



**Environmental Defenders' Office**  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



Welcome to the Autumn edition of the EDO (ACT) newsletter. The EDO ACT wishes its members and supporters a good 2018. AT EDO ACT, we are looking forward to an exciting 2018 with a number of changes afoot!

Firstly we'd like to say a very fond farewell to Principal Solicitor, Camilla Taylor, who has finished with us in after a remarkable 6 years of achievement, struggle, survival, growth and great success – full time, part time, all the time.

Camilla left in February to start her own legal practice in Yass, NSW. Just up the road.

Camilla was the Principal Solicitor of the EDO ACT for 6 years, providing quality legal advice and information on environmental matters in the ACT and surrounding areas. Camilla's passion and resilience has seen us through particularly difficult times – most notably the total cut of Commonwealth funding of EDOs across Australia. Over this time Camilla has set up and run environmental law clinics at ANU, run a series of fundraising events, was commissioned to provide legal analysis on national and international projects, commissioned a new logo for EDO ACT, and updated our flagship publication – the ACT Environmental Law Handbook. Under Camilla's direction, EDO ACT has made major contributions to environmental law reform in the ACT, been a key contributor to national environmental law reform projects, and has had substantial and concrete success acting for community environment groups - particularly in the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT). The evident value of EDO ACT was recognised by the key parties in the lead up to the ACT 2016 Legislative Assembly Election, and the ACT Government has since committed to funding the Office for the next two and half years.

We wish Camilla all the best in this next version of a multi-tasking life, albeit without the Yass to Canberra commute.

We would also like to introduce you to our new Principal Legal Officer and CEO, Stephanie Booker, who commenced her role at the EDO ACT in mid-February. Steph comes most recently from the Northern Territory and brings with her a passion for environmental law, community legal education and a commitment to affect change. She is looking forward to working with members, supporters and volunteers – so please feel free to introduce yourself at upcoming stalls and events around Canberra.

*Roland Manderson*

Chair, EDO ACT

March 2018

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## LOCAL NEWS

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### **Next Stage of the Red Hill Development about to Begin**

The ACT Government is redeveloping the Red Hill Public Housing Precinct as part of the Asset Recycling Initiative agreement with the Commonwealth Government. The Red Hill Public Housing Precinct is positioned next to the Red Hill shops and is bound by La Perouse Street, Discovery Street, and Monaro Crescent. Demolition of the existing buildings has commenced and the Estate Development Plan approved.

For more information, click [here](#).

### **New Territory for Threatened Frog**

Australia's threatened Northern Corroboree Frog will benefit from new breeding techniques and a new approach to identifying wild reintroduction sites. 30 frogs will be released into new semi-wild enclosures at Tidbinbilla this month. The ACT Government leads Australia's main captive breeding program for the tiny black and yellow frogs at



Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, accounting for 90% of the captive population.

This work builds on the ACT Government's corroboree frog recovery program, and is supported by Australian Government funding through the National Landcare Program and National Environmental Science Program.

For more information, click [here](#).

Northern Corroboree Frog  
Adam Parsons, Threatened Species Recovery Hub

### **Rapid Network 2018**

Canberra's public transport network is expanding, with the introduction of five new Rapid Routes in 2018. These new routes offer more frequent and direct services between our town centres, integrated with the Light Rail routes under construction and in planning.

For more updates, click [here](#).

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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### **Parliament Votes to Protect the Murray Darling Basin**

On 14 February 2018, the Australian Parliament voted to disallow a proposed amendment to the Basin Plan to – amongst other things – take 70GL away from the environment in the northern Murray-Darling Basin. The proposed amendment was based on work undertaken by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority as part of the Northern Basin Review.

You can read the EDO NSW Analysis of the Northern Basin Disallowance [here](#) and the EDOs of Australia submission on the Northern Basin Review [here](#).

### **Win for Acland Community as Coal Mine Expansion Licence Knocked Back**

Queensland's Environment and Science Department has rejected the application for an environmental authority to expand the planned \$1 billion expansion of the New Acland coal mine on Queensland's Darling Downs. In May 2017, Queensland's Land Court recommended that Stage 3 be refused. The recommendation followed a 99 day public hearing which included EDO Qld client Oakey Coal Action Alliance - a group of 60 local landholders and townspeople. It was one of the largest environmental public interest cases in Australian history - and the first time the Land Court had recommended the outright refusal of a mining project following a contested public hearing in its' 120-year-history. On 14 February 2018, the Queensland Government decided to accept the Land Court's recommendation to reject the application.

