

# ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 16 May 2024

## UPCOMING AEBN EVENTS

### 1. [AEBN Workshop Webinar]

#### [OPTIMISING YOUR TRADE WASTE TREATMENT PLANT AND TROUBLESHOOTING WORKSHOP WEBINAR](#)

(Interactive)

10.00am to 3.00pm  
29 May 2024

### 2. [AEBN Workshop Webinar]

#### [CONTAMINATED LAND: A Legal and Practical Approach to Risk Management associated with Contaminated Land](#)

(Interactive)

10.00am to 3.00pm  
24 July 2024

*Note: Details coming soon*

## FEDERAL

### 2024-25 Budget: Climate Change, Energy, Environment -

#### A Snapshot

The Federal Government released the 2024-25 federal budget on 14 May 2024.

Under the portfolio of the Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water,

the AEBN provides a brief snapshot of 2024-25 federal budget commitments relating to energy, climate change and environment:

- \$3.5 billion to extend energy bill relief for eligible small business and every household to help ease cost of living pressures. Over 10 million households will receive a \$300 rebate and around 1 million small businesses will receive a \$325 rebate.
- \$47.7 million over four years from 2024-25 for energy reforms that put consumers first including:
  - Investigating a ‘one-click-switch’ to a cheaper energy deal, cutting excess fees and charges, and making sure anyone eligible for a bill discount receives it.
  - Unlocking greater savings from Australia’s uptake of consumer energy resources such as rooftop solar, batteries, and electric vehicles which could avoid \$10 billion in network costs alone for consumers.
  - Investing in the Australian Energy Regulator to boost capacity and information for households on energy choices.
  - Reviewing electricity market laws to ensure consumers can be protected from misconduct.
- \$20.7 million over seven years from 2024-25 to ensure best practice engagement with local communities and landholders as new renewables, backed by storage and transmission, are installed across the country as aging coal-fired power continues to retire.

### Reliable and renewable future, made in Australia

The Australian Government is wanting to secure a *Future Made in Australia* by leveraging our world-class resources and ensuring sovereign manufacturing in clean energy industries over the next decade:

- \$5.1 billion boost to our world-leading Australian Renewable Energy Agency:
  - \$1.7 billion for the Future Made in Australia Innovation Fund to unlock private capital across new industries like green metals and low carbon liquid fuels.
  - \$1.5 billion to build capability in solar and battery manufacturing that strengthens supply chain resilience.
  - \$1.9 billion to recharge ARENA’s core mission developing, commercialising, manufacturing and deploying new renewable energy technologies.
- Supercharging Australian renewable hydrogen with:
  - \$6.7 billion over the decade for a new production tax incentive of \$2 per kilogram starting from 2027-28; and
  - \$2 billion for a new round of the successful Hydrogen Headstart program to give long-term certainty for the large-scale renewable hydrogen industry, critical for future green iron and steel opportunities.

- \$91 million to turbocharge the clean energy workforce for the jobs of the future, including boosts to training, to apprenticeships and to facility and equipment upgrades across occupations such as wind, solar, pumped hydro, large-scale battery, electricity networks, hydrogen and more.
- \$48.0 million for continued reform of the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme to support the continued and critical integrity of the 'net' in net zero emissions, and improving job opportunities and First Nations participation.
- \$76.6 million for continued engagement with our Pacific and international partners on the climate and energy transition, including through organisations like the UNFCCC, G20 and IEA, and ensuring the voice of the Pacific family on the existential and security threat of climate change for our region is heard through our bid to host COP31.

Approx. \$307 million of nature positive improvements in our laws and institutions, including:

- \$121 million for Australia's first national independent Environment Protection Agency with strong new powers and penalties to better protect nature.
- \$51.5 million for more accountability and transparency with new body called Environment Information Australia which will give the public and businesses easier access to the latest environmental data, release State of the Environment reports every two years, and report on progress on national environmental goals.
- \$134.2 million to strengthen and streamline environmental approval decisions on priority projects, including renewables and critical minerals projects:
  - \$19.9 million to process assessments for priority renewable energy related projects.
  - \$17.7 million to reduce the backlog and support administration of complex

applications under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act, and progress the reform of Australia's cultural heritage laws.

