

ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 29 August 2023

FORTHCOMING AEBN EVENTS



[AEBN WEBINARS]

- [SERIES 1 to Dangerous Goods, Hazardous Substances and GHS](#)

Covering: Regulatory framework, Identification, Classification, SDSs and Labelling

10.00am to 1.45pm (AM Half Day)
25 October 2023

- [SERIES 2 to Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances](#)

Covering: Rules and practical applications for the safe Storage & Handling and Transport

10.00am to 1.45pm (AM Half Day)
25 October 2023

FEDERAL

Review of NGER legislation by Climate Change Authority:

Comment sought

The [Climate Change Authority](#) is currently reviewing the [National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007](#) (NGER Act) and seeks your views on the key themes in this year's NGER review. The key themes are:

- NGER scheme coverage, including sectoral coverage and thresholds

- fugitive methane measurement, reporting and verification
- transparency and data publication
- confidentiality and Section 25
- administration and compliance.

The Climate Change Authority is an independent statutory authority established under the [Climate Change Authority Act 2011](#) to provide expert advice to the Australian Government on climate change policy. Every 5 years, the Authority is required to conduct a review of the NGER legislation. The Authority is currently conducting its second review of the NGER Act. This review will focus on the NGER scheme, recognising the Safeguard Mechanism has been through a significant reform process. The review is due to the Federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy before 31 December 2023.

Please provide feedback via the [survey](#) by 11.59pm (AEST) **Thursday 31 August**. For enquiries, please contact consultation@climatechangeauthority.gov.au.

Australia's Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Quarterly Update

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has released the latest [Quarterly Update of Australia's National Greenhouse Gas Inventory: March 2023](#).

The report shows emissions were 465.9 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in the year to March 2023. This is relatively flat compared with the previous year, with emissions

estimated to be up 0.1% (0.3 Mt CO₂-e).

The trend over the last 12 months reflects movement across the sectors, including:

- Ongoing reductions in electricity emissions (down 3.9%; 6.3 Mt CO₂-e) as renewable energy uptake continues to displace fossil fuel power sources;
- Decreased fugitive emissions (down 1.1%; 0.6 Mt CO₂-e), reflecting a fall in coal production of 4.6%;
- Decreased emissions from stationary energy (excluding electricity) (down 0.8%; 0.9 Mt CO₂-e), driven primarily by decreased activity in the manufacturing sector;
- Increased transport emissions (up 6.4%; 5.9 Mt CO₂-e), reflecting the ongoing recovery from COVID related travel restrictions; and
- Increased emissions from agriculture (up 3.2%; 2.6 Mt CO₂-e), returning to pre-drought levels as a result of increases in livestock populations and crop production.

Emissions in the year to March 2023 were 24.4% below June 2005 levels – the base year for Australia's 2030 Paris Agreement target.

Battery storage information to accompany Small-Scale Technology Certificates (STCs)

As businesses and households try to lower energy costs, small-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) systems with battery storage are becoming increasingly

popular.

When installed, battery storage systems form a critical part of a complete solar PV installation. These devices and all other distributed energy resource (DER) devices connected to the National Electricity Market must be updated in the Australian Market Energy Operator's (AEMO) [DER Register](#).

The Clean Energy Regulator encourages participants to supply battery storage data when applying for small-scale technology certificates (STCs).

While batteries are not eligible for STCs, battery data informs safety, grid management and product recalls. Electrical incidents with solar PV and battery storage systems while rare, are serious. System location and make-up is important for emergency services to manage electrical incidents and the security and operation of the electricity grid.

STC claims submitted with battery storage information also contributes to the [postcode data](#) collected under the Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme (SRES). This data is a key source of information for solar PV and battery storage installations across Australia, its completeness and availability are valued by industry. It is also used by AEMO and other industry bodies to understand PV and battery uptake.

Further details are now available for [Battery storage and the Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme](#).

Large-scale renewable energy target market data for July 2023: Released

The Clean Energy Regulator has released the [Large-scale Renewable Energy Target market data](#) for July 2023. The highlights include:

- 188 MW of capacity was approved for LGC generation in July, bringing the total approved in 2023 to 1,138 MW. Approvals in July included:

- Dulacca in QLD with a capacity of 180 MW.

Exposure Draft on Recycling and Waste Reduction (Export – Paper and Cardboard) Rules 2023:

Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is seeking your views on the [Exposure Draft of the Recycling and Waste Reduction \(Export – Paper and Cardboard\) Rules 2023](#).

The Department has drafted the rules based on advice from industry experts and key stakeholders. They aim to strengthen the protection of our environment, while allowing Australia to capture the economic value of our waste.

Your feedback is expected to assist the Department to understand how the draft rules will affect exporters and the recycling industry and inform the appropriate settings for the final Rules.

