

ECA WA News

Winter Edition 2016



Photo courtesy of Phoenix Environmental Sciences.

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President's Message

By Jamie Shaw

Welcome to the 2016 Winter edition of *ECA News*.

Who said consulting has gone quiet? Just when it looked like things were on the slide, along comes the Supreme Court with a ruling that potentially throws all previous assessments out the window. Thankfully, common sense has prevailed and this hasn't happened. However, for those of us lucky enough to be involved in active EIA projects at the time of the ruling in November last year, there has been a noticeable change in the EPA's approach to the assessments, not to mention the assessment timeframes.

Soon after the ruling, the ECA met with EPA Chairman, Dr Tom Hatton, and members of the OEPA to discuss the implications of the ruling to EIA and specifically how they expected it to change the way we, as consultants, do our work. We were told that it was unlikely other existing approvals would be affected but that current assessments

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The ECA WA committee meets on the third Monday of the month. Please contact committee members or Bec James if there is anything you would like to raise for discussion.

Editorial contributions welcome

The editorial deadline for the next edition of ECA News will be advised in the ECA weekly email updates. Please email contributions to ECA News Editor, Jo Thierfelder at editorecanews@eca.org.au

ECA WA News is a periodical publication of the Environmental Consultants Association (WA) Inc. It aims to inform members on the activities of the ECA and its members, events and training, and developments in the environmental industry. The views and opinions expressed in ECA WA News are those of the article authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the ECA WA.

Front cover photo courtesy of Phoenix Environmental Sciences.

would be required to demonstrate how they had addressed the EPA's policy framework. We were provided with an insight to the tools EPA was developing to ensure assessments gave adequate consideration of policy. At about the same time, the Minister announced a Legal and Governance Review of the EPA policy framework.

ECA submission to EPA Legal and Governance Review

The review, undertaken by Peter Quinlan SC and his team, was comprehensive and provided a range of recommendations for implementation by the EPA to address the identified shortfalls of its current policy framework. The ECA was invited to meet with the review panel and make a [submission on behalf of our members](#). The Chairman responded that the EPA "agreed that it was time for a 'root and branch' reconsideration of its policy framework and considered the recommendations formed a sound basis for reform." Dr Hatton committed to making the implementation of the recommendations a high priority over the coming months. Expect change. As always, the ECA will work closely with the EPA where possible and will maintain a close watch on developments to ensure our members are kept up to date with developments. *Read more on page 12.*

Other ECA submissions

In addition to our contribution to the Legal and Governance Review, the ECA has made submissions on the Draft ESD Template, the Draft Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million people and we are currently compiling a submission on the proposed withdrawal of *Position Statement 3 – Terrestrial Biological Surveys as an Element of Biodiversity Protection* and *Guidance Statement 6 – Rehabilitation of Terrestrial Ecosystems*. I'd like to thank everyone who contributed. As you would expect, we receive a variety of comments, sometimes conflicting, and we make every effort to represent all contributions in our submissions.

Best Practice for Fauna Impact Assessment workshop

I have been working with my counterpart at EIANZ to develop a two-day workshop that will focus on Best Practice for Fauna Impact Assessment. Over two days, 18 specialists in the field of fauna survey and assessment will present on their areas of expertise. The event format has been designed to encourage the participation of attendees and each presentation will be followed by a Q&A discussion session.

The ECA would like to acknowledge the efforts of Andrew Del Marco of EIANZ who has invested a considerable amount of effort in making this happen and Jason Hick, both of whom will chair the sessions. Of course, I'd like to acknowledge all of our speakers, who have donated their time to make this event a reality.

ECA Ray Hart Memorial Award

Since our last edition, we have finalised arrangements with UWA for the ECA Ray Hart Memorial Award, which will be awarded to a student from the Faculty of Science who is undertaking research for honours or postgraduate studies. It must include a substantial field component and display a multidisciplinary approach to an ecological question. We have offered complimentary Corresponding Membership to each applicant. We will also invite the successful candidate to present their studies to us at our AGM or other suitable function.

