



NELA BULLETIN MAY 2011

PO Box 241
Deakin West ACT 2600
Ph: 02 6286 7515
Fax: 02 6290 1580
nelaaustr@ozemail.com.au
www.nela.org.au

News from the Secretariat

The membership renewal notices for 2011/2012 have been posted out to all members with the latest issue of the National Environmental Law Review.

Members will note that the NELA Membership fees have increased from 1 July 2011. This increase has been necessitated by increasing costs associated with running an organization. NELA derives the majority of its operating funds from its membership fees, and as such is limited in its capacity to raise revenue outside of this process. The last increase in fees was in 2002, nearly 10 years ago.

The new subscription rates are \$185.00 for ordinary and subscriber members and \$45.00 for students.

Members will also note that a new Corporate Membership category has been established. This new membership category is open to associations, incorporated or not, and government agencies.

The subscription rate of Corporate membership will be \$850.00 per year and includes full membership of NELA for five employees of the organization. Organisations taking out the Corporate Membership will be eligible for one vote in accordance with NELA's Articles of Association. Organisations interested in taking up Corporate Membership are asked to contact the NELA Secretariat at nelaaustr@ozemail.com.au and an application form will be provided.

If you have any queries regarding your membership renewal, please do not hesitate to contact the NELA Secretariat.

New NELA Website—Subeditors Wanted

NELA will be undertaking a major redesign of its website in the coming months to increase its functionality and to ensure that the most up to date and relevant information is available to its members.

As part of this process, we are seeking expressions of interest from NELA Members to become subeditors to the new website. The primary role of the subeditors will be to ensure that relevant information (in accordance with the NELA Website guidelines) from your jurisdiction is provided to the Secretariat for inclusion on the website. It is hoped to have a subeditor from each state and territory.

Those members interested in becoming a subeditor to the website are asked to email their expression of interest to the Secretariat by 17 June 2011.

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2011 RMLA Conference NELA Speaker Opportunity

The 2011 Resource Management Law Association of New Zealand (RMLA) Conference will be held in Hamilton, New Zealand from 6—8 October 2011.

The Conference theme, "Our place in the world" intends a broad theme that reflects the diversity of the Waikato Region, together with the local and global influences on resource management issues in the 21st Century.

The 2011 conference will include key note and workshop sessions that address the developing co-management regime within the region, particularly regarding decisions affecting the Waikato River and its catchment. Other sessions will cover geopolitics, spatial planning, land use and change, as well as planning for the many major infrastructure projects being undertaken throughout the Waikato.

RMLA have set aside a Conference Session for a NELA speaker on Saturday 8 October 2011, at 10.30am—11.30am. Therefore, we are seeking expressions of interest from current financial NELA members who would be interested in presenting at the 2011 RMLA Conference. Interested members are to submit a brief outline of their proposal to the NELA Secretariat by close of business on **Thursday 2 June 2011**.

Travel and accommodation costs for the speaker will be met by the RMLA.

If you would like more information on the 2011 RMLA Conference, visit their website at www.rmla.org.nz or contact the NELA Secretariat on 02 6286 7515.

2011 NELA Environmental Law Essay Competition

Are we headed in the right direction?

Submit your essay by 1 November 2011 and you could win \$1000 and free NELA Membership.

The NELA Essay Competition is open to any student enrolled at an Australian tertiary institution (including undergraduate and postgraduate programs). Essays that have been submitted for assessment in a unit on environmental law are eligible (and encouraged).

Essays are to be 3000 to 5000 words and may be on any topic in the discipline of Environmental Law and should broadly relate to the theme "are we headed in the right direction?"

The author of the winning essay will receive AU\$1000 and one year of free membership of NELA commencing from 1 July 2012.

The winning essay will be published in the National Environmental Law Review.

For more information and to view the competition guidelines visit the NELA website.

What's New

The Critical Decade: Climate science, risks and responses

The first major report from the independent Climate Commission, *The Critical Decade: Climate science, risks and responses*, has been released.

The report is a comprehensive synthesis of the most recent climate change science with a focus on the Australian context.

Some of the key impacts already being observed are highlighted in the report:

- In the last 50 years the number of record hot days in Australia has more than doubled. This has increased the risk of heatwaves and associated deaths, as well as extreme bush fire weather in South Eastern and South Western Australia.
- Sea level has risen by 20 cm globally since the late 1800s, impacting many coastal communities. Another 20 cm increase by 2050, which is likely at current projections, would more than double the risk of coastal flooding.
- The Great Barrier Reef has suffered from nine bleaching events in the past 31 years. This iconic natural ecosystem, and the economy that depends upon it, face serious risks from climate change.

The report was written by internationally renowned climate scientist, Commissioner Professor Will Steffen. The report was critically reviewed by the Science Advisory Panel of the Climate Commission, whose members include climate science experts from Australian universities, the CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology.

For a copy of the full report can be downloaded at www.climatecommission.govspace.gov.au

NELA Victoria Carbon Farming Initiative Forum

NELA Victoria held a highly successful forum on the Australian Government's Carbon Farming Initiative and related state laws on Thursday 5 May.

The forum was chaired by Amanda Cornwall, NELA's Vice President, and was attended by a unique mix of lawyers, environment consultants, policy makers, carbon offset providers and purchasers.

The Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP, Cabinet Secretary and Parliamentary Secretary for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Eliza Murray from the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, and NELA's Barnaby McIlrath of Maddocks provided highly informative and thought provoking presentations.

The CFI will provide a legislative framework for Australian carbon credits generated by land based activities such as reforestation, avoided deforestation, and soil carbon. The discussion covered links between the CFI and a future carbon price mechanism, how the CFI will operate and relevant Victorian laws such as carbon sequestration rights, and planning controls.

Copies of the presentations and speaking notes are available on NELA's website.

NELA would like to thank Maddocks Lawyers for hosting the event.