# *Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability*

## Project Contacts

This research project was framed and developed by the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES). Involved in this project were:

**Lynn Delgado**, Project Facilitator. Lynn joined ARIES soon after the project brief was developed. She developed the Local Government Handbook and played a significant role in the design of the seminars, workshops and mentoring meetings. She is the primary author of this report.

**Fil Cerone**, Project Director and Facilitator. Fil joined ARIES soon after the project brief was developed. He worked closely with Lynn on all aspects of the project as well as playing a significant role in the logistical planning. He is an author of this report.

**Daniella Tilbury**, Director, ARIES. Daniella framed this research project and was responsible for seeking funds for its development. She was involved in the initial scoping of the planning phase of the project and provided input at various stages of implementation. She has also contributed to the writing of this report.

## Acknowledgements

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# Executive Summary

In Australia, the local government sector has been the first to respond to the sustainability education challenge and seek ways to engage people in change for a better future. Most local Councils have strategies and practical programs to involve their local communities in sustainability actions. However, research suggests that local government staff lack expertise in education for sustainability approaches to successfully implement these plans. In addition, evidence suggests that few Councils are modelling sustainability themselves. Developing the capacity of staff to create internal change as well as community change for sustainability is the key goal of the mentoring project documented in this report.

The *Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability* project was funded by the Australian Government through the Natural Heritage Trust and was an initiative of the Sustainability Education Unit at Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA). This research project was framed and facilitated by the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES) based at Macquarie University.

The project was designed to examine whether mentoring and facilitation is an effective method for local governments to:

- develop understanding and skills in education for sustainability;
- develop their capacity to use these skills to improve the effectiveness of their projects; and
- generate longer-term organisational change for sustainability within their Council.

This twelve month project involved eighteen local government staff from nine Councils across Australia. Each Council participating in the project was required to identify a current project on which they wished to be mentored and two people who could work jointly through a partnering approach.

The participant Councils were:

Auburn Council (NSW)

City of Darebin (VIC)

City of South Perth (WA)

City of Whittlesea (VIC)

Coorong District Council (SA)

Eurobodalla Shire Council (NSW)

Moonee Valley City Council (VIC)

Noosa Council   (QLD)

Pittwater Council (NSW)

A handbook was developed with the intention of providing a working resource for the project participants and assisting other Councils in using education to achieve change for sustainability. The Councils participated in a series of participatory seminars and workplace mentoring visits.

Key outcomes of the project included:

- increased capacity of Council participants to achieve sustainability outcomes through education;
- increased capacity of participants to design, develop and implement sustainability projects;
- increased confidence and motivation in using participatory learning techniques and acting as change agents for sustainability both within their Council and their community; and
- support for mentoring and facilitation approaches to build local government capacity for sustainability.

The project also improved the effectiveness of existing Council projects through:

- Councils sharing ideas and working together to deliver community programs;
- Councils partnering with businesses, universities etc to deliver programs;
- better engagement of Council staff in developing sustainability strategies and plans – sustainability is on the agenda; and
- bigger impact of community programs in travel, energy and waste.

Design features of the mentoring process which contributed to its success were:

- a mix of group mentoring seminars and individual Council workplace mentoring;
- two participants from each Council;
- workplace action plans as the basis of the mentoring;
- a Learning Contract and acquisition of support from the CEO/ General Manager; and
- a journal as a tool for critical reflection.

The project also investigated the effectiveness of a mentoring approach to bring about organisational change for sustainability within local government. Initial outcomes show that a number of participating Councils have demonstrated some tangible progress in this regard (e.g. more systemic thinking within Councils about sustainability, with changes in the way they operate, setting up internal partnerships and dialogue between departments to break down 'silo' mentality). Further evidence of this progress can only be measured over a longer period of time.

*'I feel more confident in my ability … to support other staff learning for sustainability through mentoring'*

*'I would like to have it formally recognised as part of continuing professional development'*

*'Hopefully the learnings taken from this project can be developed into a professional development program available to local government sustainability change agents in the future'*

As a result of this project, ARIES recommends that:

1. An independent evaluation be undertaken in November 2007 (8 months after the completion of the project) to assess the project's effectiveness in bringing about change for sustainability.

2. A workshop be held in Sydney in September 2007 for participants to discuss the progress of their projects.

3. Future extensions to the project or a wider program be explored, based on ideas proposed in the discussion paper, and outcomes of a further workshop with participants.

4. In the short term, results of the project are disseminated through:

   a. providing the Chief Executive Officers and senior managers of participant Councils with a summary of the findings to highlight its value.

   a. development of a summary brochure outlining the benefits of this approach, for distribution to Councils across Australia.

5. The draft handbook be further developed as an interactive online document accessible to local government across Australia.

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# Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ARIES | Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability |
| DEWHA | Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Australian Government |
| EfS | Education for Sustainability |
| EOI | Expression of Interest |
| ESD | Ecologically Sustainable Development |
| ICLEI | International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives |
| KIG | Key Informant Group |
| LA21 | Local Agenda 21 |
| LGA | Local Government Associations |
| NEEC | National Environmental Education Council |
| NHT | National Heritage Trust |
| ROC | Regional Organisation of Councils |

# 1    Introduction

This pilot *Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability* project sought to investigate the effectiveness of mentoring and facilitation as a method for local government participants to:

- develop understanding and skills in Education for Sustainability (EfS);
- develop capacity to reorient their projects towards an EfS approach; and
- generate longer term organisational change for sustainability within their Council.

The research was funded by the Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) through the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and was an initiative of the Sustainability Education Unit at DEWHA.

The project was conceptualised and facilitated by the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES) based at Macquarie University.

The project ran from 1st March 2006 to 30th March 2007 and a total of 18 local government staff from 9 Councils across Australia participated in the project. Each Council was required to identify:

a) a project which would serve as the focus of the mentoring; and

b) two people from each Council who were to be mentored in a partnering approach.

The project consisted of an introductory workshop, three seminars, three workplace mentoring visits as well as online and telephone support. A Draft Handbook was developed as part of the project to support participants and assist Councils in using education to achieve change for sustainability.

This report outlines the key project stages, project design and methodology as well as the main project outcomes. It offers reflections on the mentoring process as a tool for capacity building and organisational change for sustainability within local Councils. The report also identifies key lessons learnt from the process and provides recommendations for extending the results of this initiative.

**Box 1.1: Education for Sustainability Framework**

The framework used to deliver this project was that of Education for Sustainability (EfS). This approach seeks to go beyond traditional methods to both environment and sustainability education. Rather than Education about the Environment and Education in the Environment, EfS focuses on equipping people with different skills to take positive action for social change for sustainability. This goes beyond just raising awareness but engaging people in a new way of seeing, thinking, learning and working which gives people confidence to become active participants and decision makers in the change process. (Tilbury & Wortman 2004, p.9).

# 2 Context

## 2.1 The Need for this Project

In Australia, the local government sector has been the first to respond to the sustainability education challenge and seek ways to engage people in change for a better future[1]. Many local Councils have developed strategies and/or practical programs to involve their local communities in sustainability.

Despite this, research suggests that local government staff lack expertise in education for sustainability approaches to successfully implement these policies. Indeed, the Council staff themselves are quick to identify the lack of training opportunities in this area. [2]

The need to build capacity within local government in learning for sustainability was identified by the National Environmental Education Council (NEEC) at its 16th meeting in September 2004. Whilst there are many sustainability initiatives, the lack of capacity and training or workplace support means that many struggle to design and implement sustainability programs effectively and that the learning necessary within Councils to move towards a sustainable future is not occurring.

A National Review of Community Environmental Education practice across Australia[3] recommended that funding be sought to support capacity building at this level. This review argued that there is a need to *value-add to current local government initiatives* by introducing mentoring type programs for local government.

In addition, research suggests that few Councils model sustainability within the Council itself. Developing the capacity of staff to create internal change as well as social change for sustainability is one of the key goals of the project documented in this report.

## 2.2 Drawing Upon Previous Experience

The project documented in this report, drew upon several previous initiatives developed by Macquarie University in NSW[4] (see Box 2.1) which used mentoring and facilitation to assist participants in integrating Education for Sustainability (EfS) processes into their work. These initiatives demonstrated the potential of a learning approach to increase the capacity of local government staff to design and develop more effective sustainability programs.

*'It was a fantastic idea to invest in researching how best to support Local Government in Education for Sustainability'*

*'I believe that facilitation and mentoring processes such as we used in the project are a vital support service that can be provided to Local Government sustainability change agents struggling to champion, initiate and drive change towards sustainability within their organisations.'*

*'Sustainability officers need access to sources of support, ongoing learning and inspiration to enable them to continue in their role and to be more effective in their work.'*

This research project sought to build upon these previous experiences. It uses a similar mentoring and facilitation framework, to not only assist local government staff in developing more effective programs but also to attempt to integrate sustainability more systemically throughout their Council.

The design of this project has been adapted to develop increased momentum for organisational change for sustainability, including:

a) Two participants within each Council were selected to be mentored (previous projects involved only one mentoree from each Council). The involvement of two mentorees from each Council, acting as partners, was informed by previous experience[5] which suggested that this approach offered greater support to each participant in bringing about change and potentially increased the chance of generating longer term change within Council; and

b) It focused on bringing Councils together from across the country in order to develop a network of EfS champions who could then drive change for sustainability across local government.

**Box 2.1: Previous mentoring and facilitation projects in Education for Sustainability**

The NSW DEC It's a Living Thing Education for Sustainability Professional Development Course (2003 – 2004)

Clarence Valley Councils Action Learning and Mentoring Project (2002 – 2003)

Cooks River Councils Action Learning and Mentoring Project (2002 – 2003)

For case studies on these projects please visit **http://www.livingthing.net.au/RC_Case.htm**

# 3  The Research Project

## 3.1 Research Question

The research project sought to investigate the question:

*Are mentoring and facilitation effective methods for:*

- *developing the understanding and skill of participants in EfS processes;*

- *developing the capacity of participants to reorient their programs towards an EfS approach; and*

- *generating longer term organisational change for sustainability within local government?*

This study is based on an action research methodology which permits agents of change (i.e. Council participants) to engage in learning activities, while researchers pilot the effectiveness of specific learning methodologies in achieving change (see Boxes 3.1 and 3.2).

The project sought specific outcomes as shown in Box 3.3 below.

Section 6 of this report presents the evidence which indicates to what extent these outcomes have been achieved as well as the findings of the action research investigation. The project used an EfS framework to guide the action research.

