

ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 16 September 2025

UPCOMING AEBN EVENTS

[AEBN Workshop Webinar] [SERIES 1 to Dangerous Goods, Hazardous Substances/Chemicals and GHS](#) (Interactive)

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

10.00am to 1.45pm
17 Sept 2025

[AEBN Workshop Webinar] [SERIES 2 to Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances/Chemicals](#) (Interactive)

*Covering: Safe Storage, Handling
and Transport*

10.00am to 1.45pm
18 Sept 2025

- used
- disposed of
- recovered through recycling or reuse.

The report tracks how plastics are used, disposed of and recovered through recycling or reuse.

This release delivers on a key commitment under the National Waste Policy Action Plan to provide accessible and up-to-date waste data. Users can also explore historical data from earlier reports, with some records reaching back 25 years.

The report is designed to support more informed consumer choices, investment decisions, and policy development.

Findings show progress in increasing national plastic recovery rates, but highlight that more effort is needed to reach Australia's goal of doubling the circularity of the economy by 2035.

By making this data widely available, the Department reaffirms its commitment to reducing plastic waste and boosting recycling.

targets and three 'enablers of change' to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. This Strategy is Australia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, developed as part of Australia's commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Department is now developing an implementation plan with state and territory governments to guide action across governments, business, non-government organisations and communities. The plan is intended to set the strategic direction for collective action, highlight current efforts, identify areas for further work, and outline how progress will be monitored and reported.

Your views are critical as the Department is seeking to know your priorities for each target and enabler of change, the actions you're already taking, and where more effort is needed.

Have your say by reading the [discussion paper](#) and complete the [online survey](#), before **11:59 pm AEDT, Wednesday 15 October 2025**.

FEDERAL

Plastic report released

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has released [The Australian Plastics Flows and Fates Reporting \(APFF\)](#) for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial years. The APFF has been undertaken since 2000. The report provides information on how plastics are:

Implementing Australia's Strategy for Nature 2024-2030: Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is seeking your feedback on how Australia can achieve its ambitious biodiversity targets.

In 2024, the Department released [Australia's Strategy for Nature 2024-2030](#), which sets six national

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000 to sunset: Consultation paper released for comment

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has advised that the current Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000 (EPBC Regulations) will sunset (expire) on 1 April 2026 and must be

remade to ensure it continues to support the operation of the EPBC Act. A [consultation paper](#) has been released for feedback.

The EPBC Regulations are being remade in their current form, with only minor corrections to maintain accuracy and currency. This remake is separate from broader reforms of the EPBC Act.

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) is Australia's key national environmental law, supported by the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000 (EPBC Regulations).

The EPBC Act provides protection for Australia's unique plants, animals, habitats and places, including heritage sites, wetlands, marine areas and other nationally significant matters.

The EPBC Regulations underpin the Act by guiding environmental assessments and approvals, enforcement, administrative processes, conservation activities and the management of Commonwealth reserves.

The Department seeks feedback by **5:00pm (AEST) Wednesday, 1 October 2025** on the proposed corrections, suggest further updates, and share comments through the [online survey](#). Enquiries can be made by email to EPBCregulations@dcceew.gov.au

This is a decrease of 1.4% (6.5 Mt CO₂-e) compared with the previous year.

At the sector level, year-on-year changes include:

- Emissions from stationary energy (excluding electricity) decreased by 2.7%; 2.7 Mt CO₂-e. This reflects decreased combustion activity during the period;
- Emissions from industrial processes and product use decreased by 4.7%; 1.5 Mt CO₂-e. This was due to technology and production changes in the chemicals and metals sectors;
- Fugitive emissions fell by 2.2%; 1.0 Mt CO₂-e. This was driven by new carbon capture and storage activities and reduced production from both surface and underground mines;
- Agricultural emissions decreased by 1.3%; 1.0 Mt CO₂-e. This was mainly due to lower grazing cattle and sheep numbers;
- Emissions from electricity decreased by 0.5%; 0.8 Mt CO₂-e. This reflects record renewables generation and the ongoing displacement of coal; and
- Transport emissions rose by 0.5%; 0.5 Mt CO₂-e. This increase was mainly due to increased consumption of road diesel and domestic aviation fuel.

Emissions in the year to March 2025 were 28.1% below June 2005 levels (the base year for Australia's 43% reduction by 2030 target under the [Paris Agreement](#)).

Draft guidelines for Research and Demonstration (R&D) licences for offshore renewable energy projects: Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is seeking your feedback on the [Draft Research and Demonstration Licence Guideline](#) and [Registrar Forms Guidance](#).

