had headed up an inter-agency group in planning the intensive sustainable initiative which involved reviewing and assessing a matrix of more than 120 sustainability options.

The result was the Forrestdale land holding being selected as a demonstration project.

"The reports on the early phases of this project are now available to the public," the Minister said.

"Tenders, now being called for consultants for the next stages to develop this sustainable initiative further, will close on January 27."

Mr Griffiths, who is responsible for the dual portfolios of Housing and Works and Government Enterprises, welcomed the Water Corporation working with DHW on the project.

The Water Corporation is undertaking a separate detailed urban water management Plan, which could result in significant water savings.

Additionally, the departments of Planning and Infrastructure, Environment, Premier and Cabinet's Sustainability Policy Unit and the Sustainable Energy Development Office had been part of the inter-agency group.

"Already there is interest from interstate in the project," Mr Griffiths said.

"The objective is to create a more vibrant, interactive and safe community.

"Sustainable development options would include making the area more attractive for pedestrians, mixed land use, passive solar design, retention of bio-diversity and better water management.

"We intend to involve the construction industry in the planning stages to further the application of sustainability in land development."

DHW has released Phase One and Two of the study through its Internet site at <http://www.dhw.wa.gov.au>.

Rainwater Tank Demand Surges As Sydney Embraces Water Conservation

Media Release from Sydney Water. 9 December 2003.

The past two months have seen a surge in demand for rainwater tanks in Sydney, the Illawarra and Blue Mountains, reflected in a jump in the number of applications for Sydney Water's popular rebate scheme.

Over the course of October and November, 2003, Sydney Water received more than 600 applications for rainwater tank rebates.

This brings the total number of rebate applications to 2,407 since the scheme was first announced last year.

October was the busiest month for the scheme so far with more than 300 applications for rebates.

Sydney Water's rainwater tank rebate scheme allows customers to apply for a cash rebate of up to \$650, depending on the size and uses of the tank they install.

Tanks in the size bracket of between 4,000 and 6,999 litres have proven the most popular, with more than 700 rebates having been applied for over the past two months.

The installation of rainwater tanks by large numbers of Sydney Water customers has the potential to make a significant contribution to reducing our water consumption.

For more information on Sydney Water visit www.sydneywater.com.au.

About Origin Energy's Revolutionary Sliver® Solar Technology

From Origin Energy Limited. 8 December 2003.

Dramatically reduces expensive silicon use: Sliver® technology uses 90% less of the expensive silicon than current conventional solar PV modules yet delivers commercially competitive cell and module efficiencies. This means a solar power panel using Sliver® cell technology needs the equivalent of 2 silicon wafers to convert sunlight to 140 watts of power. By comparison, a conventional solar panel uses around 60 silicon wafers to achieve similar performance.

Substantially thinner than most solar cells yet highly efficient: Micromachined using innovative manufacturing techniques to less than 70 microns thick (thinner than a human hair) from monocrystalline silicon, Sliver® cells demonstrate efficiencies of 19.5%. While Sliver® cell efficiencies are competitive with other conventional solar cells, they perform much better than most other thin film technologies. Sliver® cell trial modules tested by Sandia National Laboratories in the United States show efficiencies comparable with other solar power module products now on the market.



Sliver® cells are micromachined using innovative manufacturing techniques to less than 70 microns thick (thinner than a human hair).

Photograph courtesy of Origin Energy

Radically different in size and shape: Sliver® cells also differ radically from conventional solar cells in size and shape. They are long, ultra thin, quite flexible and perfectly bifacial. This is unlike conventional solar cells which are typically square or round, up to 4 to 5 times thicker, quite rigid and usually single sided.

New application possibilities: These unique and versatile Sliver® properties open up opportunities to use the sun to power a wide range of potential new applications including:

- Transparent Sliver® cell panes in buildings
- Flexible and roll up solar panels
- Small and very high voltage solar panels for consumer electronics, and
- Remote surveillance systems.

In 2004, Origin Energy will be seeking global technology and marketing partners to develop the full application potential of these unique Sliver® cell characteristics.

For more information on Origin Energy Limited visit www.originenergy.com.au. For more information on the Australian National University's Centre for Sustainable Energy Systems visit <http://solar.anu.edu.au>.

Regular Features

Events and Seminars

2004

The Year of the Built Environment
2004

February 2004

The Investment Climate & Sustainability

16 February 2004

Location: CEDA Boardroom, Sydney

Website: www.ceda.com.au

* CEDA Member Company Representatives and Guests Only

New South Wales

SunRace '04

Victoria, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory

17-26 February 2004

Location: Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra

Email: sunrace@bigpond.net.au

Website: www.sunrace.com.au

Building a Competitive & Sustainable Business Environment

26 February 2004

Location: CEDA Boardroom, Sydney

Website: www.ceda.com.au

* CEDA Member Company Representatives and Guests Only

New South Wales

Additional Events, Seminars and Conferences can be viewed online at
www.sustainableinsight.com.au/resource_centre/

Funding

Envirofund

Closes: 5pm 30 January 2004

Website: www.nht.gov.au

National

Tender and Business Opportunities

Ecotourism/Nature Based Tourism Activities

Expressions of Interest

Redland Shire Council

Contact: Carl Larsen Ph. (07) 3829 8972

Closes: 11:30am 30 January 2004

Queensland

Web Resources

Websites

National Pollutant Inventory

www.npi.gov.au

What's New on Sustainable Insight Online

Resource Centre

- Past Issues of *Sustainable Insight* can now be viewed online
- A list of Events and Seminars based in Australia is now available online. International Events and Seminars to follow shortly

Online Shopping

More titles in the Bookshop related to sustainable

- Architecture and Building Design
- Business Management

Other

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- Resource Centre: Events and Seminars: Australia
- Bookshop: Architecture and Building Design
- Bookshop: Business Management

For more information visit
www.sustainableinsight.com.au

Reports and other

NSW State of the Environment 2003
www.epa.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2003/

Report of the inquiry into employment in the environment sector
www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/environ/greenjobs/index.htm

Additional Web Resources can be viewed online at
www.sustainableinsight.com.au/resource_centre/

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Name	_____
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Country	_____
Industry(ies) of Employment and Interest	_____
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