**Box 3.2: Action Research Inquiry**

In order to investigate the research question, the facilitators used a process of action research inquiry. This involved the facilitators themselves undertaking a cyclical approach of action, observation and reflection. For example, the Council participants attended the seminars where they undertook a series of activities with the facilitators observing. At the conclusion of each seminar, the facilitators undertook a process of critical reflection, review and discussion on what changes could be identified in participants, as it related to the research question. This period of reflection was supported by feedback provided by the participants at the conclusion of each seminar.

**Box 3.3: Planned Outcomes**

- Increased capacity of participants to identify **key elements of effective EfS practice**.
- Increased capacity to **design and implement learning based programs and strategies** for sustainability, through the acquisition of **new skills, tools and approaches** as well as **increased confidence and motivation**.
- **Understanding and appreciation of mentoring and facilitation as tools for capacity building** and integration of learning for sustainability and EfS within local Council.
- Ability to **identify barriers to change** and experience in how to overcome these.
- Increased **project planning and management** skills.
- Implementation of **improved learning for sustainability approaches** in existing sustainability programs.
- Development of a participant **peer support network** to assist in ongoing improvements to their practice.
- Development of a **range of resources** to support the dissemination process which not only includes the handbook but a **number of engaged and enthusiastic local Councils and their staff.**
- Foundations created for the **development of inter-Council and inter-state learning networks**.
- **Increased support** for implementing programs based on EfS approaches in the future.

# 3.2 Project Stages and Components

The project consisted of a number of key stages and components which are outlined in this section.

## 3.2.1  Design and Development

### 3.2.1.1   Development of a Context Report

Desktop research was undertaken in the initial phase of the project to:

- provide an overview of existing initiatives in EfS within local government;
- identify key strategies which this project needed to be aligned with;
- acknowledge the work of various stakeholders; and
- identify potential project partners and key informants.

A Context Report[6] was prepared which outlined the results of this study. The Report informed the design of this project and influenced who we engaged in this study as well as how they were engaged.

### 3.2.1.2 Identification of Key Informant Group and Project Partners

The research work was overseen by a *Key Informant Group* (KIG) comprised of leaders and experienced practitioners in EfS, Environmental Education, local government and mentoring from across the States and Territories in Australia. The final role of the KIG was to:

a.  review the Draft Handbook:

b.  a peer review of the final report; and

c.  assist with how the results of this project are disseminated.

The project sought to build a partnership approach with key stakeholders capable of extending this work and to seek longer term sustainability of the project. The various stakeholders became known as Project Partners and their role was to:

a.  support the rollout of the communications and publicity for the Expression of Interest; and

b.  provide assistance in the planning and execution of the dissemination phase of this project.

### 3.2.1.3 Participant Recruitment

*'This program has taken knowledgeable and capable people and given them a higher level of skill and knowledge.'*

In order to select Councils in a transparent and equal manner, an Expression of Interest (EOI) was developed for the recruitment of participants. The EOI, including the selection criteria, is presented in Appendix 1. The EOI was sent directly to all local Councils in all states across Australia, as well as being posted on a number of e-lists and advertised through the Local Government Associations (LGAs) in each state. Thirty-one applications were received from across Australia and a final list of 9 Councils was drawn up based on a number of selection criteria including those outlined in the EOI, budget constraints and an equal spread across all states and both rural and urban Councils.

The Councils and participants involved are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The Council Participants

| Council | Position |
|---|---|
| Auburn Council (NSW) | Strategist - Planning & Environment<br>Sustainability Projects Officer |
| City of Darebin (VIC) | Sustainability Education Officer<br>Project Manager - Darebin Transport Strategy & Sustainable Transport Coordinator |
| City of South Perth (WA) | City Sustainability Coordinator<br>Director Infrastructure Services |
| City of Whittlesea (VIC) | Sustainability Project Officer<br>Environmental Education Officer |
| Coorong District Council (SA) | Local Action Plan Project Manager<br>Local Action Plan Implementation Officer |
| Eurobodalla Shire Council (NSW) | Sustainability Officer<br>Development Assessment Officer |
| Moonee Valley City Council (VIC) | Environment Officer<br>Environment Officer |
| Noosa Council (QLD) | Manager Environmental Services CCP<br>Cities for Climate Change Protection Officer |
| Pittwater Council (NSW) | Natural Resources Unit Manager<br>Manager, Corporate Development |

**Box 3.4: Other resources provided at project start**

1. *Engaging People in Sustainability* (Tilbury & Wortman 2004). This is a definitive text on Education for Sustainability and a helpful source of case studies.
2. A CD containing the document *Living Change: Documenting good practice in Education for Sustainability in NSW* (Tilbury and Ross 2006).
3. A blank reflective journal.

### 3.2.1.4   The Learning Contract

All Council staff participating in the project were asked to sign a Learning Contract. The idea of a Learning Contract was informed by previous projects, which indicated that a learning contract helped to focus participants on the project and generate a stronger commitment. The Learning Contract sought to clearly identify the commitments required by both the participants and the mentors, as partners in the learning process.

A copy of this contract is located in Appendix 2.

### 3.2.1.5   Draft Handbook and other Resources

A draft Handbook was developed as part of the project to:

- act as a resource Handbook for the *Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability* project. It formed the resource book for the project and was intended to support the mentoring and workshop processes of the project; and

- After further development and input from project participants, it was intended that the Handbook could be used by staff from other local Councils or local government associations wishing to replicate the processes undertaken in this project.

This resource was developed at the initial stages of the *Mentoring Local Government in Education For Sustainability* project. The rationale was that the Handbook should be added to as the project progressed, based on feedback from the participants, with the final Handbook to include a further number of sections such as lessons learnt and participants stories/reflections on their involvement in the project. It was then planned to publish the Handbook.

During the *Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability* project feedback from participants highlighted that they were more strongly in favour of generating a web-based 'living' document. It is clear that the possibilities using this medium are far greater than for a published document and ideas around this possibility are currently being developed.

### 3.2.1.6    Timeline of Key Stages

Table 2: Timeline of Key Project Stages

| Project Stage | Project Component | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Design and Development | Development of Context Report | Mar – Apr 2006 |
| | Identification of the Key Informant Group (KIG) and potential Project Partners | May 2006 |
| | EOI process, Participant recruitment and signing of Learning Contract & Ethical Consent Form | May – Jul 2006 |
| | Development of a *Draft Handbook* | Apr – Aug 2006 |
| Implementation | Introductory Workshop | Sydney – 24th Aug 2006 |
| | Reflective Journal kept by each participant | Throughout project Aug 2006 – Feb 2007 |
| | 3 x Seminars involving all Council participants | Melbourne Sep 2006 Sydney – Dec 2006 Melbourne – Feb 2007 |
| | 3 x Workplace Mentoring Visits to Individual Councils | Sep, Nov 2006 & Feb 2007 |
| Data Collection | Participant Feedback | Throughout project Aug 2006 – Feb 2007 |
| | Final Participant Evaluation | Feb 2007 |
| | Participants' Journal submission | Mar 2007 |
| | Mentors' reflections | Throughout project Aug 2006 – Feb 2007 |
| Outcomes, Findings and Learnings | Analysis of data collected above Development of Final Report | Mar 2007 |

The integration of these elements is shown in Diagram 3.1.
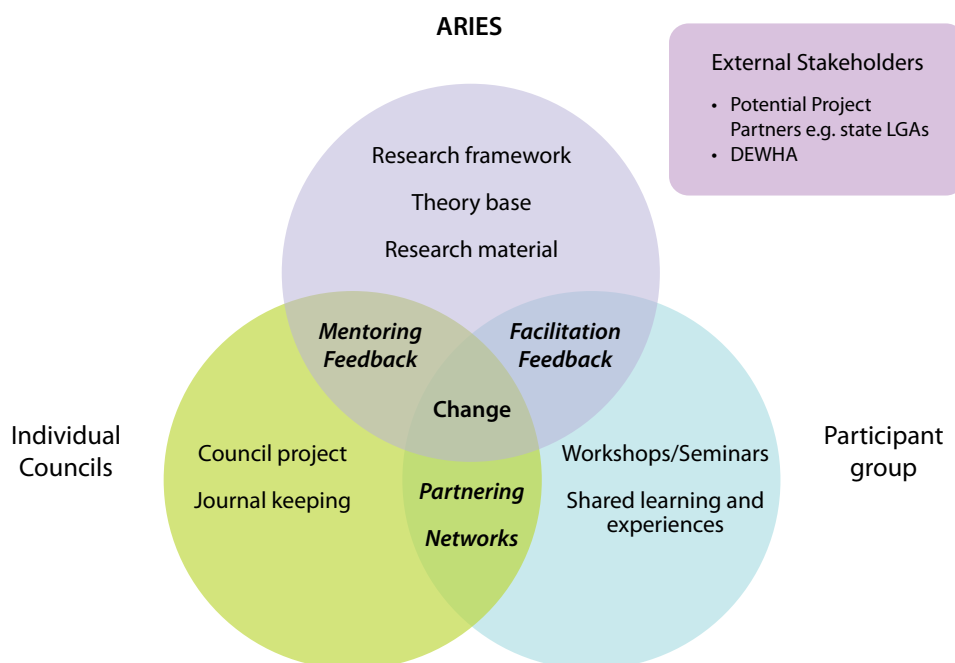


Diagram 3.1: Integration of project elements

## 3.2.2  Implementation

### 3.2.2.1  Introductory Workshop and Seminars

A one-day introductory workshop was held at the start of the project, followed by three one-day seminars. The agendas for each of these are presented in Appendix 4.

The overall purpose of the introductory workshop and seminars was to:

- generate a learner-centred and collaborative approach to change for sustainability
- encourage the sharing of learnings and experiences in sustainability across Councils
- facilitate dialogue amongst participants about internal change processes
- identify the key principles of EfS and reflect on their value and their use (Box 3.5)
- reflect on good practice in planning, design and implementation of sustainability programs and policies
- learn about and reflect on suitable tools for learning for sustainability and other stakeholder engagement programs.

**Box 3.5: Key principles of EfS**

- Visioning (imagining a better future)
- Critical thinking and reflection
- Participation in decision making
- Partnerships
- Systemic thinking.

This was undertaken through a mixture of highly participatory activities, group dialogue and reflection (in varying group sizes), individual reflection, presentations (both group and in Council pairs) and written tasks. Examples of the tools used during the workshops are shown in Box 3.6.

