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## HOPE E-news Bulletin 2013 #4 – 19 May 2013

The following items have been gleaned from various e: newsletters received by HOPE in recent times; and/or prepared specifically by HOPE members and supporters. If you have any news to contribute, please forward to [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) . Deadline for articles is 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month.

Hi,

*It's nearly time again for World Environment Day on June 5. As it is also Queensland Day on June 6, we thought we'd combine the two events into a whole week of celebration! HOPE and colleagues have organised the 'Celebrating Queensland's Environment' event. The event will showcase the efforts of government agencies, the university and local environmental groups to protect and conserve the environment. The event is to be held at Grand Central Shopping Centre, Toowoomba on 3-7 June. More info in the Office News section. Please come and support us!*

*HOPE friend Amanda Walters has written a feature article about the benefits of businesses going green. You'll also find an article about what you can do to assist being green at work and one on how to save energy and manage waste in a business.*

*This enews bulletin also has some handy hints and tips. This [green blog](#) has more great green ideas and tips. For those of you still grappling with the concept of climate change, the blog also features a series of tutorials. See below for more.*

*Until next time,*

*Miriam Sharp, [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au)*

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

### May

22 - [International Day for Biological Diversity](#)

24 – Environmental Defenders Office workshop on Coal Seam Gas, Toowoomba from 6pm – 8.30pm, Groom Park Hall, 102 Neil Street Toowoomba; all RSVPs to [qutrsvp@gmail.com](mailto:qutrsvp@gmail.com) .

24 - [Walk Safely to School Day](#)

### June

2 – [Logan Eco Action Festival](#) A free eco-festival with a huge array of family and kids activities. Come along to enjoy a day of free kids activities, workshops, organic food, free trees and live entertainment. Also Griffith University, Logan Campus. University Drive, Meadowbrook, 10am-3pm.

3-7 – [Celebrating Queensland's Environment, Toowoomba](#) (see Office News section)

8 - [World Oceans Day](#)

17 - [World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought](#)

### July

11 - [World Population Day](#)

26 - [Schools Tree Day](#)

28 - [National Tree Day](#)

### Office Hours

HOPE's office is open every Monday from 9am to 5pm; with the library resources available at the same time. Other times can be arranged through the office.

## Office News Report

### Toowoomba activities:

I'm pleased to report that our gardening information display and demonstration activities at *Gardenfest Toowoomba* (3-5 May) were well received by the visiting public; and that preparations for HOPE's *Celebrating Queensland's Environment* event (3-7 June) are well in hand.

### Celebrating Queensland's Environment, 3-7 June, Toowoomba

HOPE is jointly celebrating World Environment Day (5 June) and Queensland Day (6 June) under the banner of *Celebrating Queensland's Environment*. Our aim is to showcase the good works of government agencies (federal, state and local), the University of Southern Queensland and the environment sector in looking after our natural environment.

HOPE has booked a week-long (3-7 June) community information area at the Grand Central Shopping Centre, (GCSC), corner of Margaret and Dent Sts, Toowoomba; as well as the upstairs Jacaranda Conference Room (GCSC) on 6 June for a half-day speakers program.

Volunteers will be required to staff both aspects of the event. Please register your interest by contacting the office on 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au).

### Meeting notice:

Our next Ordinary Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, 8 June at the HOPE office, 22 Vacy St, Toowoomba starting at 3pm sharp!. If unable to attend this meeting, but would like your vote counted, please allocate your proxy vote to either Frank Ondrus, Miriam Sharp or Joy van der Wyk. Please RSVP by Wednesday, 5 June 2013 to assist with seating (please BYO chair if possible) and catering arrangements. Agenda will be emailed shortly. Copies of the last quarterly report (15/2/13) and minutes of the special Executive meeting (23/3/13) are available on request.

### Queensland activities:

Many of our envNGO colleagues are organising some great events over the next few months. Some are listed in this bulletin; whilst others appear on our website and Facebook page. Please support these events where you can.

Also, we seek your continued support for the "Plastic Bag Free Queensland" campaign ([www.qccqld.org.au](http://www.qccqld.org.au)); and the Qld Protect the Bush Alliance ([www.ptba.org.au](http://www.ptba.org.au)) campaign to preserve the integrity of our beautiful and varied national parks estate.

### Date claimer:

27-29 September - [Queensland Landcare Conference 2013](#), Warwick

### National activities:

More effort is needed to urge our politicians – local/state/federal - to support for the introduction of a national Container Deposit Scheme ([www.boomerangalliance.org.au/](http://www.boomerangalliance.org.au/)); and to "Protect the Laws that Protect the Places You Love" ([www.placesyoulove.org](http://www.placesyoulove.org)).