To see EDO Qld's statement click [here](#).

### **Special Rapporteur Presents Framework Principles on Human Rights and the Environment**

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, John Knox, has outlined framework principles that he will urge the Human Rights Council to adopt later this year. At the 37<sup>th</sup> UN Human Right Council session, the Special Rapporteur presented 16 framework principles which set out basic obligations of States under human rights law as they relate to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

To read the full report, click [here](#).

## **LAW REFORM AND POLICY WATCH**

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### **Water Use by the Extractive Industry**

The Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications is conducting an inquiry into water use by the extractive industry. Communities, scientists and conservationists across Australia continue to express concern about the impacts of extractive industry on water and the environment. This concern is widespread largely due to extent of extractive industries across nearly all states and territories of Australia and the relatively weak regulation of this industry.

To see the EDOs of Australia Submission, click [here](#).

### **Marine Biodiversity: Beyond National Jurisdiction**

This report collates findings from an expert forum in early 2017 which was organised by the Humane Society International, the Australian Committee for IUCN and EDO NSW. The forum looked at the challenge of protecting marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

To read the report, click [here](#).

# OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMENT

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## **Local Opportunities to Comment**

### **Dickson 72 Community Consultation**

Dickson Section 72 has been identified by the ACT Government as a site where broader community benefits could be readily realised. The site is located within 800 metres of major public transport services on Northbourne Avenue, adjacent to the Dickson group centre and recreational facilities at the Dickson playing fields. This location makes it an important precinct to reconsider its best uses for the community.

The ACT Government is consulting on the future of the precinct and exploring options for future uses of Dickson Section 72. For more information, and to contribute your ideas, click [here](#).

### **Draft Plan to Manage Molonglo Reserve**

Have your say on the Draft Management Plan for Canberra's newest reserve – the Molonglo River Reserve. The reserve will comprise of 1,280 hectares and extend 23 kilometres along the Molonglo River from Scrivener Dam to the Murrumbidgee River Corridor Reserve. This area contains some of Canberra's best river landscapes and is home to a wide range of native plants and animals, including the endangered pink-tailed worm-lizard, superb parrot and box-gum grassy woodland habitat.

The draft plan sets out how the reserve will be managed and restored over the next 10 years including nature conservation activities, recreational opportunities for ACT residents and visitors, heritage preservation and preparation for bushfire.

Consultation closes on 23 March 2018. To see the draft plan and comment, click [here](#).

### **Aquatic and Riparian Strategy**

Our aquatic environments supply water for our consumption, provide habitat for plants and animals, and are sought out as aesthetically beautiful places and for fishing. But they are threatened by climate change, water extraction, overfishing, erosion and sedimentation, pest plants and animals, disease, fire and other threats.

The draft Aquatic and Riparian Conservation Strategy outlines how we can best continue to repair and manage our waterways. It builds on the achievements of the previous 2007 strategy.

For more information, and to contribute to the strategy click [here](#).

## **ACT Opportunities to Comment**

### **Climate Change Discussion Paper**

The ACT Government has committed to a target of [net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050](#) as part of its commitment to the global effort to limit global warming to two degrees. The ACT Climate Change Discussion Paper provides information on the key topics for consideration as the ACT transitions to net zero emissions.

Consultation closes on 9 April 2018. To read the Discussion Paper and to contribute a submission, click [here](#).

### **Housing Choices Discussion Paper**

The ACT Government is investigating whether the housing needs of the Canberra community are currently being met and how they can be better met in the future. The Housing Choices Discussion Paper provides background to the ACT planning and housing policies, and offers an opportunity to contribute ideas on strategies to get better housing outcomes. The ACT government is asking for input about housing development in the ACT.

Consultation closes 9 March 2018. There are a number of opportunities to provide your views. For more information, and to contribute, click [here](#).

### **Complete the ACT Climate Change Survey to Win up to \$1000**

The ACT is predicted to become warmer and drier in future years, with more frequent extreme weather events such as heatwaves, storms, droughts and bushfires. To help identify how to best improve our ability to cope with the expected effects of climate change, an ACT Government-funded survey is being conducted by the University of Canberra.