A Research and Demonstration (R&D) licence allows developers to trial and test emerging offshore renewable energy technologies—such as solar, wave and tidal generators—as well as to research offshore renewable energy resources.

The draft guidance documents are designed to help prospective licence holders and stakeholders understand the application process and how applications will be assessed against the merit criteria under the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021* and the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Regulations 2022*.

To provide your feedback, please read the draft guideline, review the draft Registrar Forms Guidance, and complete the [online survey](#). Feedback will be used to refine and finalise the guidance before licence applications open.

Submissions close **Friday, 3 October 2025**.

Latest quarterly update of Australia's National Greenhouse Gas Inventory: March 2025: Released

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 2025](#) that shows emissions were 440.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂-e) in the year to March 2025.

Australia and Germany hydrogen ties under H2Global

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has announced consultation on the Australia-Germany H2Global Joint Tender and seeks your feedback on the proposed design of the joint tender outlined in the [consultation paper](#).

The Joint Tender is expected to support the emerging renewable

hydrogen industry through a double-sided auction scheme.

The scheme will be delivered by the Hydrogen Intermediary Company (HINT.CO). It is to:

- match Australian renewable hydrogen production with demand in Europe, and
- help to bridge the cost gap between the production cost and sales price.

The joint tender aims to:

- bring forward the development of renewable hydrogen projects
- build renewable hydrogen supply chains between Australia and Europe.

The Australian and German governments are each providing €200 million to support the scheme. Through this investment, the Australian government aims to:

- secure long-term offtake and bring forward investment decisions for Australian renewable hydrogen projects,
- give Australian hydrogen producers the opportunity to export to some of the world's largest renewable hydrogen markets
- help to bridge the cost gap between the production cost and sales price
- support a Future Made in Australia.

The joint tender builds on the existing Australia-Germany Energy and Climate Partnership. It is expected to contribute to both countries' national hydrogen targets.

[Feedback](#) is sought by **30 September 2025**.

Expression of interests to join Stakeholder Advisory Committee for the Snowy Water Inquiry Outcomes Implementation Deed (SWIOD) review

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is inviting expressions of interest to join the Stakeholder Advisory Committee for the Snowy Water Inquiry Outcomes Implementation Deed (SWIOD) review.

The committee is expected to provide perspectives on values, issues and management options relevant to the review.

Expressions of interest can be from representatives within the environment and catchment groups, community organisations, water users, industry, local government and academia.

Applicants should demonstrate:

- representation of a group or organisation with a genuine interest in the SWIOD review, consistent with the [Terms of Reference](#)
- the ability to provide advice on behalf of their stakeholder group
- a commitment to constructive, respectful information sharing and deliberation
- availability to engage in the committee's work.

A [position description](#) is now available.

Applications close 5.00pm AEST, Friday 12 September 2025. Expressions of interest (maximum two pages) should be emailed to SnowyDeedReview@dcceew.gov.au.

New Ambassador for Climate Change announced

The Federal Government has appointed Will Nankervis as the new

Ambassador for Climate Change. Mr Nankervis is expected to lead Australia's international climate engagement, with a focus on the Pacific and Southeast Asia, and support Australia's bid to co-host COP31 with Pacific partners.

Mr Nankervis is a senior Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) officer and currently First Assistant Secretary of the Climate Diplomacy and Development Finance Division. His career includes serving as Ambassador to ASEAN in Jakarta, with previous roles in New York and Colombo. The Government thanks outgoing Ambassador Kristin Tilley for her leadership since 2022.

VICTORIA EPA Victoria updates Guide for Construction and Demolition Activities

In early September 2025, EPA Victoria released the updated [Civil Construction, Building and Demolition guide](#) to help the civil construction, building, and demolition industries eliminate or reduce risks to human health and the environment through good environmental practices.

The guide is particularly relevant for work involving:

- Land development
- Commercial and residential building
- Civil construction and subdivision
- Demolition and decommissioning
- Earthworks
- Maintenance, repair, and renovation of existing structures
- Other construction trades

This updated guide replaces several earlier publications, ensuring that guidance is current and consolidated. The publications it supersedes include:

- *Environmental guidelines for major construction sites* (Publication 480, February 1996)
- *Doing it right on subdivisions: Temporary environmental protection measures for subdivision construction sites* (Publication 960, September 2004)
- *Reducing stormwater pollution from construction sites* (Publication 981, May 2005)
- *Noise control guidelines (Section 2)* (Publication 1254, October 2008)
- *Noise from large residential subdivision or urban development sites* (Publication 1264, November 2008).

