



Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

PO Box 6118 – Clifford Gardens, TOOWOOMBA QLD 435

(22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350)

Ph 07 4639 2135; Email: office@hopeaustralia.org.au

Website: www.hopeaustralia.org.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Householders.Options.to.Protect.the.Environment

ABN 48 036 173 161

HOPE E-news Bulletin 2024 #06 --- June 2024

The following items have been gathered 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. Deadline for articles is 15th day of the month.

Editorial

Welcome to the June issue of the newsletter! In this edition, we focus on recycling with information on Containers for Change scheme and Planet Ark. In Queensland news, we learn about Southern Queensland Landscapes in the Southern Queensland region and beyond. This edition also explains and explores genetic modification. We also learn about International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), promoting adherence to and implementation of the United Nations nuclear weapon ban treaty.

Kind regards,

Nina Stick, Newsletter Editor – HOPE Inc.

2024 Environmental Observances

June

3 [World Bicycle Day | United Nations](#)

5 [World Environment Day | United Nations](#)

7 [World Food Safety Day | United Nations](#)

8 **HOPE quarterly Ordinary Meeting**

8 [World Oceans Day | United Nations](#)

17 [World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought | United Nations](#)

29 [International Day of the Tropics | United Nations](#)

July

11 [World Population Day | United Nations](#)

29 [International Day against Nuclear Tests | United Nations](#)

August

9 [International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples | United Nations](#)

19 [World Humanitarian Day | United Nations](#)

29 [International Day against Nuclear Tests | United Nations](#)

Annual Pledge/Donation

<http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/annual-pledgedonation/>

We invite members and supporters to consider making an annual financial contribution to help cover our operating costs of approximately \$20,500 p.a.

Currently, our income is derived from project grants, fund-raising, corporate sponsorship and donations, but falls well short of our requirements.

Your financial support, by way of an annual pledge or donation, will considerably help us to achieve better financial viability.

Queensland Articles



Southern Queensland Landscapes - <https://www.sqlandscapes.org.au/>

Written by Cassandra Adofo-Kissi, HOPE researcher ACT

Main Aims

Founded in 2018, Southern Queensland Landscapes are a natural resource management organisation. Southern Queensland Landscapes recognises the need for evidence based and reliable information to effectively balance productivity

and environmental health in the Southern Queensland region and beyond.

Southern Queensland Landscapes exists to coordinate, connect, and engage with land managers, community groups, First Nations people and others to work collaboratively. Learn from and engage with each other to ensure healthy and flourishing communities and landscapes.

Southern Queensland Landscapes aims to improve the lives of people in regional communities now and for the future. Additionally, to connect and support communities to take care of landscapes.

Central to the success of these objectives is to equip communities to use sustainable practices, empowered by science and technology, and supported by First Nations' knowledge, to improve all life. Southern Queensland Landscapes are an evidence-based company, with the objective to provide useful, and information and resources informed by science.

This information is provided to land managers so they can make informed decisions about the landscapes inhabited by Australian communities.

Southern Queensland Landscapes undertakes various activities to improve the condition of Australian landscapes in priority areas in collaboration with partners. These activities include providing knowledge and services targeted at achieving specific outcomes for local agricultural industries and the environment. To learn more about these knowledge and services please visit the website at <https://www.sqlandscapes.org.au/knowledge-and-services>

For more information about Southern Queensland Landscapes, please visit their website at <https://www.sqlandscapes.org.au/>

Achievements

Regional Land Partnerships- Agriculture Project

Regarding the Regional Land Partnerships- Agriculture Project, Southern Queensland Landscapes has engaged 40 Land Managers with 23 projects currently being delivered across three regions. These regions being the Murray-Darling, South-West, and Darling Downs. This project currently involves 153,192 hectares of soil health improvement projects, 8306 hectares of vegetation improvement projects and 1516 hectares of erosion mitigation projects. These projects are progressing well.

The Regional Land Partnerships-Environment Project

The Regional Land Partnerships-Environment Project, is a \$5.3 million dollar investment from the Australian Government through the National Landcare Program aimed at improving three ecosystems in Southern Queensland. These ecosystems include Brigalow and Weeping Myall remnants in the Murray-Darling Basin, Natural Grasslands and Poplar Box Grassy Woodlands of the Darling Downs and the Currawinya Ramsar Wetlands of south-west Queensland.

This project has resulted in 28,159 hectares of weed reduction and 178,980 hectares of pest control and a further 93,686 hectares of practice change.

