

# ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 4 October 2024

## UPCOMING AEBN EVENTS

Announced soon!

### FEDERAL

#### Reform of Packaging Regulation:

#### Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is exploring the best way to reform Australia's packaging regulations to minimise packaging waste and pollution and build a circular economy for packaging.

The Department seeks your views on potential options for a reformed system for regulating packaging in Australia. The Department would like to hear from all stakeholders involved or interested in the production, use and recovery of packaging in Australia.

To provide your feedback, please read the Department's [Reform of Packaging Regulation Consultation paper](#) and provide your feedback by 5.00pm (AEDT) on Monday 28 October 2024 via the [online survey](#).

#### Proposed changes expected to strengthen transparency of Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme:

#### Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has released for comment the [Exposure Draft of the Carbon Credits \(Carbon Farming Initiative\) Amendment \(2024 Measures No. 2\) Rules 2024](#) that proposes an amendment to the Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Rule 2015.

A [draft Explanatory Statement](#) has also been released.

These changes are expected to strengthen transparency of the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme and help further build public trust in the ACCU Scheme as recommended by the 2022 [Independent Review of ACCUs](#).

The Exposure Draft requires the Clean Energy Regulator (CER) to publish additional ACCU Scheme project data and information on the CER's website.

This includes:

- i. improved description or detail of project activities for all projects under all methods
- ii. description of any suppression mechanisms identified and removals of suppressors relating to the project
- iii. type of estimation approach used
- iv. project crediting period start and end dates
- v. project permanence start date

- vi. start date for the chosen tool or modelling approach used to calculate abatement for each carbon estimation area (CEA) of a project
- vii. published link in the Project Register to any enforceable undertakings
- viii. the names of all agents involved in a project's management.

There are 2 exemptions to publishing the information above, including where:

- a. withholding the information is required to protect or respect 'Aboriginal tradition', as defined in the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*; or
- b. publication may threaten, damage or cause harm to a threatened ecological community or threatened species.

Feedback received will help to inform the Federal Minister's decision on the rule amendments.

Feedback is sought by 5.00pm, 7 October 2024 via the [online Survey](#).

#### Australian organisations encouraged to become TNFD adopters

The [Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures](#) (TNFD) and other bodies are encouraging Australian organisations to become TNFD Adopters ahead.

Becoming a TNFD Adopter is a commitment to getting started with TNFD-aligned reporting.

The TNFD is a global initiative which has developed a risk management and disclosure framework and guidance, to support organisations to report and act on their nature-related dependencies, impacts, risks and opportunities.

[Details](#) are now available.

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## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:

### Quad Clean Energy Supply Chain Diversification Program

#### Round 1 opens Nov 2024

In November 2024, Round 1 of the [Quad Clean Energy Supply Chain Diversification Program](#) will open for applications.

The Federal Government has committed A\$50 million to this program.

Funding is available to research and development projects and feasibility studies to develop more diverse solar photovoltaic, hydrogen electrolyser and battery supply chains. Projects must be delivered as joint projects between Australian and Indo-Pacific organisations.

Up to A\$25 million will be available under this Round, with grants ranging from A\$100,000 to A\$2.5 million.

The Program supports the implementation of the Quad Principles on Clean Energy Supply Chains – a foundation for engagement on clean energy supply chains in the Indo-Pacific.

The Federal Government is encouraging businesses to [register](#) their interest and to hear more about the program and application process.

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### Green finance by CEFC for maritime sector to decarbonise Australian ports to lower emissions

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Green finance is available to the maritime sector, through the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) to

help Australian ports to lower emissions.

The \$70 million CEFC commitment to Flinders Port Holdings (FPH) is the first CEFC direct finance in the maritime sector and the first green financing of container Stevedoring operations in Australia.

The CEFC capital will finance electrification initiatives across FPH's seven South Australian ports to demonstrate a decarbonisation pathway for the emissions intensive sector and enable Australia to benefit from the global net zero maritime transition.

FPH will introduce a range of measures to transition and accelerate towards low and zero emissions technologies and operations for customers.

FPH will investigate transitioning from hybrid straddle carriers to an electric Automated Rubber Tyre Gantry at its Flinders Adelaide Container Terminal, in what would be a significant change to the way it moves containers, and an Australian first.

