

## **Local Contributions Plans and Development Control Plans**

The amendments allow the Minister to approve, amend or repeal a contributions plan. It will also allow the Minister to direct a council, or act in the place of a council, to make, amend or revoke a development control plan. These amendments are aimed at ensuring contributions plans and development control plans are made for proper purposes and, in the case of contributions plans, are consistent with special infrastructure contributions.

## **Redfern-Waterloo Authority**

The Bill will amend the *Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act 2004* so that it clearly places local development, as well as Part 3A major projects, under the control of the Minister for the Authority (with the ability for the Minister delegate those functions to the Authority, members of staff of the Authority and the Council). The amendments will also allow the Minister to delegate responsibilities to consult with the Heritage Council to the Authority and members of staff of the Authority.

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## **VICTORIA**

*Editor: Jennie Slatter*

## **Draft Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy**

The Draft Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy is a plan to secure water supplies for homes, business, industry, agriculture and the environment for the next 50 years.

It's aim is to secure water supplies for all users in the face of future pressures on the resource such as climate change, population growth, economic development and land use change. The Draft Strategy is an integrated approach to water resource planning. It considers all water sources including rivers, reservoirs, aquifers, as well as recycled water, storm water and seawater.

The Central Region covers an arc around Melbourne, including Geelong, Ballarat, the Macedon district and West Gippsland. It includes the Barwon, Moorabool, Werribee, Maribyrnong, Yarra, Bunyip, Thomson and Latrobe river catchments.

For further Information: Department of Sustainability and Environment's (DSE's) Customer Service Centre  
Email: [customer.service@dse.vic.gov.au](mailto:customer.service@dse.vic.gov.au)

## **New Waste Management Policy (Used Packaging Materials)**

A new Waste Management Policy (Used Packaging Materials) was published in March 2006. The new policy implements the requirements of the National Environment Protection Measure (NEPM) (Used Packaging Materials) (2005) in Victoria. The policy follows the Environment Protection and Heritage Council's (EPHC's) endorsement of strengthened National Packaging Covenant arrangements in July 2005. The new policy provides a regulatory safety net to signatories to the voluntary Covenant arrangements. The policy targets 'brand owners' setting out individual recovery targets for used packaging and annual reporting obligations. The policy will be enforced by the EPA.

## New Guidelines for EPA Appointed Environmental Auditors

EPA published a number of new guidelines for EPA Appointed Environmental Auditors in April 2006, including:

- Environmental auditor guidelines for appointment and conduct;
- Environmental auditor guidelines for preparation of environmental audit reports on risk to the environment; and
- Environmental auditor guidelines for conducting environmental audits.

## Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association – Upcoming Events

Interakt - Victorian State Planning Conference  
14-15 September 2006, Ballarat Lodge, Ballarat  
For further information, refer to: <http://www.vpela.org.au>

## QUEENSLAND

*Editor: Larissa Waters*

### Forestry rules weaken environmental protection

#### *(i) Rainforest logging permitted by freehold forestry code*

Since 2004 the Queensland government has been developing a Forest Practices Code for Freehold Land, in consultation with stakeholders including The Australian Rainforest Conservation Society, The Wilderness Society, AgForce and the Queensland Timber Board.

An interim Forest Practices Code for Freehold Land was released in October 2004 for public consultation, and conservationist stakeholders lobbied for rainforest logging on freehold land to be banned. Negotiations between stakeholders were protracted, and the government's deadline for release of the final code was deferred several times.

The final Vegetation Management Forest Practice Code for Native Forest on Freehold Land was released and took effect on 1 December 2005. Forest practices in remnant vegetation on freehold land are lawful only if they comply with all parts of this code. However, the Queensland government adopted the code which had been released for public consultation 14 months prior *without including any of the changes agreed on by stakeholder groups*. This means that under the current Freehold Forestry Code, intensive logging of old growth rainforests and tall eucalypt forests on private lands are permitted, despite being important threatened species habitat.

The government's media release announcing commencement of the code leaves open the possibility of future amendments, but to disregard 14 months of existing stakeholder consultation is extremely unsatisfactory in this author's opinion.

#### *(ii) Forest protection slowed in favour of graziers under SEQRFA phase-in*

In other forestry developments, in December 2005 the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency announced it would grant lease extensions to 34 graziers using land due to be protected under the South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement, because of expected financial hardship if their grazing leases were not renewed.

The lease extensions will affect 37 forest reserves totalling 14,000 hectares of forest dedicated for protection under the next phase of the SEQ Regional Forest Agreement, which will create 406,000 hectares of new national park when it comes into effect in February 2006.