Please consider writing to politicians directly about these two matters; or conversely, write a *letter to the editor* expressing your reasons/concerns.

### Volunteers needed

More active volunteers – both local and remote (i.e. online) – are required to help us maintain our high levels of activity.

We are currently looking for people to assist with admin tasks; internet research and article writing; and media and marketing activities. We are also seeking expert comment from academics and the like to assist in critiquing government and industry reports. On-ground helpers are also required to assist with staffing information displays, and helping out at events.

Please contact the office on 07 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) to offer your assistance.

A fair portion of the above work would ideally be done by locals (i.e. in the Toowoomba area) because the HOPE office is in Toowoomba. However, quite a bit of the literature review, research, media and publications activity can be done via email. If you have a little bit of time to help us in any way, then contact the HOPE office on email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) or phone (07) 4639 2135.

## Letters to the Editor

On 23 April our President, Frank Ondrus, sent out an email asking our members and supporters to be more actively involved in HOPE and the activities we undertake. He asked, “Are YOU doing enough to support HOPE?” We’ve had a good response from our members to date. One of the key matters that a lot of you mentioned is need for HOPE to make more use of social media. This is an area that we are slowly but steadily starting to explore. For those of you who are interested, you can find us on Facebook! Please go to <https://www.facebook.com/Householders.Options.to.Protect.the.Environment>

We would like to share with you, some of the comments we received:

*“You are exactly on the right track with your objectives to ‘Think Globally, Act Locally’. HOPE is a shining example of how communities can come together to promote a sustainable way of living as well as taking a vested interest in the bigger picture.”*

*“I am fully supportive of all your efforts, and mention HOPE, and often forward your emails. I will aim to do more of what I have been. I wish there were many more committed groups in Australia spreading the word, encouraging and advocating. Best wishes in all you do there!”*

*“I hope we’re doing enough for future generations. You as a community leader keep us focused on emerging issues - thank you for an incredible effort. My focus is about ‘think global, act regional, empower local, foster innovation, and build capacity through lifelong learning societies’.”*

*“You are doing an amazing job – and mostly I guess it’s a thankless task. I’m sorry that I’m not more actively involved, but I really do appreciate the information you send. I choose the ones that are possible for or of interest to me. ... If there is something else I feel strongly about, I can always send a letter, sign a petition etc., and I have done this on many occasions. There is always someone who will find fault, but if you asked them to do your job, it wouldn’t happen.”*

*“Just want to say that you’re doing a great job and to keep up the good work!”*

Thank you very much to all of you who have provided feedback. This will help HOPE understand better what our readers would like to see and hear about, and where we can improve. We very much appreciate all the support we can get, whether it is in person actively participating or to sign petitions and write letters. Every little bit helps!

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## General

### [Sustainability at Work – What Can I Do?](#)

There are many things you can do while at work to help the environment and create a more sustainable workplace. Although this guide focuses on sustainability actions in an office environment, some of the tips will also apply whatever your workplace. Taking on board these practical everyday changes can add up to make a real difference—especially if they catch on with your co-workers. Our tips include simple steps you can take right now, and some that require a little more planning. None of the actions will require significant up-front costs and most will save money. Check out these six sustainable things you can do from your desk.

### [Growing Healthy Local Food: Sustainability Potential and Household Participation in Home Gardens](#)

Interesting article on the need to recognise the potential of home gardening (PDF).

### [Carbon College Tutorial Series](#)

Would you like to improve your knowledge of climate change? Have you ever wished you were better equipped to argue climate change at the dinner table – or when it was raised with friends, colleagues, clients, politicians? Media reports are often conflicting, and even if you instinctively know where you sit on the climate change spectrum – it can be difficult to articulate a convincing scientific argument to support this position because the issues are so complex. This series of ten short blogs aims to provide a simple collection of the best articles, videos, podcasts etc... from experts around the world, who explain the main aspects of climate change in order for us to gain a basic understanding of the science.

## Feature Articles

### How Going Green Could Boost Your Company's Reputation, *by Amanda Walters*

Once upon a time the reputation of a business was based on size, number of employees and the positive figures on the balance sheet. However, in recent years there has been a big environmental wake up call. With global warming an ever present threat and the severe weather warnings we have had from nature in the last decade, we have all been passed the responsibility of becoming more ecologically aware. This increased public awareness in environmental matters and being green, mean that the factors that attract consumers to a business have changed. Savvy customers are now taking a greater interest in how environmentally aware the businesses that they choose to deal with are and they may even refuse to deal with a business that doesn't appear to care about the environment.