Other measures include the replacement of internal combustion engine light vehicles and vessels with electric and hybrid alternatives, and installation of solar PV to reduce power consumption across the energy intensive sites. In addition, FPH will investigate the potential of cleaner shore-based power by connecting berthed ships to the grid to replace diesel bunker fuel.

CEFC CEO Ian Learmonth said: "The shipping sector powers the global economy and represents an enormous opportunity to drive down transport emissions while ensuring it continues to deliver in the future net zero economy.

Australia has signed up to efforts by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to decarbonise shipping. The IMO has committed to reducing total annual greenhouse gas emissions from shipping by at least 50 per cent by 2050.<sup>4</sup>

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## Gas supply and demand outlook for 2025 quarter 1

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Federal Government will not activate the Australian Domestic Gas Security Mechanism (ADGSM) for the January to March 2025 quarter.

The Federal Minister for Resources' decision was informed by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) [September 2024 interim gas inquiry report](#) and additional information on the WA gas market.

The ACCC report forecasts enough gas across the east coast to meet domestic demand from January to March 2025, even if liquified natural gas (LNG) producers export all their uncontracted gas.

This means the government is confident that:

- Australia's east coast gas market will likely have enough supply from January to March 2025
- domestic demand for the east coast gas market can be met without reducing gas exports
- should a localised gas supply emergency or shortfall arise, the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) powers allow it to respond in several ways, including by directing gas flows in the east coast, if required.

The ACCC report forecasts that supply is expected to exceed demand, with an east coast gas surplus of between 12 petajoules (PJ) and 27 PJ for the first quarter. The size of the surplus will depend on how much of their available uncontracted gas LNG producer's export.

The ACCC report draws on gas demand data from the *AEMO 2024 Gas statement of opportunities report* and gas supply information from gas producers in July 2024.

The Minister is satisfied there are no significant risks for supply-demand balance for Western Australia (WA) due to an increased supply of gas since the release of AEMO's *WA 2023*

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## IChEMS proposed standards:

### Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is seeking feedback on the proposed IChEMS standards on internationally recognised chemicals of concern and lower-concern chemicals, and proposed variations to existing standards.

Comment is sought on the proposed decisions and variations as provided below:

Proposed decisions:

- [Hexachlorobenzene](#)
- [Polychlorinated biphenyls](#)
- [Polychlorinated terphenyls](#)
- [Lauryl \(dodecyl\) sulfates](#)
- [Linear alkylbenzene sulfonates](#)

Proposed variations:

- [Pentachlorobenzene \(PeCB\)](#)
- [Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid \(PFOS\) and related substances](#)
- [Perfluorooctanoic acid \(PFOA\) and related substances](#)
- [Short chain chlorinated paraffins \(SCCPs\)](#)

The proposed standards relate to industrial uses of the chemicals/chemical groups, and to their impacts on the environment. The IChEMS does not manage risks to human health, nor does it regulate medical or agricultural uses. [Further information](#) on the IChEMS is available.

Feedback received on the proposed decisions will help ensure that Australian governments and businesses manage the environmental risks of these chemicals.

Please provide feedback via the [online survey](#) by 5.00pm on Friday, 25 October 2024.

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## Implementation of Phase 2 of the Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy:

### Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is developing the reporting framework and templates for phase 2 of the [Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy](#) (ESP Policy) which aims to reduce the environmental impact of Australia Government procurements.

Implementation of the policy requires a template for the Supplier Environmental Sustainability Plan (SESP) and a reporting framework for each of the phase 2 categories:

- Furniture, fittings and equipment (FFE)
- Textiles
- ICT Goods

The SESP template and reporting framework for Phase 1 (Construction services) is now [available](#).

The Department has consulted with industry and government procurers to develop discussion papers for each of the 3 categories. These discussion papers consider the underlying sustainability issues of each category and propose a draft:

- Reporting Framework
- Supplier Environmental Sustainability Plan (SESP) template.

Feedback is sought on these discussion papers that will help the Department to develop the SESP template and reporting framework for each phase 2 category.

