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Photo: Moonie River, Near Alton (May-le Ng)



Environment Institute of
Australia and New Zealand

Editorial

One of the principal ways that members of EIANZ and Certified Environmental Practitioners set themselves apart from other environmental practitioners is our adherence to a Code of Ethics.

Environmental practitioners, and indeed practitioners in many fields will face ethical challenges throughout their careers. Some of the more common examples include proponents pressuring practitioners to ignore certain results or reinterpret conclusions and practitioners misrepresenting the field or extent of their expertise.

But the Code of Ethics is not just about dealing with these sorts of incidents. In fact, ethical practice is a day to day commitment that we, as members and CEnvPs must continually affirm. So what does the Code of Ethics really mean for members of the EIANZ and CEnvPs?

The Code says we must practice competently. This means that we must be aware of our limitations and not give advice on matters for which we are not qualified or experienced to give, but even to practice within our own field of expertise, we must undertake professional development activities on a continual basis. Regularly attending conferences, forums and seminars is crucial as is tracking policy and statutory changes within your field. Networking with peers can be fun and also helps us to stay abreast of issues and trends. Seeking assistance from senior colleagues and mentors and reading relevant journals are also important professional development activities.

Competent practice also means that we do not make mistakes, however unintentional. We must have systems in place for checking work. We must also clearly communicate the context and limitations on any work, so that data, information and conclusions are used appropriately.

Think of someone reading your report in a decade; will that reader be able to understand the context correctly, and interpret and utilise the information appropriately?

Ethical environmental practitioners must also promote sound environmental principles and be leaders in setting high standards of environmental practice and management. This does not mean becoming a “greenie” (how often have people confused the profession of environmental practitioners with their politics!). But it does mean that we are advocating for maintaining and protecting the integrity of environmental systems, values and resources and promoting sustainability. This in turn requires us to have a sound understanding of sustainability, be able to explain benefits and impacts, and assist with making the inevitable trade-offs that will arise.

We must apply our knowledge and skills objectively and honestly, no matter who is employing or engaging us. Our work so often occurs in the public domain or in situations where there is existing or potential conflict between stakeholders. Here, we must conduct ourselves in a way that all stakeholders are able to trust us to act with integrity, respect and competence. The Institute can, and has expelled members for breaches of the Code of Ethics, and certification can also be cancelled if a certified practitioner breaches the Code. But for me, the real power of the Code of Ethics is in providing empowerment and inspiration to be the best practitioner that I can be.

The code of ethics is available [here](#). Please take a moment to refresh yourself with this fundamental part of our commitment to excellence in environmental practice.



Claire Gronow FEIANZ, CEnvP

Responsiveness and Governance – Two aspects of an effective organisation

The purposes of the EIANZ are to facilitate interaction among environmental professionals, promote environmental knowledge and awareness, and advance ethical and competent environmental practice. In the last edition of *The Environmental Practitioner* I pointed to the wide range of activities in which environmental practitioners are engaged, and the kinds of changes that need to be made to the way in which the EIANZ conducts its business if it is to achieve the vision of being recognised as the pre-eminent body representing environmental practitioners in Australia and New Zealand.

The Great Barrier Reef has received much attention in the community and is of course the focus of the work of many environmental practitioners. There have been important concerns raised about the management of this iconic ecosystem that is recognised as one of Australia's nineteen World Heritage Areas (WHA). The Tasmanian Wilderness WHA has also been in the spotlight, with concerns about an application to change the boundaries of the area based on the claimed lack of environmental values associated with areas of forest included within its boundaries. In both cases the EIANZ has been active in making representations to governments about the assessment and protection of the outstanding universal value of these areas.

In response to concerns raised by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee about the impacts of development on the Great Barrier Reef WHA, the Australian and Queensland governments have been undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). In an exemplary collaboration between the Far North Queensland and South East Queensland Divisions, the EIANZ made representations about the assessment process and the nature of the analysis that had informed the draft assessments. That work became part of the material that will inform two supplementary SEA documents. The submission made by the EIANZ and the response received from the Queensland Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection can be found at www.eianz.org.

The Queensland Minister has committed to prepare a "Long-term Sustainability Plan for the GBR" jointly with the Australian government and the GBR Marine Park Authority. This plan is to guide protection and management programs to 2050 and be reviewed every five years. The Minister also gives a commitment to seek expert advice in the preparation and implementation of the plan.



Photo – May-Le Ng

The Minister's letter also provides some important contextual information that relates to the Australian government initiative to implement a "One Stop Shop" approach to environmental assessments and approvals under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

It explains that the purpose of undertaking two contemporaneous strategic assessments is to assess whether the legislative programs of the Queensland government and the GBR Marine Park Authority are sufficiently robust to assess and regulate impacts on matters of national environmental significance. The EIANZ questioned this approach and preferred a single integrated approach to the strategic assessment. The Minister's expectation is that if the strategic assessments demonstrate that the legislative programs are sufficiently robust and they are accredited under the EPBC Act, the Australian government will step away from project by project assessment and decision making.

In a similar vein, the EIANZ recently wrote to the Prime Minister expressing concern about the statements that have been made in relation to the National Reserve System (NRS). That concern focussed on; the suggestion that the extent of the NRS is somehow sufficient or too large; any move away from an NRS that is not founded in good science and best practice conservation management of publicly and privately protected lands; and any lack of recognition of the economic value of the ecosystem services provided by the land that forms the NRS. The EIANZ advocated an NRS that is comprehensive adequate and representative; that involves the practice of reserved and private land contributing to the NRS; and the provision of public access to land that contributes to the NRS. The EIANZ made the point that Australian governments have demonstrated great leadership in ensuring that, on the basis of sound scientific evidence, this nation has begun to build a comprehensive, adequate and representative NRS, but the task is not finished.

