

Let's Talk About Consumption

1 Day Inter-active Workshop — Adelaide, Friday 27th May, 9am to 4.30pm
Conservation Council of South Australia, The Joinery, 111 Franklin Street, Adelaide



How do we create human societies that can 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 1.6 planets to provide the resources we use and absorb our waste (Global Footprint Network). And of course, we only have one precious Earth. The impacts on our climate, ecosystems and declining biodiversity are just some of the most obvious signs of our over-consumption. 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 part of 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/consumption>

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 system by clicking here or copying and pasting this URL:
www.trybooking.com/KUBR

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



**Conservation
Council SA**

Program

“Let’s Talk About Consumption”

Adelaide, 27 May 2016



8.30-9.00am Registration, tea and coffee

9.10-9.20am Opening remarks and welcome - *Dr Michelle Maloney, National Convenor, AELA*

9.20-9.50am **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?

9.50-10.20am **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 Brendan Mackey, Griffith University, ‘Making Room for Nature in the Anthropocene: How Much Does Nature Need and What Are the Implications for Human Consumption?’

10.20-10.50am Morning Tea break - tea and coffee provided

10.50-11.50am **So how did we get here? Understanding the causes of unsustainable consumption**

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

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

Dr Robert Crocker, University of South Australia, “The History and Origins of Consumerism”

11.50am-1pm Lunch break - tea and coffee provided, refreshments can be purchased nearby

1.00-2pm **Stories of success - positive examples of reducing consumption**

Vaughan Levitzke, Chief Executive, Green Industries SA & Zero Waste SA ‘Regulating to reduce consumption: South Australia’s Plastic Bag and Container Deposit Legislation - lessons for other sectors’

Graham Davies, Sustainable Engineers Australia “Let’s Talk About Energy = Consumption: systems, embodied and renewable”

2.00-3.30pm **How do we reduce consumption? Group Discussions**

**** See over the page for details about our discussion groups ****

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

Interactive discussion groups will enable participants to discuss their own initiatives and recommendations for ways forward. 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 and activism and politics

3.30-4.00pm Afternoon tea - tea and coffee provided

4.00-4.30pm **Conclusions and next steps** - *Dr Michelle Maloney, AELA*

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DISCUSSION GROUPS

2.00pm to 3.30pm

2.00-4.00pm **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? Interactive discussion groups will enable participants to discuss their own initiatives and recommendations for ways forward. 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 and activism and politics

***** Participants will be invited to join a discussion group listed below, or to create their own group *****

Ideas, suggestions and case studies discussed by participants 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. To complete AELA’s consumption survey, please visit this webpage:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LSLCYMD>

PROPOSED DISCUSSION GROUPS INCLUDE:

- **The role of civil society in creating its own initiatives to reduce consumption** - Discussion Leaders include: Kathy Whitta and Alex Gaut from the Conservation Council SA and Kathryn Warhurst, Transition Town Gawler.
- **The role of planning and planning law, in linking human settlements to our ecological limits** - Discussion Leader: Melissa Ballantyne, Environmental Defenders Office
- **How sharing and collaboration is helping us transition to a low consumption future** - Discussion leader: Sharon Ede, Green Industries SA and Founder of Share Adelaide
- **How science can help us understand the nexus between ecological limits and human consumption** - Discussion Leader: Professor Brendan Mackey, Griffith Climate Change Response Program
- **What types of laws and regulations can help us reduce consumption?** - Discussion Leader: Dr Michelle Maloney, AELA
- **A throw away society is throwing away energy—what can we do?** Discussion Leader: Graham Davies, Sustainable Engineers Australia
- **How NRM bodies and catchment management groups can link their work to local and regional ecological limits** - Discussion Leader: Kirsty Spiers, Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board
- Other groups as decided by participants at the workshop