The design of both the content and the process of the workshop and seminars was based on an EfS approach. That is, it sought to involve the participants in seeking their own collaborative solutions to the barriers that they face in bringing about change for sustainability within their Councils and communities. The seminars built on the knowledge and learnings of the previous seminar and always sought to include feedback and suggestions from the participants on what they wished to focus on.

All seminars focused on the same underlying framework:

1. Focus on participants' projects including sharing and reflecting on progress, the successes and challenges faced and generic skills such as project design and development, project management, conflict resolution and change management

2. Focus on one or two key EfS principles, actively applied to the participants' projects.

Within this framework each seminar focused on different themes which are mapped further in Appendix 3.

### 3.2.2.2   Workplace Mentoring

Three bi-monthly workplace mentoring visits were undertaken, alternating with the seminars. The agendas for each of these mentoring sessions are presented in Appendix 4. The mentoring provided tailored support to each individual Council by identifying their specific needs and working with them on the integration of EfS principles into their specific projects. These sessions provided an opportunity to critically reflect and explore participant project issues.

Two participants within each Council were selected to be mentored. The involvement of two mentorees from each Council, acting as partners, was informed by a similar project[7] which suggested that this approach offered greater support to each participant in bringing about change and potentially increased the chance of generating longer term change within Council.

Within each Council the actual mentoring structure varied on an as-needs basis. For example, the majority of the Councils had two participants either from the same department, or from different departments, working together on the same project. These participants were mentored together. However some participants were working on separate projects and preferred to be mentored separately.

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**Box 3.6: Examples of tools used in the workshops***

- Ice breaker games
- Visioning
- Sustainability Café
- Question Expo
- Round Robin
- Poster Presentations
- Quotes Game
- Connect It!
- Article Sharing
- Case studies

*Further information on these (and other) tools will be available in the online handbook.*

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*'It was great to get ideas for workshops, sessions, ways to deal with problem issues, people etc in a really practical, hands-on way with people who really understand the organisational and working context.'*

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*'I found these sessions valuable as it was more about reflection time for 'my project.'*

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*'It has been most valuable to have one on one support to trouble shoot and provide me with space to reflect on the design process of my project.'*

*'The networking opportunity was fantastic.'*

*'No other training could have been more effective in my own professional development.'*

*'It was wonderful to have the opportunity to learn alongside like minded EfS colleagues in such enjoyable, participatory processes.'*

As an integral part of the mentoring process, the mentorees were asked to identify a mentoring focus or change action for their projects. This focus was used to develop a mentoring action plan at the first mentoring meeting which was reflected upon and developed as the project progressed.

The Council projects and their mentoring foci are outlined in Table 3 overleaf.

Table 3: Council Projects and Mentoring Focus

| Council | Project | Mentoring Focus |
|---|---|---|
| **Auburn Council** | Auburn's Towards Sustainability Strategy | The integration of EfS approaches to achieve better outcomes for the Sustainability Strategy and within all education programs across Council and the community. |
| **City of Darebin** | Darebin's Sustainable Homes Program | Documenting the 'Sustainable Homes Policy' (SHP) model framework and its associated 'Resource Kit', including building better partnerships with SHP participants, their workplaces and local community, businesses and schools. |
| | Going Places - Darebin's Travel Reward Scheme | Engaging with the community of Darebin to increase their participation rate in 'Going Places - Darebin's Travel Reward Scheme' program and help build the capacity of existing program members to attract new members and act as program mentors. |
| **City of South Perth** | City of South Perth Sustainability Strategy | Effectively communicating the Sustainability Management System (SMS) to:- <br>• Executive Management Team (EMT) <br>• Operational Management Team (OMT) <br>• Relevant staff |
| **City of Whittlesea** | Environmental Events Program | Encourage a better level of engagement with both the community and selected Council colleagues to help in the development of a vision and design for the 2007 'Energy Action' series of events within the Environmental Events program. |
| | 'Spring into Composting' Community Promotion | A better level of engagement with the City's urban community to raise their level of understanding and awareness of waste minimisation issues. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***Coorong District Council*** | Coorong District Local Action Plan | Effectively communicating and reviewing the actions listed in the Local Action Plan to the following sectors:-<br><br>• Farmers<br>• Town residents<br>• Schools and identified community groups<br>• Local agronomists and consultants. |
| ***Eurobodalla Shire Council*** | Best Practice Integration of NRM into the planning and management of the Eurobodalla Shire | Using an EfS approach to increase ownership and application of the tools and resources for EEC and TS conservation across all of Council and within the community. |
| ***Moonee Valley City Council*** | Integrating ESD into all Council programs | Effectively engaging with the Senior Officers at Moonee Valley City Council (MVCC) to obtain their support and ownership of the MVCC Sustainable Environment Plan 2007. |
| ***Noosa Council*** | Noosa 'Living Smart' Program | Instilling, at its core, EfS principles and processes into the design, development, delivery and evaluation of the Living Smart Homes project in order to achieve more effective outcomes. |
| ***Pittwater Council*** | Sustainable Pittwater 2030 | Engagement of the S-Team to engender commitment and actions towards integration of sustainability throughout Council using a Learning for Sustainability approach. |

### 3.2.2.3   Reflective Journal

Each participant was provided with a journal to record their thoughts and ideas during the project. The purpose of the journal was to promote critical reflective thinking on changes occurring throughout the project. Participants produced a summary of their journals at the end of the project which then formed part of the validation process (see Section 4.2).

*'I believe in the ongoing review and assessment of the ARIES project…. and I therefore intend to continue the journal.'*

# 4 Project Methodology

**Box 4.1: Different mentoring and facilitation methods employed in the project**

**One to one**
One to one mentoring was undertaken through the workplace visits i.e. individual visits to the local Council offices. The strength of this form of mentoring is its ability to offer highly targeted support to each Council and its flexibility to address the particular needs of the participants. This approach however is highly resource intensive.

**One to many**
One to many mentoring was undertaken through the group seminars. The aim was to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and learnings between everybody and to jointly reflect on ways of bringing about change for sustainability. The strength of this mentoring approach lies in the sharing of knowledge and joint learning experience. It is much less resource intensive than one to one mentoring.

**Networking**
This is an informal form of mentoring. Networking opportunities were offered throughout the project, for example at coffee breaks and at lunchtime, during activities and during the evening dinners that were organized for this purpose.

This section outlines the research context behind this project, the methods used and the data collection and validation techniques applied to investigate the research question.

## 4.1 Mentoring and Facilitation Method

The *Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability* project used mentoring and facilitation as the method for delivering the Education for Sustainability framework. Mentoring and facilitation as tools are aligned with the principles and practice of EfS, offering collaborative, non-expert led support and space to engage professionals in critically examining opportunities for change within their workplace. Mentorees also directly benefit from the professional exchange and support gained through sharing of ideas and issues with their peers in the seminars.

Mentoring is increasingly being seen as a useful and powerful tool for community development and increasingly it is being innovatively used as a tool to support the process of change for sustainability.

There are many different forms of mentoring but this project differed from more traditional mentoring relationships (e.g. leader and protégé, adult and youth) in that for this project *mentoring was identified as being a peer relationship, that is, it was non-expert led*. The mentors (in this case, ARIES) acted as *facilitators*, whose responsibility was to facilitate the learning of the mentorees (in this case, local government participants) by encouraging continual critical reflection and action based learning. This was done by asking strategic questions, offering the participants time and space to reflect as well as support with issues as they arose. A key role of the mentor is to offer on-going support to the participants in bringing about their change action or mentoring focus.

This *Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability* project integrated a combination of the 'one to one' and 'one to many' and 'networking' mentoring and facilitation approaches as explained in Box 4.1

## 4.2 Data Collection and Validation

Data was collected from various sources to support the outcomes, the findings and the learnings of the project. The sources of data included:

1. Final evaluation form. All participants were asked to complete a Final Evaluation Form which was collated by the ARIES Administrator such that confidentiality was maintained.

2. Participant presentations. This consisted of an oral presentation in seminars 1 and 3 and any accompanying written handouts. The presentation covered the outcomes of their project, key challenges and learnings; key EfS principles integrated into their projects and where to from here.

3. Participant feedback. This consisted of both informal and formal written feedback following the workshops as well as informal oral (via phone) and written feedback (via email).

4. Facilitator personal critical reflections after the workshops and the mentoring sessions.

5. Observer reflections. This consisted of other observers who were present at the final seminar (Seminar 3) and took notes of their observations of the day.

6. Participant journal summary. This consisted of a written summary of the reflective journal kept by each participant and submitted following the last workshop.

7. Workshop notes. This consisted of individual and group comments made during the workshop and recorded in written format during the workshops.

This verification of data across different sources is known as 'triangulation'. Triangulation is used to ensure the validity and reliability of the data gathered. (Box 4.2).

Particular data sources were then used to investigate both:

• the overall *Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability* project findings; and

• the Council project outcomes.

See Box 4.3 below.

**Box 4.2:**
**Why triangulation is used**

• To obtain a variety of information on the same issue

• To use the strengths of each method to overcome the deficiencies of the others

• To ensure the data is both valid and reliable

• To overcome the deficiencies of single method studies.

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**Box 4.3 Particular data sources used to investigate outcomes.**

Overall Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability Outcomes

      Data Source 1: Final participant evaluation forms

      Data Source 2: Participants' Presentations at final Seminar

      Data Source 3: Participant feedback

      Data Source 4: Mentors' personal reflections

      Date Source 5: Observer reflections

      Data Source 6: Participants' journal summaries

 Individual Council Outcomes

      Data Source 1: Final participant evaluation forms

      Data Source 2: Participant Presentations at final seminar

      Data Source 4: Mentors' personal reflections

      Date Source 7: Workshop notes

# 5 Project Outcomes

## 5.1 Outcomes from the Mentoring Local Government in EfS project

The original project proposal for the *Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability* outlined a number of planned outcomes (see Section 3). This section presents the evidence to support the achievement of these outcomes whilst Section 6 discusses the outcomes in detail.

The following table (Table 4) captures a range of responses from the data sources that supports the achievement of project outcomes.

