

The last year has seen 2 national campaigns begin to climax; and with the election of conservative state governments – our efforts to protect past advances. A major characteristic of TEC is its longevity as we enter our 40th year; and commitment to persistent campaigning. The issues we tackle are the difficult (sometimes called ‘ugly’) ones and aimed at systemic change. Our long corporate memory and skilled campaigners help maintain a focus on the strategic changes needed to make Australia environmentally sustainable.

Electricity gets hot

Finally as electricity prices became a hot political issue - the message has got through about energy efficiency and problems in the National Electricity Market (NEM). Not only have consumers begun to use less electricity but also regulators, federal and state ministers and the mainstream media are voicing the need for alternatives to the ‘build and consume more’ driver in the NEM. The stage is set for major reforms.

TEC actively participated in the national policy debate about demand management including key submissions to the “Power of Choice” review and the Senate Inquiry into prices; and social media opeds. We made a significant contribution to proposals to augment consumer advocacy in the NEM.

We also completed our NEM 10yr Report Card – the first comprehensive evaluation of the market – setting a benchmark for the regulators and politicians.

Our communications project on energy efficiency provided important insights into how we and other NGOs can explain the reasons for the steep power prices and the virtues of efficiency.

Also we held a forum to advance community-based renewable energy networks which resulted in a joint position to government and additional recognition in the NSW Renewable Energy Action Plan.

TEC completed the Environmental Trust funded project compiling case studies of energy efficiency in lower grade office buildings; along with two forums in Sydney and Parramatta.

Carbon price not so hot

Australia finally got a carbon price along with billions for clean energy. It’s a start and now the environment movement needs to defend it. The good news is that the fear mongering about its impact on the economy has fallen flat and it’s no longer a big political issue. TEC has engaged in the public debate to defend the carbon price.

The long march to improve recycling

The historic container deposits battle continues. A national decision is still on the agenda as the Boomerang Alliance of now 22 groups campaigns around Australia to combat beverage industry misinformation. As the lead organisation TEC is working hard to bring the effort to a successful conclusion.

Now that an e-waste recycling scheme has been launched, the next product for attention is tyres. After failing to achieve a regulatory approach, governments have been examining a voluntary or co-regulatory scheme. Not surprisingly it lacked targets (binding or otherwise). However after lobbying by TEC, this has been rectified.

Our film, *Waste Not* continues to inspire its audience; and has now spawned a new interactive educational website. Due to be launched shortly it contains video of waste heroes, school activities and a history of waste.

Finally we joined with representatives from industry and government to assess the prospects for waste to energy. TEC remains very cautious about this activity as a part of the waste management hierarchy.

Green economy push must continue

We have embarked on new programs to push along the green economy debate. Our ‘Buying Better’ project has just completed examination of the most material environmental impacts from four products – paper, small IT, meat and dairy and laundry. We expect our results to inject a new vision into labelling and life cycle views of products.

TEC has also launched the Green Economy Project intended to bring collaboration, campaign skills training and business sector planning together.

Green Capital organised the following events: ‘Media, Marketing and the Green Message’, ‘National

Electricity Market – has it worked?"; 'Paper Wars – why is green procurement 101 still such a battlefield'.

Protecting rivers and the bush

Finally the Snowy River received a 'spring flush' from the snow melt after sufficient water saving measures had been achieved pursuant to the inter-governmental agreement. However, there's still more to do to reach the promised 24%.

A major preoccupation during the year was the NSW Strategic Land Use Plan originally promised to provide an approach to avoid damage from mining to high value agricultural and conservation areas. A strong alliance of environmentalists and farmers has developed. We also released our review of mining and land use – 'NSW: fossil or balanced future?' showing the long history of distortion of land use planning by mining interests. Unfortunately the decision by the NSW government delivered no guaranteed protection (even the aquifer interference law is optional) – and controversy about the rapid expansion of coal and gas mining will continue.