- \$7 million for more support for staff to assess project proposals from business, and more tailored support to help business more effectively comply with environment law.
- \$65.1 million for extra research into threatened species so sensitive areas can be more easily avoided and suitable projects can be more quickly approved based on robust, existing publicly available data.
- \$24.5 million for better planning – working with state and territory governments – in seven priority regions so it's clearer to business where complying development can more easily occur and where the 'no go' areas are.

### Climate change and energy

- \$1.7 billion over 10 years from 2024-25 to establish the *Future Made in Australia Innovation Fund*. The Fund will be administered by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency, to support early stage innovation across priority sectors.
- \$2.0 billion extension of the *Hydrogen Headstart program*, and establishing a new production tax credit for renewable hydrogen. This will be expected to provide investment certainty for large-scale hydrogen producers involved in the rapid scale up of the industry and support the decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors.
- The expansion of the Guarantee of Origin scheme to include products such as green metals and low-carbon liquid fuels. This will establish markets for these key sectors, and lay the groundwork for future policies to drive investment and ensure Australia is able to help shape rapidly developing global markets.

- Up to \$7.1 billion in *Snowy Hydro Ltd (Snowy Hydro)* to support the delivery of Snowy 2.0. This investment will reinforce the financial strength of Snowy Hydro during the peak construction period of Snowy 2.0, a vital project to the renewable energy transformation. This Budget ensures that households and families receive the benefit and realise the potential of the renewable energy transformation.
- To set up a *Consumer Energy Resources (CER) Taskforce* that will design and implement reforms to better utilise the potential of CER, including rooftop solar, electric vehicles and batteries. These reforms will reduce demand on the grid and unlock savings for households and families.
  - *Energy Price Relief Plan*, delivered by the Treasury, to reduce power bills and provide cost-of-living relief now.
- Regional cooperation of carbon sequestration has been established to support the *Future Gas Strategy* by providing options for energy security and carbon management solutions for our regional partners.
  - The department will continue to implement reforms to the *Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme* to improve integrity, transparency and participation.
  - The department is also trialling changes to the purchase of ACCUs to support the effective operation of the Safeguard Mechanism.

### Environment and water

- As part of the *Future Made in Australia* package, \$134.2 million over five years from 2023-24 to speed up environmental approval decisions. This will provide timely and robust assessments for identified priority renewable energy projects.
- Delivering the *Nature Positive Plan: better for the environment*,

*better for business*, - \$121.0 million to set up Environment Protection Australia and \$51.5 million to establish Environment Information Australia.

- an additional \$5.3 million to continue work to reform Commonwealth environmental laws.

- Opening of the *Nature Repair Market* in January 2025. \$21.6 million over two years from 2024-25 for the department to continue to develop the methodologies and other rules and guidance needed to establish the market. The department is developing tools and guidance to drive voluntary uptake of nature-related financial reporting. This work will raise awareness of the value of nature and will assist to drive an increase in private finance and investment in nature.

- Supporting Australia's Antarctic and Southern Ocean leadership by replacing the sub-Antarctic research station on Macquarie Island. \$370.7 million over nine years from 2024-25 for the department to construct a new research station to ensure continued delivery of Australia's Antarctic program. This program is key to maintaining Australia's reputation for global leadership on scientific research and ocean protection. The station will provide year-round facilities for the multiple Australian and Tasmanian government departments and agencies that use the island. The station will allow Australia to continue to build understanding of the Southern Ocean and ocean protection, while delivering critical services like weather forecasting, natural disaster alerts, international nuclear monitoring and measurement of greenhouse gas emissions.

- Supporting marine science and environmental management with \$17.6 million for extra days at sea for the icebreaker ship RSV Nuyina.

- Funding to maintain existing core water policy functions including renewing the *National Water Initiative* (NWI).

- Funding to implement the *Great Artesian Basin Water Security Program*, in collaboration with state and territory governments. This will deliver vital on-ground projects to deliver water savings and protect the environment and First Nations Peoples' cultural values. The Great Artesian Basin is Australia's largest groundwater system, providing water for over 120 regional towns and communities, as well as endangered natural spring ecosystems.

- \$174.6 million over six years from 2024-25 for *new water infrastructure projects for productive and community water use*, including \$26.1 million for new water infrastructure projects in regional and remote First Nations communities. This will improve water quality, availability and reliability.

- \$28.6 million over four years from 2024-25 for the *Inspector-General of Water Compliance* (IGWC) to establish a dedicated oversight and inquiry function and improve its public engagement. This will enable the IGWC to better uphold Murray Darling Basin rules and restore public trust and confidence in metering and monitoring.