Going green is here to stay. Everyone is now recycling, buying organic produce and becoming more aware of the impact that our lifestyles are having on the environment. To ignore this growing trend would be detrimental to the connection between your business and your customer. Going green is a way of showing that your business is aware of the changes that are happening around it and are in touch with and care about the needs of its community.

The phrase 'going green' would have once conjured up images of peace loving hippies and 'The Good Life' style of living. These days it's a much more accessible concept to put into action in our everyday lives. Like any investment, it may take an initial commitment to put some cash up front, but each step will earn you a return; some will take a few months, others you will be counting up way into retirement.

A '**green**' **transport strategy** is an essential part of any business' green credentials. Creating a green travel plan for your business will encourage employees to commute in a more environmentally friendly way. The rising cost of fuel mean that **greener company cars** have started to become an easy way to make significant savings. Encourage employees to **travel to work together** to reduce the number of vehicles used making their way into the workplace. Consider allowing employees to **work from home** to reduce overheads and commuting costs.

To make overseas business travel 'green' consider the journey. **Flying non-stop reduces emissions.** Make sure trips are planned wisely, fly to your furthest point and work your way back by train if possible. Make sure you have adequate travel insurance so any delays or cancellations do not result in expense. Try online companies such as [Budget Travel Insurance](#) for a quick insurance solution.

There are other ways that you can make positive changes within your business: make a commitment to **reduce paper waste**, encourage communications by email, use a recycled paper supplier and install recycling bins in the workplace. Check the **energy efficiency** of electrical equipment and run an **energy audit**.

All these changes have obvious positive benefits for the environment, you and your employees; but make sure that you advertise your green credentials to your customers so they can support your business.

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**Conservation Volunteers** is a national, not-for-profit, community based organisation that is dedicated to involving the community in practical conservation natural resource management programs. We welcome volunteers from across Australia and around the world, to join programs for a day, a week or longer. Conservation Volunteers work in partnership with Catchment Management Authorities, Local Councils, community groups, conservation agencies, tourism organisations, State and Federal Government departments, NGOs and individual land owners.



Conservation Volunteers involve the community in conservation projects in urban, regional and remote Australia including tree planting, seed collection, endangered species protection, weed control, mulching, flora and fauna surveys, walking track construction/maintenance, fencing and environmental monitoring. Volunteers participate as part of a team on practical conservation projects and are given induction and training on all conservation tasks undertaken, along with safety training and supervision.

The Brisbane office run projects each day of the week (Monday to Friday), and we're always looking for new and enthusiastic volunteers to help us out. To register your interest, please contact Jo in the Brisbane office: Telephone: (07) 3399 5761; Mobile: 0428 934 199; Email: [brisbane@conservationvolunteers.com.au](mailto:brisbane@conservationvolunteers.com.au); Website: [www.conservationvolunteers.com.au](http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au)

## Queensland News

### [Natrasha Turtle's Target Road Trip](#)

Healthy Waterways and [TARGET AUSTRALIA](#) have joined forces to spread the word about plastic pollution impacts on our waterways and marine life. Healthy Waterways' [PLASTIC POLLUTION REVOLUTION ICON](#), Natrasha Turtle, will be visiting Target Stores across South East Queensland. Check out Natrasha's road trip schedule and be sure to come and learn more about the impacts of plastic. Natrasha will also be encouraging people to vote in the [HEALTHY WATERWAYS PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD](#).

### [Energy saving ideas for business](#)

Saving energy in your business can significantly reduce your operating costs and your impact on the environment. Understanding your energy use and taking steps to become more energy efficient can benefit your business in a range of ways. Saving energy will help your business cut carbon emissions, reduce costs and enhance your image. Energy efficiency and conservation should be a part of your business planning. There are many low-cost steps that businesses can take to start saving energy now, as well as more detailed actions that can happen over time. This guide provides energy saving tips and Queensland Government programs to help your business save energy and adopt energy-efficient practices.

### [Waste management tips for business](#)

By encouraging reuse, recycling and resource recovery in your business, you can reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfill. Reducing your business's waste can save you money, and benefit the environment.

## National News

### [De-extinction a furphy](#)

There's a buzz now around bringing species back from the dead - "de-extinction." Australian researchers try to resuscitate the mouth breeding frog, though the thylacine project is on hold at the Australian Museum. Should public money be spent trying to bring extinct species back to life? Or should we accept that as evolution moves on, changing environments extinguish the species that live in those habitats? With habitat gone, would it be ethical or sensible to make a few curiosities for sideshows or zoos? Is de-extinction recompense for human complicity in driving some species out of existence, or a business opportunity?