The Department intends to use your feedback to inform the final version of the rules, that is expected to be finalised by the end of 2023. It is expected that the Paper and Cardboard Rules will come into effect on 1 July 2024.

To provide your views, please read the draft Recycling and Waste Reduction (Export – Paper and Cardboard) Rules 2023 and provide your views using the [survey](#) by 11 September 2023.

Australia Carbon Credit Units Review Discussion Paper:

Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water seeks feedback on the [ACCU Review Discussion Paper](#) that focuses on how to implement recommendations about improving the transparency of the ACCU scheme.

On 9 January 2023, the government released the Independent Review of Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCU) report. The government accepted in principle all 16 recommendations. The Review found that the ACCU Scheme is sound and recommended some changes around transparency and information sharing to ensure the Scheme's integrity.

Your feedback is intended to help inform the policy and legislative reforms deliver benefits for ACCU scheme participants and the carbon market.

Please read the Discussion paper and provide your response to the consultation questions in the Discussion paper via the [survey](#) by 10.00am AEDT 3 October 2023. For enquiries, please contact ACCUScheme@dceew.gov.au.

Register of Solar Water Heaters: Updated

The Clean Energy Regulator has released Version 49 of the [register of solar water heaters](#) that came into effect on 16 August 2023.

The register lists solar water heater and air source heat pump models that are eligible for small-scale technology certificates (STCs) under the [Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme](#).

New Chair for Reef 2050 Advisory Committee (RAC):

Expressions of Interest

The Federal and QLD governments are looking for a new independent Chair for the [Reef 2050 Advisory Committee \(RAC\)](#). The Committee facilitates engagement with industry and the broader community on strategic matters related to the Great Barrier Reef. The Committee has a specific focus on the Australian and Queensland governments' joint [Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan](#).

The Chair leads the Committee and reports on behalf of the members to the Federal Minister for the

Environment and Water, and QLD Minister for the Environment and Great Barrier Reef.

Please email your expression of interest to OGBRReef2050@des.qld.gov.au with your resume and 1-page letter outlining why you are suitable for the role by **5pm, Friday 15 September 2023**. Please include EOI RAC Chair in the subject line.

Australia and California to work in collaboration on climate and clean energy

The Australian and Californian governments have agreed to work together to address climate change and support clean energy transition.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed by both governments that outlines cooperation for the next five years. Through the MOU, both governments will cooperate on a range of work, including:

- clean energy
- clean transportation
- clean technologies
- nature-based solutions
- adaptation
- green finance and investment
- circular economy
- research and development
- advancing vehicle efficiency standards, and
- decarbonising the aviation industry.

The agreement also recognises the vital role of Indigenous knowledge in helping to manage the environment.

The MOU will add to the strong relationship between Australia and California. Both countries are prone to similar severe weather events and disasters such as wildfires, drought and flooding. Both countries also face similar challenges such as protecting a unique natural heritage.

Through the MOU, both governments will collaborate on policy, work together on projects, encourage public-private partnerships and exchange scientific knowledge and technical expertise.

VICTORIA

Proposed new *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Risk, Consequence and Contingency) Regulations 2023*:

Comment sought

The Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action is seeking your views on the proposed risk, consequence and contingency regulations to manage risks to essential services in the waste, recycling and resource recovery sector.

The proposed new *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Risk, Consequence and Contingency) Regulations 2023* are intended to support the implementation of a statutory risk, consequence and contingency planning framework (RCC framework) in the *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021* (Circular Economy Act) that shares the management of risks between industry and government.

The regulations will prescribe the waste, recycling or resource recovery services that are 'essential' to give effect to a duty in the Circular Economy Act to minimise risks of failure, disruption or hinderance of the service. Providers of these essential services will be required to meet this duty to reduce risk of major service disruptions.

The proposed regulations are intended to address existing gaps in Recycling Victoria's visibility of sector-wide risk planning and mitigation and will improve risk, consequence and contingency management practices by service providers.

The proposed *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Risk, Consequence and Contingency) Regulations 2023* and Regulatory

Impact Statement (RIS) are available now for comment by 12 September 2023. Your views received will be considered to finalise the regulations in November 2023.

- [Regulatory Impact Statement \(Accessible Version\)](#)

- [Regulatory Impact Statement](#)

- [Proposed Circular Economy \(Waste Reduction and Recycling\) \(Risk, Consequence and Contingency\) Regulations 2023](#)

Please provide your views via the –

- [Survey for Victorian community and other stakeholders;](#) or
- [Survey for industry, councils, Alpine Resorts Victoria and other waste contract managers.](#)

Managing Victoria's Waterways:

Comment sought

The Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action is developing a new Victorian Waterway Management Strategy to guide how waterways are managed in Victoria into the future.