The ECA is proud to be a part of this award and we thank Roz Hart for encouraging the joint naming of the award. Students are the future of our industry and we are pleased that we can provide the opportunity for them to make connections with us at such an early stage in their career.

YECA Update

Our YECA group continues to work hard to provide opportunities for our younger and less experienced members to learn from each other and our more senior members. They held the first of their four-part series on the Environmental Industry in March, which focused on Approvals. The topic for Part 2, held in June, was Biological Services, which is the subject of a significant amount of discussion among our membership at the moment.

Keep an eye out for the upcoming sessions on Contamination and Water. Our YECA group do a really good job at organising these events and the experience they gain from being involved in an industry organisation at this stage of their careers is invaluable. If you have anyone in your team that you think would be up for joining the YECA committee, please encourage them to put their hand up. We are always looking for bright new talent.

Offshore environment industry briefing

Cameron Grebe, Head of Environment Division at National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA), recently contacted me to request assistance from ECA with organising an offshore environment

industry briefing. We are in the early stages of planning but our current list of topics include the current challenges and opportunities for offshore petroleum, myths and misconceptions about the environmental approvals process and key failings of EPs when first submitted for assessment, to name a few.

We hope this will be an invaluable refresher for offshore environmental practitioners as well as an opportunity for NOPSEMA to outline changes and developments in its assessment process. Feel free to provide us with any particular topics you would like to hear about and we will try to have them covered.

New ECA website

I am really excited about the development of our new website. The content has been updated and is in the process of being migrated across to the new platform. We will soon begin testing and expect to go live around the middle of the year. Our intention is to coordinate this with the release of our new Specialist Services criteria and membership renewals. Once this is in effect we will begin actively promoting your profiles to industry to help you get the most out of what ECA can offer.

Before I sign off, I'd like to recognise the huge effort that goes on behind the scenes, both to produce this newsletter and to keep the ECA running. Our Editor, **Jo Thierfelder**, is a Communications Consultant who operates a business called [Finesse Communications](#). She has done a fantastic job at turning our newsletter into the professional-looking publication it is and ensures we all provide her with the content she needs to make it work.

Bec James is the one behind our weekly emails. She works tirelessly at ensuring the ECA runs smoothly, keeping the committee informed and coordinating our affairs. Thanks to both of you for all the work you do for us.

I hope you enjoy reading the 2016 Winter edition of *ECA News* and I look forward to seeing you soon.

The Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015 is the lead story of debate in this issue and ECA News brings you two differing viewpoints.

Join the debate on ECA's LinkedIn forum and tell us what you think.

The Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015: A Biologist's Perspective

By Kelli McCreery, Consultant Botanist

The old Act

One of the challenges of working with the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* (WC Act) has been the ambiguity surrounding what should be protected. The Act itself is quite clear in that only flora and fauna species are protected with an extra level of protection for 'Declared' species. Habitat or ecosystems are not covered under the Act. Organisms that do not constitute flora or fauna are not protected. 'Flora' and 'fauna' are not even adequately defined.

The shortcomings of the WC Act have long been widely recognised. The result of this has been the development of an informal administrative and scientific process, whereby other elements of biodiversity are listed and given consideration in EIA processes. However, there is no clarity in this arrangement; outcomes rest on negotiations and the process is arbitrary and often convoluted. Because of these shortcomings and the sheer age and dated nature of the WC Act, new legislation has been eagerly anticipated for some time.

The new Bill

The *Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015* has recently been tabled as the proposed replacement for the WC Act. Its purpose is "to provide for the conservation and protection of biodiversity and biodiversity components in Western Australia."

Long overdue reforms include replacing 'Declared' status with 'Threatened' and the subcategories 'Critically Endangered', 'Endangered' and 'Vulnerable' so that listings will be in line with the IUCN ranking system. It is more inclusive as to what may be listed as 'Threatened' and includes the 'Animal, Plant and Fungi Kingdom'. This means not only flowering vascular plants and fauna may be listed, but presumably also fungi, mosses, liverworts and lichen. Although somewhat arbitrarily, 'fish' have been excluded. Ecological communities will be covered under the proposed legislation, as well as critical habitat.

