

ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 29 August 2024

UPCOMING AEBN EVENTS

[AEBN Workshop Webinar - Interactive]

[SERIES 1 to Dangerous Goods, Hazardous Substances/Chemicals and GHS – INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP WEBINAR](#)

COVERING: Regulatory framework, Changes to laws and requirements, Identification, Safety Data Sheets and more

10.00am to 1.45pm
18 September 2024

[AEBN Workshop Webinar]

[SERIES 2 to Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances/Chemicals – INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP WEBINAR](#)

COVERING: Safe Storage, Handling and Transport

10.00am to 1.45pm
19 September 2024

FEDERAL

Clean Energy Regulator Compliance and Enforcement Priorities 2024-25

The Federal Clean Energy Regulator (CER) has released its Compliance and Enforcement Priorities for 2024-2025.

The priorities describe the CER's compliance and enforcement focus for the year ahead. They highlight areas of actual and potential risk to the integrity of the schemes.

The [2024-2025 Compliance and Enforcement Priorities](#) focus on:

- the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme
- the Safeguard Mechanism
- the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) Scheme, and
- the Renewable Energy Target (RET) Scheme
- Greenhouse and Energy Auditors.

Full Carbon Accounting Model (FullCAM):

Comment sought

The Federal Department of the Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is consulting on the new 2024 public release version of the Full Carbon Accounting Model (FullCAM) and six associated Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme FullCAM guidelines.

The new FullCAM version contains two key updates, compared to the 2020

version:

1. Updated plantation and mallee planting calibrations; and
2. New climate data to end-2022 and a recalculated forest productivity index for all years since 2001.

The FullCAM is a calculation tool for modelling Australia's greenhouse gas emissions from the land sector. FullCAM is used in [Australia's National Greenhouse Gas Accounts](#) for the land use, land use change and forestry sectors. Results from modelling are used to produce the annual totals for Australia's National Inventory Reports. Emissions data (including from the land sector) can be found in [Australia's National Greenhouse Accounts](#).

FullCAM is also used to generate abatement estimates for vegetation Methodology Determinations (methods) under [Australian Carbon Credit Units Scheme](#), previously known as the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF).

Feedback is sought to ensure that the new public release version is functioning correctly, prior to its full launch. This version of the model is for beta testing only and is not to be used for the purpose of submitting offsets reports under the ACCU scheme.

To provide feedback on the new FullCAM version:

- read the [consultation paper](#) and relevant [draft ACCU Scheme FullCAM guideline](#) updates;
- test the 2024 FullCAM public release version by requesting access at this [link](#);
- complete the survey.

Please provide comment via the [survey form](#) by 13 September 2024.

Draft Sustainable Ocean Plan:

Comment sought

The Federal Department of the Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is seeking comment on the [draft Sustainable Ocean Plan](#) for Australia.

DCCEEW has developed the plan, that aims to provide for sustainable ocean management, to ensure:

- a healthy and resilient ocean;
- ocean industries are environmentally sustainable, socially responsible and economically prosperous; and
- inclusive and diverse decision-making processes are in place.

Engagement has been undertaken to draft the plan, which is open for comment until 13 September 2024 via the online [survey](#).

VICTORIA

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Asbestos Disposal Point Grants

Sustainability Victoria (SV) has announced that applications are now open for funding to establish Asbestos Disposal Points to increase access to waste facilities that support the safe disposal of non-friable (bonded) asbestos waste.

The Asbestos Disposal Points (ADP) Grants program will fund local government or industry to establish asbestos disposal points. The disposal points will accept small quantities (under 10 square metres) of packaged, non-friable asbestos waste from domestic customers and commercial customers for a fee. Once delivered, the asbestos will be temporarily stored before transport to an EPA Victoria licensed landfill for final disposal.

Grant recipients will be required to implement the [Guide to Developing and Managing Asbestos Disposal Points for the Temporary Storage of](#)

[Non-Friable Asbestos Waste](#). Grants of up to \$80,000 are available per project and approved projects must be completed by 30 April 2025.

The Grants program and supporting resources have been informed by an SV pilot program of three sites to test the infrastructure, systems, guidance and communication resources needed to manage an asbestos disposal point.

Applications are made via [SmartyGrants](#) and close on 3 October 2024. Information on the application process is available [here](#).

NEW GUIDELINES: New Separation distance and landfill buffer guidelines

EPA Victorian has released guidelines for [industry separation distances](#) and [landfill buffers](#).

The guidelines aim to support the making of planning decisions about land use around activities with potential offsite impacts.

