

The Green Jobs Illawarra Project

Overview

On 16 April 2009, NSW Premier Nathan Rees announced \$250,000 funding towards the Green Jobs Illawarra initiative. The announcement coincided with the staging of an Illawarra Jobs Summit involving over 60 business, community and government stakeholders to examine employment conditions in the Illawarra and discuss opportunities for further collaborative action to support jobs and investment in the region during the current global recession with a view to harnessing opportunities which may emerge as the economy recovers.

The Green Jobs Illawarra initiative further responds to a recent paper prepared by the University of Wollongong for the South Coast Labor Council entitled *Power to the People: Building Sustainable Jobs in the Illawarra*. The initiative also draws upon new market and policy initiatives at the international, national, state and regional levels responding to heightened sustainability imperatives and the global move towards a carbon constrained economy.

\$100,000 of the NSW Government funding allocation will be used to undertake a more detailed scoping of the challenges and opportunities as they relate to the Illawarra region given the rapidly evolving imperatives and policy initiatives.

Following a 3 month intensive effort a Green Jobs Action Plan will be presented back to the NSW Government for further consideration. The report, due by the end of August will include:

- An overview of the current government (national, state, local) policy and program framework regarding sustainability and relevant to the emergence of a 'Green' economy sector in the region;
- An assessment of existing business and industry capacity as well as labor market skills and strengths that can provide a platform for the development of a Green economy sector;
- An outline of the components of a Green economy sector and the pathways in which these may be developed towards a mature sector over time; and
- Identification of initial steps (immediate and short term) as well as longer term areas for action that can accelerate the development of this sector, encourage investment and generate/reshape jobs.

The Green Jobs Illawarra initiative recognises that the region has existing sustainability focused enterprises and workers as well as facilities and infrastructure (eg – the largest currently operating urban wastewater recycling system in Australia) which demonstrate that the Illawarra already has credentials of substance as a leading Australian region in the emerging Green economy. This means that the Illawarra already has some momentum in this area on which the Green Jobs Illawarra initiative will build.

Under the direction and guidance of a multi-stakeholder Project Steering Committee a small project team will examine the policy, industry capacity and skilled labour dimensions and explore opportunities in areas such as the move towards greener residential and commercial buildings, alternative power generation, manufacturing alternative energy equipment components as well as future training and research pathways.

This initiative can draw from and link with relevant state level work currently underway such as the Green Skills NSW initiative and implementation of measures announced by the NSW Government in response to the NSW Jobs Summit held in February 2009.

\$150,000 of the funding allocation has been provided to support Green Jobs education and training measures linked to the initiative.

Project Steering Committee

The composition of the Project Steering Committee was broadly defined in the Premier's announcement of 16 April and includes:

- South Coast Labour Council Arthur Rorris (Chairperson) & Mike Donaldson
- University of Wollongong Prof. Judy Raper
- Illawarra Business Chamber Terry Wetherall
- Australian Industry Group Leanne Grogan
- Southern Council's Group Clr Ben Van Der Wijngaart
- Department of Premier & Cabinet Mark Roberts
- Department of State & Regional Development Nigel McKinnon & Paul Butler
- Department of Education and Training Di Murray (TAFE) & John Murray (State Training)
- Department of Environment & Climate Change Susan Dixon & Roz Hall

The Project Steering Committee will provide direction and guidance to the small project team who undertake the research and develop the draft report. The PSC will also provide important information input, assist with making relevant connections to expert sources and shape draft recommendations for the Green Jobs Action Plan.

Methodology

Close interaction between the 3 person team of project officers and the collective and members of the Project Steering Committee is at the core of project delivery. Given the 3 month project term (commencing end of May) streams of activity will need to occur in parallel pathways. Following discussion at the initial PSC Meetings the following methodology was agreed:

Reference Forums be convened across 6 thematic areas, being:

- Manufacturing (Lead Convenor – Leanne Grogan, AIG)
- Construction & Building Retro-Fit (Lead Convenor – Terry Wetherall, IBC)
- Green Skills & Training (Lead Convenor – Di Murray, Illawarra TAFE)
- Power Generation (Lead Convenor – Clr Ben Van Der Wijngaart, SCG)
- Research & Development (Lead Convenor - Judy Raper, UoW)
- General (Lead Convenor – Arthur Rorris, SCLC)

Forum Lead Convenors will compile lists of relevant stakeholders who should participate in consultations and information gathering across each particular theme. Each of the 3 Project Officers will support 2 Forums and work closely with the Lead Convenor.

One Project Officer will take a lead across the project team to work with the Chairperson in co-ordinating preparation of the Draft and Final Reports while the Project Officers team will be encouraged to collaborate and support the efforts of each other where necessary or appropriate.

In parallel with the activities of the 6 thematic forums the Project Officers will progress background research and document drafting which will feed into the progressive development of the Draft Report.

Timeline

- Initial Meeting of PSC (discuss project purpose & parameters as well as give consideration to methodology, budget and timelines). 6 May
- Preparation of Draft Project Overview/Workplan By 26 May
- EOI and appointment of Project Officers By 26 May
- 2nd Meeting of PSC (adoption of Overview/Workplan, briefing with Project Officers) 29 May
- 3rd Meeting of PSC (progress report, discussion and feedback) 30 June
- 4th Meeting of PSC (progress report, discussion and feedback) 31 July
- 5th Meeting of PSC (presentation, consideration and discussion on the Draft Report) 11 August
- Refinement of the Draft Report By 25 August
- Submission of the Green Jobs Illawarra Action Plan ('the Report') By End August

Contact

You can contact the project team or forward ideas or information at green_jobs_illawarra@uow.edu.au.