The Department seeks your views on a Discussion Starter to help shape the development of the new draft Strategy. The final Strategy is expected to be released in 2025.

The Department is working closely with key stakeholders throughout the project on development of the new Strategy. The next round of formal public consultation will take place when the draft Strategy is released for public comment which is expected in 2024.

The purpose of this consultation is to:

- Provide information as to why a new Victorian Waterway Management Strategy is needed.
- Invite input into a new vision for the future of our waterways, which will help us develop the new Strategy.

- Invite early feedback on what the new Strategy needs to achieve.

Please read the [Developing the new Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Discussion Starter](#) and provide feedback by 1 September 2023.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY for Recycling / Air Quality / Timber Industry transition from native to timber harvesting

The following funding opportunities are now available:

[Recycling Modernisation Fund Plastics Technology Stream](#) – closes 4 September 2023

[Air Quality Improvement Precincts Grant Program](#) – closes 6 September 2023

[Funding for VIC timber industry businesses to transition from native timber harvesting](#) – closes 31 August 2023

[Timber Innovation Grants VIC](#) – closes 31 August 2023

NEW SOUTH WALES

Pathways to progress green hydrogen in the Hunter Valley

Research is underway by the Federal Australian Government on how green hydrogen can provide the Hunter Valley community in NSW with clean and cheaper energy.

The study will identify pathways to support measures announced by the Australian and New South Wales governments including the [Hunter Valley Hydrogen Hub](#) and [Snowy Hydro's Hunter Power Project](#).

The region includes 3 of the 5 top energy and gas users in NSW, along with large and small businesses and households. Expert advisors are working alongside these groups to find the best way forward.

Green hydrogen will:

- transition existing manufacturing activities and jobs to renewable energy
- support jobs in new manufacturing and service industries
- deliver cleaner and cheaper renewable energy for all.

The Hunter Valley is ready to help deliver Australia's ambition to be a renewable energy superpower.

Proposed area for offshore wind development off the coast of Illawarra region NSW

The NSW Government is seeking your views on the area proposed for offshore renewable energy projects, particularly offshore wind, in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of the Illawarra region in NSW.

The proposed area extends from Wombarra in the north to Kiama in the south and is at least 10km from the coast.

Australia is taking actions to meet net zero emissions by 2050 and to ensure Australia maintains a secure energy supply. Offshore wind offers a large, reliable and clean energy source for the electricity network. It plays a crucial role in transitioning from electricity supply to mainly renewables.

The Minister will consider public submissions to help inform his decision as to whether the proposed area is suitable for offshore wind development.

This proposal is a first step to seek public feedback on how communities and industry use coastal and ocean resources across the Illawarra region.

Offshore renewable energy projects can only be progressed in areas that have been declared by the Minister.

Please provide feedback by 23:59 AEDT on Monday 16 October 2023 via the online survey.

Transport Emergency Response Planning for Dangerous Goods

NSW EPA has released the [Transport emergency response planning for dangerous goods](#) that provides guidance on how to prepare a transport emergency response plan.

Transport emergency response planning is a key requirement for transporters of dangerous goods. Advance preparation increases the chance that incidents will be effectively managed and will reduce any negative impacts on the community and environment.

NSW Biosolids Regulatory Review:

Comment sought

NSW EPA is seeking your views on a new approach to regulating biosolids in NSW. Your views on the questions posed in the Biosolids Regulatory Review [Issues Paper](#) are highly valued and will inform the development of the Biosolids Regulatory Approach.

NSW EPA seeks to understand how changes to the regulation of biosolids may affect different industry sectors and businesses, and whether support is needed.

NSW EPA is consulting with:

- the community
- local councils
- Aboriginal Land Councils
- EPA licenced sewage treatment plant operators
- waste associations and contractors
- composters
- farmers and landowners
- mining operators
- research institutions

- other government agencies and jurisdictions.

Various ways that stakeholders can be involved is available [here](#).

Guideline on offsetting requirements for electricity firming infrastructure

NSW EPA has released the [Guideline on offsetting requirements for electricity firming infrastructure](#) that outlines the role of the NSW EPA as a regulator under the Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020 (EII Act) and Electricity Infrastructure Investment Regulation 2021 (EII Regulation).

It also provides guidance to long-term energy service operators on requirements they must comply with under Part 12 of the EII Regulation.

NSW EPA to undertake water testing around the Turon River

NSW EPA will conduct water sampling in the Turon River and its tributaries in the State's Central Tablelands to provide the community with information about the water quality in the area. Testing will take place in the coming weeks at recreational spots near Daylight Creek and Turon River.

This follows claims that pollutants may have spread from the old Sunny Corner mine into the surrounding waterways.

