Green Office March Update Session:
Dr Chris McGrath & ‘General Environmental Duty’

At the Green Office Update Session on the 7th of March we were fortunate enough to have Dr Chris McGrath, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Regulation, come and give a presentation on the environmental legal system in Australia and the principle of ‘General Environmental Duty’. Section 319 of the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld) outlines the principle of ‘General Environmental Duty’ and states that:

(1) A person must not carry out any activity causes, or is likely to cause, environmental harm unless the person takes all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent or minimize the harm (the general environmental duty).

Dr McGrath talked about the general environmental duty in regards to the Green Office Program and how you as representatives can use this principle to support changes in the workplace. Similar to OH&S regulations, staff at UQ have a responsibility to ensure that their practices and behaviours at work prevent or minimise harm to the environment. Many of your colleagues may not be aware of this principle or the environmental legislation and it can be useful to provide support for initiatives that you may like to introduce into your workplace. Simple actions, such as making sure that staff switch off all lights and equipment, reduces energy consumption, which in turn reduces greenhouse gas emissions sourced from coal-fired power plants. The presentation reinforced that we all have a role to play in reducing our impact on the environment.

Welcome to the following new Green Office Representatives who joined the program in March 2011
Jackie Nash—CRC Mining, Pinjarra Hills—NEW AREA
Eunice Grinan—Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis, St Lucia—NEW AREA
Dr Christine McClintock—Centre for Military and Veterans Health, Herston—NEW AREA
Conrad Leonard—Institute of Molecular Biosciences—NEW TEAM MEMBER FOR IMB
Vladimir Pacheco Cueva—Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining

For those of you who were unable to attend the session, I have attached the handout that Dr McGrath provided at the end of this newsletter. If you would like more information on these topics Dr McGrath has a great website with easy to understand information and case studies available at:


You can also view Dr McGraths new book ‘Synopsis of the Queensland Environmental Legal System’ free at:


Camille Percival, Green Office Coordinator
Clean Up Australia Day Success

The student run volunteer organisation, The Bridge, organises a Clean Up Australia Day Group each year. This year was their largest with 170 volunteers turning out on Sunday 6th March to pitch in. They cleaned up the University of Queensland as well as the suburbs of St Lucia and Dutton Park, collecting enough rubbish to fill the equivalent of a construction waste skip bin.

The Sustainability Office made the clean up possible by assisting with publicity and providing the Bridge with gloves, caps and garbage bags. It was great to see some Green Office involvement too!

Public Place Recycling at UQ

On the 4th March 2011 the new public place recycling program was officially launched by Di Farmer, member for Bulimba on behalf of the Honourable Kate Jones, Minister for Environment and Resource Management.

Staff and Students are reminded to “Do the Right Thing, Use the Right Bin” using the well known national awareness program. A total of 42 are to be installed throughout March and April at the St Lucia Campus. The program will be introduced to other UQ campuses during 2012.

There has been a 29% improvement in recycling rates since the introduction of the program.

You can have a look at the UQ News TV clip about the new recycling program at http://vimeo.com/20820667

Frequently asked questions

Is UQ doing anything about the sale of bottled water on campus?

The Property and Facilities Division plan to investigate options for the installation of water bubblers in public places on campus to reduce the need to purchase bottled water. This will include speaking to stakeholders regarding the sale of refillable water bottles in preference to bottled water! The project will start in late 2011.

What is Sustainable Paper?

Virgin content is certified sustainable (Forest Stewardship Certification - FSC).

It is manufactured without using chlorine bleaches.

It is manufactured according to a certified Environmental Management System.

It does not have a plastic or wax coating.

It will ideally have recycled content.