However, the proposed legislation also introduces an administrative framework that would give the Minister discretion in all matters. In its analysis of the Bill, the Leeuwin Group described this as the 'God clause'. There are several of these clauses with an overarching one that states the Minister can choose to exempt anyone from any provision of the Bill. The clause also includes:

- listing and delisting of species and communities;
- authorisation 'to take' Threatened matters;

- authorisation to approve extinction;
- setting of conditions, including offsets;
- licensing and the issuing of substantial fines of up to \$500,000 for individuals and up to \$2,500,000 for organisations, including whether or not fines are to be waived.

The Minister's power to have the final say in many of these matters is not new. What is unusual is the absence of any counterbalance to this authority. It is not clear how such an arbitrary decision-making process will affect the practical application of the legislation. There is no clear administrative framework and no requirement for transparency, to justify decisions or to consider independent expert advice.

Independent scientific advice

The requirement for a scientific advisory is standard in equivalent legislation in similar jurisdictions. The *NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*, for example, has a requirement for a scientific committee. It includes detailed terms of reference that ensure the science is taken into account and the process is transparent, accountable and consistent. There are numerous clauses guarding independence, for example: "The Scientific Committee is not subject to the control or direction of the Minister". In the NSW legislation 'scientific committee' is referred to 357 times in a 232-page document. It is a key component of the legislation.

The extent to which the Bill requires that advice be sought to support decision-making is a single clause that states the "Minister may obtain advice from any person considered by the Minister to have expertise relevant..."

Outcomes

The stated aim of the new legislation is to provide for the conservation and protection of biodiversity. If this aim is to be realised, the science will need to inform decisions in a meaningful and consistent way. Projects requiring EIA often have feasibility studies that span 10 years or more. Over the last 10 years, Western Australia has had eight different

environment ministers. Any new legislation would also need to include an administrative framework that provides continuity and consistency.

The Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015: **A modern approach to biodiversity conservation regulation**

By Gordon Wyre, Director, Legislative and Policy Reform, Department of Parks and Wildlife.

There is clear recognition that the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* and the *Sandalwood Act 1929* are outdated and inadequate to meet the needs of Western Australia into the future. These Acts are based on approvals and penalty regimes (often referred to as 'command and control' regimes), with bureaucratic processes and also outdated penalties. For example, there is a \$10,000 maximum penalty for unlawfully taking a critically endangered (specially protected) species under the Wildlife Act and a \$200 penalty for unlawfully taking sandalwood under the Sandalwood Act. Neither Act provides any opportunity for consultation or public input.

The *Biodiversity Conservation Bill 2015* has been prepared to provide a "modern approach to biodiversity conservation regulation" but what does this mean? Essentially, the modern approach involves a framework based on two key elements:

- extending the legislative coverage to include the most important modern concepts related to biodiversity conservation; and
- focusing regulation on matters where there is an identified regulatory need and avoiding unnecessary regulation.

Expanded coverage of biodiversity conservation and sandalwood matters

The Bill includes modern provisions for threatened species, threatened ecological communities, critical habitats, key threatening processes, biodiversity management programmes,

Significantly the Bill provides a new system of accountability for the Minister through the preparation of Ministerial Guidelines that cover decision-making by the Minister or anyone else under the Act.

recovery plans, biodiversity conservation agreements, biodiversity conservation covenants, environmental pests, nature-based tourism, modern compliance provisions (including infringement notices), 'reparation' orders to repair habitat damage, greatly increased maximum penalties (up to \$500,000 for critically endangered species and \$200,000 for sandalwood), community consultation, targeted landholder consultation and management of wild sandalwood harvesting that provides for 'source to export' certification.