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## Draft Onshore Wind Farm Guidance:

### Comment sought

The Federal Government of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is seeking feedback on the proposed new onshore wind farm guidance.

Australia has committed to a net zero emissions future. To do this, Australia must transition the national energy system to renewables. Climate change is a key risk to Australia's environments, wildlife, and heritage.

This draft guidance supports regulation under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)*. The guidance aims to:

- reduce impacts to, and manage protection of the environment;
- provide an efficient regulatory pathway essential to a renewable energy transition;
- provide clear guidance for onshore wind farm assessments;
- provide certainty to industry around regulatory expectations.

Please read the consultation paper and provide [feedback](#) Friday 6 June 2024.

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## Reform options for ACCU Scheme Landfill Gas Methods:

### Comment sought

The Federal Government of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is seeking feedback on the [proposed changes to strengthen the Australian Carbon Credit Unit \(ACCU\) Scheme, Landfill Gas \(LFG\) Methods](#).

These proposed changes come after an [independent panel reviewed the ACCU Scheme](#). The panel made [16 recommendations](#) which the [Federal Government accepted in principle](#). [Plans are underway to implement the recommendations](#).

Recommendation 10 of the independent review calls for the incorporation of upward sloping baselines for landfill gas projects.

To support implementation of this recommendation, the government established a [Landfill Gas Technical Working Group](#). The group advises on methane gas capture including on the:

- scientific
- technological
- regulatory
- economic context.

The group helped to inform the Reform Options Paper. This includes proposed options for adjusting LFG baselines



and ensuring they are upwards sloping.

Feedback received is expected to help inform drafting of the legislative reforms to Landfill Gas Methods.

Please forward feedback to [ACCUMethods@dceew.gov.au](mailto:ACCUMethods@dceew.gov.au) by **Friday 31 May 2024**.

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## More renewable energy for Victoria and Tasmania through new agreement

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The Australian and Victorian governments have agreed to sign a new deal intended to deliver more renewable energy through the Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS) to the benefit of Victorian businesses and households.

- 1.4 GW of renewable energy is intended to be delivered specifically to Victoria, enough to power 750,000 households.
- To allocate 300 MW for renewable energy projects in Tasmania.

The two new deals build on the allocation of at least 2.2 GW of renewable energy for NSW and 300 MW in SA that was announced in April 2024.

The allocations of renewable energy to the four states are part of the CIS Tender 1, Generation in the NEM (Tender 1), the largest single tender for renewable energy in Australia.

Tender 1 will target 6 GW of renewable generation capacity in the National Electricity Market (NEM). Registration of bids for the tender open on 31 May 2024.

The Federal Government has released a [market brief for the CIS Tender 1](#) to provide key information to potential proponents. Through the CIS, the Federal Government will seek competitive tender bids for renewable capacity and clean dispatchable capacity projects to:

- deliver an additional 32 GW of capacity by 2030
- deliver the Australian Government's 82% renewable electricity by 2030 target.

AEMO Limited, and its independent subsidiary AEMO Services Limited, (together AEMO) have been selected as service providers to administer CIS competitive tender processes, including to recommend projects to the Federal Government consistent with tender guidelines.

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## Largest renewable energy tender: Opens

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The Federal Government has announced the largest single tender for renewable energy in Australia, with its first auction scheduled for late May 2024 through the Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS). It aims to produce 6 GW of new variable renewable energy projects for the National Electricity Market (NEM)

The CIS is delivering 32 GW of new energy infrastructure in total across Australia between now and 2030. The plan is expected to transform Australia's energy system to a reliable 82% renewable grid, supported by gas, storage and transmission.

Through the CIS, the Federal Government will seek competitive tender bids for renewable capacity and clean dispatchable capacity projects to:

- deliver an additional 32 GW of capacity by 2030
- deliver the Federal Government's 82% renewable electricity by 2030 target.

A market briefing on the May tender will be released in May outlining the tender process. Tender rounds will run in the NEM approx every 6 months until 2027.

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## Large-scale Renewable Energy Target market data for March 2024:

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### Released

The Clean Energy Regulator has released the latest [Large-scale Renewable Energy Target market data](#) for March 2024.

Highlights include - 526.2 MW of capacity was approved for LGC generation in March, bringing the total approved in 2024 to 867.0 MW.