The promotion and politics of "de-extinction" uses green-washing and guilt-tripping to advance its case. De-extinction defuses the real and effective work of nurturing threatened habitats and ecological communities of animals and plants. The idea that species can be "saved" by technology diverts resources and commitment.

## World News

### [Timelapse: A fascinating but frightening look at global landscape change](#)

A project between NASA, the US Geological Survey (USGS), TIME, Google, and the CREATE Lab at Carnegie Mellon University has compiled images of Earth taken from space into an interactive time-lapse experience, revealing a comprehensive picture of our changing planet between 1984 and 2012. The [Timelapse story](#) reveals the impacts on resource use, climate change, and urbanisation, and a [selection of animated Timelapse images captured by Google](#) shows the stark changes from glacier retreat, urban and coastal expansion, mining, deforestation, and water resource over-use. To see an animation of the changes in your area, [visit Timelapse](#), click "Explore the World" in the bottom right corner of the animated story heading image, then enter your desired location and search.

### [Australia seeks to limit ocean 'geoengineering'](#)

Australia has launched a bid to stop the commercial use of a controversial "geoengineering" technique that involves dumping iron into the ocean in a bid to counter the effects of man-made climate change.

### [What Do You Think About Geo-engineering?](#)

Few members of the UK public are comfortable with the idea of injecting aerosols high into the atmosphere to help slow down climate change, a study has found. People voiced concerns that this type of approach fails to address the basic problem of increasing greenhouse gas emissions. They are also nervous about any unintended consequences of such an action. But most significantly, they say that injecting aerosols into the Earth's atmosphere raises problems of international governance and control: who would ultimately be responsible?



## Helpful Hints

### 10 Top Tips for Fuel Efficient Driving

The way you drive and the condition of your car has an impact on the amount of fuel you use. Here are a few tips to help you save fuel and money:

1. Minimise your vehicle use

Vehicles are least fuel efficient and most polluting at the start of trips and on short trips. One reason for this is that catalytic converters (which reduce air pollution emissions) do not operate properly until they have warmed up. Trips of less than five kilometres generally do not allow the engine to reach its peak operating temperature. Plan to do a number of errands in one trip rather than several trips and save both time and fuel. Try to avoid short vehicle trips by walking or cycling. This will save over a quarter of a kilogram of greenhouse gas emissions per kilometre of vehicle driving it replaces, as well as give you healthy exercise.

2. Drive in the right gear

Driving in a gear lower than you need wastes fuel, and letting the engine labour in top gear on hills and corners is also wasteful. In a manual vehicle, change up gears as soon as the car is comfortable with the higher gear but without accelerating harder than necessary. Automatic transmissions will shift up more quickly and smoothly if you ease back slightly on the accelerator once the car gathers momentum. Avoid the use of power options which drop the car into a lower gear and therefore use more fuel.

3. Drive smoothly

Stop/start driving is much less efficient and more polluting than driving at a constant speed. Avoid travelling during peak-hours and on congested roads whenever possible. Take it easy on the accelerator - more revs equals more petrol use. Drive at a good distance from the car in front so you can anticipate and travel with the flow of traffic. This avoids unnecessary acceleration and frequent repetitive braking that ends up wasting fuel. It's also far safer. If you see traffic stoppages ahead, first take your foot off the accelerator and let the engine's drop in power slow the vehicle, particularly by also changing to a lower gear. Don't continue to drive at the same speed and applying the brakes at the last minute. Getting back to cruising speed while the car is still moving uses far less petrol than stopping and then starting again.

4. Minimise fuel wasted in idling

Most cars don't need to be "warmed up" by idling before setting off. This simply wastes fuel. Start your car when you are ready to go. Once on the road, minimise fuel wasted in idling by stopping the engine whenever your car is stopped or held up for an extended period of time. By having the engine switched off, even for a short period, you will save more fuel than is lost from the burst of fuel involved in restarting the engine. The net increased wear and tear from this practice is negligible.

5. Don't Speed

Fuel consumption increases significantly over about 90 km/h. At 110 km/h your car uses up to 25 per cent more fuel than it would cruising at 90 km/h. If your car is fitted with cruise control, using it during highway driving will help to maintain a steadier speed, which will save fuel.