Focusing regulation where there is an identified need

Recent reviews of legislation including 'A review of biodiversity legislation in NSW' (Independent Biodiversity Legislation Review Panel, 2014) have identified a need to move away from 'command and control' style regulation. Modern legislation should focus on the outcomes and minimise the situations where formal approvals are required to those that have a significant risk of negative outcomes. This involves recognising where people are unlikely to have significant impacts, including where they are following standard guidelines, codes of practice and the like, or are operating under other appropriately considered approvals.

The Bill has been prepared on this basis and includes provisions for:

- recognition of codes of practice;
- exempting actions from approval where they have a low biodiversity conservation impact risk, operate under standard Ministerial guidelines or approved codes of practice;
- negotiated outcomes including offsets;
- not duplicating approvals made through an *Environmental Protection Act 1986* process or other identified processes and impacts on biodiversity.

The idea is to focus regulation where there is an identified need and where the regulation is likely to improve the outcome for biodiversity conservation. There are specific safeguards in place in the Bill for this approach with exemptions to be conditional and to cease to apply if conditions are breached, as well as being subject to Parliamentary review.

Ministerial authority for decision-making

The Bill provides for the Minister to be responsible for all major decision-making, as operates currently. This is appropriate in a Westminster system of government where the Minister is accountable to the community and Parliament for administration of the legislation. The Bill also provides for public disclosure of important decision-making and Parliamentary review of Ministerial decision-making in areas likely to be controversial. In the unlikely

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event that a decision is made that may lead to a future extinction, it would be subject to Cabinet consideration, Governor's approval, public notification and tabling in Parliament. All efforts would clearly be made to avoid such an outcome.

Significantly the Bill provides a new system of accountability for the Minister through the preparation of Ministerial Guidelines that cover decision-making by the Minister or anyone else under the Act. The Guidelines will provide assistance to people making submissions for approvals and will also provide a transparent framework for reviewing decisions made by the Minister and others. If the Minister or another decision-maker varies from the Guidelines when making a decision they will give the reasons for doing so when conveying their decision.

Science in decision-making under the Biodiversity Bill

The Biodiversity Bill provides for the Minister to obtain expert advice on species and community

listings and it is intended that the current system of non-statutory scientific committees for threatened species and communities listing processes will continue under the Biodiversity Bill. No issues have arisen in the past with the non-statutory scientific committee approach and none are anticipated in future under the enhanced accountability provided for in the Bill.

An example of this increased accountability is the requirement for the Minister to advise nominators of any decision regarding their nomination and to provide reasons if the decision is at variance to the nomination. This requirement will cover public nominations and those made by the non-statutory scientific committees. The Bill also provides for the preparation of specific Ministerial listing Guidelines, covering the process for nominations and the process for dealing with these nominations, including their consideration by experts and expert committees.

In addition, the Bill recognises the advisory role of the new Conservation and Parks Commission established under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* in May 2016.

High altitude sampling in the central highlands of PNG

By Christopher Hofmeester, WRM Senior Environmental Consultant

Wetland Research & Management (WRM) recently had the opportunity to sample creeks at 3,200m above sea level in the central highlands of Papua New Guinea. This was the highest altitude at which WRM has ever sampled and it set a company record.

With mist-shrouded mountains for a backdrop, the team observed rainbow trout (*Onchorhynchus mykiss*) in the crisp, fast flowing waters, which were first introduced to the highlands of Papua New Guinea in 1952 as a protein source to supplement the diet of local villagers. With help from local landowners and scientists (and a pet cassowary named "Muruk"), the streams were also found to support a diversity of native macroinvertebrate fauna, including *Ephemeroptera* (mayflies), *Odonata* (dragonflies and damselflies),

Chironomidae (non-biting midges) and *Coleoptera* (aquatic beetles). The surrounding terrain was spectacular, although affected by fires and frost damage as a result of the El Niño-related drought that was active at the time.



At an altitude of 3,200 m above sea level, WRM ecologists sample the crisp, flowing creeks of the central PNG highlands, with help from local landowners and scientists.