Campaigns/Projects

Black Fish Project- Condamine Headwaters Recovery Reach

River Blackfish are experiencing severe decline across the Murray Darling Basin and are highly vulnerable to localized extinctions. Essential Habitat is located in the upper Condamine headwaters due to its cool upland. This is considered vital for maintaining the presence of blackfish in Queensland and the wider Basin area.

Southern Queensland Landscapes will work with land managers to reduce sedimentation and increase thermal habitat in waters where blackfish continue to maintain a presence.

Southern Queensland Landscapes is seeking to engage land managers in this project to perform actions on their properties to achieve the above purpose.

To find out more about this project or to get involved, please visit the website at <https://www.sqlandscapes.org.au/condamine-headwaters-recovery-reach> and register.

Agriculture Project- Regional Land Partnerships

The objectives of the Regional Land Partnerships- Agriculture Project is to improve the sustainability and productivity of agriculture across the Murray-Darling, Darling Downs and South-West regions through vegetation and soil health improvement and erosion mitigation.

It aims to 'future proof' agricultural lands in Southern Queensland by increasing production and profitability while balancing biodiversity, waterway, and landscape health.

To find out more about this project or to register and get involved, please visit the website <https://www.sqlandscapes.org.au/agriculture-project---regional-land-partnerships>

Brigalow Project-Regional Land Partnerships

This Partnership is funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. It is aimed at helping land managers to better manage their Brigalow scrub while at the same time promoting, improving threatened these Ecological Communities.

Given that mustering livestock can be problematic for land managers, the objectives of this project are to provide funding and resources to enable effective management of scrub areas that livestock access.

Funding and knowledge resources will also be provided to help minimise damage and eradicate weeds including mother of millions, tree pear and boxthorn.

To find out more about this project and to get involved please visit this website link <https://www.sqlandscapes.org.au/brigalow-project>.



National Articles



Containers for Change

- <https://www.containersforchange.com.au/qld/>

By Anna Kula, HOPE Researcher QLD

Containers for Change is a recycling scheme operating in Queensland and Western Australia since 2018. The scheme incentivises the residents of Queensland and WA to recycle plastic and glass bottles as well as aluminium cans to receive 10c in return for each bottle or container. The refund can be paid in cash (depending on the refund point), or bank payment to your bank account or that of your chosen charity. This excludes containers used for dairy products as they usually come in a different type of plastic container or bottles without a barcode as these cannot be scanned and identified by the recycling collection point scanner. The Scheme also advises you to remove bottle lids for safety reasons before depositing them.



There are several types of container refund points:

1. walk in or drive through *depots* (best for large loads) which offer cash for containers, bank account payments, a retail voucher as well as donations
2. *bag drop off* points, where members can drop off their filled bags with their member number attached to receive a bank payment once the bag is collected
3. *reverse vending machines* or *self-serve* kiosks where you may scan your member number on the Containers for Cash app to receive a bank payment for your containers
4. *book a collection* with your preferred date and time on the Containers for Change app, useful for workplaces, busy households and cafes.

QLD has 300 and WA has 263 refund points across their respective states. Return locations can be found by searching in the "Where to Return" search bar on the QLD and WA sites (<https://www.containersforchange.com.au/qld/where-to-return>, <https://www.containersforchange.com.au/wa/return-locations>).

Local depot organisers of Queensland sometimes host 'pop-up' refund points, a scheduled service held at a certain time every week, fortnight or month. Organisers may count the containers on the spot or will take the bags back to count at the depot. Refunds may be given in cash or bank payment with a valid member number.

The Scheme in WA has attached numerous baskets to general waste bins in public places where you may drop off your containers which will be delivered to a local refund point by someone else. WA also have donation points similar to bag drop off points where your refund will go directly to that local charity or not-for-profit organisation marked on the bin. Information on how to become a donation point for your charity can be found here <https://www.containersforchange.com.au/wa/become-donation-point>.



When containers are deposited at the refund collection points, they are sorted by their composition, either by an organiser or sorting machine.

The types of materials accepted are:

- plastic (PET or HDPE)
- cans (aluminium)
- glass bottles
- liquid paperboard (poppers and juice boxes)
- steel.

Once sorted your containers are then collected by the truckload and taken to a processing facility. Here containers are baled, weighed, and prepared to auction off to certified recyclers to reuse and create new products!

Once purchased the materials may be melted down and turned into new bottles, shredded and to make insulation or turned into pellets to make other plastic products such as furniture or clothing.

How does Containers for Change differ from council kerbside collection?