The consultation period for each category is as follows:

### Furniture, fittings and equipment (FFE) consultation: consultation

- Please read the following discussion paper and draft reporting framework and provide [online feedback](#) by 5pm AEDT, **Friday, 25 October 2024**.

- [Discussion Paper – ESP Policy - Furniture, fittings and equipment](#)
- [Draft Reporting Framework – FFE](#)

### Textiles consultation

- Please read the following discussion paper and draft reporting framework, and provide [online feedback](#) by 5pm AEDT, **Tuesday, 29 October 2024**.
- [Discussion Paper – ESP Policy - Textiles](#)
- [Draft Reporting Framework - Textiles](#)

### ICT Goods consultation

- The [discussion paper and draft reporting framework](#) will be available on Tuesday, 8 October 2024 for comment. Please provide online feedback by 5pm AEDT, **Tuesday, 5 November 2024**.

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## Operating the Nature Repair Market discussion paper:

### Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is working on legislative rules that will support the operation of the Nature Repair Market under the *Nature Repair Act 2023*.

As part of this, the Department has developed a [discussion paper](#) to test policy ideas in relation to proposed rules.

Please provide feedback on the proposed policy that will inform the development of the rules.

All feedback will be considered by the Department as they prepare for the commencement of the Nature Repair Market.

Comments is sought by Tuesday, 8 October 2024 via the [online survey](#).

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## Latest Quarterly Carbon Market Report for June quarter 2024 -

### Released

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The Clean Energy Regulator has released the latest [Quarterly Carbon Market Report for June Quarter 2024](#).

The report provides highlights for the quarter including the latest on Australian carbon credit units (ACCU), Large-scale generation certificates (LGCs) and Small-scale technology certificates (STCs).

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## Converting ethanol from agricultural waste into jet fuel

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The Federal Government is supporting a homegrown sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) project that is expected to convert ethanol – made from agricultural waste – into jet fuel.

With a total value of \$36.8 million, the project would support the development of a Townsville production facility capable of producing approx. 110 million litres of low carbon liquid fuels (LCLFs) such as SAF and renewable diesel each year.

Jet Zero Australia has formed a consortium of partners to support delivery of the project with the technology to be supplied by LanzaJet with Qantas, Airbus and Idemitsu Kosan among the key investors.

Through the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), the Commonwealth has committed \$9 million, with the QLD Government contributing an additional \$5 million through the QLD New-Industry Development Strategy (QNIDS) to grow local production capabilities and establish SAF value chains in QLD.

The project will include a Front-End Engineering Design (FEED) study and further project development work to assess the viability of a subsequent commercial scale alcohol-to-jet (ATJ) production renewable fuels facility.

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## New Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner announced

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The Federal government has announced the appointment of Tony Mahar as the new [Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner \(AEIC\)](#).

The appointment is for an initial 3 year period.

The Commissioner is expected to lead efforts to promote community engagement practices in the renewable energy transformation.

Mr Mahar has been the CEO of the National Farmers Federation for the past 8 years.

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### VICTORIA

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## Proposed guideline for operating organic waste processing facilities:

### Comment sought

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EPA Victoria has released for feedback a [proposed guideline for operating organic waste processing facilities](#).

The new guideline is being developed by EPA Victoria for organic waste processing facilities. Once finalised, this guideline will replace *EPA Publication 1588: Designing, Constructing, and Operating Composting Facilities*.

Properly processed organic material can:

- Improve soil's physical and chemical properties
- Divert significant amounts of material from landfill

Poorly designed or operated facilities can harm human health and the environment, including causing off-site odour issues. Contamination of feedstocks which can be chemical, physical, microbial, or non-organic, creates problems when turning organic waste into a usable material.

EPA Victoria is developing this guideline to:

- Help the industry safely manage larger volumes of organic waste
- Mitigate risks associated with contamination
- Reflect relevant legal requirements, new technologies, and industry best practices

Please provide feedback via the online survey by 25 October 2024.

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## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Asbestos Disposal Point Grants

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Sustainability Victoria (SV) is providing funding under the [Asbestos Disposal Point \(ADP\) Grants](#) program to help local government and/or industry to establish Asbestos Disposal Points that will increase access to waste facilities that support the safe disposal of non-friable (also known as bonded) asbestos waste.