By following the updated guide, industry professionals can manage environmental risks more effectively, protect communities, and comply with EPA Victoria requirements.

EPA Victoria releases updated Noise Protocol

EPA Victoria has released an updated guide on the [Noise Limit and Assessment Protocol for the Control of Noise from Commercial, Industrial and Trade Premises and Entertainment Venues \(Noise Protocol\)](#). The guide is incorporated into the **Environment Protection Regulations 2021** without modification.

The Noise Protocol provides a standardized methodology for determining noise limits for new and existing commercial, industrial, and trade premises, as well as indoor and outdoor entertainment venues and events, as defined by the Regulations.

Anyone conducting a noise prediction, measurement, assessment, or analysis within a noise-sensitive area for the purposes of the **Environment Protection Act 2021** or the Regulations (excluding Part 5.3, Division 5) must follow the procedures set out in the Noise Protocol.

The protocol outlines methods for assessing the effective noise level to determine unreasonable noise under Regulations 118, 125, and 130. It also provides measurement procedures for assessing aggravated noise under Regulations 121, 127, and 131.

By following the Noise Protocol, industry and venue operators can ensure compliance with noise regulations, protect surrounding communities, and apply consistent, legally recognized methods for noise assessment.

\$45,000 penalty will go towards environment project

A North Wangaratta particle board manufacturer has been ordered by Wangaratta Magistrates' Court to pay a \$45,000 penalty to fund a local environmental project, following a 2023 incident that affected properties over a kilometre away.

The project will target woody weed removal and replanting with indigenous species around Reedy Creek, Yellow Creek, and Stamps Lane, with local groups including the North East Catchment Management Authority, Wangaratta Urban Landcare and Sustainability, Landcrew Partner, and Swamps Rivers and Ranges running the work.

The company, which processes wood chips into Medium Density Fibre (MDF) board, pleaded guilty to an EPA Victoria charge after hundreds of kilograms of fine wood fibres were discharged from a factory dryer on 25 April 2023. The fibres rained down for more than 20 minutes, affecting neighbouring properties, vehicles, and buildings, including a motel more than 1.5 km away. A neighbouring business temporarily closed due to breathing hazards.

EPA Victoria charged the company with breaching its operating licence by

discharging waste and visible emissions beyond permitted limits. The court also ordered the company to pay \$5,819 in costs and publicise the penalty locally. The environmental project is funded under provisions that allow EPA Victoria to direct penalties toward local conservation initiatives.

NEW SOUTH WALES

New Protection from Harmful Radiation Regulation: Commenced 29 August 2025

The *Protection from Harmful Radiation Regulation 2025* commenced on **29 August 2025**, replacing the 2013 Regulation. It supports the *Protection from Harmful Radiation Act 1990* and introduces stronger, risk-based controls to improve radiation safety across NSW.

The updated Regulation aligns with national and international best practice and strengthens obligations for radiation users, licence holders and regulators. The Regulation follows a comprehensive review of NSW's radiation protection framework.

Key changes include:

- **Licensing exemptions:** Refined to target higher-risk activities, with safety obligations extended to exempt users, including training, supervision and compliance with national codes.
- **Training and approval:** The EPA can now approve radiation training courses, with a course assessment fee applying.
- **Radiation management licensees:** Required to adopt a radiation management plan and comply with national codes through the Regulation, not just licence conditions.
- **Incident reporting:** Expanded to capture significant radiation incidents with accurate, timely

information.

- **Dose monitoring:** Clarified limits, approval processes for monitoring devices, and EPA powers to impose conditions.
- **Tanning ban:** A clearer ban on commercial use of UV tanning units, including restrictions on social media promotion.
- **Delegations:** Confirming regulatory responsibility for radioactive ore on mine sites rests with the Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.
- **Financial assurance:** Strengthened requirements under EPA guidelines for cost estimates and assurance provision.
- **Fees and penalties:** Updated to improve cost recovery and deter non-compliance.

All [changes](#) are now available.

Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Amendment (Waste Facility Contributions) Regulation 2025: Commenced 22 August 2025

The Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Amendment (Waste Facility Contributions) Regulation 2025 (Amending Regulation) amended the Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014 (Waste Regulation). The Amending Regulation commenced on 22 August 2025.

The amendment extends two important provisions:

- The **concessional waste levy rate** for prescribed shredder floc has been extended until **31 August 2026**. This measure provides industry with ongoing

certainty and supports the responsible management of waste materials generated through metal shredding processes.