The guidelines recommend larger separation distances for some activities and include new industries and activities.

[Supporting information](#) for separation distance and landfill buffer guidelines has also been released. This report provides those who use the guidelines with further information on the basis for the separation distances. It also provides the science and data used to determine these distances.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Guide for assessing partial loss of biodiversity:

Comment sought

The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is seeking feedback on the [Assessing partial loss of biodiversity values guide](#).

The Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) is a way to assess impacts on or improvements in, biodiversity under

the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme. The guide proposed is to be used by accredited assessors in applying the BAM to assess partial loss of biodiversity values.

Feedback can be provide via an [online form](#) or [email](#) by 2 September 2024.

State-wide coal mine consultation:

Comment sought

The NSW EPA is consulting on the regulation of [coal mines](#) in NSW, which are licensed activities.

The EPA progressively makes changes to licences to ensure they reflect best practice.

The consultation will complement the individual statutory five yearly reviews of coal mine licences, the majority of which are due in 2024, and provide community with a streamlined opportunity to have their say.

Feedback is sought on how EPA regulates and licences:

- Monitoring conditions;
- Reporting conditions;
- Community access to information; and
- Environment Protection Licence conditions.

Comment is sought by 5pm on 2 October 2024 via the online [survey](#) or email coal-mine-consultation@epa.nsw.gov.au.

QUEENSLAND

Performance framework for QLD's Biodiversity Strategy:

Comment sought

The QLD Department of Environment, Science and Innovation is seeking your feedback on a performance framework for Queensland's Biodiversity Strategy.

The [Conserving Nature — a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Queensland](#) (Biodiversity Strategy) was released October 2022.

A [community summary and Performance Framework for Queensland's Biodiversity Strategy Consultation Paper](#) have been prepared to assist in completing a consultation survey.

The consultation paper references the Biodiversity Strategy and the [Protecting our threatened animals and plants](#) (*Report 9:2022-23*).

The surveys, [Proposed targets survey](#) and [Performance framework survey](#) can be completed by setting up an In the Loop account (refer to links for details).

Alternatively, a written submission can be sent via email to biodiversitystrategy@des.qld.gov.au (using the subject line: Submission – Consultation Performance Framework – [your name]) or via mail to GPO Box 2454, Brisbane, Queensland, 4001.

Submissions close at 5pm on 11 September 2024.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

New office waste guide for SA government

Green Industries SA has launched the [Government office waste: Strategy and better-practice guide](#).

The guide provides advice to government agencies on improving waste management and recycling practices in government offices and administration facilities.

The guide establishes a standard for waste and recycling in government offices and sets out 3 key targets:

- removal of under-desk waste bins by 1 July 2025;
- minimum-standard services implemented by 1 July 2026; and
- 90% diversion by weight from landfill by 1 July 2027.

The measures and targets set out in the guide aim to support South Australia's transition to a circular economy by minimising waste and increasing recycling and resource recovery.

Consultation on EIS for a proposed battery anode material facility:

Comment sought

The SA Department for Housing and Urban Development is [consulting](#) on a development application to construct a Battery Anode Material (BAM) Facility at Robinson Road, Waterloo Corner. The facility aims to produce purified spherical graphite, a key material in the manufacture of lithium-ion batteries used in electric vehicles.

The project proponent [Renascor Resources](#) has prepared an [Environmental Impact Statement](#) (EIS) and feedback is sought for consideration by the [State Planning Commission](#) when making a recommendation to the Minister for Planning.

Feedback closes on 27 September 2024 and can be provided via the online [survey](#).

Independent Review of Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020:

Comment sought

Green Industries SA is consulting on a review of the [Single-use and Other Plastic Products \(Waste Avoidance\) Act 2020](#) to draft a recommendation report to the SA Deputy Premier.

The [Discussion Paper – Single-use and Other Plastic Products \(Waste Avoidance Act\)](#) provides information and poses questions on several issues on which input is sought.

The review is seeking to:

- determine the effect of the current legislation on the community; and

- identify opportunities to improve the legislation ensuring it remains fit-for-purpose and meets evolving challenges.

The Act commenced on 1 March 2021, and was the first state legislation banning single-use and other plastic items. As part of the legislation, an independent review must be conducted after 3 years.

The [Terms of Reference](#) have been developed that includes identifying opportunities to update definitions, address harmful chemicals, mandate reusable food and beverage containers in specific settings and/or large public events as well as consider opportunities to harmonise with other jurisdictions' legislation across Australia and New Zealand.