City councils and other local authorities offer general kerbside recycling programs to divert material from landfills and reduce litter. The Containers for Change scheme with its 'cash back' incentive has better control over what is deposited into its depots offering higher-quality products to registered recyclers. Recyclers must be a member of the Cash for Containers recycling panel and pass all the necessary checks to ensure that their business operations align with those of the scheme.

Together Containers for Change and council recycling services including kerbside collection and resource recovery centre help divert waste to landfill and contribute to the circular economy.



- <https://planetark.org/programs/recyclingnearyou>

By Anna Kula-Kaczmarksi - HOPE Researcher Qld

Planet Ark is a 30-year-old environmental organisation focused on making positive changes to "live in balance with nature...[and] help it to thrive". The not-for-profit (NFP) works with a wide variety of groups including schools, businesses, community groups and the government to inspire environmental action.

Planet Ark supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals (goals 7 affordable and clean energy, 11 sustainable cities, 12 responsible consumption and production, 13 climate action and 15 life on land) through their three key objectives:

1. Sustainable resource use for a circular economy.
2. Supporting low carbon lifestyles.
3. Connecting people with nature.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

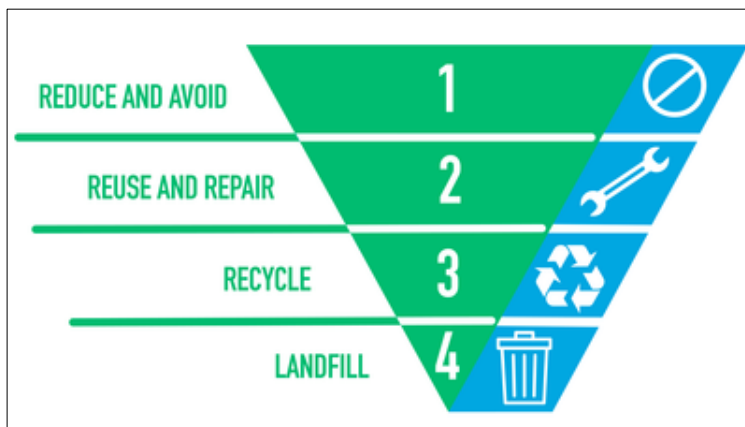


Planet Ark offer partnership opportunities to businesses to improve their environmental impact by identifying problem areas and finding ways to reduce them. The NFP also offers sustainability reviews, sustainability training and research projects to businesses, government and various industries.

The organisation runs several programs to encourage individuals, communities, schools and businesses to lessen their environmental impact. These programs include; the Australasian Recycling Label, Australian Circular Economy Hub, Batteries 4 Planet Ark, Business Recycling, Cartridges 4 Planet Ark, Make It Wood, National Recycling Week, National Tree Day, Planet Ark Power, Podcycle and Recycling Near You. Planet Ark's campaigns are sponsored by many enterprises for example Coca-Cola and Coles sponsor National Recycling week, Toyota sponsors National Tree Day and the Australian Government sponsors Podcycle. You can find out more about their programs here <https://planetark.org/programs>.

Planet Ark endorse products providing recommendations on which products to choose to help lessen your environmental impact as a consumer. Purchasing Planet Ark endorsed products supports their other environmental programs such as National Tree Day and National Recycling Week. The organisation reviews the entire fabrication process, the materials used, processing, packaging and disposal.

Planet Ark- Recycling Near You



Recycling Near You is a directory which gives location-specific 'reuse and recycle' information for individuals, businesses and local councils to use (<https://recyclingnearyou.com.au/>).

The directory provides a vast array of resources and is an educational 'go to' for what can and cannot be reused or recycled, with a recycling 'MythBusters' page and a recycling guide.

The Reuse Hub

This page guides readers to ways in which they might be able to repurpose unwanted household items. Reusing, donating, sharing, borrowing or buying second hand reduces the demand for manufacturing new products and diverts more 'stuff' from clogging up our landfills.

The page provides links to charity stores nearby, community programs and recommends reselling items on online marketplaces or giving 'upcycling' a try.

The page also has information about the 'Sharing Economy.' This community-based service allows people to pool together resources which they can all use. This is sometimes referred to as 'collaborative consumption.' Examples of this include the Australian Library of Things Network or the 'tools library' which hires tools, bikes, camping and gardening equipment to its members (<https://www.alotnetwork.org/>). KinderShare allows users to rent prams, bassinets and baby carriers (<https://www.kindershare.com/>). Toy Libraries Australia provides a toy rental service (<https://www.toylibraries.org.au/>). Similar services exist for boats, books, cars, caravans, clothes and much more!