WRM continues to support communities in the highlands of PNG, by providing ongoing training for landowners and scientists in field methodology, laboratory processing and identification of aquatic macroinvertebrates. The ultimate aim is for local scientists to obtain complete competency in macroinvertebrate sampling techniques, and develop a sound understanding of the roles macroinvertebrates play in local stream ecosystem function.



The pet juvenile cassowary "Muruk" assists local scientists with macroinvertebrate sampling.



Meet Hon. Albert Jacob MLA, Minister for Environment; Heritage

Delve behind the LinkedIn profile and get to know the movers and shakers in your industry. *ECA News* presents “Give me 5”, a regular segment that asks five slightly more personal questions of its interviewees.

1. What’s your favourite childhood memory of the natural world?

Probably the first time I walked the Stirling Range ridge walk from Ellen’s Peak to Bluff Knoll, or kayaking down the Blackwood river with my brothers. It is hard to choose a single highlight. I have been very fortunate to have grown up in an outdoors focussed family with almost unfettered access to the WA environment as a child. Our family home was on a large semi-rural lifestyle block next to state forest and our family holidays were usually to different areas of the Western Australian conservation estate.

2. Tertiary qualifications in Architecture are not the usual route into public service. How did you end up as a Minister in the State Government?

Via a circuitous route. I always had a keen interest in politics, particularly at a grassroots community level. A tertiary background in Architecture is a fairly common route into local government and this is where I started in 2006 being elected to Joondalup Council. I served on Joondalup Council for nearly three years and found the role of being a local elected member to be the most rewarding role I have ever undertaken. Running for State Parliament was an opportunity to be a local member on a full time basis and local electoral success at a State level has led to the opportunity to become a Minister.

To now be the local MP for my community and also the State’s Environment Minister is an incredible privilege and I consider myself very fortunate. Western Australia would have to be one of the most remarkable jurisdictions in the world for an Environment portfolio and the Liberal National Government has funded an extensive and ambitious program of expansions and upgrades to our conservation estate during this period of government. I am fortunate indeed to be Minister in this place at this time.

Separating the regulatory agency from the management agency has allowed both agencies to have a clear focus on their respective areas of responsibility.

3. Do you have any particular life experiences or personal interests that shape and influence your management of the Environment portfolio?

Before studying architecture I trained as a horticulturalist and worked as an arborist for close to a decade. This included running parks management contracts for large local councils and managing a privately owned two hectare botanical garden in Wanneroo for two years. Having extensive experience 'on the tools' at the entry level of land management as well as 10 years' experience as an elected decision-maker gives good alternate perspectives to both broader government objectives and the needs and challenges for those working on the ground delivering our services.

4. Replacing the Department of Environment and Conservation with two new departments (DPaW and DER) in June 2013 was a major initiative. How has this change benefited environmental protection in WA?

This has been one of the most fundamental reforms of this term of Government. Separating the environmental regulatory agency from the environmental management agency has allowed both agencies to have a clear focus on their respective areas of responsibility. There was a community perception that the combined agency had an inherent conflict of interest and separating them has also addressed this.

5. What would you consider to be the three most important issues facing environmental protection in WA?

- First and foremost is declining rainfall in the South West.
- Second is feral cats and foxes.
- The unnecessary politicisation and polarisation of environmental issues. We largely all agree in the outcomes that we want to see for the health of our environment, but it is often difficult to have a mature and rational discussion about how best to arrive at these outcomes due to the polarisation of aspects of the discussion for political advantage.

Announcing ECA's new membership framework

The ECA Committee is continually striving to ensure its activities and membership framework remains relevant for its members. Consistent with the ECA's strategic priorities, a key initiative of the Committee in 2015-16 has been to review the current arrangements and provide a new approach that maximises value and incentivises active membership into the future.

At its May meeting, the ECA Committee endorsed a new membership framework to be implemented from mid-2016.

The new framework is based around the following core guiding principles:

- Increase the value of a member being listed on the Consultant's Register.
- Encourage greater uptake of full membership.
- Provide clients with greater confidence in a practitioner's ability to perform the services listed.
- Recognise excellence amongst members.