Next Issue: World Environment Day—Forests: Nature at your service

Quote of the Month: Change is hard because people overestimate the value of what they have—and underestimate the value of what they may gain by giving that up." — James Belasco and Ralph Stayer *Flight of the Buffalo* (1994)

Earth Day 22nd April 2011

For more information please visit: http://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2011

AMOS SEQ Weather Forum

12th April 2011, 8.45am—4.15pm

For more information, costs and to register for the seminar please visit: http://www.gpem.uq.edu.au/index.html?page=151384&pid=114393

Brisbane Institute Conversations: Brisbane, Smart, Connected City

For more information, costs and to register for the seminar please visit: http://www.brisinst.org.au/here-and-now/brisbane-smart-connected-city-tues-12-april

UQ Staff Development Program: Topic—Introducing a Sustainable Culture


Put this date in your diary

World Environment Day Breakfast at UQ: Friday 3rd June 2011—Staff and Graduates Club, Eleanor Room 7:15am for a 7:30 start.

For further information contact the Sustainability Office, Property and Facilities Division:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green Office Coordinator (p/t)</td>
<td>3366 9959</td>
<td><a href="mailto:greenoffice@pf.uq.edu.au">greenoffice@pf.uq.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Website: www.uq.edu.au/sustainability
Dr Chris McGrath – Environmental Legislation

Major pieces of the Queensland environmental legal system

**International Law**
- Biodiversity Convention 1992
- CITES 1973
- International Whaling Convention 1946
- MARPOL 73/78
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change 1992
- Ramsar Convention 1971
- UNCLOS 1982
- Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer 1985
- World Heritage Convention 1972

**Commonwealth Law**
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (Cth)
- Airports Act 1996 (Cth)
- Energy Efficiency Act 2006 (Cth)
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)
- Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981 (Cth)
- Fisheries Management Act 1991 (Cth)
- Fuel Quality Standards Act 2000 (Cth)
- Gene Technology Act 2000 (Cth)
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 (Cth)
- Hazardous Waste (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1989 (Cth)
- Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976 (Cth)
- National Environment Protection Council Act 1994 (Cth)
- National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 (Cth)
- Offshore Minerals Act 1994 (Cth)
- Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2008 (Cth)
- Ozone Protection Act 1989 (Cth)
- Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983 (Cth)
- Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1986 (Cth)
- Quarantine Act 1908 (Cth)
- Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000 (Cth)
- Sea Installations Act 1987 (Cth)
- Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1954 (Cth)
- Water Act 2007 (Cth)

**Queensland Law**
- Constitution Act 1867 (Qld), Constitutional Powers (State Waters) Act 1980, and Constitution of Queensland 2001 (Qld)
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (Qld)
- Biodiversity Act 2004 (Qld)
- Biological Control Act 1987 (Qld)
- Clean Energy Act 2008 (Qld)
- Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995 (Qld)
- Electricity Act 1994 (Qld)
- Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld)
- Fisheries Act 1994 (Qld)
- Forestry Act 1959 (Qld)
- Gene Technology Act 2001 (Qld)
- Geothermal Energy Act 2010 (Qld)
- Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009 (Qld)
- Land Act 1994 (Qld)
- Land Protection (Pest & Stock Route Management) Act 2002 (Qld)
- Local Government Act 1993 (Qld)
- Marine Parks Act 2004 (Qld)
- Mineral Resources Act 1989 (Qld)
- Nature Conservation Act 1992 (Qld)
- Nuclear Facilities Prohibition Act 2007 (Qld)
- Offshore Minerals Act 1998 (Qld)
- Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 (Qld)
- Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982 (Qld)
- Plant Protection Act 1989 (Qld)
- Public Health Act 2006 (Qld)
- Queensland Heritage Act 1992 (Qld)
- Recreation Areas Management Act 2008 (Qld)
- Soil Conservation Act 1988 (Qld)
- State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 (Qld)
- Sustainable Planning Act 2009 (Qld)
- Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 (Qld)
- Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995 (Qld)
- Vegetation Management Act 1999 (Qld)
- Water Act 2000 (Qld)
- Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection & Management Act 1993 (Qld)
- Wild Rivers Act 2005 (Qld)

**The Common Law (including native title)**