

Let's Talk About Consumption

1 Day Inter-active Workshop — Brisbane, Friday 28 August, 9am to 5pm
Griffith University EcoCentre, Nathan Campus, Brisbane



How do we create human societies that live within their ecological limits?

One of the greatest causes of the destruction of the natural world is the unsustainable consumption of 'natural resources' by human societies. It is estimated that today, we use the equivalent of 1.5 planets to provide the resources we use and absorb our waste (Global Footprint Network). And of course, we only have one precious Earth. If we are to transform our relationship with the Earth community and create a healthy future for all life on Earth, we must reduce our consumption of the natural world.

But how do we do this? Modern Australian society has little experience understanding, or trying to live within, its ecological limits. Our dominant economic, political and legal systems are built on the antiquated notion of 'endless growth', which is powered by unsustainable consumption.

AELA is inviting individuals, community groups, environmental NGOs, regulators, academics and others to our interactive workshop, to discuss the problems caused by unsustainable consumption and map out collective strategies for reducing consumption.

We're inviting you to share your achievements and frustrations in trying to tackle consumption, and provide your views about the role of law and regulation in supporting a sustainable consumption future. The ideas, case studies and recommendations generated by participants will form part of a major publication series, aimed at supporting civil society initiatives and influencing public policy.

This workshop is the first in a national series of workshops and publications being coordinated by AELA in 2015 and 2016. Join us for a positive, informative day of discussion and strategy development.

Visit: <http://www.earthlaws.org.au/current-projects/ecological-limits/>

Photo above: pavement art made out of plastic cups, Lisa Be

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

Environmental & community advocates, researchers, academics, students, regulators and anyone interested in tackling the toughest environmental issues we face

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE:

Please visit our online booking webpage: <http://www.trybooking.com/HSLL>

PLEASE NOTE - Tea and coffee will be available, but to keep this event free, lunch is not provided. You can bring your own lunch or purchase it at a nearby café

MORE INFORMATION:
convenor@earthlaws.org.au



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Draft Program

“Let’s Talk About Consumption”

Brisbane, 28 August 2015



8.30-9.00am Registration, tea and coffee

9.00-9.10am Opening remarks and welcome - *Dr Michelle Maloney, National Convenor, AELA*

9.10-9.45am **Framing the conversation - individual or collective responsibility?** *Dr Michelle Maloney, AELA*

How do we address the complexity of consumption - environmental and social impacts, inequities of ‘global consumption classes’, corporate creation of consumption, population growth and individual vs collective responsibility?

9.45-11.00am **So how did we get here? Understanding the causes of unsustainable consumption**

This session examines how we created unsustainable consumption via ‘growth economics’ and the range of approaches that challenge the dominant growth paradigm

Dr Sam Alexander, University of Melbourne, “Challenging Growth Economics: Degrowth & Voluntary Simplicity”

Dr Amanda Cahill, Centre for Social Change, “Building New Economies - Community Responses”

11.00-11.30am Morning Tea Break - tea and coffee provided, refreshments can be purchased nearby

11.30-1.00pm **How much is enough? How do we know our ecological limits?**

The starting point is not us, it’s the natural world. What do our ecosystems and bio-regions need for ecological health? How do we reframe our efforts, so we consume only within the ecological limits of our biosphere?

Professor Will Steffan, Climate Council - ‘Planetary Boundaries and a Safe Operating Space for Life on Earth’

Professor Brendan Mackey, Griffith University, ‘Making Room for Nature in the Anthropocene: How Much Does Nature Need and What Are the Implications for Human Consumption?’

1.00-2.00 Lunch - tea and coffee provided, refreshments can be purchased nearby

2.00-4.00 **How do we reduce consumption? Individual vs collection action - Interactive Discussions**

How do we create human societies that live within ecological limits and nurture the Earth upon which we depend?

Brief presentations will be provided by a range of speakers from various sectors, followed by interactive groups, so that participants can discuss their own initiatives and recommendations for ways forward. Focus topics will include: the role of planning and catchment management, challenging the consumer culture, civil society’s voluntary simplicity and transition initiatives, regulation and structural reform, the psychology of consumption and activism and politics

- All input will be documented, and participants will be invited to complete online and in-person surveys after the workshop, to continue the conversations and accurately capture people’s experiences and recommendations

4.00-4.30 Afternoon tea - tea and coffee provided, refreshments can be purchased nearby

4.30-5.00 **Conclusions and next steps** - *Dr Michelle Maloney, AELA*

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