As part of the proposed changes, the ECA Committee is introducing a two-tiered register to recognise the different level of skills and experience of practitioners. This includes members with:

- **Competent** skills and experience in specified environmental disciplines

The minimum criteria, as currently in place for full individual membership, remain applicable for applicants with at least three years experience in provision of professional environmental consulting services.

- **Specialist** skills and experience in specified environmental disciplines

This is a new category to recognise practitioners with advanced skills and experience in particular discipline(s). It is open to professionals with at least five years experience who are expected to meet

defined criteria to demonstrate proficiency in the nominated discipline area.

Now is the time to be actively engaged and be recognised for your specialist skills within the consulting profession. As part of the new framework, there will be a small premium (\$20 per annum) to be recognised as a specialist. This will result in the specialists being recognised on the ECA database and preferentially identified in searches of the new website.

The ECA Committee proposes to retain both existing levels of corporate members:

- Sustaining (Premium) ECA members
- Standard Corporate ECA members

Those companies registered as Sustaining (Premium) members are listed separately and given more prominence in various media and publications issued by ECA, and have the benefit of being able to promote sponsorship support through events hosted by the ECA. As with discipline Specialists, Sustaining Corporate Members will receive priority listing on our corporate member register.

We are proposing to introduce a new requirement for Corporate Members to have at least one employee listed on the register as being a specialist capable of providing each service offered by the company. There are no changes proposed for the existing categories of Associate Members and Corresponding Members.

Further information including detailed guidance on the expected qualifications and experience for applicants for the new Specialist category is provided on the website and also communicated through the ECA weekly updates and our LinkedIn page. The ECA intends to implement the new framework concurrently with the release of its new website and in time for the membership renewal process in mid-2016.

We encourage everyone to support the proposed changes and get involved. This is all about providing an opportunity to maximise value and visibility for individuals and companies across the industry.

Photo Story

This photo of a Southern Brush-Tailed Phascogale was taken in State Forest near Collie after being relocated from a clearing area. Photo courtesy of Greg Harewood.



ECA represents members' interests at review of EPA

The ECA welcomed the announcement of the Legal and Governance Review of Policies and Process of the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the opportunity to represent its members' views through a meeting with the review panel and subsequent formal submission.

The following is a summary of the ECA's desired outcomes taken from the [full ECA submission](#) available on our website.

Our members rely on clear and succinct guidance in order to effectively perform our roles and discharge our responsibility to our clients, the OEPA and, ultimately, the public.

- *Recommendations to ensure that the hierarchy of EPA policy is clear through a system-based approach.*

- *Policy needs to be clear, easily understood and accessible to the full spectrum of users.*
- *Policy needs to find that balance between being fully flexible (providing less certainty) and rigid.*
- *Policy needs to be adaptive.*
- *Policy needs to be publicly accessible, both physically and also in terms of its ability to be understood and applied.*
- *There are grounds for some immediate restructuring of the current policy set into a hierarchy and removal and/or modification of some older documentation.*
- *The referral and assessment of schemes and scheme amendments is not very well covered in the current body of policy.*
- *A more complete suite of policy is required to clarify all relevant processes for proponents.*
- *Policy has to describe how it should be used for assisting in the decision-making process, particularly those that articulate scientific requirements.*
- *The ECA applauds the current initiative to update the current website to a more user-friendly platform.*

The ECA sees the review as an opportunity to clarify and rationalise the broad suite of EPA policy statements in a manner that supports a core premise of impact assessment.

WALGA's Environmental Planning Tool

By Evie Devitt-Rix, Project Officer Environment, WALGA

WALGA's Environment Planning Tool (EPT) is a web-based GIS tool created to assist in accessing, interpreting and analysing data for land use and environmental planning and decision-making. The EPT was initially created for WA Local Government officers. However, WALGA has found that private consultants engaged in land use planning and development have begun to utilise the tool. A

key attribute of the EPT is the time it saves users looking for environmental information.