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## Clean Energy Regulator releases Compliance Update for Jan-Mar 2024 period

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The Clean Energy Regulator has released the latest [Compliance update for January – March 2024](#) that provides information on activities relating to the Regulator's [compliance and enforcement priorities](#).

The update includes important information on:

- Human-induced regeneration (HIR) gateway audits
- the NGER 2022-23 assessment program
- outstanding Renewable Energy Target (RET) shortfall debts
- power stations suspended for failing to submit electricity generation returns
- expectations for registered persons
- civil penalty proceedings against Emerging Energy Solutions Group Pty Ltd
- another solar PV installer declared ineligible to install solar systems under the SRES
- the completed enforceable undertaking – Diamond.

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## Offshore feasibility licences granted through Round 1

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The Federal Government has awarded the first feasibility licences for offshore wind projects off the coast of Gippsland, Victoria. Six developers may now explore the feasibility of offshore wind farms within the [area declared](#) in December 2022.

Feasibility licences have been granted or offered to:

- High Sea Wind Pty Ltd
- Gippsland Skies Pty Ltd
- Blue Mackerel North Pty Ltd
- Kut-Wut Brataualung Pty Ltd
- Ørsted Offshore Australia 1 Pty Ltd (Gippsland 01)
- Star of the South Wind Farm Pty Ltd.

Licence holders can begin the assessment work needed to determine the feasibility of their proposed offshore wind projects. This can include potential approvals under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

A further 6 licences have progressed to First Nations consultation. These include:

- Iberdrola Australia OW 2 Pty Ltd (Aurora Green)
- Greater Gippsland 2 OWP Project Pty Ltd (Gippsland Dawn)
- Navigator North Project Pty Ltd
- Ørsted Offshore Australia 1 Pty Ltd (Gippsland 02)
- Kent Offshore Wind Pty Ltd
- Great Eastern Offshore Wind Farm Project Co Pty Ltd

These 12 projects have the potential to generate 25 GW of electricity.

## VICTORIA

### **'Responsible Entities' have obligations says Recycling Victoria**

Recycling Victoria has released the first Circular Economy Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plan (CERCC Plan), following approval by the Victorian Minister for Environment.

The [CERCC Plan](#) identifies and manages risks of disruption to essential waste, recycling, and resource recovery services in Victoria,

and ensures that contingency plans are developed and implemented by industry to minimise the impact of any serious disruptions to service delivery.

This new regulatory approach supports greater understanding, visibility and oversight of sector-wide risk planning. It will also enable shared management of risks by industry and government to reduce disruptions and make the system more resilient and reliable.

**Essential waste, recycling and resource recovery service providers can self-assess whether they are a responsible entity using the CERCC Plan and the [guidelines available](#).**

**Responsible entities have until 11:59pm on 8 July 2024 to notify the Head, Recycling Victoria of their status and are then required to prepare and submit a Responsible Entity Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plan by 30 September 2024.**

Recycling Victoria will provide support to the sector on how to assess their obligations and meet the requirements of the CERCC Plan.

## **Circular Economy Market Report**

Recycling Victoria has released the inaugural [Circular Economy Market Report](#): an overview of Victoria's progression to a circular economy. The report provides information about material circularity relating to the generation, collection, sorting, re-processing or re-manufacturing of products within the circular economy market.

This information in the report will be used to help businesses and the government to make better policy and investment decisions.

The report highlights the opportunities to improve circularity in the management of materials, with actions or market strategies provided to address the opportunities.

The Circular Economy Market Report provides information on 8 key material streams:

- aggregates, masonry, and soil
- glass
- metals
- organics
- paper and cardboard
- plastics
- tyres
- textiles.

The report also identifies material streams that are continuing to challenge the sector, such as textiles, plastics, and tyres as well as emerging materials entering the market such as solar panels, batteries, and wind turbines .

The Circular Economy Market Report will continue to evolve in future years, as further important work is done to expand measurement of Victoria's material streams. The report is based on resource recovery rates as a measure of the circular economy market, understanding the current limitations to fully reporting the circularity of each material stream.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### **NSW EPA provides amended Clean-up Notice to 2 major supermarkets relating to soft plastics**

NSW EPA has amended Clean-up Notices to provide additional time to two major supermarkets to manage the recovery, recycling and lawful removal of soft plastic stockpiled across NSW.

The supermarkets applied to NSW EPA for an extension after identifying possible pathways to keep most of the soft plastics out of landfill.

