

recent developments

INTERNATIONAL

International law center finds the environment is left behind in Doha

The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) presented a paper on trade and the environment to a recent expert meeting in Paris, which concluded as follows:

'History shows that the WTO has focused primarily on the impacts of environmental policy and regulation on trade. Only after the Tuna-Dolphin cases were trade negotiators forced to consider that the trade regime can have negative impacts on the environment and environmental policy, both at the international and national levels. The creation of the CTE and the Doha Ministerial Declaration reflect this development. However, the ineffectiveness of the CTE and the current negotiations show that the WTO has a hard time looking at the trade-environment linkage from more than one angle.'

See: http://www.ciel.org/Tae/Doha_IDDRI_26Oct05.html

Pathway forward at Montreal Conference of the Parties on Climate Change

A media release by Australia's Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell, on 11 December 2005 (C384/05) said that 'After marathon all night negotiations, there was unanimous agreement among all nations on a positive new pathway forward to create an effective international response in the post-Kyoto period. The agreement of 189 countries at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Montreal heralded a new chapter in action on global climate change.' Senator Campbell said Australia had played a key role in the negotiations and had worked closely with the Canada President of the Conference and many other nations to get agreement to start a dialogue on post-Kyoto approaches for long-term cooperative action on climate. The first Ministerial meeting of the AP6 will be held in Sydney in mid January.

On the other hand, ACF Executive Director Don Henry said from Montreal, that "It's great that the world's first strong agreement to tackle climate change is up and running but the Australian Government's lack of action to cut spiralling domestic greenhouse pollution and international spoiling role is damaging our reputation and future."

Australia's emissions projections

A Federal Government report released in November 2005 has published the latest projections of Australia's greenhouse emissions performance against the Kyoto Target. See: 'Tracking to the Kyoto Target 2005; Australia's Greenhouse Emissions Trends - 1990 to 2008-2012 and 2020' and related press release: 'Australia remains on track to Kyoto target - Media release, 30 November 2005. \

NATIONAL AND COMMONWEALTH

Editor: Elizabeth Marsden

Marine initiatives to sustain environment and industry

On 14 November 2005, the Australian Government released detailed proposals for the creation of an extensive network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the oceans off south-eastern Australia that again confirms Australia as a world leader in marine environment conservation.

The 14 candidate MPAs cover more than 170,000 square kilometres of Commonwealth waters off Tasmania, Victoria, southern New South Wales and eastern South Australia. The boundaries and zoning of these MPAs announced today will now be subject to consultations in January and February, then finalised in March 2006.

The Government also announced further details of the major fisheries management reforms being implemented as part of the \$220 million *Securing our Fishing Future* package to ensure the sustainability of Commonwealth managed fisheries and to secure the fishing industry's future.

See Joint Media Release by Australian Minister for the Environment and Heritage

Senator the Hon. Ian Campbell & Australian Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, Senator Ian Macdonald, 14 December 2005.

Draft National Guidelines for Water Recycling

National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) draft *National Guidelines for Water Recycling – Managing Health and Environmental Risks* have been released by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) and the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) for public comment. The guidelines comprise a risk management framework and specific guidance on managing the health and environmental risks associated with the use of recycled water. The draft guidelines focus on treated sewage effluent and greywater. Once completed and cleared by EPHC and NRMMC, these guidelines will replace NWQMS Document 14 – *Guidelines for Sewerage Systems – Use of Reclaimed Water*.

The draft Guidelines and information on how to make a submission can be downloaded from the EPHC website http://www.ephc.gov.au/ephc/water_recycling.html. The closing date for submissions is Friday 13 January 2006.

New national licensing system for refrigeration and air conditioning sector

New regulations in support of the Australian Government's *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989* came in to full effect on 1 July 2005. The regulations affect those who buy, sell or handle ozone depleting substances or synthetic greenhouse gases.

The Minister has appointed the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) as the Industry Board to administer these new regulations. More information regarding the new licensing system is available on the ARC web site. Comments on the Suggestions for an industry advisory body for the refrigeration and air conditioning industry - Discussion paper are welcome and sought by 5.00pm Monday 16 January 2006.

VICTORIA

Editor: Jennie Slatter

Commencement of Sustainability Victoria on 1 October 2005

On October 1 2005, Sustainable Energy Authority Victoria (SEAV) and EcoRecycle Victoria joined forces to become Sustainability Victoria.

The objectives of Sustainability Victoria are to:

1. Drive a water, energy, and materials saving culture in business, communities and government.
2. Support the demonstration and application of innovative technologies, systems, services and products.
3. Reduce climate impact of energy supply, and increase the supply and use of renewable and distributed energy.
4. Increase efficiency and productivity of materials, energy and water use.
5. Enable the recovery, re-use and recycling of materials.