The EPT was originally developed in 2009 under the Perth Biodiversity Program as a checklist. Users could tick off various environmental considerations to provide an interpretation on how to deal with matters of importance, such as the presence of endangered flora or fauna, if they occurred within a planning area.

Over the last seven years, the EPT has evolved into a unique nexus of environmental and planning data, with continuously refined functionality and more than 300 data layers. These include threatened flora, fauna and ecological communities, Metropolitan Regional Scheme, Peel Regional Scheme, Local Planning Schemes, Ramsar sites, quenda mapping, geomorphic wetlands of the Swan Coastal Plain, FPC plantations, the Swan River Trust Development Control Area and the Indian Ocean Drive study area. Data is updated every six months and WALGA is always on the lookout for new datasets to increase value to users.



WALGA is running a series of free workshops in 2016 to demonstrate the EPT's capabilities to assist environmental consultants in their work.

The EPT can be used for the initial desktop survey of an area, which can be confirmed with a field survey if environmental issues such as threatened flora or fauna are indicated. The Beard Vegetation Complex overlays, which indicate the vegetation types and species naturally occurring in a region, can determine species lists for revegetation projects.

The EPT is used for planning for biodiversity and natural area management, environmental assessment for clearing applications and can indicate where environmentally sensitive areas are in the landscape. The tool can assist with assessing land use implications for a wide range of projects, from proposed development or rezoning applications to revegetation and rehabilitation plans. The EPT can also be used to locate possible drainage problems using the 2m, 5m and 10m contour mapping overlays.

The EPT's Environmental Considerations Reporting Tool can create a report that lists environmental planning and legislative considerations. The EPT also gives users the ability to generate and print maps, create mapping layers, share mapping files with colleagues, and upload information from devices such as GPS and smart phones. The EPT is available for download to a PC or Mac computer.

Companies can subscribe to the EPT for an annual fee of \$3,600 +GST. This subscription includes a user guide, short video demonstration, metadata summaries and explanatory notes as well as ongoing technical support and opportunities to attend group demonstration sessions. Companies interested in a free trial of the EPT before subscribing can contact the WALGA Environment team for a free temporary log in or can try the smaller public version, which is available free of charge.

WALGA is running a series of free workshops in 2016, available to both subscribers and non-subscribers, to demonstrate the EPT's capabilities to assist environmental consultants in their work.

Workshops will be run on:

- 25 August 2016
- 9 November 2016

For more information on the workshops and to register, please visit the events page on the WALGA website at www.walga.asn.au

To find out more about the EPT please contact the Environment team on environment@walga.asn.au

YECA peers into the future

The YECA is running a four-part Career Futures series during the year, which kicked off in February with a full house of YECA members and other consultants.

Four experienced consultants - Lisa Boulden, Harley Lacy, Hannah Fletcher and Tim Mitchell - discussed their career highlights, challenges, the places their work has taken them, career tips as well as the significance of environmental approvals on projects.

Some of their many tips included:

- seek out mentorship with people/career paths you admire
- skills learnt in any hobbies or non-industry work are often transferable
- if the door you are knocking on doesn't open, it probably isn't the right door for you and another one will likely open instead.

There was plenty of time as well for a drink and catch up between presenters, colleagues and people who have just started in the industry. The Japanese beer and food went down a treat. Many thanks to the speakers whose efforts were much appreciated and received great feedback following the event.

Join us on the YECA Committee

YECA is looking for enthusiastic young consultants to sit on the YECA Committee and help drive the future of YECA. We operate on a voluntary basis and there are no specific requirements for being on the Committee. However, you will ideally have between 1-5 years of consulting experience and be able to attend most monthly meetings (one hour on the second Tuesday of the month) and events, which we collectively organise.

Being on the YECA Committee is a great way to get more involved with the ECA as a young consultant in this industry. If you are interested send us an email at yeca@eca.org.au

Who's on the YECA Committee?



Camilla Spry, Graduate Environmental Scientist at Jacobs.

I'm a first year graduate gaining exposure to environmental approvals working on the Great Northern Highway Muchea to Wubin Upgrade Stage 2 Project.