Table 4: Analysis of Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability
project outcomes

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Increased capacity of participants to identify key elements of effective EfS practice. | ARIES comments<br><br>Yes. This was evident especially during the latter stages of the project as more and more participants began to engage with the key elements as part of their seminar presentations and general group discussions. | The workshops… not only significantly increasing my understanding of EfS principles but also how to successfully implement these in local government (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*Understanding the EfS principles and systems thinking etc much enhanced (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>EfS presents a framework in which focus is placed upon process rather than content to bring about positive, self-reinforcing and lasting change towards sustainability (Participant journal summaries)<br><br>*We started seeing overwhelming evidence of a significant increase in participants' ability to reflect on the value of EfS components for sustainability outcomes (Mentor personal reflections)*<br><br>*the five principles of education for sustainability - they have become my sustainability mantra. (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>I have developed my capacity to identify and incorporate elements of a program that are essential to insuring effective engagement of the target audience (Participant journal summaries) |

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Increased capacity to design and implement learning based programs and strategies for sustainability, through the acquisition of new skills, tools and approaches as well as increased confidence and motivation. | <u>ARIES comments</u><br>Yes. Once the participants developed a deeper understanding and awareness of EfS principles, they were better able to take these tools and use them more confidently within their own project settings. | the knowledge and skills I have learnt here have certainly built my capacity to achieve change for sustainability (Participant journal summaries)<br><br>*I feel better enabled to think both analytically and systemically about driving change towards sustainability using learning for sustainability approaches from within my various roles at Council (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>During the workplace mentoring visits, participants demonstrated confidence in implementing their new learnings within their project frameworks (Mentor personal reflections)<br><br>*the mentoring confirmed and built my confidence / skills (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>assisted me personally with confidence within a group and public speaking, no other training process could have been more effective in my own professional development (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*The elements of EfS improved the way they designed and delivered their programs and made them more effective (Observer reflections)*<br><br>The project has definitely built my capacity immensely as an education officer for Local Government (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*I believe I now have the tools to bring about change towards sustainability within my own Council. (Final participant evaluation forms)* |

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Understanding and appreciation of mentoring and facilitation as tools for capacity building and integration of learning for sustainability and EfS within local Council. | <u>ARIES comments</u><br>Yes. We are of the view that the mentoring in the workplace proved to be very effective in reinforcing key EfS messages, assisting participants in overcoming obstacles and building their capacity and confidence to manage their projects towards a better sustainability outcome. | I feel more confident in my ability to deliver an action learning project, and to support other staff learning for sustainability through mentoring (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*It was encouraging to see that all participants believed that mentoring ...had helped make their programs more effective (Observer reflections)*<br><br>by applying the EfS principles within ... Cross Directorate Sustainability Working group not only will it improve the effectiveness of this group but …build the capacity of members of the working group to incorporate EfS into their projects and programs. (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*I believe that using mentoring and active learning methods to engage people in learning is much more effective than straight teaching. (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>Mentoring using the EfS principles I believe helps breakdown the silo mentality within Council and helps integrate sustainability as a core function of Council by involving Council as a whole in the change process and fostering a sense of individual staff ownership in that change. (Participant journal summaries)<br><br>*Yes, I believe that facilitation and mentoring processes … are a vital support service that can be provided to Local Government sustainability change agents struggling to champion, initiate and drive change towards sustainability within their organizations (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>sustainability officers need access to sources of support, ongoing learning and inspiration to enable them to continue in their role and to be more effective in their work. (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*My overall impression of the project is that it is an extremely valuable process for equipping Council staff with the knowledge and tools to deliver programs and act strategically in the area of environmental sustainability. (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>It was interesting to see how participants came to value the mentoring approach, with a common theme being that it provided a 'circuit breaker' effect and provided much needed support. (Mentor personal reflections). |

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Ability to identify barriers to change and experience in how to overcome these. | <u>ARIES comments</u><br>Yes. The whole group seminars were particularly successful in enabling participants to discuss barriers and how they might be overcome. See Point 3 also. | Being able to break through the barriers of implementing our project, the SMS and begin to roll out this management system (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*was great to get ideas for workshops, sessions, ways to deal with problem issues, people etc in a really practical, hands-on way with people who really understand the organisational and working context. (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>the idea of having 2 participants from each Council really assisted them to tackle barriers as they had support from one another to bring about change (Mentor personal reflections)<br><br>*the dialogue encouraged was stimulating and I think the group also came up with interesting and practical ideas to tackle the issues faced (Participant journal summaries)*<br><br>the project has definitely got us thinking about how we can do things differently (Participant journal summaries)<br><br>*the 'World Café' group workshop activity really assisted participants in recognising that they shared common organisational barriers as well as developing ideas for tackling these barriers ( Mentor personal reflections)*<br><br>I have tried to apply critical thinking techniques to a range of problems/issues with which I have been presented (Participant journal summaries)<br><br>*see also Section 7 of this report |

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Increased project planning and management skills. | <u>ARIES comments</u><br>Yes. The key EfS elements surrounding critical reflective thinking and systemic approaches were particularly effective in this regard. | The program assisted in time and project management skill, team building and team work skills and organisational skills which are all useful skills to have and learn about (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*As a result of the mentoring project our activities have been well planned (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>the mentoring program has helped to shape the xxx Plan and how we are developing it (Participant journal summaries)<br><br>*It became apparent that the Council participants came to see the relative value of incorporating good strategic planning in the development phase of projects (Mentor personal reflections)*<br><br>I found that most of our project action plans, outcomes and planning stemmed from these sessions. I always felt like we had really made headway and are really motivated after a session. (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*It was obvious that the mentoring helped them to plan and evaluate their projects and to identify better approaches (Observer reflections)* |

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Implementation of improved learning for sustainability approaches in existing sustainability programs. | <u>ARIES comments</u><br>Yes. See points 1 & 2. | I have already used the techniques taught in several very different areas to great effect (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*As a direct result of this program I have undertaken a number of activities which I would otherwise not have done, and which have contributed significantly to successful outcomes in my project. (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>We are incorporating the concepts and principles of EfS into our awareness presentations and other community projects and programs, as well as our EfS project, and communications and discussions with peer and partner groups (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*As a result of the mentoring project ….particular effort has been directed toward engaging people and raising awareness which has been very successful. (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>it was encouraging to see that all participants believed that mentoring and their learnings about EfS had helped make their programs more effective (Observer reflections)<br><br>*I ran a series of community forums using our new skills in critical reflective thinking (Participant presentations at final seminar)*<br><br>Initiatives include development and adoption of a high-level sustainability policy, initiation of development of a strategic plan within a sustainability framework, creation of an internal sustainability team, and ongoing support for a community Local Agenda 21 process (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*I have also noticed that I have started to use the other tools and strategies of EFS in my day to day work such as systemic thinking, partnering, participation and evaluation in a more structured way. (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>I am now very focused on learning for sustainability and will be folding that into everything I do (Participant presentations at final seminar)<br><br>*Have used the visioning techniques with my managers with regard to reviewing our infrastructure plan (Participant journal summaries)* |

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | Development of a participant peer support network to assist in ongoing improvements to their practice. | ARIES comments Partial. An informal network between the project participants was attempted during the life of the project using electronic networking, however the continuation of this electronic network does not appear to be particularly active. | the networking opportunity was fantastic and I have learnt so much from my colleagues and their responses to their very diverse communities (Final participant evaluation forms)

*The national aspect of the interaction was particularly valuable (Final participant evaluation forms)*

I did not anticipate the value of the meeting with and sharing with other sustainability professional from around the country at the group workshops in Sydney and Melbourne. (Final participant evaluation forms)

*being able to share notes and networks across Australia is wonderful (Final participant evaluation forms)*

the value of the group workshops as a support network was clear. They want to continue to maintain contact with one another after this project is completed (Mentor personal reflections)

*the most important thing has been the engagement with my colleagues (Participant presentations at final seminar)*

It was fantastic to have had the opportunity to collaborate with and build connections to other leading Councils (Final participant evaluation forms)

..we can also start to see some relationships between projects and potentially build a few linkages on specific projects between LGAs (Participant journal summaries) |

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Development of a range of resources to support the dissemination process which not only includes the handbook but a number of engaged and enthusiastic local Councils and their staff. | <u>ARIES comments</u> Yes. See the handbook for further information. | Draft Handbook has been developed and final version will be placed online. It was fantastic to work with such a committed and enthusiastic group. (Mentor personal reflections) <br><br> *the greatest outcome for us so far is engagement and awareness to a point where we can not keep up (Final participant evaluation forms)* <br><br> we have generated interest and enthusiasm for sustainability from staff and participants (Participant presentations at final seminar) <br><br> *we've really got people excited (Participant presentations at final seminar)* <br><br> we've got a real buzz in our office at the moment (Participant presentations at final seminar) <br><br> *Sitting in the plane on the tarmac with xxx who is raving about sustainability (Participant journal summaries)* |
| 9 | Foundations created for the development of inter-Council and inter-state learning networks. | A discussion document has been produced to consider a future mentoring program | |

| | Outcome | Achieved? | Sample evidence (with Data source) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | Increased support for implementing programs based on EfS approaches in the future. | <u>ARIES comments</u><br>Partial. It is felt that the best way to assess the extent of this uptake is via an independent evaluation as outlined in the recommendations arising from this report. | . .the process received the praise of our unit managers (Participant journal summaries)<br><br>*We are also considering a full-time Sustainability Officer to progress our efforts further and work with xxx. (Final participant evaluation forms)*<br><br>. .having an objective and independent process allowed my project partner to gain acceptance from Executive management (Participant journal summaries)<br><br>*The jury is still out and time will tell. We need to work on selling the positive outcomes to local government elsewhere. (Mentor personal reflections)*<br><br>He (CEO) will be more willing for us to be involved as mentors in the future I believe (Final participant evaluation forms)<br><br>*The Council Committee that oversees our project was quite receptive to using EfS principals in reviewing the aims, objectives, targets etc of the project. (Final participant evaluation forms)* |

## 5.2 Individual Council Project Outcomes

The key outcomes from each Council project are outlined in Table 5 below.