The Department of Regional NSW has invested over \$1.2 million on remediation work at Sunny Corner Mine which included earthworks aimed at reducing the generation of acid mine drainage that discharges from the underground workings.

Rehabilitation requirements for mines that have ceased operating are generally set out in the planning approval, and monitoring of rehabilitation is primarily overseen by the Resources Regulator, within the Department of Regional NSW. Sunny Corner, located on Crown Land, was first mined in the mid-1800s and was

abandoned in 1967.

NSW EPA will be working with the Department of Regional NSW to conduct sampling of the waterways to increase understanding of the water quality to inform any further remediation works that need to occur.

QUEENSLAND

Submissions on Draft End of Waste (EOW) Code - Biochar

The QLD Department of Environment and Science (DES) has developed a [Submissions on draft end of waste \(EOW\) code – Biochar](#) to allow the use of Biochar as a resource. Submissions on this [draft EOW Code](#) is to be made by 5:00pm 25 September 2023.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Growing the Recovery of Organic Waste via Food Organic and Garden Organics (Grown FOGO) Fund – SE QLD

Organic waste makes up around half of what Queenslanders throw away each week in their kerbside waste (red lid) bin. Diverting organic material from landfill presents numerous environmental and economic benefits, ranging from significant landfill methane emissions reduction to the generation of a value-added product.

The [QLD Organics Strategy 2022–2032](#) (the strategy) plans to assist with the management of organic materials better, like food and plants, from where they are made to where they are used. The goals of the strategy will be reached through the [QLD Organics Action Plan 2022–2032](#) which provides guidance to create less organic waste, cause less harm to nature and communities, reusing things more, and creating economic opportunities.

The QLD Government has committed to supporting councils, industry and community to implement the Organics Strategy and Action Plan, recognising the unique challenges faced by Queensland communities.

The Fund guidelines provide detail regarding GROW FOGO (SEQ), including eligibility and the application process.

The Growing the Recovery of Organic Waste via Food Organic Garden Organic (SE QLD) (GROW FOGO SEQ) fund will provide support to assist SE QLD (SEQ) councils to implement or expand kerbside Food Organic Garden Organic (FOGO) collection services that form part of a core waste service. The QLD Government is working to create a similar funding assistance program for non-SEQ councils.

Further details are now available via the Office of Circular Economy Waste Programs team at wasteprograms@des.qld.gov.au.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

State of the Environment Report 2023:

Scheduled Release December 2023

SA EPA is developing the State of the Environment Report 2023 (SOER 2023) which is produced every five years under the [Environment Protection Act 1993](#).

The SOER provides important information on the health of the environment in SA. It does this by:

- Providing information on the current state of the South Australian environment;
- Incorporating Aboriginal perspectives on caring for Country and Sea Country;
- Identifying significant trends and condition of environmental assets;
- Describing the key pressures that may cause environmental change;
- Including perspectives on the most important environmental risks facing South Australia;
- Summarising policies and programs to protect and improve

the environment;

- Presenting opportunities to facilitate environmental improvement.

The SOER collates information from multiple sources to assess and report on the condition of the environment in SA – to understand the pressures that are placed on the environment, what impacts these may be having on land, sea, air and inland waters, and what is being done to help protect, restore and enhance the environment for current and future generations.

Protecting the environment is a shared responsibility.

The SOER will be published in December 2023.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Recycling Modernisation Fund Plastics Technology Stream

The Federal Government is providing funding under the [Recycling Modernisation Fund Plastics Technology stream](#) to deliver national solutions for hard-to-recycle plastics.

Under the Federal Government's funding guidelines, state and territory governments apply to the Federal Government for funding on behalf of industry.

Grants of between \$1 million and \$20 million is available. Industry must contribute at least 50% of the eligible project financial costs.

SA businesses who are encouraged to apply are:

- Businesses
- research institutions (not including consultancies)
- councils and other local government-controlled organisations
- not-for-profit organisations
- Aboriginal Land Councils.

Details are now available. For further details, please Justin Lang on 0419 948 931.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY for projects that contribute to waste strategy's targets

The WasteSorted Infrastructure Grants program is an initiative of the Government of WA administered by the Waste Authority and funded through the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account.

The aim of the grants program is to support investment in recycling and processing infrastructure in WA.

Priority will be given to infrastructure projects that support recovery and reprocessing of focus materials prioritised for the 2023–24 funding round.

The *WasteSorted Infrastructure Grants guidelines 2023–24* provide further guidance on eligibility and how to apply for funding.

- Total program funding: \$1,000,000
- Grant limit: \$250,000 maximum per project

Closing date: 12 noon (WST) Monday 2 October.

[Details](#) are now available.