The supermarkets have been granted an additional 10 months to comply with the notices until March 2025. This will ensure that the identified processing solution is operating at sufficient capacity to handle the stockpiled material.

NSW EPA required the supermarkets to submit a staged removal Plan to track the progress of the supermarkets under the revised timeline.

The supermarkets moved more than 5,000 tonnes of soft plastic material to safe storage last year meeting their immediate clean-up obligations to address the potential fire and pollution risk posed by 15 stockpiles found across NSW.

## QUEENSLAND

### Changes to composting facility standards:

#### Comment sought

The QLD Government is seeking feedback on a [proposal for legislative changes](#) that aim to prescribe the standard for composting facilities. These changes will over time address odour issues, reduce their impact on neighbouring residential developments and the environment and improve the recovery and circulation of valuable organic materials.

Community concerns regarding odour from composting facilities has highlighted the need to ensure that these operations meet certain standards if they are located close to residential areas.

The proposed changes would enable the regulator to require composting facilities near residential areas use in-vessel or enclosed processing for highly odorous waste. Also, that transporters of highly odorous waste do not take waste to sites which do not meet these requirements.

Feedback is also sought from industry about help that would assist businesses transition to the new standards.

Please provide your [feedback](#) by 5.00pm 14 June 2024.

### Submissions on draft amendment of end of waste (EOW) code - Paunch

The QLD Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) is proposing to amend the [current energy of waste \(EOW\) code for Paunch](#) and has issued a Notice of proposed action along with the proposed amendment to the existing EOW code for the use of paunch as a resource.

Submissions on this draft amendment EOW code should be received by **5:00pm on 3 June 2024.**

### Regulatory amendments to increase protections of QLD section of Lake Eyre Basin:

#### Comment sought

The QLD Government is strengthening protections for the [most sensitive and fragile rivers and floodplains of the Lake Eyre Basin](#) from future high risk and high impact activities of the oil and gas industry by using geographically-precise regulations, and by recognising its special ecological features.

Please provide [feedback](#) by **Thursday 30 May 2024** to ensure they are considered by the department in its human rights impact assessment work.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

### SA Climate Leaders Awards:

#### Open for nominations

The SA Government seeking nominations for the [2024 SA Climate Leaders Awards](#) of local climate change innovators.

The awards recognise achievements of individuals and organisations taking action to address climate change in SA.

Nominations had opened on 1 May 2024 and can be made under 5 categories:

- community,
- business and industry (small-to-medium enterprises),
- business and industry (large enterprises),
- research and education, and
- government.

Nominations can include initiatives that aim to:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Unlock economic opportunities
- Better manage climate risk
- Build climate resilience and adaption
- Build knowledge and awareness of ways to increase sustainability.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### Mine Closure Plan Guideline: Comment sought

The WA Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) is seeking feedback from stakeholders on updates to its [Mine Closure Plan \(MCP\) Guideline – Guideline for preparing Mine Closure Plans](#).

The purpose of this guideline is to assist applicants in preparing mine closure plans in accordance with the *Mining Act 1978 (the Mining Act)* and the *Mining Regulations 1981*.

DEMIRS has reviewed the MCP guidance in conjunction with the recently released draft guidelines for developing a [Mining Development and Closure Proposal \(MDCP\)](#) – a key feature introduced in the *Mining Amendment Act 2022* – to ensure the documents align and duplication is reduced as far as possible.

Under efficiencies introduced by the *Mining Amendment Act 2022*, a

standalone MCP will no longer be required at the project approval stage, removing duplication and streamlining decision-making.

While the Mining Act will still require MCPs to be submitted throughout the life of a mine, they will function as a planning tool to demonstrate an operation is tracking towards successful closure.

Please note, a number of [other Mining consultations are currently open for comment](#).

For this consultation, please provide feedback by 5.00pm on Tuesday 25 June.

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## **New tyre recycling capacity announced**

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Tyrecycle's new East Rockingham plant will have the capacity to process approx. 42,000 tonnes of used tyres every year.

The project is co-funded by \$5.2 million of state and federal funding through the Recycling Modernisation Fund (RMF) as well as \$9.6 million from Tyrecycle.

The facility in WA will be able to produce 7,000 tonnes of rubber crumb each year. The crumbed rubber will be integral to the construction of roads within WA, with surplus quantities earmarked for export to international markets such as Japan, where the product will serve as tyre-derived fuel.