The EIANZ has also sought a meeting with the Prime Minister to brief him on the important role that skilled professional environmental practitioners play in reducing the burden of regulation, and helping assure governments and the community that appropriate standards of environmental management are being maintained.

The EIANZ will continue to engage with governments on the application of good practice environmental management and the involvement of suitably qualified and experienced environmental practitioners in assuring governments and the community about the standard of environmental assessments and decision making. The more that the voice of the EIANZ is heard in policy formulation, the greater will be the recognition of the role of environmental practitioners in implementing good practice environmental management. The strength of the EIANZ comes through the capacity of its members to contribute wisdom, born out of practical experience, to the policy making process. Let us know if, as a member, you want to lead on a



particular issue in your area of expertise, keeping in mind that as a professional association the focus of the EIANZ is on advocacy of evidence based good practice environmental management standards and the role of skilled environmental practitioners, rather than particular causes.

It is one thing to be an active contributor to the policy development process. At the same time, the EIANZ must pay attention to the effectiveness and efficiency of its own governance arrangements.

At the beginning of February 2014 the EIANZ welcomed Jacquie White as the new General Manager for the EIANZ. This appointment is an important step in helping to improve the governance of the organisation. Strengthening our Central Office team in this way doesn't mean that we value the voluntary contributions of members less. It does though mean that we can be better coordinated and have better systems in place for delivering services to those members.

Over the last six months the EIANZ has become a Registrable Australian Body which allows it, as an incorporated association in Victoria, to have legal standing in all Australian jurisdictions. The EIANZ is also in the process of registering with the New Zealand regulators as an Australian enterprise operating in New Zealand. You may notice some subtle changes in the way in which the organisation presents itself as it complies with various regulatory requirements. For example, we are officially the "Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand Inc".

The Executive Committee and the Council have begun the task of working through the changes that will improve and streamline the governance of the organisation, making it more efficient and effective, with a stronger focus on doing business as the professional association of choice for environmental practitioners. When approved and implemented, these changes in governance arrangements will allow the EIANZ to more effectively provide services to members, and be more responsive in its role of representing good practice environmental management and the value of well-credentialed environmental practitioners to government, industry and the community.

The EIANZ's potential membership exceeds its present membership many times over. Members of the EIANZ abide by a *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* which commits environmental practitioners to represent and promote the profession. I encourage you to make sure that a key question that you ask of an environmental practitioner is: "Are you a member of the EIANZ?" As a Member, Fellow or Certified Environmental Practitioner I also encourage you to use the relevant post-nominals on your business stationary as a sign of your professional recognition by the EIANZ as an environmental practitioner. Share with potential new members a powerful story from your own experience about why they too should be proud to say that they are a member of the EIANZ and a professionally recognised environmental practitioner.

Jon Womersley

President

Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand

March 2014



News, Views, Articles and Updates

Climate Policy – Any Action, Direct or Not

By Jacqui Bonnitcho and Tom Davies, MELANZ, Chair Climate Change SIS

Climate change presents a complex problem that requires a multifaceted response. There have been many recent changes in both climate change mitigation and adaptation policy making it challenging to stay up to date with developments. Here we establish the context for the current policies, their key features and what this means for environmental practitioners working in climate change related fields.

Climate Change Mitigation Policy

Climate change mitigation is action or policy directed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Policies range from carbon farming to renewable energy targets. The Parliament of Australia website tracks [Australian policy developments](#) back to the 1980s. Here we focus on the developments that have led to the current policy position under two key categories: GHG emission reduction targets and reduction mechanisms.

Reduction and renewable energy targets:

Upon coming to power in 2007, one of the first acts of the Rudd Labour government was to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. This was Australia's first commitment to an emissions reduction target and was seen as an important signal to the international community. In 2012 it was [announced](#) that Australia would join a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol and would reduce emissions in line with the bipartisan goal of 5% below 2000 levels by 2020. The government also included options to move to larger reduction targets should international action meet certain conditions.

A recent [review](#) by the Climate Change Authority confirmed that the governmental conditions set to move beyond a 5% target have been met but that it was not clear that all the requirements for the 15% target have been met.

A recent [review](#) of the abatement in GHG emissions required to meet the 5% target showed that this is much less than originally forecast, estimated at 431 Mt CO₂e.

The combination of a changing policy environment, global actions to curb GHG emissions and changes in the emissions reductions required to meet our target means that there is still a possibility that targets will be reset between now and 2020.

Reduction mechanisms and funding mechanisms:

In order to meet Australia's reduction targets, policies that create reduction mechanisms are required. The first iterations of reduction mechanisms came in the form of the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) Bill, first introduced in May 2009. The ETS was initially defeated by the Senate. When the Bill was reintroduced later in 2009 media reports of bi-partisan support for the Bill from the then Liberal leader, Malcolm Turnbull, resulted in Tony Abbott being installed as opposition leader and the ETS was again rejected by the Senate.

The Labour Government's next iteration of reduction mechanism was the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) which was again defeated in the Senate. It wasn't until Julia Gillard had come to power that the *Clean Energy Act* (2011) was passed and introduced. The *Clean Energy Act* included 18 bills that provided a framework for a CPRS based on emissions trading, and starting with a three-year fixed-price phase. The ETS came in to effect on 1st July 2013. In November 2013 the recently elected Liberal-National Coalition government introduced a bill to repeal the *Clean Energy Act*. The Senate voted against this bill on 20 March 2014.