Please provide feedback via the online [survey](#) by 11 October 2024.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Environment reforms introduced to Parliament

On 15 August 2024, the WA Government introduced to Parliament significant reforms to WA's environmental approval laws.

The [Environmental Protection Amendment Bill 2024](#) is intended to overhaul the state's environmental approval laws in response to the Vogel-McFerran Review - which found approvals can be overly complex, time consuming and costly without benefiting the environment.

The most significant reform proposed in the new legislation is that other Government regulators will be allowed to issue their own approvals ahead of WA EPA issuing an environmental impact assessment. Under the current system, other government regulators cannot consider approvals for projects until WA EPA has finished its assessment which often results in project delays.

The new parallel decision-making policy would enable proponents to obtain other approvals while their environmental impact is assessed. Projects will still need WA EPA approval to begin, and penalties for

carrying out works without approval are to double - with fines of up to \$125,000 for an individual, and \$250,000 for a body corporate.

Under the new laws, the Environment Minister will provide WA EPA with a 'Statement of Expectation', helping it to better understand the Government's priorities - including the green energy transition, housing delivery, job creation and protection of WA's unique environment.

The membership of the independent WA EPA board will also be expanded to between five and nine members, who will be required to have skills or experience in specific disciplines important to the functions of WA EPA.

The reforms also remove the right of appeal against a decision made by WA EPA not to assess a project, with most projects in this case subject to other forms of rigorous environmental regulation. WA EPA will instead publish a summary of reasons for its decision.

Expression of Interest (EOI) for EPA Appointments as a Members

In anticipation of changes to the Environmental Protection Act 1986 (EP Act), the WA Minister for Environment is seeking expressions of interest in appointment as a Member of the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

The proposed amendments to the EP Act are expected to be finalised around October 2024 and will expand the WA EPA board and change the terms of appointment.

One of the WA EPA members will be appointed as the Chair, with duties of the Chair performed on a full-time basis. The duties of the Deputy Chair are performed on a part-time basis.

The Authority's functions are set out in Section 16 of the EP Act and include conducting environmental impact assessments, formulating environmental policies, and advising the Minister on environmental matters generally.

The EP Act requires that members be appointed on account of their interest in, and experience of, matters affecting the environment generally. The pending amendments to the EP Act will also require that members be appointed on account of their knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications in one or more of the following fields:

- environmental science;
- natural resource and biodiversity management;
- waste management and pollution control;
- industry, commerce or economic development;
- public administration, governance, regulation or law; and
- regional areas and issues.

Expressions of interest close 5pm on 6 September 2024, and should be sent to:

Minister for Environment
Level 8, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
West Perth WA 6005
Email:
Minister.Whitby@dpc.wa.gov.au([link sends email](#))

New online system for resources approvals to launch soon

The WA Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) will soon launch a new digital solution to improve assessment efficiency and customer experience when lodging environment applications for resources projects.

The new platform, Resources Online, will eventually replace the current Environmental Assessment and Regulatory System (EARS) to provide a single user portal.

DEMIRS expects to launch the portal in a staged approach from the end of September, with the first release being Programme of Works applications.

E-waste to landfill ban factsheets:

Released

Following the 1 July 2024 ban on e-waste to landfill in WA, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has released a range of fact sheets to support understanding the ban.

The [Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery \(e-waste\) Regulations 2024](#) prohibit the disposal of regulated e-waste to landfill by e-waste service providers, significant business or public entities, and landfill operators; or those who collect, aggregate, sort, recycle, process, store and dispose of e-waste.

Households are not obligated under the ban; however, they are encouraged to take regulated e-waste to drop-off points (which can be found via [Recycle Right\(link is external\)](#)) and not to dispose of e-waste in kerbside bins.

The published fact sheets are:

- [E-waste ban E-waste service provider overview](#)
- [E-waste ban Overview](#)
- [E-waste ban Significant entity overview](#)
- [E-waste ban Estimating the weight of e-waste](#)
- [E-waste ban Reporting requirements of e-waste service providers](#)

WA Compliance priorities 2023-24 amended and released

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has amended and released its November 2023 [Compliance Priorities 2023-24](#) report.

The report outlines the Department's compliance monitoring subprograms and priorities for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

It has been amended and re-published to address the December 2023 exemption of Alcoa of Australia Limited from compliance with s.41A of the

Environmental Protection Act 1986
which would otherwise prohibit Alcoa
from implementing a proposal under
assessment by the Environmental
Protection Authority (EPA).