- The **waste levy exemption for Mixed Waste Organic Outputs (MWOO)** disposal, set out under clause 21A, has been extended until **1 September 2026**. This extension allows additional time for the regulated community to adjust to evolving waste management practices while ensuring environmental protections remain in place.

Climate Change Licensee Requirements: Comment sought

The NSW EPA is seeking feedback on proposed new requirements for licensees that are large greenhouse gas emitters.

The proposed requirements will apply to facilities that emit 25,000 tonnes or more of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e) from Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions each year.

The aim is to drive emissions reductions across NSW, improve industry practices, strengthen transparency in reporting greenhouse gas data and climate action.

Please provide feedback on:

- [Climate Change Licensee Requirements](#)
- [Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Plans: Mitigation Requirements](#)
- [Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Guide for NSW Coal Mines](#)

These proposals are expected to affect around 200 licensees—around 10% of the EPA's regulated community—who collectively produce

about 50% of NSW's total emissions. By focusing on this group, NSW EPA can fulfil its climate obligations while working closely with regulated industries to cut emissions and improve environmental outcomes.

Feedback is sought by **5.00pm, Tuesday 7 October 2025** to climatechange.review@epa.nsw.gov.au or via the [online survey](#). Your views will help shape these initiatives and deliver long-term benefits for NSW.

Updates to Biosolids Reuse Requirements: Comment sought

NSW EPA is [updating](#) requirements to the **Resource Recovery Order and Exemption for biosolids** to ensure land application remains beneficial and poses minimal risk to human health and the environment.

NSW EPA seeks feedback on what the new chemical contaminant limits will mean for industry including updated requirements for testing new chemical contaminants, record keeping and reporting, biosolids application management and a new definition for biosolids. This follows publication of the PFAS National Environmental Management Plan 3.0 (PFAS NEMP), and the outcomes of previous public consultation and testing of sewage treatment plants across the state by the EPA in 2023. Your feedback is sought on proposed changes, including:

- new chemical contaminant limits
- updated testing, record keeping and reporting requirements
- improved application management measures
- a new definition of biosolids.

Feedback is sought by **5pm, Friday 10 October 2025** to EnvSolCLR.Requests@epa.nsw.gov.au or via the [online survey](#).

Expansion of the Return and Earn Scheme from mid-2027

The NSW Government's **Return and Earn** container deposit scheme will expand in **mid-2027** to include:

- wine and spirit bottles
- cordial and concentrate containers
- larger-sized drink containers.

This expansion will make an extra 362 million containers eligible each year, including around 196 million glass bottles.

By broadening the scheme, NSW will increase recycling rates, cut the amount of waste sent to landfill, and support the shift towards a **circular economy** where materials are reused and recycled for longer.

[Details](#) are now available.

Applications Open for Final Round of Local Government Waste Solutions Fund

NSW EPA is seeking applications for Round 4 of the [Local Government Waste Solutions Fund](#) (LGWS), with up to \$2 million available to support innovative waste and recycling projects.

Councils in the NSW waste levy area can apply for grants of up to \$200,000, while collaborative projects are eligible for up to \$400,000.

Projects funded in Round 4 will run from April 2026 to April 2027.

This is the final round of the \$10 million program, part of the NSW Government's \$356 million Waste and Sustainable Materials (WaSM) Strategy.

Applications close on **10 October 2025**.

Mines breaching their licence conditions now face hefty fines

The NSW EPA is once again placing mines, in the Hunter Valley, on notice with the return of the **Bust the Dust campaign** this spring. Now in its sixth year, the campaign continues to target dust pollution from open cut mining, with **tougher penalties** introduced in 2024 to strengthen compliance.

Mines breaching their licence conditions now face fines of \$30,000 for a first offence and up to \$45,000 for repeat offences.

Throughout the campaign, EPA Operations Officers will carry out roadside surveillance, unannounced inspections and use drone technology to monitor dust emissions.

EPA Director Operations, David Gathercole, said the community expects stronger regulation to protect air quality, particularly in spring when particle pollution is at its peak.

“Mines must have effective dust controls in place — whether that’s using water on stockpiles and haul roads, increasing monitoring and reporting, or halting operations during dry and windy conditions,” Mr Gathercole said.

Earlier this year, a mine company entered into a binding agreement to improve dust management after compliance failures, contributing \$120,000 to local environmental rehabilitation.

NSW EPA is determined in reducing air pollution and safeguarding the health of Hunter communities.

QUEENSLAND

QLD State of the Environment Report 2024 Released

The QLD Government has released the [QLD State of the Environment](#)

[Report 2024](#) that provides a comprehensive snapshot of the condition and trends of the state’s environmental assets, alongside the management actions undertaken by the Queensland Government.