The Coalition opposes the ETS/CPRS as an inefficient tax mechanism and proposes a more interventionist alternative, the Direct Action Policy (DAP).

The DAP was first put forward in 2010 and offers incentives to reduce emissions. Its centrepiece is the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF) that rewards businesses for emitting below a baseline and penalises those that are above it.

In December 2013 a [Green Paper](#) was released discussing the proposed ERF. The ERF will have \$1.55 billion over 3 years but it is not specified in the paper how this will be distributed or what the funding will be beyond 2017. Under the ERF emissions reductions would be purchased by the government through a reverse auction process. Essentially, businesses will submit tenders to the government for projects that will either lower emissions or offset them (according to agreed methodologies). Legislation of the ERF is scheduled for release in April 2014 and the DAP is planned to begin in July 2014.

While the Green Paper provides some information on how an ERF will work, there are many details which remain unclear. These include:

- The interaction between the baseline (or 'safeguard') and the price of abatement units is not specified and it is unclear if the baseline will be adjusted between now and 2020.
- The means by which the baselines are set (e.g. at a facility or activity level) is still uncertain.
- A key to the ERF is 'additionality' that is, ensuring that emissions reductions paid for by the government are in addition to those that would occur normally. The Green Paper does not set out a methodology for determining whether emissions are additional or not.
- Detail of which sectors and organisations will be required to participate in the scheme has not been released.
- The timing, frequency and volume of auctions remains unclear.
- The penalty for not meeting reductions remains undetermined.

The DAP has attracted criticism from commentators for being [more expensive](#) than an ETS and because the measures proposed do not provide sufficient certainty that Australia will meet its [energy reduction target](#).

Discussions concerning the DAP have also noted that the more interventionist approach is [somewhat inconsistent with Liberal ideology](#) of promoting free market mechanisms over government intervention.

For practitioners in the environmental field it will be important to monitor developments in climate change mitigation policy over the next few months as details on the DAP and ERF are released. It may also be useful to brief clients who are likely to have commitments under the new legislation by beginning to identify or develop potential emissions reduction projects that may be eligible for funding.

Climate Change Adaptation Policy

Adaptation to climate change is about adjusting to the unavoidable impacts that will occur due to a changing climate. Past and current emissions mean that a certain amount of change is already 'locked in'. According to the Bureau of Meteorology Australia's average temperature has risen approximately 1 °C since 1910, and 2013 was the hottest year on record. However, it is not just the rise in average heat, but also the changes in extremes that are of concern. Climate change adaptation therefore requires us to address the vulnerability of existing and future development and our communities to events such as extreme storms, heat waves, intense rainfall events and water supply shortage.

As with any mitigation policy, adaptation policy has seen a number of changes in recent years but these have usually been less high profile compared to the emission reduction schemes outlined above.

The Local Adaptation Pathways Program and the Coastal Adaptation Pathways Programs were federally funded climate change adaptation projects to produce adaptation plans at a local or regional level. The funding packages began in 2008. This instigated many plans, and developed skills and knowledge at a local government level, however while many risks were identified, action has often been deemed too expensive given competing local government priorities.

In February 2010 the Australian Government released a [Position Paper](#) on adaptation to climate change which set out a vision for adaptation and practical steps to realise the vision.

The Paper noted that many decisions being made today will have consequences for future vulnerability and that the uncertainty around climate change requires a flexible and creative approach but should not be an excuse to delay action. While the Paper acknowledged that all sectors of society must contribute to adaptation it carved out a role for government in providing information and setting the right conditions (avoiding distorting price signals, adjusting policy instruments appropriately and stepping in where the market is ineffective). The Paper also identified national priorities for adaptation action including coastal management, water supply, infrastructure, natural systems of national significance, natural disaster preparedness and agriculture.

The next key analysis was undertaken by the Productivity Commission in the form of a report on the [Barriers to Effective Climate Change Adaptation](#). The report, released in March 2013, and recommended reducing perverse incentives, increasing information and aligning land-use planning and building codes.

The current Federal government has not yet acted on these recommendations, continuing emphasis on monitoring and reporting rather than decisive action. In line with this approach, the first [Climate Adaptation Outlook](#) was produced in 2013 and proposes a framework for reporting on adaptation activities based on the categories of 'drivers, activities & outcomes'. The framework asks what Australia would look like with effective adaptation to the impacts of climate change. In essence it is a monitoring framework that will deliver a "State of the Nation" type report to inform Australians of adaptation progress, but not in itself drive delivery of any specific adaptation outcomes.

There appears to be a significant amount of work to be done for Australia to adapt to the unavoidable consequences of climate change. The greatest challenge is at a local government level, adapting our settlements and communities and making them more resilient. There is a growing body of knowledge and resources for practitioners to use, including standards, certifications and training but a consistent policy environment is lacking.



Brisbane River in Flood (Photo: Mike Ferguson)

EIANZ Response to Climate Change Issues

The EIANZ constituted a Climate Change Special Interest Section (CCSIS) in 2011. This working group focuses on developing skills for practitioners to address climate change issues. The CCSIS has achieved endorsement from the Certified Environmental Practitioner Programme to develop a Climate Change Specialisation, and has developed a draft set of competencies that professionals must be able to demonstrate in the skills based assessment programme.

Complimenting this, the CCSIS has continued to develop the 'Learning to Adapt' series of training that attracts CPD points, and also instigates practical adaptation projects in the participant organisations.