Based at existing waste facilities in eligible areas identified by SV, the disposal points will accept small quantities (under 10 square metres) of packaged, non-friable asbestos waste from domestic customers and commercial customers for a fee. Once delivered, the asbestos will be temporarily stored in a secure area equipped with a fit-for-purpose bin.

When the bin reaches storage limits, the waste will be transported to an EPA Victoria licensed landfill for final disposal.

Applications close October 2024.

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## Turning waste textiles into cement

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Sustainability Victoria has announced [partnership between Victoria University and social enterprise Assembled Threads](#) as they have developed an innovative solution to transform old polyester vests into new cement footpaths.

Every year Australia throws out 11,000 tonnes of textile waste in the form of

uniforms, including high-visibility vests. Their fluoro materials and reflective strips in the vests fade over time and need to be replaced every six months. 99% of uniforms end up in landfill.

Assoc. Prof. Dr Malindu Sandanayake and his team designed the mix of cardboard and textiles that can replace virgin cement with a product containing recycled materials.

The textiles come from [Assembled Threads, who turn old high-vis vests into new ones](#).

[Details](#) are now available.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### Review on NSW Underground Petroleum Storage Systems (UPSS) Regulation

NSW EPA is undertaking its periodic review of the *Protection of the Environment Operations (Underground Petroleum Storage Systems) Regulation 2019 (UPSS Regulation)*.

The Regulation outlines the requirements for designing, installing, maintaining and monitoring underground petroleum storage systems in NSW.

The purpose of the regulation is to reduce the risk of harmful environmental leaks that can lead to contamination of land and groundwater. The purpose of the review is to assess whether the regulation provides up-to-date requirements to prevent leaks and achieve effective regulatory outcomes.

This will help the regulation stay aligned with industry changes.

As part of this review, NSW EPA has surveyed local councils, consulted with other government agencies and engaged with key industry bodies to identify issues and inform potential changes to the UPSS Regulation.

In early 2025, NSW EPA plans to publicly consult on any proposed changes to the UPSS Regulation.

### Site Auditors exempt from Automatic Mutual Recognition

NSW Government has exempted contaminated land site auditor accreditation from the automatic mutual recognition (AMR) scheme for 5 years, until at least October 2029.

Automatic mutual recognition (AMR) is a national program that allows workers with a license or registration for certain occupations in one Australian state or territory to do the same work in another state or territory without needing to apply or pay for a new license or registration. [Additional information](#) on the AMR is now available.

The exemption is intended to allow time to address differences in accreditation, as well as technical, policy and legislative requirements for contaminated land site auditors in NSW and other areas. The differences could lead to inadequate land contamination assessments and potential risks to public health and the environment. The 5 year exemption provides time for states and territories to collaborate and align their accreditation processes and standards.

[Further information](#) on contaminated land site auditors is now available.

### Updated information on managing asbestos on contaminated sites

NSW EPA is providing [updated information](#) on managing asbestos contaminated sites.

NSW EPA has not changed the way they assess contaminated land in NSW. NSW EPA received feedback from Industry and the community on their position statement, as feedback suggested that additional clarity was required about what is allowed under the current regulatory framework for remediation projects.

NSW EPA advises that they will continue to review this information and provide updates when available on their website.

### Changes to NSW EPA cost recovery and site auditor fees

On 1 September of each year, under the Contaminated Land Management Regulation 2022, NSW EPA sets out revised site auditor accreditation and application fees. The fees are adjusted and based on changes in the Public Sector Wage Price Index.

From 1 September 2024, the fees will increase as follows:

- \$109 per hour: Cost recovery fee rate
- \$1,292: Application fee for accreditation as a site auditor
- \$9,023: Fee for accreditation as a site auditor (for a period of 1 year or less).

Further information regarding NSW EPA's [cost recovery fees](#) and [accreditation fees](#) are also available.

### FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Business Food Waste Partnership Grants

NSW EPA has announced the opening of [Round 2 of the Business Food Waste Partnership Grants](#) program.

Over \$4 million, over four years, is available to support eligible organisations to help businesses and institutions to reduce and source separate food waste.