Table 5 – Summary of Key Council Project Outcomes

| Council | Key project outcomes to date |
|---|---|
| *Auburn* | • Draft framework for the Sustainability Plan has been developed, incorporating key elements of EfS<br>• High level of interest and engagement from staff participants generated in addressing internal sustainability issues<br>• Workshops held with Council staff using EfS processes<br>• Community Ambassadors program designed and being implemented to increase community engagement in sustainability discussions and solutions |
| *Darebin* | 'Sustainable Homes Program'<br>• Have shifted from an individual Council program to a partnership program with other neighbouring Councils to increase impact;<br>'Going Places - Darebin's Travel Reward Scheme'<br>• Developed partnerships with Yarra Trams as part of their centenary celebrations to encourage sustainable transport use<br>• Membership of the Travel Reward Scheme program has doubled (now 384 memberships)<br>• Developed support for the possible expansion of the program regionally in the future |
| *Whittlesea* | 'Environmental Events Program'<br>• Engaged colleagues on the design of the program incorporating EfS techniques<br>• Partnerships have been formed with organisations such as Green Plumbers, Travel Smart, Council colleagues and other business organisations to increase reach of the program<br>'Spring into Composting'<br>• 442 x 210 litre composting bins and 97 worm farms have been sold – normally only sell 20 of each per year.<br>• Participant survey developed to assess the effectiveness of the 'Spring into Composting' program to identify some trends to better inform the development of the 2007 Spring into Composting program. |

| Council | Key project outcomes to date |
|---|---|
| *Noosa* | • Living Smart Homes program strategically planned and developed with EfS approaches integrated throughout the design and content<br>• Partnership developed with neighbouring Council to deliver project and increase impact<br>• Partnership developed with university to evaluate project<br>• Funding sources identified to ensure sustainability of project |
| *Eurobodalla* | • Workshops held to engage all staff in discussions re: NRM planning and develop greater level of ownership<br>• Increased skills and awareness of staff and community participants in NRM related issues<br>• A series of data and GIS systems have been developed |
| *South Perth* | • One of the project participants was relocated to the main office building one day per week to engage with other staff and address 'silo' issues.<br>• Sustainability Strategy snapshot completed<br>• Director and Manager both highly supportive of the process<br>• Barrier of moving ahead with the SMS dissolved by:<br>  » delivery of awareness presentations; and<br>  » conducting sustainability aspects and impacts reviews |
| *Coorong* | • A presentation depicting the systemic nature of local actions on environmental issues as outlined in the Local Action Plan prepared and distributed<br>• A critical evaluation undertaken to ensure mail out of information and educational material is more effective<br>• Developed group guided walks to sites in the LGA that show both best and worst practice examples of sustainable whole of land management.<br>• Conducted a series of visioning and critical reflective thinking exercises with major stakeholders, i.e. Local Action Plan Committee leading to support for EfS processes and an improved Local Action Plan |
| *Pittwater* | • Development of draft Learning for Sustainability framework for the S-Team<br>• Coastal Environment Centre Strategic Plan revised to incorporate EfS principles<br>• Many highly engaged sustainability champions identified who can drive change within Council |
| *Moonee Valley* | • Sustainability Indicators to be developed across all of Council<br>• Sustainability Indicators workshops numbers increased from 5 senior staff members to 15 staff members<br>• "Speed-dating" exercise was used as a systemic thinking activity to identify sustainability links between Council departments and encourage dialogue. |

# 6 Discussion of Outcomes

The findings of this pilot project support an assessment that mentoring and facilitation are effective techniques for:

- developing the understanding and skill of participants in EfS processes;

- developing the capacity of participants to reorient their programs towards an EfS approach; and

- generating longer term organisational change for sustainability within local government.

**On generating dialogue around sustainability...**

*'People are talking about this stuff. Even that is a change, a win'*

*'I have received requests for participation in sustainability change processes from an increasingly wide cross section of staff.'*

**On increasing sustainability outcomes…**

*'as a direct result of this program I have undertaken a number of activities which I would otherwise not have done, and which have contributed significantly to successful outcomes in my project.'*

*'I realised how powerful the outcomes can be when you go with people on the journey…'*

## 6.1 Individual Council Project Outcomes

Each Council achieved different outcomes as a result of :

- the focus of the project they chose to work on;

- where their project was at the start and finish of the *Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability* project,

- at what level they engaged with the *Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability* project

- their depth of understanding of an EfS approach and of their concept of sustainability.

A key outcome common to many of the projects was the development of dialogue around the theme of sustainability at a wider level within Council and the generation of significant numbers of enthusiastic sustainability champions, often in unexpected places. For example, one participant Council ran a series of workshops designed to engage both senior management and staff in reflecting on how to make local government operations more sustainable.

Some projects were already being implemented and so these participants sought to review and increase the effectiveness of their projects by applying EfS principles e.g. increased participation or seeking new partnerships. These projects generally demonstrated good increased sustainability outcomes e.g. Darebin doubled the membership in their project as a result of work done through the *Mentoring Local Government*

*In Education for Sustainability* project, Coorong LAP Committee have embraced a broader sustainability plan rather than the original single issue of salinity that drove their LAP.

Other participants brought new projects to the *Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability* project and so their projects were in the planning and design phase. This means that an evaluation of significant sustainability outcomes is not possible at this stage since the projects are yet to be implemented. These participants worked towards integrating EfS principles into the design and development of their projects as well as the content. These projects will need to be assessed in terms of longer term sustainability outcomes in the next 6 – 12 months and this forms a recommendation of this report.

A significant number of projects focused around the development of Sustainability Strategies and again longer term specific sustainability outcomes are therefore harder to identify in this situation. Those developing strategies sought to use EfS principles to:

- seek broad ownership of the strategies across Council: and

- to use the development of the strategy as an opportunity to learn for sustainability by applying EfS principles such as visioning, systems thinking and participation.

They sought to address the silo mentality that can occur within Council departments by encouraging a cross-Council approach to strategy development and sustainability.

## 6.2 Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability Project Outcomes

The Outcomes Table presented in Section 5 demonstrates that the original planned outcomes at the commencement of this project have been achieved.

In particular participants identified:

- Increased capacity of participants to achieve sustainability outcomes through education;

- Increased capacity of participants to design, develop and implement sustainability projects;

- Increased confidence and motivation in using participatory learning techniques and acting as change agents for sustainability both within their Council and their community;

- Improved effectiveness of existing Council projects e.g. increased levels of participation or new partnerships being formed;

- Significant support for these types of mentoring and facilitation approaches as capacity building for local government for sustainability.

**BOX 6.1: Sustainability on Local Government agenda**

It is clear that sustainability is now very much on the Local Government agenda due to a combination of issues including media coverage of climate change and the current drought. Participants were able to tap into this raised awareness to encourage participation and dialogue. Projects such as this Mentoring Local Government In Education for Sustainability are highly valuable in supporting participants to identify such opportunities and to develop strategies for best 'cashing in' on them.

We have assessed Outcomes 1 -6 and 8 -9 as having been fully achieved and have presented sample evidence to support this assertion.

Outcomes 7 and 10 show less evidence and therefore have been identified as being partially achieved at this point.

### Outcome 7 (development of a peer support network)

A Yahoo groups email was set up at the request of several participants, however to date use of this forum has been limited. Participants stated that one of the key values of the group sessions was the opportunity to exchange and share learnings and experiences, however there is currently little evidence to suggest that this connection between participants continues to occur outside of the sessions. This may be partly due to time and workload constraints of the participants. Participants have however stated strong support for continuing to meet at least once or twice more to continue the learning network and to be involved in a network of local government mentors. These form recommendations of this report.

### Outcome 10 (increased support for implementing programs based on EfS approaches in the future)

There was strong evidence demonstrated that there is an increased interest and enthusiasm across Council staff for sustainability change processes in general and that this was generated as a result of this project. Support for their participation was evident as a requirement of the EOI, however what is not yet clear is whether this project has built support at a management or CEO level for increased implementation of projects with an EfS approach. Some Councils have identified their support by writing Letters of Support for continued programs and funding in this area.

A recommendation arising from this outcome is to provide the Chief Executive Officers and senior managers of Councils that have participated in the project with a summary of the findings to highlight its value.

## 6.3 Assessing the Research Question

The research project sought to investigate the question:

*Are mentoring and facilitation effective methods for:*

- *developing the understanding and skill of participants in EfS processes;*
- *developing the capacity of participants to reorient their programs towards an EfS approach; and*
- *generating longer term organisational change for sustainability within local government?*

Discussion of findings against these questions is presented below.

### 1. Have participants developed their understanding and skills in EfS processes?

As evidenced by Outcomes 1-6 in the Outcomes Table in Section 5, the evidence strongly suggest that this is true. Participants not only identified and reflected on the key EfS principles during the mentoring sessions but they also actively sought to integrate EfS aspects into their projects. This active learning approach i.e. learning about EfS processes by actively applying them to their projects and then reflecting on this, was identified by several participants as being key in the development of their understanding of EfS. Participants have identified that they feel more confident and able to use EfS within their work.

### 2. Have participants developed their capacity to reorient their programs towards an EfS approach?

This question is very closely related to the one above, however this seeks to investigate what evidence there is as to whether participants have actually re-orientated their projects towards an EfS approach. Participants in their final presentations were asked to identify what elements of an EfS approach they had successfully integrated into their projects. All participants identified aspects that they had incorporated, both into the structure and/or the content of the project. Some examples of what participants identified are:

- building or increasing participation in their existing projects or developing new, highly participatory projects
- seeking to develop a more partnership based approach within their project or in new projects
- using visioning techniques to develop strategies and plans, to review projects and reflect on what they could be doing better, to get buy in from management
- using critical reflective thinking to identify challenges and improvements to projects, embedding critical reflective thinking processes into the project content to encourage participants to develop skills in this area
- using systemic thinking to develop strategies and plans, to develop a wider sustainability based approach, to address silo mentalities within Council, to develop better management systems.

There is therefore very strong evidence that participants have significantly improved their capacity to reorientate their programs to an EfS approach. In doing this they have reinforced the evidence for the achievement of point 1 above.

**On using learning for sustainability approaches…**

*'I have already used the techniques..in several very different areas to great effect'*

*'I have started to use the other tools and strategies of EfS in my day to day work such as systemic thinking, partnering, participations and evaluation'*

*'I have tried to apply critical thinking techniques to a range of issues'*

*'I have used visioning techniques with my managers'*

*'We are incorporating the concepts and principles of EfS into our awareness raising presentation and other community projects, as well as communications and discussions with peer and partner groups'*

**On longer term organisational change for sustainability in council …**

*'…I feel more confident in my ability to…support other staff learning for sustainability through mentoring'*

*'…I can now also share my learnings of EfS with colleagues'*

*'…I will now be able to help staff within Council develop their capacity to do the same thing'*

*'I think the greatest capacity I have now is to share the knowledge of EfS with others in the organisation, to bring about broad scale change for sustainability.'*

*'this mentoring … definitely has built my capacity for advocating and leading change towards sustainability'*

*'I feel significantly more confident in my ability to use EfS in a strategic way to drive change towards sustainability within my organisation and the wider community.'*

### 3. Generation of longer term organisational change for sustainability within Council

This question is clearly a longer term one and as such can at this time only be addressed partially. The question here is whether there is evidence to suggest that **participants are now more able to participant in, and actively advocate for, the generation of longer term organisational change for sustainability?** If participants are able to act as key multipliers within Council and have the ability and the motivation to begin to push for organisational change then this starts to build a foundation or a set of building blocks towards longer term change.