More information on the CCSIS is available [here](#):



Photo: May-le Ng

Invertebrates in the Environmental Assessment Process

From: Jonathan Majer, MEINZ, Biomonitoring International, Hillarys WA

Terrestrial invertebrates make up over 95 percent of the different species of animals alive today on the world's landmasses; in some habitats they can make up over 70 percent of animal biomass. They occupy almost all possible habitats and niches and are involved in driving or regulating most ecosystem functions and processes.



Despite this, they tend to be left out of current environmental assessments, with regulators and practitioners being more concerned with the 'charismatic megafauna'; the birds, mammals and other vertebrates.

This omission from the environmental agenda is as perplexing, as it is unjustified. Take minesite rehabilitation as an example. Without an adequate component of soil and litter invertebrates such as termites, ants, worms and springtails, the soil would not develop an appropriate structure for healthy plant growth and valuable nutrients would not be cycled back to the soil. Without ants and pollinating flies and wasps, seeds would not be dispersed and many flowers would not be pollinated, meaning that populations of plants that have been so expensively established in the new rehabilitation would not be able to reproduce. Many of the vertebrate animals that we are so concerned with depend in part, or in whole on invertebrates for their diet. If their numbers are to be sustained, the invertebrates on which they depend must be present in adequate quantities. This brief and incomplete list of invertebrate roles surely indicates that this important component of the biota must be considered in rehabilitation and other aspects of environmental management.

One important aspect of environmental assessment is measuring environmental quality or success with rehabilitation. The introduction of Completion Criteria for rehabilitated mines is a graphic example of this. Such criteria tend to be generic and include measures such as percentage plant cover, number of plant species in quadrats or the presence of particular vertebrate habitats.

A recent study by two PhD students compared the cost and environmental information gained by measuring plants, birds, and specific groups of invertebrates (e.g., ants, beetles, spiders, etc) as indicators of progress with minesite rehabilitation. The study convincingly showed that not only were invertebrates cost effective to survey, they provided a more faithful indication of the condition of the environment than surveys of vertebrate animals. This work can be found [here](#):

Happily, the situation is improving. A recent analysis all papers published in the journal *Restoration Ecology* between 1994 and 2008 indicated that increased attention is being paid to this component of the biota. Although much of this work is for monitoring, a growing number of studies relate to the economic or ecological value of animals in restored land.

There is still a bias towards vertebrates over invertebrates, although the proportion of invertebrate-focused papers is steadily increasing. Analysis of these papers suggests that greater synergy would be obtained if standardised protocols had been used and, in the case of invertebrates, studies would be more informative if species-level identifications had been obtained. Partnerships with industry should allow long-term studies to be performed, which would provide more reliable information than that yielded from chronosequence-type investigations. This article can be found [here](#):

One area in which invertebrates are routinely considered is the surveying for short-range endemic animals, particularly the subterranean troglofauna and stygofauna. Short-range endemic invertebrates, by their very nature, can be threatened if an impending development overlaps their range. Since their extinction would be unacceptable under State and Federal legislation, surveys for their presence are often required before approval for a project can be granted. Annually, millions of dollars are being spent in Western Australia on surveys for SRE's. By contrast, funds for research on non-SRE terrestrial invertebrates, which probably represent around 98% of animal species, are extremely sparse - a peculiar anomaly! A full discussion of this issue can be found [here](#).

Biomonitoring International has been formed in order to service the needs of clients who need to consider invertebrates. The directors, Professor Jonathan and Dr Mazé Majer are both entomologists with over 60 years of experience between them, having worked in South America and Africa, as well as throughout Australia.

The company has a well-equipped entomology laboratory and undertakes consultancies in the areas of survey design, baseline surveys, monitoring of restoration progress, monitoring of habitat quality, surveillance of introduced species, taxonomic services, pest problems, expert opinions and desktop studies. Full information about the capabilities and activities of the Company can be found at: BiomonitoringInternational.com



Photo: Professor Jonathon (R) and Dr Mazé Majer (L) at the Stone Forest, a World Heritage UNESCO Geopark, Yunnan Province, China

The Directors recently attended the 9th International Conference of the Asian Ant Network (ANeT) in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Jonathan Majer gave the plenary address titled 'Planning for long-term ant studies – a personal perspective'. He also presented a paper titled 'Is there an ant mosaic in the canopy of tropical rainforests?' It is necessary to understand this, since ants are important drivers of tropical ecosystems. While there, Jonathan and Mazé visited the Utan Paradise Jungle Camp in the Crocker Range.

There, they collected ants and were able to confirm that dominant ants do not form a mosaic in the understorey, but they probably do in artificial clearings where light penetrates the forest canopy. They also visited the Southwest Forestry University in Kunming, China to train local researchers to use ants as bio-indicators.

Recently released

- State Party Report on the state of conservation of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (Australia) – 2014 – progress report on progress in implementing key requests made by the World Heritage Committee. [Read the report here](#)
- CSIRO and Australian Bureau of Meteorology third edition of State of The Climate report includes observations and monitoring carried out by the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO in the Australian region, as well as information on future climate scenarios. [Read the report here.](#)
- Biodiversity and Environmental Change - Monitoring, Challenges and Direction – Produced by the Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (Australian National University and University of Adelaide), presents long-term ecological data as a basis for informing trends in biodiversity and environmental change. [Read more...](#)



EIANZ Members Collaborate to Comment on GBR Strategic Assessment Reports

A team of EIANZ members from the SEQ and FNQ Divisions prepared a submission to the Australian and Queensland Governments on the Draft Great Barrier Reef (GBR) Strategic Assessment (SA) marine and coastal reports.