Our other major battle has been to preserve the laws that prevent broadscale land clearing. The O'Farrell administration (and other new conservative governments) have launched reviews of the protection laws and key rural lobby groups want to effectively dismantle them. TEC established its Living Landscapes campaign including use of social media to combat the threat.

Planning for a sustainable future

There's nothing more important than the planning law that sets down the rules for determining the thousands of development applications each year as well as environmental assessment. A wholesale review is underway in NSW and TEC is represented on the ministerial stakeholder committee. In addition we have produced major reports with the Nature Conservation Council and Environment Defenders Office in an effort to inject environmentally sustainable development and genuine public participation. We have also undertaken work on cumulative impact assessment, for example in relation to air pollution; developed a Public Participation Charter; and supported local action.

The development lobby wants faster approvals and less public consultation and has captured government attention due to the slowing of the housing industry.

Similarly at the federal level, environment protection laws are under attack and we have added our voice to the widespread concern amongst the environment movement.

On a more local level we have been laying the groundwork for the Cool Streets campaign, aimed at reducing the urban heat island effect through more vegetation in our streets and on the roofs.

Key Project Funding and Philanthropic Support:

Pratt Foundation – Waste Not website
Myer Fund – Waste Not website
Purves Environmental Fund – Living Landscapes
National Electricity Advocacy Panel – NEM Advocate
NSW Environmental Trust – Lessons and Tools from existing office building leaders

Staff - Jeff Angel (Executive Director). Vicktoria Wade (Office Manager). Leigh Martin (Urban/Water Campaigner). Dave Burgess (Natural Areas Campaigner). Ruth Hessey (Communications Director). Mark Byrne (NEM Advocate). Lisa Wriley (Waste Minimisation Officer). Sylvia Baumgartner (Special Projects). Glen Wright (NEM Research Officer). Matt Fisher, (Existing Buildings Project Manager). Tessa Menzies (Sustainability Events and Marketing Manager), Rochelle Self (Client Relationship Coordinator). Murray Hogarth (Green Capital Senior Advisor). Gareth Johnston (Green Capital partners). Jenn Brewer (Admin Assistant).

Management Committee – Seb Crawford (Chair). Gerri Ormonde (Secretary). Bob Wallace (Treasurer). Anita Mitchell. Jemilah Hallinan. Fabian Sack. Paul Sheridan. Jeff Smith (Public Officer)

Volunteers – Steve Granger. Sabine Prah. Bethany Charlton. Chris Weholt. Kate Coates. Tim Silverwood. Silke Stuckenbrock. Paul Sharp. Catherine Leach. Peter Cook. . Judy Pincus. Justin Bonsey. Charles Gream. Gavin Imhof. Jenn Brewer. Georgina Mallam. Millicent Ryals. Ann Proudfoot. Shauna Forrest. Wendy Bishop. Sjirk Bangma. Lyn, Alistair. Dave Thomas. Keelah Lam. Judy Reizes. Ifeanna Tooth. Barvara Hush. Helen Wei. John Addley, James Wright. Ro Self. Sally Atkinson. Iris Elqueta and family. Jennifer Salkeld. Students from Orana Steiner school. Tom Mackenzie. Kat Reid. Peter Giles Wendy Thomas. Christine Freeman. Matthew Clarke. Kathy Clarke. Mark Brown. Kate Beveridge. Antoinette Edwards. Andrew Fielding.

Government Committees – TEC staff were members of: Millenium Parklands Advisory Committee; Land and Water Advisory Panel; Lord Howe Island Board; Biobanking Ministerial Reference Group; Product Stewardship Legislation Advisory Committee. Television and Computer Scheme Stakeholder Reference Group. New Planning System Stakeholder Advisory Group. Strategic Regional Land Use Stakeholder Group.

Environmental Management – during the year TEC purchased 50% GreenPower and 50% Gold Standard offsets; implemented an action plan on paper, containers and recycling under the National Packaging Covenant; and adopted a worm farm. Our office was rated 6 star NABERS.

and THANKS TO OUR DONORS!