The evidence from this project suggests that many of these building blocks have been put in place and participants identified that they feel strongly that they now have the necessary skills and abilities as well as the motivation to act as mentors and advocates of EfS within their Councils i.e. to act as change agents for sustainability.

Although many of the participants are currently in positions of minimal power in terms of effecting change, these are the same people who in the future will be the managers and CEOs of Local Government and in this sense capacity can be built to generate momentum for change. Other participants already hold positions of relative power and these people are much better placed to advocate for change in the shorter to mid-term. It is, however, clear that one or two Council participants are limited in the change that they can effect on their own. For this reason this project sought to create networks of support and to build the foundations for a larger state-level or inter-state mentoring program.

One of the recommendations arising from this report specifies the need for an independent evaluation to be undertaken in late 2007. It is envisaged that one of the key evaluation questions will try and assess whether any change for sustainability within the participating Council organisations has occurred as a direct result of their involvement in this project.

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**On the value of mentoring and the change process ...**

*'...Mentoring using the EfS principles I believe helps breakdown the silo mentality within Council and helps integrate sustainability as a core function of Council by involving Council as a whole in the change process and fostering a sense of individual staff ownership in that change.'*

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# 6.4 Key effective design features of the project

This project was designed with a particular structure as outlined in greater detail in Section 2 of this report. The significant design features that ARIES feel led to the achievement of the project outcomes are:

### a. *A mixture of group mentoring seminars and individual Council workplace mentoring*

The individual sessions gave participants the ability both to focus and reflect on their particular projects and to develop actions for their projects in a supportive and trusting environment, whilst the group sessions complemented this by giving the opportunity to develop new knowledge, reflect on experiences (theirs and others), share learnings and practice new skills in an open and supportive environment. This alternation between the two appears to be highly

effective and participants rated both aspects of the program as equally valuable for the reasons stated above.

b. *Two participants from each Council participated in the mentoring*

The original intention was that all Council partners would be mentored in pairs within their workplace and work jointly on their project in the group seminars, however the project was to remain flexible to each Council's particular needs. In reality, whilst the majority of Councils brought one project several Councils did bring more than one project and participants were mentored separately if they wished. This flexibility worked well and it is felt that all variations met the particular needs of the participants. We believe that the feature of two partners from each Council was a real strength of the project and very important in its overall effectiveness.

c. *Clear identification of a mentoring focus and development of an Action Plan*

The action plans developed as part of the workplace mentoring were very important for:

- developing critical thinking skills in identifying key actions required

- developing project planning and management skills

- use as a driver for action

- use a tool for reflection

- identifying outcomes achieved.

For these reasons we see the action plans as an important tool and feature that helped make this project successful and effective.

d. *The Learning Contract and Letter of Support from CEO*

Generating buy in and commitment from all participants and support from their management were seen as critical factors and this was supported by evidence from previous mentoring projects. Therefore we believe that these types of projects should always have some form of Learning Contract and identified support from management in order to be successful.

e. *The Journal*

One of the key features of the project was the requirement of participants to keep a journal. Some participants struggled with this to start with whilst others enjoyed the experience greatly. The facilitators discovered that the best way to encourage use of the journal was to give distinct breaks during the group seminars to pose reflection questions and to ask the participants to write in their journals. These journals are seen as indispensable as a way of encouraging participants to take time to practice critical reflection. Some participants vocalised the difficulty of finding the time to fill out their journals and the challenge of critically reflecting. This serves to highlight the value of the journal.

# 7 Barriers and Opportunities

*'It is amazing to realise how many similarities there are between the councils (barriers, rewards, processes etc)'*

## 7.1 Council Participants

As part of the first seminar participants undertook a dialoguing activity to reflect on the key barriers and opportunities within their Councils for bringing about change for sustainability. They identified 3 main themes which they then investigated further to discover the opportunities. These are outlined in Tables 6–8 below:

**Table 6: Nature of Organisations**

| Barrier | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| **Getting support from management** | Harness energy and enthusiasm from the general staff to drive managerial change. |
| | Communicate the benefits of working towards sustainability to management frequently and in a language that resounds with them. |
| | Don't forget to include frequent and positive communications to Councillors. |
| **The organisation in general** | There is value in being opportunistic, especially when initially starting the dialogue on sustainability: establish who the supporters are and get them involved, even if they are not ideally the people you need to have involved. |
| | Tailor your message about sustainability to suit the staff members you are engaging with. |
| | Work towards getting sustainability included in staff selection criteria, job description and performance appraisals. To be effective this needs to be accompanied by a sustainability education and action program. |
| | Engage with HR to review their approach to recruitment, so that you are hiring the 'right' people in the first place. |
| | Establish or use cross-Council groups to break through the 'silo' problem. |
| | Build a regional approach to Council's approach (even if it is just officers and not at the political level).  A formal staff 'sharing' scheme could even be negotiated between neighbouring Councils to support staff seeking other skills and working experiences. |
| | Use the concept of the 'learning organisation' as an overarching, umbrella concept. |

| Barrier | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| *The 'more work' barrier* | Acknowledge that sustainability may require some extra work and effort initially, but stress that in the long run it is not about creating more work, but about working differently. Systems that are established should support and seek to achieve this. |
| | A sustainability assessment of the organisation could include an 'efficiency audit' to establish where staff time and effort is being duplicated or wasted. |
| | Use systems and resources developed by other Councils and organisations wherever possible. To facilitate this, build and use networks with the aim of sharing ideas, experiences and tools. |
| | The ultimate aim is 'total integration' which means that sustainability is not seen as extra work but just part of work. |
| | Establish a time 'levy' system which is aligned with Council's performance appraisal system. |

## Table 7: Economics

| Barrier | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| *Economics always driving decisions. Cost limits the sustainability of programs* | Use whatever resources you do have to work on critical issues and leverage other resources |
| | Make solutions more local instead of adapting one size fits all economic model (e.g. salary packaging and cars) |
| | Establish borrowing facilities to allow Council's to do projects now that have a long pay off period |
| | Environmental credits – transferable development rights – offsets |
| | Revolving funds – where you save funds the savings go to a revolving fund |
| | Reduce cost through resources sharing and building alliances with other LGs |
| | Extend economic horizons – longer terms of government |

| Barrier | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| *Political environment* | Programs are sustainable when the community is empowered to demand them from politicians |
| | Incrementally change policy - green policy commitment – green purchasing policy – buying green products even though they are more expensive |
| | Internal politics are easier to influence and change |
| | Embrace networking with other Councils |
| | Develop critical thinking and self evaluation by focusing on issues that everyone agrees are critical and where there is common interest e.g. talk about water management in the drought and get the community to commit to action there and then. |
| | Generate demand at the grass roots level for programs |
| | Environment industry needs marketing and lobbying programs and raised publicity |
| | Councils need to lobby strategically and build alliances with the business community |

Table 8: Engagement

| Barrier | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| *How to target all stakeholders* | Identify stakeholders depending on the situation |
| | Recognise cultural barriers/access issues |
| | Include Aboriginal perspectives |
| | Consider the approach used to target e.g. local champions/ ambassadors/ elders etc |
| *Apathy* | Individual marketing |
| | Connection of the issue to lifestyle |
| | Increase exposure to the issue |
| *Lack of connection with community* | Create a space for them to contribute |
| | Engagement forums at venues where different groups reside e.g. youth/skate parks etc |
| | Offer input into planning the agenda |
| | Establish interest/advisory groups |
| *How to communicate* | Need to remember that the language of sustainability is a barrier – don't assume that your audience understands what you are talking about |
| | Ensure you know your audience |

| Barrier | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| ***Keeping people engaged*** | Put processes/systems in place to ensure that momentum continues – plan for this |
| | Time levy for staff to participate |
| | Sharing the workload |
| | Make sustainability part of core business |
| | Generate high visibility to keep motivation |
| | Provide incentives (food!!) |
| | Provide reward and recognition |
| | Succession planning |
| ***Making it relevant*** | Target the core beliefs of the people as a mechanism for making it relevant |
| | Use a bottom-up/groundswell approach |
| | Get 'them' to develop the solutions |
| | Make it locally relevant not global |
| | Listen to people and respond quietly |
| ***Hostility*** | Think about the environment when planning e.g. a public meeting is often a hostile environment |

# 7.2 ARIES Facilitators

Some of the observations identified and recorded by the facilitators during the life of this project are also worth noting. There is merit in outlining how these may be considered in the event of similar programs being conducted in the future.

- *Project Timeframe very short*

  Both facilitators and participants agreed that any similar mentoring projects in the future would benefit from a total face to face component consisting of a minimum of 12 months duration in addition to a 6 month start up phase.

- *Lack of use of the Handbook*

  Participants were reluctant to utilise the resource in hard copy format. In accordance with current trends for this sort of resource, both facilitators are of the view that resources for this type of project should be web based wherever possible.

- *Engagement of Project Partners*

  It is recognized that more headway could have been made in raising interest if the focus had been solely on liaison with the various state based local government associations and some of the more progressive Council clusters such Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs).

# 8 Lessons Learnt

The key learnings identified for those wishing to undertake a similar project are outlined below:

## 8.1 Project Design

*'I think it would benefit from being a longer project perhaps with 2 more workshops'*

*'space out the sessions and run the whole thing over one year'*

**These types of processes take time.** Both the participants and the facilitators felt that the overall project timeframe was too short (the actual mentoring phase lasted only 6 months) and that also the time between mentoring meetings (generally one month) was too short. Local Government often has many competing priorities and things tend to move quite slowly. Some participants had little time to undertake their actions in their Action Plans between meetings. It is important to allow enough time for participants to fully engage with the process and to actively undertake and reflect on their actions. We recommend that this type of process allows for at least 12 months of mentoring.

**Make project resources highly accessible.** The feedback that ARIES received was that the participants did not utilise their draft handbooks as much as was anticipated. They felt that the resource would be of greater value and accessed more if it were an online resource.

*'Maybe try single state groups to build a group of EfS supporters within that local government pool who can mentor each other as well as one or two interstate meetings mixed in for providing that different perspective as well'*

**An interstate approach is highly valuable.** Participants identified one of the key values of the group seminars as having the opportunity to share experiences and learnings between colleagues from right across Australia. Participants brought a rich diversity of skills and knowledge to the process and were genuinely interested in what their interstate colleagues were doing. Having said this many participants recommended further programs consider a state based or localised approach.