The submission acknowledged the efforts being made by the Commonwealth and Queensland governments to respond to and address the recommendations of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for management of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA) (refer UNESCO Mission Report, recommendation R5).

The review team considered that the SAs represented a large body of work and a good overview of issues facing the various matters of national environmental significance associated with the coastal zone and the GBR ecosystem but did not focus strongly enough on the specific attributes and values that contribute to the OUV of the GBRWHA. The GBRWHA is a geographically large property, and the attributes that contribute to its OUV are complex, varied and heavily inter-related. This poses many planning and management challenges, and the review team felt that the approaches taken in the SAs and the resulting forward programs of action did adequately reflect the size and complexity of the property and therefore do not provide a sound basis for the property's ongoing management and protection.

Key concerns raised by EIANZ in its submission included:

- Lack of integration and consistency between the marine and coastal components of the SAs with no clear evidence of progress having been made in addressing jurisdictional issues that underpin good practice management of the GBRWHA;

- Limited focus on the full range of attributes that contribute to the OUV of the GBRWHA and lack of detail on the values, current states, pressures and trends associated with those attributes. The review team felt that the issue of the integrity, an important attribute of World Heritage properties, needed to be more extensively analysed and better understood so that threats to integrity could be comprehensively assessed;
- Lack of site specific assessment of issues, with limited use of available data published by government, research organisations and consultancies, or analytical tools to advance the understanding of the OUV of the GBRWHA;
- Inadequate evidence and analysis in the SAs as a basis for the conclusions drawn, and inconsistency between the conclusions drawn in the coastal and marine components;
- Vague forward management program focussing mostly on further studies to fill identified information gaps, rather than real actions to address the issues identified by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee; and

- Lack of clarity on whether the SAs will be used to eliminate project by project assessment under the strategic assessment provisions of the EPBC Act.

Detailed comments were also provided on the soundness of the methodological approaches underpinning the SAs, and the efficacy of the forward programs of action in achieving sustainable and best practice management of the GBRWHA. The full EIANZ submission is available on the EIANZ website [here](#).

The documentation produced for the SAs was substantial and the review process required a strong collaborative effort on the part of the review team, not to mention substantial amounts of curry and wine. Thanks in particular to Nathan Waltham, Nikki O'Donnell, Brian Crosby, Toivo Zoete, Tatia Zubrinich, Penn Lloyd, Scott Hanna, Jon Womersley and Claire Gronow for making the time for this important issue.

Event Reports

Professional development activities are a cornerstone of the EIANZ contribution to achieving the highest standards of environmental practice. Reports of some recent events are provided below.

For information on upcoming events, please see our website event page [here](#).

You can also contact the professional development coordinator in your Chapter or Division if you are seeking information on professional development activities, or interested in assisting in organising an event.

Environmental Impacts of Light Rail – an ACT Perspective

On 19 March, over 25 participants attended a one-day event organised by the ACT Division of the EIANZ on the environmental impacts of light rail. This was a timely discussion, given the progress of the ACT government in the development of a light rail network for Canberra.

Attendees from the ACT Government, local government, consulting firms, developers and others discussed general environmental impacts of light rail, such as construction noise, visual impacts, ecology and operational noise and vibration, as well as more specific issues related to the ACT, including heritage values and threatened species habitat protection.

All in all, it was a great event, and one of a series of successful one-day events in the ACT. Our next event is on 9 April, looking at environmental management issues relating to kangaroos. The Canberra media is even getting in on the act – [read more...](#)

Keep checking in to the EIANZ website to find out about more great events in the ACT. Click [here](#) to go to the events page



An artist's impression of light rail along Northbourne Ave, Canberra:

Life on the Edge Managing our urban/rural fringe environments

From : Pene Ferguson, Christchurch branch coordinator

The NZ Chapter Symposium challenged members and non-members to think about Life on the Edge – and the issues of urban growth and sprawl, intensification of rural activities, and the conflicts of land use on the fringe.



Christchurch's finest environmental practitioners gather for the symposium

50 people attended the symposium which was held on March 14th in Christchurch. The Audience listened to former Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment and Chair of WWF NZ, Dr. Morgan Williams, talk personally about the encroachment of the urban into the rural. Deputy mayor of Christchurch Vicki Buck also explained that after the earthquakes we have many edges in Christchurch (social, urban, coastal, natural hazards), and the edge of opportunity and possibility, as Cantabrians have come up with innovative ways to approach the rebuild.

The Chancellor of Lincoln University and Commissioner for Environment Canterbury, Tom Lambie, discussed the challenges of resource management faced by the regional council in the rural environments, and raised many questions about the balance between economic and agricultural growth, and sustainable, healthy environments. Martin Ward joined Tom Lambie and Morgan Williams in a panel discussion on managing issues at the rural / urban edge.

Over half of the participants took the lunchtime tour around the inner city, to learn how contaminated site investigations had been undertaken as part of the earthquake demolition and rebuild processes.

Participants praised the speakers and topics and made the most of opportunities to network. We were pleased to host a large number of non-members from Christchurch and Canterbury, and we hope to see many of them join the Institute.



Deputy Mayor of Christchurch, Vicki Buck addresses the symposium

NSW Practitioners Receive a PEP Talk on Social and Community Matters

The EIANZ NSW Division PEP (Positive Environmental Practice) talk series aims to bridge the gap between the experts within our profession and those who wish to learn from them.



