

# The Sydney Morning Herald

News and Features

## **SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPIONS: From music to merinos**

Keeli Cambourne

843 words

29 July 2009

[The Sydney Morning Herald](#)

SMHH

First

25

English

© 2009 Copyright John Fairfax Holdings Limited. [www.smh.com.au](http://www.smh.com.au) [<http://www.smh.com.au>]

Green Globe Awards 2009

The environmental leaders have ideas and expertise that are making waves around the globe.

### SMALL BUSINESS

#### Peats Ridge Festival

Meegan Jones took a job in 2004 as sustainability manager for the Peats Ridge Festival. Since then, she has provided advice to some of the world's biggest festivals – including the Glastonbury, Reading and Leeds events as well as India's Live Earth concert – on how to make their gatherings environmentally friendly and sustainable.

Peats Ridge is Australia's leading sustainable arts and music festival, held over four days in Glenworth Valley, north of Sydney.

It was the first major event in Australia to run entirely on bio-diesel and renewable energy resources, use 100 per cent composting toilets, recycle 100 per cent of its grey water and demonstrate sustainable practices such as running container-deposit programs (since adopted by the Homebake and Field Day festivals) and know-your-waste education schemes. All food is served on compostable plates with compostable cutlery and alternative natural products are used for cleaning.

The Carbon Reduction Institute is conducting a carbon audit of the festival to determine emissions, which will be the subject of Australian Government Greenhouse Friendly carbon offsets.

### BUSINESS

#### Instyle Contract Textiles

Seven years ago, Instyle Contract Textiles set about trying to make itself a world leader in sustainability practices.

Last year, the company won the Premier's Award in the Green Globe Awards for its innovation not just in sourcing its textiles and reducing its in-house ecological footprint but also in taking into consideration its life cycle and supply chain by introducing recyclable packaging and helping its suppliers with their own sustainability issues.

According to the company's third annual sustainability report, it has further reduced energy use by 1.5 per cent, water use by 16 per cent and waste-to-landfill use by 17.6 per cent.

Last year, the company worked on two other major initiatives. It has tightened its wool sourcing specification to Etheco wool, which aims to improve animal welfare, human health and environmental care. It has also developed a program in which customers can visit a typical farm where the Etheco wool is grown.

### COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

#### Local Government Super

Local Government Super's Environment Investment Strategy has shown that by directly investing in renewable energy and by continually improving the environmental efficiency of its property portfolio, it can still make a return on investment as well as deliver positive social and environmental outcomes.

Local Government Super has made a commitment to use renewable energy for 100 per cent of its base building needs throughout its portfolio, which will amount to about 10 gigawatts of accredited green power a year and reduce carbon emissions by about 10,000 tonnes of CO2 a year.

It is encouraging its tenants subscribe to renewable energy and all new leases require that power must come from green energy suppliers. Already, 30 per cent of tenants have switched.

Local Government Super has also invested in improving the efficiency of all its buildings and aims to have its portfolio up to a five-star NABERS (National Australian Built Environment Rating System) Energy standard by 2010-11.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

#### Newcastle City Council

ClimateCam is keeping a close eye on the city of Newcastle's carbon emissions. The initiative of Newcastle City Council aims to promote sustainability and educate schools, business, industry and the public about their carbon footprint.

As the world's largest coal exporter, Newcastle hopes to establish itself as a testing ground for the application of sustainable climate-change technology and practices.

Since 1995, the city has reduced its electricity consumption by 39 per cent and, in 2001, the council introduced a seven-year Greenhouse Action in Newcastle (GAIN) Plan.

Part of that plan was the world's first greenhouse gas speedometer, ClimateCam ([climatecam.com](http://climatecam.com)), which was developed to measure progress of the GAIN Plan.

ClimateCam provides information on greenhouse gas emissions within 15 geographic zones in Newcastle. On July 2, the council's review of its GAIN Plan found the city had reduced its carbon footprint by 13.6 per cent since 1995.

ClimateCam was demonstrated in Milan last October and has been recommended for installation in Copenhagen in the lead up to December's COP15 Climate Summit.

#### PUBLIC SECTOR

##### University of Sydney

Researchers at the University of Sydney have brought precision to the previously inexact science of measuring carbon footprints.

The Integrated Sustainability Analysis team has devised a method of measuring ecological, carbon and water footprints that has enabled businesses to identify risks and work out sustainable strategies that benefit the environment and the economy.

The team developed an ecological footprint assessment framework that takes into account everything from money spent to industrial interdependency, energy and water consumption and carbon emissions to gauge a company's environmental impact from the start of its supply chain to the end product.

The framework and methodology have been developed into a stand-alone software tool.

Document SMHH000020090728e57t00054