**Mentorees prefer a face to face mentoring approach.** Although the level of support varied, many participants had little contact with their mentors between mentoring meetings although generally they seemed happy with this level of support. The mentors' expectations of the amount of contact that they would have via email and telephone with their mentorees was, in reality, not met. The participants identified that the value for them lay very much in the face to face contact when they had the space and time to focus on the process, away from their often heavy workloads and competing priorities (although several expressed concern at the amount of flying involved in the project).

*'Local mentors, to provide the capacity for more direct contact'*

*'More workplace visits would be beneficial'*

**Any Project Partners should be well-aligned with the project aims**. It is important when identifying potential project partners to have a clear idea about what role they can play and how aligned their core business is with your project.

**Allow opportunities for informal networking and team building.**
Participants identified the value of informal moments such as the dinners (held the night before the seminars) and the lunch hours for them to chat informally with their colleagues and share experiences. The facilitators also noted the value of these activities for building trust and a sense of connection.

**Smaller group seminars may be better.** The design and facilitation of some of the workshop activities, particularly the reflective activities, were difficult given the number of participants (18). The ideal number for a group mentoring process would be 9 -12 which allows for the critical thinking process and sharing of experiences to occur but encourages all participants to have equal input.

**Council should have control of the project they are to be mentored on.** For example, a project that is being run by an external consultant in partnership with a Council makes it more difficult for participants to generate ownership or to effect change.

**Hold a two day workshop at start.** Participants suggested, and the facilitators agree, that it would be better for a project such as this to commence with an intensive two day workshop in order to generate strong motivation from the start.

## 8.2 Mentoring and Facilitation

**The mentor's role is to encourage action**. One of the roles of the mentors during the project was to give encouragement to ensure that the participants undertook their actions and actively found the time to undertake their reflections. Participants have heavy workloads and at times found it difficult to find space for their actions and reflections when faced with competing priorities.

**Mentors should identify and celebrate success with their mentorees.**
Given the lesson learnt above, it is important that progress on the mentoree's part is identified and acknowledged.

**All participants will engage differently**. All participants are different and all engaged differently with the process. Some participants found some of the EfS principles such as systemic thinking difficult to grasp, others struggled with their critical reflective thinking skills whilst some found strategic project planning challenging. The strength of the group mentoring approach is that participants have the opportunity to discuss and share their particular difficulties and to gain insight from others.

**Be ready to clarify that EfS is a well defined approach.** At the start of the process participants were asked to rate their understanding of EfS and the majority rated their understanding as 'high'. However it became clear that many had a different interpretation of EfS from the accepted literature, one that they had generated themselves. It is important to reinforce that EfS is a well defined approach or framework for community or organisational learning for change for sustainability rather than another term for community consultation or traditional environmental education.

*'In my view, our mentors made the project a success through being supportive, well organized, highly professional and lots of fun to be with'*

# 9 Recommendations

*'I would like to have it formally recognised as part of continuing professional development'*

*'Hopefully the learnings taken from this project can be developed into a professional development program available to local government sustainability change agents in the future'*

*'I feel re-invigorated and more confirmed in my vocation and career choice – to work at the local government level through education and learning approaches to foster societal change towards sustainability'*

1.  To assess the real impact of the project in achieving change, we recommend that an independent evaluation be undertaken in November 2007 (8 months after the completion of the project) to assess the project's effectiveness in bringing about change for sustainability.

2.  There is strong support from the current group of Council participants in meeting on at least one more occasion to discuss the progress of their projects. It is therefore recommended that the workshop be held in Sydney in September 2007.

3.  In order to extend the reach of this project to other local government areas in Australia, we recommend:

    a.  The development of a Dissemination Plan using the draft discussion paper submitted to DEWHA in January 2007 as the basis for exploring possible future extensions to this program.

    b.  Holding a workshop with all potential Project Partners and Council participants to brainstorm possible structures for a wider program as detailed in the final Dissemination Plan. It is recommended that this workshop be facilitated by an independent facilitator.

4.  It is proposed that the results of the project be disseminated in the short term through:

    a.  Providing the Chief Executive Officers and senior managers of Councils that have participated in the project with a summary of the findings to highlights its value; and

    b.  Development of a summary brochure outlining the benefits of this approach for distribution to Councils across Australia.

5.  Additional funding is sought to further develop the Draft Handbook as an interactive online document accessible to local government across Australia.

# Endnotes

1    Tilbury, D.et al (2005)

2    Agyeman, J. et al (1996); Tilbury et al (2005)

3    Tilbury et al (2005)

4    Tilbury, D. and Bowdler, L. (2003a); Tilbury, D. and Bowdler, L. (2003b); ILT Team (2004)

5    ILT Team (2004)

6    Delgado, L. et al (2006)

7    ILT Team (2004)

# References

Agyeman, J. Morris, J. and Bishop, J. (1996) *Local Government's Educational Role in LA21,* in Huckle, J. and Sterling, S. (eds) Education for Sustainability, London: Earthscan

Delgado, L., Cerone, F. and Tilbury, D (2006) Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability Context Report. Prepared for Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage, Unpublished.

ILT Team (2004) 'Mentoring as a tool for workplace change: outcomes and lessons learnt from the It's a Living Thing Education for Sustainability Professional Development Program', Paper presented by Henderson, Garlick and Calvert to the *Effective Sustainability Education: What works? Why? Where to next? – Linking Research and Practice Conference,* University of Sydney, 18th – 20th February 2004

Tilbury, D. and Bowdler, L. (2003a) *Education for Sustainability in Clarence Valley Councils: Action Research, Learning and Mentoring,* Sydney: Macquarie University

Tilbury, D. and Bowdler, L. (2003b) *Education for Sustainability in Cooks River Local Councils: Action Learning and Mentoring in Stormwater Community Education,* Sydney: Macquarie University

Tilbury, D., Coleman, V., Jones, A. and MacMaster, K. (2005) *A National Review of Environmental Education and its Contributions to Sustainability in Australia: Community Education.* Canberra: Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage and the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES).

# Appendices

# 1   Appendix 1:
# The Expression of Interest



## Expression of Interest

## Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability

- Are you working on an existing Council project that has environmental outcomes?
- Do you use education and/or learning strategies to achieve those outcomes?
- Do you want to build your capacity and the capacity of others at Council to use education and learning strategies for change towards sustainability?

If so, you may be interested in being part of a new project by the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES). We are seeking to work with a limited number of Councils to enable local government staff to consider how education and learning can assist in the planning and implementation of sustainability policies and programs at the local level. We aim to achieve this outcome through a number of means including:

- utilising mentoring strategies to build capacity in education for sustainability and provide support for its implementation in an identified Council project
- developing a Handbook to support the mentoring process as well as becoming a resource to be used by others who wish to replicate the project
- utilising the skills of all project stakeholders (e.g. state based local government associations and training professionals) to extend the learnings and outcomes of the project beyond the immediate participants.

The project is funded by the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage through the Natural Heritage Trust.

### Information for Applicants

*Who Can Apply?* – This Expression of Interest (EOI) is open to all Councils across Australia. Up to 9 Councils will be selected from the EOI to participate in this process.

*What Will it Cost?* – There is no cost to participate. The project funding will cover all costs related to travel and related accommodation costs. All we are seeking from you is a contribution of your time.

*Please note that participation in this mentoring process will not result in a new Council project. The purpose of the mentoring is to value add to the existing Council project/s identified in your Expression of Interest. The mentoring process is NOT a project in its own right.*

## Essential Selection Criteria

1. You must clearly identify an **existing Council environmental or sustainability project/s** that will be used as the basis for your participation in the mentoring process. The existing Council project/s **must use** learning or education as the basis for achieving outcomes.

2. You must be able to identify **two members from Council** who can commit to participating in all aspects of the ARIES mentoring process from start to finish. The two identified members of Council can be working collaboratively on one project or on two separate projects as long as both projects use learning and education as the basis for achieving outcomes. **The identified members can be staff and/or Councillors.** If they are staff members, they can be located in different departments. Councillors similarly should have some practical involvement in the nominated Council project. **Two neighbouring Councils** can put in a collaborative application on a joint project if they wish (i.e. one person from each Council).

3. You must supply **written support from senior management** (i.e. GM or CEO) actively encouraging the Council to participate in the project*.

4. You must be prepared to enter into a **formal agreement** with ARIES to cover participation, learning and intellectual property issues. Copies of the agreement will be made available once the successful Councils have been notified.

5. You must be able to **demonstrate how you will work collaboratively** with the local government association in your state as well as other networks to ensure that the learnings and impact of this mentoring process continues once ARIES involvement ceases.

## Desirable Selection Criteria

1. You should be able to show how **your Council has committed itself to Education for Sustainability (EfS) and/or Agenda 21 initiatives** by supplying some evidence of the incorporation of some or all these principles into its daily operations (e.g. policies, employment of EfS officers, community engagement programs etc).

2. You should be able to demonstrate how you envisage taking the learnings from this process and **extending those learnings** across the Council organisation.

*PLEASE NOTE: The extent of involvement in this project will revolve around a number of one day seminars and workshops to be held at the workplace of participants and in some instances, at a nominated interstate location. Every participant should therefore expect to dedicate approximately 2 days per month over a seven month period (July 2006 to February 2007) to this mentoring process. All interstate travel and accommodation costs will be covered by the project budget and managed by ARIES. The actual dates for the seminars and workshops will be established soon after successful Councils have confirmed their participation in the project.*

---

The closing date for the EOI is **4.30pm Thursday 29th June 2006**. Please fill in the accompanying form (together with all supporting documentation) and return it in an envelope marked 'EOI - Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability' to:

ARIES Coordinator

Graduate School of Environment
Macquarie University, Sydney
NORTH RYDE  NSW 2109

Alternatively, you can email the completed application form (together with a scanned copy of all supporting information) to **ariescoordinator@gse.mq.edu.au** or fax it by the due date to (02) 9850 7972 marked to the attention of Fil Cerone.

> ### ?
>
> ## If you have any questions, please contact the Project Director, Fil Cerone on  (02) 9850 4225.

*About Us* - Further information on ARIES publications, projects, news and events is available by visiting our website at **http://www.aries.mq.edu.au**.

### Acknowledgement of receipt of applications

You should expect acknowledgement of your application within 2 weeks of the closing date.  If you email your application you should expect acknowledgement within 2 working days.  If you do not receive acknowledgement please contact Fil Cerone to ensure your application has been received.

### Notification of successful applicants

Successful applicants will be notified by email or post.  This is expected to happen in the week commencing 10 July, 2006. Decisions are final. There is no appeal process. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email in due course.