Presenters and Panellists Consider

the Issues

On the evening of 11th February – over 30 EIANZ members heard from five experts on social impact assessment, community engagement, social auditing and assurance and social life cycle assessment. A big thanks goes to the five speakers – Heather Nesbitt – Principal Social Sustainability Consultant - GHD, Claire Tucker – Consultant - Banarra, Mette Kirk – Senior Strategic Planner – Warringah Council, Maartje Sevenster – Director Sevenster Environmental, and Danielle Mulder – Director Edge Environment, as well as Fabian Sack – Director – Sustainably for facilitating the evening.

The importance of companies seeking to secure their social licence to operate and defend their reputations is becoming increasingly crucial to their long term economic sustainability. Several case studies were outlined by the five speakers – including an SIA for the Ranger Uranium Mine in the NT, Social Life Cycle assessment of Focus Press operations, KFC Australia - Social Sustainability assessment and Sustainability Strategy, Internal and External stakeholder consultation from a local government perspective, and setting up Social sustainability requirements in the planning and tender phases of large infrastructure projects such as Barangaroo and North-West-Rail link.



Members of the Audience

In addition to a wide range of questions raised by the audience – it was agreed that quality of stakeholder relationships and understanding of their issues and concerns are critical for successful social performance. Despite this many organisations shrink from strategically engaging with the social dimension of sustainability, seeing it as too complex, or just too hard, and the NSW Division had strong feedback from participants for further evening, breakfast or day-long courses on this immensely complex, yet highly interesting topic.

The event was kindly hosted by GHD.

Liz Floyd – MEIANZ, NSW Committee member and event organiser

SEQ Hosts Inaugural “Members Plus One” Event

David Baldwin, CEO of LNG at Origin Energy, presented at a Members Plus One luncheon held by the SEQ Division on March 5th. This event sold out its 40 available seats, with one spare on the day – congratulations to Shane Brooks of URS Brisbane and his wife, who welcomed their baby boy into the world that morning.

David spoke on the role of the environment in a multibillion dollar megaproject and how gas is paving the way to a renewable energy future. Recognising that the gap between safety and environment is a growing challenge, David challenged the senior environmental practitioners present to use their combined knowledge base to innovate and raise the profile further of the environmental sector in major project environments.

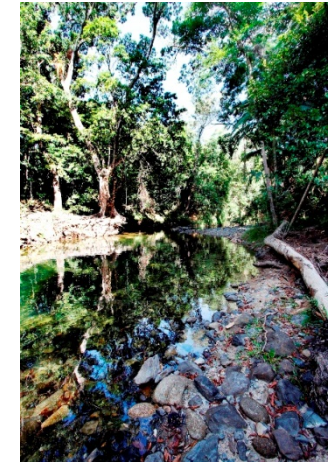
The “Members Plus One” initiative is aimed at giving EIANZ members who are senior practitioners the opportunity to invite other leaders within their organisations or associate organisations to hear industry and business leaders discuss a range of environmental matters.

This luncheon was the first of SEQ’s “Harvest Series” of luncheons, which are professional development events aimed at our senior practitioners. The next event in this series is planned in early June to coincide with World Environment Day. More information is available [here](#).

New and returning members January-March 2014:

Welcome to:

- Martin Nordstrom – SA
- Ian Davies – SA
- Matthew Yu – Vic
- Kevin Masterton – SEQ
- Lindi Olivier – SEQ
- Emma Howcroft – NSW
- Delwyn Howard – WA
- Anthony Burton – ACT
- Karissa Preuss – ACT
- Jane Doran – FNQ



Out and about among the membership

EIANZ Member Snapshot – Trent Bell

Qualifications: BSc Biology (2004), Victoria University of Wellington
In the process of applying for CEnvP

What do you do? I am a Director & Principal Herpetologist at EcoGecko Consultants Ltd (www.ecogecko.co.nz, or you can find us here: [EcoGecko on Facebook](#)). I oversee a team of four herpetologists (nicknamed the 'EcoGekkonids') involved in resource management and conservation research of our unique herpetofauna around New Zealand. We are the only specialist herpetology company in New Zealand, and we work with a very diverse range of clients ranging from Landcare Research, the Department of Conservation, Councils, community-based wildlife sanctuaries, environmental consultancies, and developers.

How did you get there? I have been very involved in New Zealand herpetology for 21 years. Between the years 1993-1997, aged only 13-17 years old, I produced a regional magazine for a lizard advocacy and breeding group. Upon graduating from VUW in 2004, I landed a research technician position at Landcare Research, New Zealand's leading environmental research organization, undertaking lizard surveys and population studies. My position quickly morphed into a herpetologist by 2006, culminating into the delivery of NZ Lizards Database (<http://nzlizards.landcareresearch.co.nz>), a massive online database of information on our lizards - and also resulting in the description of several skink species during my time at Landcare Research. After this, I started up EcoGecko in 2009 because I recognized the need to provide a specialist herpetological service, and the need to pursue independent conservation research projects.



Trent Bell undertaking lizard monitoring project for the Greater Wellington Regional Council on a very windy Wellington day! Photo: Tommy Leung (University of New England, NSW, Australia)

What is your biggest environmental concern? The ongoing localized extinction and decline of our lizard fauna across New Zealand – 85% of our incredibly speciose lizard fauna (100+ endemic species) are Threatened or At Risk. A major contributing factor is the lack of awareness in our lizards when undertaking resource consent planning (the other major issue is predatory pests). Issues in resource management is usually due to a disconnect between the processes involving decision making under the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Wildlife Act 1953 (all native lizards are strictly protected species by law, and death, injury or habitat destruction is illegal under this Act). Resource management practitioners either fail to assess lizards or undertake poor assessments – our lizards are one of the most difficult fauna to detect, a fact that general ecologists are not aware of or are equipped to deal with - and territorial authorities sometimes forget to ask about the lizards when handling consent applications. This is despite the fact that lizards *make up the other 50%* of our native terrestrial vertebrates - and they are everywhere around us, even in rank grassland habitat apparently devoid of wildlife. This failure leaves environmental practitioners quite open to liability issues since they are advising their clients in environmental matters.