Correct ways to recycle

This page provides information on the many ways to recycle- containers, mobile phones, paint, computers and even materials from demolished buildings!

There is also a recycled products directory aimed at educating consumers about the various products that can be made from recycled goods. Some interesting products made from recycled 'waste' materials includes rubber pavers, building boards, speed humps and belts!

A 'recycle finder' search engine is available for business interested in recycling waste nearby.



Educational resources

A myriad of other information can be found on the "Use educational resources" webpage providing information about the different types of recycling available near you.

This section has links to resources such as bin posters, a recycled products directory, container deposit schemes, FOGO, home composting, electronics and electrical recycling as well as information for councils, schools and workplaces.



This article discusses and explores genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

GM crops have caused an increase in the use of chemicals on farms. These chemicals accumulate in plants, so fruits, vegetables and grains and also in the soil.

Some countries, such as India, don't want GM based on cultural grounds. As stated in the Academia paper, "The Politics of Genetically Modified Organisms: Global Rules, Local Needs", "In addition, there is an ethics aspect that claims a violation of natural organisms' intrinsic values" (Gonzalez, 2009) and because of this some countries choose to abandon or impose stricter regulations on GMOs.

Also stated in "The Politics of Genetically Modified Organisms: Global Rules, Local Needs": "Inventors and creators of GM foods claim that biotechnology contributes to the world's problem with world hunger". "The access of poor rural people to nutritious food is also related to productivity, prices and distribution in the agricultural sector". "The factors of food security and poverty differ greatly between regions and countries". "Hunger and poverty can be rooted in bureaucratic and systematic problems". (Gonzalez, 2009) Another paper, "The GMO threat to food sovereignty: resistance and transformation, also states", "It is clear that GMO crops have not been responsible for any reliable increase in yields over equivalent non-GM crops, and have generally increased farmer's dependence on agricultural chemicals. Twenty years of claim that genetic engineering will "feed the world" by making crops more resilient and healthier have time and again been proven false." (Tokar, 2014) Another point are the consequences of Roundup Ready soybeans for conventional and organic soybeans. "That's another very important point in transgenic agriculture, which leads to bio-uniformity, which is another danger for food security. GM soybeans have practically made conventional and organic soybeans disappear, because they are contaminated and their prices have declined drastically." "The lack of diversity of plant species prevents resistance to disease" (Robin, 2008) also affecting food security.

There is a coordinated national set of policies regarding GM food and fibre products in Australia but it is unsatisfactory and poorly regulated, and the policies tend to be pro-GMO. The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator oversees the release of GMOs in Australia. "The Australian Government will not regulate the use of gene-editing techniques in plants, animals and human cell lines that do not introduce new genetic material. The decision, announced on **10 April**, is the result of a review of the country's gene technology regulations." (Mallapaty, 2019)

References

- (Gonzalez, Ximena, 2009) "The Politics of Genetically Modified Organisms: Global Rules, Local Needs". Academia (99+) [The Politics of Genetically Modified Organisms: Global Rules, Local Needs | Ximena Gonzalez - Academia.edu](#)
 - (Mallapaty, Smriti, 23 April, 2019) "Australian gene-editing rules adopt 'middle ground'". Nature [Australian gene-editing rules adopt 'middle ground' \(nature.com\)](#)
 - (Robin, Marie-Monique, 2008) [The world according to Monsanto. Pollution, Politics and Power. An investigation into one of the world's most controversial companies. Spinifex Press.](#)
 - (Tokar, Brian, 2014) "The GMO threat to food sovereignty: resistance and transformation". The Global Food System: Issues and Solutions, W. Schanbacher, ed Academia (99+) [The GMO threat to food sovereignty: Science, resistance and transformation | Brian Tokar - Academia.edu](#)
-

International Articles

ICAN – International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons



ICAN (www.icanw.org) is a coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) promoting adherence to and implementation of the United Nations nuclear weapon ban treaty. It is headquartered in Switzerland. It has 652 partner organizations spread across 106 countries.

On the 7th July 2017 – after a decade of advocacy by ICAN and its partners – the UN adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The treaty entered into force on the 22 January 2021. For its advocacy and campaigning, ICAN was awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize.

To date, 93 countries are State Signatories; 70 of which have ratified it. This means that these countries are prohibited from developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, transferring, possessing, stockpiling, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons, or allowing nuclear weapons to be stationed on their territory. It also prohibits them from assisting, encouraging or inducing anyone to engage in these activities.