Grants of up to \$200,000 are available for projects up to 2 year duration.

By 2030, NSW Government has a target to halve organics waste sent to landfill and achieve net zero emissions from organics waste in landfill.

Applications close at 4.00pm on 14 November 2024.

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## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Assisting Councils Go FOGO

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NSW EPA has announced Round 3 of the NSW Go FOGO grants program to help Councils across NSW to roll out food organic and garden organics waste collection services to their residents.

Councils can claim up to \$50 per household to support the transition to FOGO, with additional payments available for areas with a high proportion of multi-unit dwellings. Funds can be used to support the roll out of infrastructure such as green bins and kitchen caddies, education and staffing.

NSW EPA has also launched 'Starting Scraps', a free FOGO education program co-designed with councils and Monash University's Behaviour Works to ensure households can make the most of their new service.

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### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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#### EPA SA reviews Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010:

##### Comment sought

EPA SA is reviewing the [Environment Protection \(Waste to Resources\) Policy 2010 \(W2R EPP\)](#) to modernise SA's approach to the regulation of resources and wastes and enable the development of a more circular economy.

The [Beyond recycling: Moving SA towards a more circular economy](#) discussion paper outlines the issues and opportunities for policy reform and potential policy measures.

The key policy review areas are:

1. Supporting the transition to a circular economy.
2. Avoiding waste generation.
3. Maximising resource recovery.
4. Supporting a strong market for recovered resources.

5. Protecting the environment and human health from waste pollution.
6. Circular economy metrics, reporting and transparency.

Feedback will help inform how the existing W2R EPP may be amended and whether any additional may be included in a new draft EPP.

Please provide your feedback via the [online survey](#) by 20 December 2024

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### Environment Protection (Beverage Container Deposit Scheme) Amendment Bill 2024:

#### Comment sought

EPA SA has released for comment the [draft Environment Protection \(Beverage Container Deposit Scheme\) Amendment Bill 2024](#) as they intend to modernise SA's beverage container deposit scheme (CDS).

Proposed reforms focus on scheme governance and system modernisation.

Feedback is expected to refine the draft legislation to ensure CDS governance reform objectives can be achieved.

The proposed reforms set out:

- Updated objectives and features of the CDS that build upon the scheme's success in reducing litter and waste.
- The appointment and functions of a not-for-profit scheme coordinator who would be responsible for the administration, management, and proper operation of the scheme.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for the scheme coordinator including around contract arrangements with scheme participants, scheme cost-setting practices, performance targets, customer service standards, and IT-based payment, auditing, and reporting requirements.

- A framework to recognise eligible material recovery facilities in the scheme.
- A scheme price review mechanism for the Essential Services Commission of SA.
- Clear roles for government oversight and EPA fee reform.
- Transitional provisions including a process to be followed to bring existing collection depots into a reformed scheme.

Feedback is sought by 25 October 2024 via the [online survey](#).

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### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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#### New EPA WA Chair

##### Announced

EPA WA has announced the appointment of their new chair, Darren Walsh.

Mr Walsh brings significant experience in environmental impact assessments, planning and policy to the role of Chair after joining the EPA board in November 2023.

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#### New guide to future climate projections for water management in WA:

##### Released

EPA WA has released the [new guide](#) – Guide to future climate projections for water management in WA – to help WA's water sector manage water resources using up-to-date climate projections and assessment strategies.

It's a step-by-step decision support tool assisting scientists, water planners and decision-makers make locally relevant choices when considering climate change.

WA's Minister for Water Simone McGurk said "the guide helps us choose climate adaptation actions today that will assist key decision-

makers with determining WA's water needs into the future".

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## **Key outcomes of WA's Waste Authority meeting**

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The latest meeting of WA's Waste Authority was held in September 2024. The [outcomes](#) of discussions and decisions were made on the following items:

- The Development of a National Circular Economy Framework (while the Framework will not be directive on Australian states and territories, there will be synergies with WA's Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030 (WA's Waste Strategy);
- Waste management challenges in regional and remote Aboriginal communities
- Western Australian led national project on end-of-life tyre options
- GREAT Sorts waste sorting behaviour change program
- 2022-23 Waste Plan data and Local Government progress against waste strategy targets