Best aspects of your work? To me, nothing beats getting to work with our lizards every day – I get to see some amazingly beautiful – and incredibly rare – lizard species in the wild in many habitats ranging from mountainous peaks, wildlife reserves and isolated offshore islands – and also in greenfield development projects. I estimate I probably have worked with around 80% of our 100+ lizard species across the country over the years – and every species always have left a lasting impression on me. However, I just love seeing the change happening in my own clients (even in developers themselves!) – they often become strong advocates for lizards themselves as soon as they obtain insight into this forgotten fauna. That has always been the most rewarding outcome for me.



Oligosoma Grande (Photo Trent Bell)

How and why did you get involved with EIANZ? I joined up with the EIANZ because I wanted to increase awareness among our NZ-based EIANZ members about our lizards and frogs in New Zealand and the critical need to start considering them in resource management. As a part of increasing this awareness across the board and thus protect this fauna, I am often talking to people and networking on LinkedIn – check your connections, I am probably already your friend.

EIANZ Member Snapshot – R Scott Hanna

Qualifications: B.Sc. (aquatic ecology/zoology),



M.R.M. (resource and environmental management),

Member of EIANZ,

Registered Professional Biologist (BC, Canada),
Professional Biologist (AB, Canada),

Certified Environmental Professional (Canada)

What do you do? I relocated to Australia from Canada in December 2012 to take on the role of Australia-Asia Regional Director of Hatch Ltd's Environmental Services Group, based in Brisbane. Prior to this, I was Hatch ESG's North American Regional Director based in Vancouver. Outside of work, I have the pleasure of contributing to the development of the next generation of environment professionals through my role as a joint Adjunct Professor in the School of Business, and School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Management at the University of Queensland. I am also involved with EIANZ as the current Chair of the Policy and Practice Committee, SEQ Division.

How did you get there? It's been a wonderful 38+ year journey to arrive at where I am today. After completing a Bachelors degree at the University of Victoria, I worked as a government biologist researching methods for controlling nuisance aquatic vegetation in British Columbia's Okanagan and Shuswap lakes systems. This was followed by two years in Ghana, West Africa (the coup d'etat years), where I was a volunteer with the Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO), teaching biology and resource management to college level students.

Upon returning to Vancouver, Canada, I joined what was then one of Hatch's predecessor companies as an environmental studies coordinator, completed a Masters degree at Simon Fraser University, moved up through the Hatch organization taking on increasingly more senior environmental positions, and along the way becoming an Adjunct Professor at SFU where I taught impact assessment. Now, after thirty-two years at Hatch, and assignments in more than fifteen countries, I have the pleasure of being based in Brisbane and working in the Australia, Asia, and South Pacific region.

What is your biggest environmental concern? I have two environmental concerns. First is the continued marginalisation of the importance of ecosystem health and ecosystem integrity by some companies/agencies that appear to be only interested in doing the bare minimum to get their projects approved.

Second is what I perceive to be a lack of agency follow-up, after environment assessment / development approvals have been issued, to determine whether a) impacts have accrued as predicted, and b) mitigation measures as proposed and implemented are effective in minimizing the predicted impacts.

Best Aspects of your Work? The people with whom I have had the pleasure of meeting and working over the course of my career is what keeps me going . . . that, and the very interesting places in which I've had the privilege to work.

How and why did you get involved with EIANZ? As someone who has been in the environment industry for 38+ years, and who believes in the continuous improvement that is afforded by professional environment organizations, I saw EIANZ as an organization of environmental professionals to which I just had to belong. Since joining EIANZ, I have been impressed with the caliber of its members and the dedication of its Executive in furthering the development of environment professionals in this region.

EIANZ Member Snapshot – Rebekah Utting

Qualifications: Bachelor of Environmental Management (Sustainable Development) Hons, University of Queensland, Brisbane.

How have my qualifications helped me prepare for my job? The most valuable elements of my degree have been those units which covered environmental regulation and planning. This background knowledge has been invaluable in being able to communicate compliance issues that are an essential part of my job. There are so many acronyms but now they form an essential part of my professional vocabulary – DA, EA, ERA, MUA. I could go on all day.

To people studying within the environmental profession I would recommend that you study anything that you can gain a discernible practical skill out of e.g. GIS. Understanding earth systems, biology and ecology are essential in the field, but practical skills are what make you employable, particularly in the current economic climate.

What do you do? I am an environmental officer for a resource management company. I oversee the management of a landfill and a quarry at present. I deal heavily with regulators regarding the operation of these sites due to the sensitive nature of them. My job has quite a wide ranging scope. Some days I liaise with waste generators to ensure their wastes are compliant and well managed to remove potential resource items from waste streams. On other days I will be having a cup of tea with residents nearby to quarry operations to ensure that our activities don't negatively affect them. There is also a bunch of compliance and monitoring work, but that's a given. There is no routine to my work and I spend most of my time managing relationships with people for positive environmental outcomes.

How did you get there? I got into the environmental profession due to the complex impossible problems it presented. I enjoy the challenge of balancing the triple bottom line with the projects I work on.

