



NEW GREEN ONLINE RESOURCE

The Australian Green Infrastructure Council (AGIC) has launched its Knowledge Hub - a free online resource focused on sustainability in Australia's infrastructure sector.

AGIC chair, Professor David Hood, says the new Knowledge Hub will provide a focal point for the latest developments in infrastructure sustainability.

"The AGIC Knowledge Hub will improve sustainability, productivity and innovation in the infrastructure sector," he says.

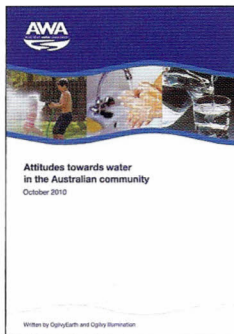
"It will quickly become a valuable resource for the infrastructure sector. For the first time, national and international information about sustainability and green infrastructure will be freely available from one source for industry and researchers."

Professor Hood says the AGIC Knowledge Hub will include a resource library of best-practice case studies, discussion papers, reports, tools and checklists, as well as education information. It will also include an online discussion and 'wiki' forum.

Submitted case studies, for instance, have included an interesting editorial on the use of E-Crete - a low-carbon concrete - at the CERES Community Environmental Park in Melbourne, and a Thies presentation featuring civil engineering applications of wind turbines and emerging alternative sustainable materials such as geopolymer (green) concrete, road base materials from waste, drainage bedding, low-pressure piping from HDPE wastes and carbon fibre composites.

Organisations and project teams are encouraged to contribute to the Knowledge Hub by submitting a case study on a project, a technical innovation, a success story, a lesson learned, conference proceeding, and/or technical paper relating to sustainability in infrastructure and the AGIC rating categories.

AGIC Knowledge Hub
www.agic-khub.net.au



DESALINATION OUT OF FAVOUR

Recent research by the Australian Water Association (AWA) shows that more than 75 percent of Australians would prefer to supplement existing water supplies through the use of stormwater treatment and the construction of new dams - not through options such as desalination.

Water security remains a concern for many Australians, the survey found, despite heavy rainfall and healthy dam levels in many States.

Tom Mollenkopf, the AWA's CEO, says: "While it is encouraging that three-quarters of Australians still consider water to be an issue of concern, it is disconcerting that almost a quarter of Australians are not at all concerned about running out of water. Our urban water supplies may not be facing an immediate crisis in many states thanks to recent rain and new supply options but we cannot afford to get complacent on this issue. We must ensure that water security continues to be a priority for everyone."

Although many Australians are prepared to reduce their water consumption and support water restrictions in order to protect Australia's water supply, the majority favour increasing our water supplies.

Interestingly, the preferred supply options highlighted by respondents were introducing treated stormwater to water supplies and building new dams over other options such as desalination. Over 75 per cent of respondents supported using treated stormwater.

When asked about desalination and other supply options such as recycled water, respondents said that they lacked information to make an informed decision about these options. Fewer than one in five Australians believe that they are very informed about either treated recycled water or desalination water.

AWA
www.awa.asn.au



GREENER SCHOOLS

A new resource developed by the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) outlines the reputed benefits of green schools, and shares the practical experience of ministers, education departments, principals and teachers as they embrace a new 'green' education revolution.

The GBCA released the Green Star - Education v1 rating tool in 2008 to support the design and construction of high-performance, sustainable schools and universities.

Since then, 10 schools and universities have achieved Green Star ratings, with more than 90 registered for Green Star certification.

"Green Star is already supporting improved learning and teaching outcomes for hundreds of students and teachers around Australia," says chief executive of the GBCA, Romilly Madew.

"However, with more than 9500 schools across the nation, this is just the beginning of Australia's green education revolution.

"Many of Australia's students and teachers spend each day in schools with badly designed classrooms, poor indoor air quality and limited access to daylight. Evidence and experience shows that this affects student health and learning, teacher morale and school operational costs - as well as the environment," Madew says.

Our new report outlines these benefits - from lower operating costs through to reputational equity - with case studies of real green schools in Australia.

"The GBCA is working closely with Federal and State Governments to ensure they commit to Green Star for all new schools, as well as for new buildings and refurbishments at existing schools.

The new Green Schools policy paper can be downloaded from the GBCA website at www.gbca.org.au/resources/greening-your-school.

GBCA
www.gbca.org.au