Laura Zimmermann, Environmental Scientist at GHD.

I specialise in ecology, EIA and approvals and I'm currently on secondment at the Public Transport Authority working as an Environmental Officer on the Transport Infrastructure Project for the new Perth Stadium.



Sally Ascott, Environmental Scientist at 360 Environmental.

I specialise in contaminated sites, hydrology, marine science, approvals.



Ben Leonard, Environmental Scientist at MWH.

I specialise in mine closure planning and TSF decommissioning, GIS



Hayden Davies, Environmental Scientist at MWH.

I specialise in rehabilitation monitoring, site support, environmental auditing.

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Keep in Touch

YECA now has a Facebook Group where you can keep track of all our news and upcoming events, and communicate with other YECA members and the YECA Committee. To find us, search 'YECA' on Facebook or click on this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/YECA1/>

You might already be aware of our LinkedIn page. To find us search 'YECA' on LinkedIn Groups. You can also contact us via email at yeca@eca.org.au or we are always happy to have a chat over a drink at one of our events.

If you have any queries, comments or feedback we would love to hear from you.

ECA is on LinkedIn

ECA has two great ways of being engaged in the latest news, events and issues via LinkedIn:

1. the general ECA page for keeping up to date with events and industry relevant information, and
2. the ECA LinkedIn Group for discussing issues or asking advice from your peers.

We encourage all members to join the Group as it is an exclusive forum for putting questions to the wide range of experienced and skilled practitioners at the ECA. We're sure all our YECA members in particular will benefit... start a discussion today!

Advertise with ECA News

Would you like to reach a niche, tailored audience of more than 400 industry professionals?

ECA News is the quarterly digital publication of the Environmental Consultants Association of Western Australia. It is sent to a diverse database of members and non-members directly via email and with links published on our website and LinkedIn page.

ECA is now offering its members an opportunity to talk directly to their fellow colleagues and the wider stakeholder group through affordable advertising rates. This is an excellent platform through which to promote your industry event, advertise your services and share your views on hot topics. If you would like to know more, please contact the ECA on admin@eca.org.au

Best Practice for Fauna Impact Assessment Workshop

Learning from science, experience and innovation



The ECA (WA) & EIANZ WA Division invite you to attend

Best Practice for Fauna Impact Assessment Workshop

The two day workshop is for regulators, consultants, local and state government officers, industry, researchers and students.

Including presenters from government and the private sector covering a range of topics:

- Scoping and survey design
- Survey and assessment techniques
- Threatened Species Discussion Panel
- New technology and innovations

Confirmed speakers, with more details to come, include:

Stephen van Leeuwen | Bridget Hyder | Mike Bamford | Glen Gaikhorst | Manda Page
Graham Thompson | Scott Thompson | Mark Cowan | Robert Browne-Cooper | Neil Thomas
Matt Williams | Piers Higgs | Peter Adams | Alan Burbidge | Peter Spencer

Government Sector (local, State and Federal): Understand the latest WA fauna survey technology used by zoologists and how it relates to EIA guidelines, regulations and best practice requirements.

Zoologists: Refresh your understanding of contemporary fauna survey and assessment techniques, as well as emerging technologies that will assist you be more competitive in today's market

EIA Practitioners: Understand what you should be asking for of your fauna consultants and how the data collected by them should be used in your EIA documents

Students: An opportunity to hear from practicing specialists to give you the edge when looking for that first job

When: Wednesday 6th and Thursday 7th July 2016

Where: Keiran McNamara Conservation Science Centre, 17 Dick Perry Ave, Kensington.

Cost: Members (EIANZ/ECA) \$100 | Non-members \$150 | Students \$70 (incl. GST)

Register: ECA members via www.eca.org.au

EIANZ members and non-members via www.eianz.org

Students please contact EIANZ Central Office on (03) 8803 6150 to register and receive the Student discount.

Registration closes Wednesday 22nd June 2016



Department of Parks and Wildlife