If consumers require a resource, I want to be able to provide it whilst minimising the environmental impact of producing it. It's become my mantra.

Whilst I was at university I worked full time for a large construction company working the first stage of Brisbane's New Parallel Runway for nearly 18 months. This exposed me to big infrastructure projects with high stakes. I also had some excellent mentors who definitely filled in the gaps that my degree left me with.



Rebekah clearly enjoys working in glamorous surroundings

What is your biggest environmental concern? I don't think the true costs of resources are passed on to consumers. Externalities are poorly understood and, in some cases, intentionally overlooked. I think if true costs were applied, more informed decision making would occur.

It would also increase our reuse of existing resources and make recycling more economically viable.

Best aspects of your work? Working with an increasing cohort of operators who are more informed and more aware of environmental issues associated with the work we do. I find it refreshing to see genuine concern for operational practices and ideas on how to improve them. I enjoy that I am seen as a sounding board to save time and money whilst 'doing the right thing,' rather than an impediment to 'business as usual.'

How and why did you get involved with EIANZ? I joined EIANZ when I was still at university. I have remained a member due to all of the opportunities to learn and grow as an environmental professional. This year I will be undertaking the EIANZ STEPS program. Can't wait!



Photo: May-le Ng

Standing Committee Report: Professional Development

The Professional Development Committee is responsible for:

- developing a structure for the advancement and delivery of a competent practice program for environmental practitioners;
- identifying the requirements of competency for the various levels of experience within the Institute, from students and graduates through to general and specialised practitioners;
- providing guidance as to the content required for the various levels of experience and speciality; and
- assisting Divisions, other Standing Committees and Special Interest Sections to deliver their competent practice programs.

This is clearly a very broad charter which could utilise resources well beyond those currently available to the Committee. With a view to achieving a useful outcome within its available resources, the Committee is currently focused on a project to assist the professional development of environmental practitioners working in isolated situations, where there is limited opportunity to interact with other experienced environmental practitioners. This project has so far been pursued through workshops at the EIANZ Annual Conference, with a view to possibly establishing a mentoring scheme to assist isolated practitioners.

The STEPS program, which will assist new practitioners on the path towards competence and certification, is managed independently of the Professional Development Committee, but is closely related to its work.

The current members of the Professional Development Committee are David Hogg (chair), Emma Barry, Matthew Bell, Alan Chenoweth, Alexandra Hare, Hugh Kirkman and Lara Mottee, but the Committee is open to other EIANZ members who are interested in its work.

David Hogg, Chair

Students and Young Professionals

A few pointers for young environmental professionals trying to establish themselves:

1. Get out in the field or out onto a project site – take advantage of the opportunities afforded by getting away from your desk to put theory to practice and to obtain a practical view of what happens out on projects;
2. Embrace change / be flexible – change is one of those inevitable things in life, so the more you learn to adapt to change, the more confident you will be in coping with the challenges that change brings ... and always have a plan 'B';
3. Challenge yourself / push the envelope – step outside your comfort zone, perhaps not so far as to put yourself in situations for which you have little hope of succeeding, but far enough outside that you learn new skills and abilities you heretofore were unaware you might have had. Your confidence will grow with each challenge you master;
4. Maintain your curiosity – as Albert Einstein said “I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious.” Maintaining your level of curiosity will stimulate you to continue acquiring knowledge, making you an expert in your chosen subject area(s) along the way;
5. Be a volunteer - give back to your community and to your profession by volunteering with community or professional associations, or by giving presentations to colleagues or students on your work;
6. Find a mentor / be a mentor – we all benefit by having one or more mentors with whom we can discuss aspects of careers and work-life balance and ask the “what did you do in this situation?” type questions. Young environmental professionals can also be mentors to their colleagues and those still going through tertiary education;
7. Maintain your sense of humour – when the pressure is on and deadlines are looming, maintaining your sense of humour will assist you in maintaining your sanity, and the respect of those around you that face the same pressures;
8. Continue to improve – life is a journey of learning. Avail yourselves of the learning opportunities that come with being a member of EIANZ, and continue to develop your skills as an environmental professional;
9. Be ethical in your professional dealings – your reputation as a professional hangs on your words and deeds; and
10. Be respectful – you may not always agree with the opinions of others, but respect their right to speak their minds. In the face of adversity, be respectful of those who may attack your point of view. At the end of the day, you will be respected as a professional.

From Scott Hanna MEIANZ



These young peregrine falcons have just fledged and clearly appreciate Scott's advice (photo: Phil Cameron)

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Registration enquiries:

Deretta Brown
0488 774 107
dbrown@niche-eh.com

General course enquiries:

Dr Frank Lemckert
0425 249 026
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For more information about certification criteria and the application process, please visit www.CEnvP.org/apply.

Australia: 03 9001 6948

New Zealand: 03 741 3102

info@cenvp.org

The Board of the Certified Environmental Practitioner Scheme encourage suitably qualified practitioners to participate in this important initiative for the environment profession. To qualify for CEnvP, you will need:

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- A signed statement of ethical conduct;
- Commitment to continued professional development through a minimum of 100 points every two years;
- Additional supporting evidence of claim including at least 2 Referee reports.

An assessment interview conducted by a certification panel completes the process.

EIANZ Members and Fellows receive significant discounts on application and annual certification fees.

For further details on how to apply for CEnvP or the Specialist Certification programs, please visit www.CEnvP.org/apply.

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Current CEnvPs should visit the 'Current CEnvP' section of the website for details on how to apply for Specialist Certification as the requirements are slightly different.

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