6. Minimise aerodynamic drag

Additional parts on the exterior of a vehicle such as roof racks and spoilers, or having the window open, increases air resistance and fuel consumption, in some cases by over 20 per cent at higher speeds. Take off roof and bike racks when not in use. If you have to use roof racks, load them carefully to help minimise wind resistance or use a streamlined roof box.

7. Look after your vehicle's tyres

Inflate your vehicle's tyres to the highest pressure recommended by the manufacture and make sure your wheels are properly aligned. Looking after your tyres will not only reduce your fuel consumption it will also extend tyre life and improve handling.

8. Use airconditioning sparingly

Air-conditioners can use about 10 per cent extra fuel when operating. However, at speeds of over 80 km/h, use of air-conditioning is better for fuel consumption than an open window as this creates aerodynamic drag. If it is hotter inside your car than outside when you start a trip, drive with the windows down for a few minutes to help cool the car before starting the air-conditioning.

9. Travel light

The more weight a vehicle carries, the more fuel it uses. Don't use your car as a mobile store room. Leave heavy items like tools and sports equipment at home when you don't need them on a trip.

10. Keep your vehicle in good condition

Keep your vehicle well-tuned and regularly maintained. Get your car serviced at the intervals specified in the manufacturer's handbook. Use the petrol that is recommended for your vehicle by the manufacturer. If you use regular unleaded in a car designed to run on premium unleaded you can expect slightly less performance and fractionally higher consumption. Using premium unleaded petrol in a car designed for regular unleaded may give better fuel consumption in some newer vehicles but it is unlikely to offset the extra cost of the fuel.

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## Household Cleaning Recipes

from the Self Sufficiency Shoppe - [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au)

### Non-toxic Detergent Alternative

Detergents are the most dominant chemical in our life. We come into contact with it many times a day in the form of shampoos, dish detergent, laundry detergent, shower gel, liquid hand washes, household cleaners, and more. Soap is a less toxic environmentally friendly alternative. Transform a bar of soap into a versatile soap liquid mix that will replace all your detergent-based products:

### Economical Soap Liquid Mix:

One bar of soap will make 20 litres (2 buckets) of detergent alternative.

1. Grate one bar of soap. Put one half in one 9 litre bucket. Put the other half in another bucket.
2. Add ½ cup washing soda\* and 2 litres of boiling water to each bucket. Stir both buckets until mixture has dissolved.
3. Top each bucket up to full with water. Leave to cool.

How to use: 1 cup per full wash tub (for clothes washing) or use as a detergent alternative for all other cleaning tasks: dishes, floors, walls, mats/carpets, hair shampoo, hand wash, shower wash, etc.

*\*Sodium carbonate is a water softener available from supermarkets or use bicarb soda as an alternative*

### Carpet Deodoriser in recycled jar

Three-quarter fill a clean medium-sized jar with bicarbonate soda. Add 6 drops eucalyptus or lavender oil. Apply lid. Shake well to blend. Leave 24 hours for the perfume to permeate the bicarbonate soda. Punch holes into the lid of the jar to form a sprinkle-top container.

To Use: Sprinkle onto the carpet area, focusing specifically on areas that require extra deodorising.

Leave 30 minutes – then vacuum or brush off.

(From e-Booklet No. 9 Amazing Bicarb!)



### Eco Friendly Heating

Heating options, like installing reverse cycle air conditioning and under-floor heating require significant investment and might not be appropriate if you are renting or strapped for cash. We have researched your heating options to help you keep warm and maximize the efficiency of your heater.

## Resources

### Websites



#### [Green Renters](#) guide

Renting a house? You can still do your bit for the environment and live sustainably. Lots of hints and tips on sustainable living in rental accommodation.

### Book Reviews and Reports

[National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme – a guide for householders](#) fact sheet

[Samford Valley](#) community project report

“The Samford Valley is considered by some as one of the few ‘green lungs’ of South East Queensland and its community has always embraced the need to be environmentally friendly.”



#### [Living Smart program – Creating Sustainable Communities](#)

[Living Smart](#) is an award-winning program that helps you live a more sustainable lifestyle. Knowledge, skills and practical tools are obtained over 6–8 weeks for you to take action in your own home and community to improve both your quality of life and reduce your environmental impact.

Topics include simple living, water, power, waste, gardening for biodiversity, gardening for food production, transport, healthy you, healthy home, and community. You can [participate in a course](#) in your local area, or if there are no courses near you, [consider hosting one](#).

*Remember, you CAN make a difference!*

*Think before you print! 1 ream of paper = 6% of a tree and 5.4 kg CO2 in the atmosphere; 3 sheets of A4 paper = 1 litre of water*

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