The report is organised into five key themes - 13 sub-themes, and 124 environmental indicators. Each theme and sub-theme follows a consistent format, featuring Key Facts, State and Pressure Indicators, and Responses, which include management actions and illustrative case studies.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Industrial Chemicals Environment Protection Policy

A notice has been published in the SA Government Gazette advising of the intention to prepare a draft environment protection policy relating to industrial chemicals.

The EPA SA intends to prepare a draft Industrial Chemicals Environment Protection Policy. The purpose of this policy will be to implement the Commonwealth Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management Standard (ICHEMS) in South Australia. This includes, but is not limited to, giving effect to the ICHEMS Register, which was established under the *Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management (Register) Act 2021 (Cwlth)*.

Further notices will be published in due course, providing additional information about the draft policy and the details of the public consultation process.

WA's Containers for Change Program to include Wine and Spirit bottles: Commences 1 July 2026

WA's Containers for Change program will expand to include wine and spirit bottles from 1 July 2026, adding an estimated 200 million additional containers eligible for refunds each year.

Since its launch in 2020, the scheme has increased the WA's beverage container recycling rate from 35% to 65%, and diverted tonnes of recyclable materials from landfill.

The expansion will cover almost all beverage containers between 150 millilitres and 3 litres. In addition to glass wine and spirit bottles, it will include wine packaged in plastic, sachets and casks, water in casks, concentrated fruit and vegetable juices, and flavoured milk and cordial. Plain milk and registered health tonic containers remain excluded and should be recycled at home.

Glass bottles already have the highest return rate at 80%, and in 2023–24 alone, around 39,000 tonnes of glass were recycled into new bottles.

Containers for Change has also supported community fundraising, with over \$16.7 million donated to more than 8,200 schools, charities, and community groups across WA. This expansion is expected to further increase recycling, reduce waste, and strengthen the program's contribution to local communities and the environment.

ChemCentre Leads Research to transform brewer's spent grain into high-value products

ChemCentre is leading new research to turn brewer's spent grain (BSG)—a

major by-product of beer production—into sustainable, high-value products. Supported by a \$660,000 investment from the WA Government in partnership with the End Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre, the three-year initiative aims to expand the potential uses of BSG beyond its current low-cost applications as animal feed or landfill disposal.

For every 100 litres of beer brewed, approx 20 kilograms of wet BSG are produced, totaling over 300,000 tonnes annually across Australia.

Despite being rich in protein and fibre, BSG's full potential has yet to be realised.

ChemCentre will deliver the first-ever detailed chemical composition and nutritional profile of Australian BSG, identifying key nutrient components, aromas, and flavours for use in food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and biomaterials.

Curtin University will trial innovative, eco-friendly processing techniques—including reverse osmosis, pulsed light with ultrasound, and microwave-assisted extraction—to enhance the recovery of proteins, flavours, and flavonoids from BSG.

ChemCentre Project Lead Dr Manjree Agarwal said the research demonstrates how scientific insight can deliver commercial outcomes. "By unlocking the value of brewer's spent grain, we can reduce food waste, support innovation in WA's craft brewing sector, and create exciting new products for market," she said.

The project brings together ChemCentre, Curtin University, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, and industry partners including the WA Brewers Association, Spinifex Brewing Company, Nanollose Ltd, and Maalinup Aboriginal Gallery. By combining advanced research with industry collaboration, the initiative will

support WA's brewing industry, reduce waste, and create sustainable, value-added products for the future.

Tenders open for projects that support Australia's transition to net zero

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has announced the opening of Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS) [Tenders 5](#) and [Tender 6](#) in the Western Australia Wholesale Electricity Market (WEM).

The CIS is a national program designed to unlock investment in new renewable generation and storage, helping ensure reliable, affordable and cleaner energy supply. By providing revenue certainty for investors, the scheme aims to accelerate the development of projects that support Australia's transition to net zero.

These tenders will add 1.6 gigawatts (GW) of renewable generation backed up by 2.4 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of clean dispatchable capacity to the WEM. This is enough energy to power more than 900,000 homes each year and enough storage to cover the peak electricity needs of 550,000 households for 4 hours.

It is expected that successful projects will play a critical role in supporting the state's electricity system as coal-fired power exits the market and renewable generation expands.

The WA WEM is unique in being separated from the National Electricity Market, making these tenders a significant milestone in building the state's own pathway to a low-emissions energy future.

Proponents [must register](#) by 10 October 2025 and bidding closes on **7 November 2025**.