If a nation possesses nuclear weapons, it may join the treaty, so long as it agrees to destroy them in a legally-binding, timely manner. Similarly, a nation that hosts another's nuclear weapons may join, so long as a process is agreed for those weapons to be removed.

In addition, signatories must also provide assistance to all the victims of the use and testing of nuclear weapons - especially women, children and indigenous peoples; and, to take measures for the remediation of contaminated environments.

ICAN was founded in Australia in 2007. Australia is not one of the signatories – despite not having nuclear weapons of its own – and has caused much controversy with its decision to join the US and UK in an alliance to purchase a new generation of nuclear submarines.

Currently, there are 13,080 nuclear warheads spread across the world. The following are countries that still hold nuclear weapons (listed in number of warheads):

- Russia – 5,889, USA – 5,224, China – 410, France – 290, UK – 225, Pakistan – 170, India – 164, Israel – 90 and North Korea – 30

The following countries host U.S. nuclear weapons:

- Turkey – 20, Italy – 35, Belgium – 15, Germany – 15 and Netherlands – 15

Belarus is thought to host Russian nuclear weapons.

None of the above countries have joined the TPNW.

The rationale of holding a nuclear arsenal is that of Mutually-Assured Destruction (MAD). Having a nuclear arsenal and knowing that your enemies also have such an arsenal means that no-one is stupid enough to actually give the order to launch nuclear weapons because they would know that a nuclear retaliation would occur.

Whilst the threat of an actual nuclear confrontation between the major holders of nuclear weapons in Europe seems to have diminished for the present, it is possible that a war between China and /or North Korea and the USA, Australia, UK and others might occur, which could turn nuclear. A number of flashpoints in Asia and the Middle East could potentially turn nuclear as several of the key stakeholders are nuclear-armed:

- *India and Pakistan* along their disputed border regions
- *India and China* along their disputed border regions
- *North Korea* and its relations with South Korea and Japan
- *China* and its relationship with Taiwan
- *China* and its expansion into the South China Sea and Philippine region
- *Israel* being surrounded by Islamic countries who have an inherent distrust of the Jewish state. The ongoing *Israeli-Palestinian* conflict in Gaza is a destabilizing force that has the potential to widen the conflict; already, the *US* and *UK* have been involved in strikes against (Iranian-backed) rebels in Yemen, and *Iran* and *Pakistan* have engaged in strikes against one another.
- *Russia* and its relationship with some of the former Soviet states in Asia. This is especially so given the actions in *Ukraine*.

In addition, there is a concern that 'rouge' or terrorist elements will obtain nuclear material and use it for their own warped agenda. The fear is that such a group could carry out a Twin Towers-style attack in the future, but with nuclear (or, indeed, chemical or biological) material.

The other problem is that not all countries are particularly open with their various energy and weapons programmes, and what they hold. Iran's nuclear energy programme is causing particular concern over its alleged research into manufacturing nuclear weapons due its uranium enrichment and plutonium production. The International Atomic Energy Authority (IAEA) monitors these activities but has not always been provided with full and unrestricted access to facilities and documentation.

The problems that the IAEA have had with Iran bring into the spotlight another issue: how open and trustworthy will particular countries be with their civilian nuclear and other programmes? The invasion of Iraq due to Saddam Hussein's supposed refusal to be open about Iraq's nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and that the 'intelligence' agencies stated that there 'must' have been such materials left in Iraq as the figures that they had didn't correlate. The invasion and subsequent search uncovered very little in the way of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons.

The above digression shows that the work of ICAN is by no means over, and that ICAN and its partners need to work to convince countries that currently have nuclear weapons that they are no longer needed. This requires a truly significant change in mindset of leaders of the 'Nuclear Club.' This is especially difficulty due to the dichotomy between the major capitalist nuclear members (USA; France and UK) and the three main communist regimes (Russia, China and North Korea). Unfortunately, leaders of all three communist regimes play hardline politics and, as such, cause concern in the major capitalist countries, which continue to modernize their own offensive and defensive capabilities to 'counter' these threats.

With the release of the film *Oppenheimer*, a renewed interest in the development of the atomic programme has occurred. As the film points out, Oppenheimer himself campaigned against the further development and use of nuclear weapons; and was penalized by the American establishment for doing so (coupled with his earlier links to socialist and communist parties).

Can the public enthusiasm for *Oppenheimer* be harnessed to ensure an acceleration of nuclear disarmament?

The challenge of ICAN and its partners is to encourage dialogue and openness between the members of the 'Nuclear Club.'

(Written by Jason Dingley, HOPE Media Officer, Vic)