# Expression of Interest Form –
# Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability

## 1. Council Participants

| | |
|---|---|
| Council Name | |
| Name # 1 | |
| Position | |
| Previous experience in education/sustainability programs | |
| Telephone | | Facsimile | |
| Mobile | | E-mail | |
| | |
| Council Name | |
| Name # 2 | |
| Position | |
| Previous experience in education/sustainability programs | |
| Telephone | | Facsimile | |
| Mobile | | E-mail | |

## 2. Existing Council Project Details

| | |
|---|---|
| Project Title #1 | |
| Expected Duration (years) | |
| Indicative funding (per year) | (to nearest $10,000): $ |
| What is the role of Name #1 in this project? | |
| What is the role of Name #2 in this project? | |

| What are the aims and objectives of this project? | |
|---|---|
| At what stage is the project? (e.g. planning, design, delivery). | |
| Main participating organisations | |

## This next table is only applicable if the two identified Council members are working on two separate projects (otherwise go to Q3).

| Project Title #2 | |
|---|---|
| Expected Duration (years) | |
| Indicative funding (per year) | (to nearest $10,000): $ |
| What is the role of Name #1 in this project? | |
| What is the role of Name #2 in this project? | |
| What are the aims and objectives of this project? | |
| At what stage is the project? (e.g. planning, design, delivery). | |
| Main participating organisations | |

## 3. What does the Existing Council Project Seek to Achieve?

*What is the issue that is being addressed and who is your target group? What sustainability outcomes are expected from this project? How are you using education in your project and what education tools or approaches have you used? (maximum of 500 words)*

4. Demonstrate how you will work collaboratively with the local government association in your state as well as other networks to ensure that the learnings and impact of this mentoring process continues once ARIES' involvement ceases.

*Maximum of 500 words*

5. Please provide some clear and concise examples from your Council's daily operations that show how your Council has committed itself to Education for Sustainability (EfS) and/or Agenda 21 initiatives.

*Maximum of 500 words*

6. Please outline how you envisage taking the learnings from participating in this process and extending those learnings across the Council organisation.

*Maximum 500 words*

## 7. Participation in this mentoring process involves the active support of your CEO and/or General Manager. You must provide written documentation to this effect together with an acknowledgement of the time requirements of participants as outlined below. This written supporting documentation must be signed by the CEO and/or General Manager and must accompany this application at time of lodgement.

> *PLEASE NOTE: The extent of involvement in this project will revolve around a number of one day seminars and workshops to be held at the workplace of participants and in some instances, at a nominated interstate location. Every participant should therefore expect to dedicate approximately 2 days per month over a seven month period (July 2006 to February 2007) to this mentoring process. All interstate travel and accommodation costs will be covered by the project budget and managed by ARIES. The actual dates for the seminars and workshops will be established soon after successful Councils have confirmed their participation in the project.*

The closing date for the EOI is **4.30pm Thursday 29th June 2006**. Please fill in the accompanying form (together with all supporting documentation) and return it in an envelope marked 'EOI - Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability' to:

ARIES Coordinator
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Alternatively, you can email the completed application form (together with a scanned copy of all supporting information) to ariescoordinator@gse.mq.edu.au or fax it by the due date to (02) 9850 7972 marked to the attention of Fil Cerone.

**?**  If you have any questions, please contact the Project Director, Fil Cerone on  (02) 9850 4225.

*About Us* - Further information on ARIES publications, projects, news and events is available by visiting our website at **http://www.aries.mq.edu.au** .

### Acknowledgement of receipt of applications

You should expect acknowledgement of your application within 2 weeks of the closing date.  If you email your application you should expect acknowledgement within 2 working days.  If you do not receive acknowledgement please contact Fil Cerone to ensure your application has been received.

### Notification of successful applicants

Successful applicants will be notified by email or post.  This is expected to happen in the week commencing 10 July, 2006. Decisions are final. There is no appeal process. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email in due course.

# 2 Appendix 2: The Learning Contract

## The Learning Contract

Welcome to the Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability project. This project is funded by the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage through the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and delivered by the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability at Macquarie University. This learning contract outlines the responsibilities of the project deliverers and participants.

*Our Commitments*
- To deliver 1 workshop, 3 seminars and 3 workplace visits for each mentoree.
- To provide support for your project throughout the process.
- To be open and honest at all times.
- To be available via email or telephone throughout the project.
- To provide a Draft Handbook to all mentorees and at completion of the project a Final Handbook complete with your stories and reflections.
- To provide other resource materials, including 2 key publications.

*Your Commitments*
- Attend 1 workshop, 3 seminars and 3 workplace visits.
- Identify and commit fully to a change action within your project (we can help you identify this).
- Prepare, update and act on Action Plans developed during the workplace visits.
- Work collaboratively with your mentoring partner.
- Develop a journal outlining your reflections and thoughts during the project.
- Engage with the project enthusiastically and be open and honest at all times.
- Provide feedback for evaluation as required.
- At the end of the project provide a journal summary containing anecdotes about your journey through the project and reflections about Education for Sustainability.
- Provide input in to the Dissemination Plan and, if interested, become involved in the continuation of the project.

I _____(print name) agree to the above conditions of the Learning Contract.

Signed _____     Date _____

We, the Team, agree to the above conditions of the Learning Contract

Signed _____

# 3    Appendix 3: MLGEfS Workshop and Seminar Themes

## MLGEfS Workshop & Seminar Themes

### Table 2: Workshop Themes

| Workshop/Seminar | EfS principles | Participants' Projects/Generic Skills |
|---|---|---|
| Introductory Workshop - Sydney 24th August 2006 | Overview of 5 key principles Visioning, Systemic Thinking | Identifying project outcomes Strategic planning and design |
| Seminar 1 - Melbourne 19th October 2006 | Critical Thinking, Participation | Barriers/challenges faced Organisational change for sustainability |
| Seminar 2 - Sydney 7th December 2006 | Partnerships | Positive outcomes/learnings to date, key design and management aspects of effective EfS programs |
| Seminar 3 - Melbourne 22nd February 2007 | Recap | Evaluation |

# 4 Appendix 4: Agendas for Workplace Mentoring Meetings



## Agendas for Workplace Mentoring Meetings

### Draft agenda for first mentoring meeting, week of 11th September 2006

#### AIM of this meeting

- Getting to know each other.
- To ensure we are all clear about the aims and objectives of the mentoring process.
- To identify what we hope to achieve from the mentoring process.
- To be clear about our roles and responsibilities as mentor and mentoree.
- To start to discuss further the specific focus of the mentoring and to discuss any particular issues, barriers that may be faced.
- To develop an Action Plan.

#### Agenda items for first mentoring meeting

- Logistics – dates for mentoring, where, how long.
- Confidentiality issues.
- Aims and objectives of the mentoring project.
- Roles and responsibilities of mentor and mentoree.
- Explanation of the project.
- Discussion of mentoring questions.
- Specific focus of the mentoring i.e. specific objectives - action plan with dates.
- How did the meeting go?
- Next meeting/seminar.
- Other…(need to meet with management?).

## Draft agenda for second mentoring meeting, week of 6ᵗʰ November 2006

### AIM of this meeting

To further support and assist you in the design/development/dissemination of your project and the integration of EfS processes into the project.

### Agenda items for second mentoring meeting

- To review the stages of your project.
- To review what elements of EfS you are using in your projects and your day to day work, what elements are missing and how we can assist/support you.
- To review and update your Action Plan.
- To discuss any particular issues, barriers and opportunities in your project.
- To discuss the journal and how you are tracking with it.
- To discuss the Handbook.
- Any other items.

## Draft agenda for third mentoring meeting, week of 29ᵗʰ January 2007

### AIM of this meeting

To further support and assist you in the design/development/dissemination of your project and the integration of EfS processes into the project.

### Agenda items for third mentoring meeting

- Action Plan Update
- How can we extend the life of this project?
- Draft agenda items so far for our final seminar
  - » Presentations by each Council on the success or otherwise of their Action Plans. What were the outcomes you were seeking and did you achieve them? What EfS principles did you include?
  - » Financial discussions on extending the life of this project
  - » Recap on the five principles of EfS with a particular focus on systems thinking
  - » The handbook
  - » How will you evaluate your own project – must be outcomes based!
  - » Joining web-based forums
  - » Evaluation of the project.
- Journal Summary
  You will need to start developing your thoughts around supplying us with a minimum one-page summary/synopsis of your journal.

# Journal summary –
## *To be submitted by Friday 2 March 2007*

### 1. Background

As part of the Mentoring Local Government in Education for Sustainability Project you were asked to keep a reflective journal. The purpose of the journal (in whatever form) was to assist you in reflecting on:

a) the process of understanding and reflecting on Education for Sustainability and change for sustainability during the workshop sessions, the mentoring sessions and in your workplace and community.

b) the development and implementation of Education for Sustainability programs in your workplace or community.

c) the integration of Education for Sustainability into your existing programs in your workplace or community.

You have not been asked to submit your journal but only to submit a summary of key points.

### 2. Journal summary – Hints

You may decide for yourself how to summarise and report your journal reflections but you may find one or more of the following questions useful starting points.

- Think about what you've learnt and describe your learning journey and your reflections on the process of change for sustainability.

- Is there a difference between the start of the project and now as to how you approach change and Education for Sustainability?

- Can you identify any particular moments, challenges or interactions in the past 6 months which, in retrospect, you see as significant steps forward with your project?

- How has your understanding of change for sustainability, using an EfS context affected your approach to your work and your project?

- Have there been particular views or perspectives which have challenged your previous values, behaviour, way of thinking or your view of change?

- What kind of change agent were you at the start of the project and how has your involvement in the project enhanced your potential to drive change in your council?

- What observations do you have on the effectiveness of using EfS and mentoring in making change towards sustainability?

## 3. Further handy hints

- Your summary should be written in the first person.

- Before you lock yourself in to any one structure for developing your summary, give yourself time to reflect and engage with your inner voice.

- Try to start mulling over your journal and the summary sooner rather than later.

- If you need any guidance or have any questions please give us a buzz.

Good luck!!

Mentoring
Local Government
In Education for
Sustainability

ARIES is the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability based at Macquarie University, Sydney. ARIES is primarily funded by the Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts.

Its core business is to undertake research that informs policy and practice in Education for Sustainability across a range of sectors including: business and industry, school education, community education, and further and higher education.

ARIES adopts an innovative approach to research with a view to translating awareness of sustainability issues into action and change. ARIES is concerned with how we inform, motivate and manage structural change towards sustainability.

To find out more about ARIES, please visit http://www.aries.mq.edu.au