People aged 18 or over who live or work in the ACT and who participate before midnight 9 March 2018 go into the draw to win one of seven gift cards worth a total of \$2,000. To complete the survey, click [here](#).

### **Commonwealth Opportunities to Comment**

#### **Clean Energy Finance Corporation Amendment (Carbon Capture and Storage) Bill 2017**

The *Clean Energy Finance Corporation Amendment (Carbon Capture and Storage) Bill 2017* amends the *Clean Energy Finance Corporation Act 2012* to remove the prohibition on the Clean Energy Finance Corporation investing in carbon capture and storage technologies. The technology involves capturing carbon dioxide from a power plant and burying it underground in a bid to reduce emissions.

The closing date for submissions is 13 March 2018. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **Energy Security Board National Energy Guarantee**

A public consultation paper for the National Energy Guarantee has been released by the Energy Security Board. The paper seeks feedback on the high level design of the mechanism's reliability and emissions component.

Submissions on the consultation paper are due by 8 March 2018. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **Nominations Open for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities**

Nominations are invited for species, ecological communities or key threatening processes to be considered for listing under the EPBC Act. Accepted nominations will progress to assessment by the Scientific Committee commencing 1 October 2018.

Any threatened species or ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act becomes a “matter of national environmental significance”, for which approval is required where proposed actions are likely to have a significant impact on the species or community.

Nominations can be made until 30 March 2018. For more information, click [here](#).

## EVENTS

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### **Climate Change Strategy Round Table**

Every Canberran has a role to play in taking climate action and the ACT Government wants you to contribute to our next climate strategy. Come along to the third climate change roundtable which focuses on the potential economic costs of proposed ACT's emissions reduction efforts.

The session will also cover living infrastructure (such as wetlands, trees, green refuges) and its important role helping our city adapt to climate change impacts. This follows the release of CSIRO's urban heat report for Canberra and the ACT Government's living infrastructure plan.

When: Thursday 8 March 2018, 12pm – 2pm

Where: Renewables Innovation Hub, 19-23 Moore Street, Turner

For more information, click [here](#).

### **Introduction to Seed Saving**

Join Canberra Seed Savers for an introductory workshop to basic herb and veggie seed saving. There are many benefits to saving seeds: seed saving protects our heritage of abundant, open-pollinated food seeds from biodiversity loss. It also allows Canberra growers to make the most out of varieties that grow well in local conditions and can help reduce the cost of growing your own food.

When: Tuesday 13 March 2018, 6pm-8pm

Where: Canberra Environment Centre, Cnr Lennox Crossing and Lawson Crescent, Acton

For more information, click [here](#).

### **The Canberra Harvest Festival**

The 10th annual Canberra Harvest Festival returns to the Canberra Environment Centre. One of the biggest events on the Canberra region's environmental calendar, the Harvest Festival is an annual celebration of local food and producers from the ACT food bowl.

When: Saturday March 24 2018, 2pm-6pm

Where: Canberra Environment Centre, Cnr Lennox Crossing and Lawson Crescent, Acton

More information can be found [here](#).

### **Better Laws for a Better Planet – Symposium on the Future of Australia's Environmental Laws**

This symposium organised by the Australian Panel of Experts on Environmental Law brings together experts from across disciplines and sectors to discuss the key challenges, opportunities and directions for the next generation of environment laws to deliver genuine environmental protections.

When: Tuesday 27 March 2018

Where: University House Hotel, Acton, Canberra

For more information, click [here](#).

### **ACT Permaculture Festival**

The ACT Permaculture Festival is an opportunity to connect with community associations, local enterprises and small businesses with social goals and makers or individuals whose work is related to the practice of permaculture.

When: Sunday 15 April 2018

Where: Canberra City Farm, 2 Dairy Road, Fyshwick

More information can be found [here](#).

### **Climate Leadership Conference**

Over 30 of Australia's leading climate experts will present the latest best practice strategies to this conference.

When: Thursday 15 – Friday 16 March 2018

Where: Dockside, Darling Harbour, Sydney

More information can be found [here](#).

## Support the EDO ACT

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EDO ACT has been providing support to individuals and community groups on environmental law issues since 1995. We are the only community legal centre in the ACT that specialises in public interest environmental issues. We rely on donors to help fund these critical services.

Your support is vital in ensuring that individuals and community groups have access to environmental justice. Make your donation online [here](#).