

asen newsletter



june - july 08

gosh wow, june and july were super huge months for ASEN. kids from all over the country got together and travelled to Newcastle (kudos to those who made those journeys possible, and to those who travelled them) for the Students of Sustainability Conference and the Camp for Climate Action.

students of sustainability

thanks so much to all the SoS organising collective for their tireless work in organising a national conference which came together like a beautiful dream. thanks to everyone who participated and together made a community of tents and a sharing of plans, discussions and ideas.

SoS comprised a diversity of activities and opportunities. a quick scan around the grounds at Newcastle Uni over the five days of the conference would have revealed:

a field of tents battered by gale force winds and sprinkled by a light rain but still standing, a talk on Sovereignty that a couple of people reckoned was one of the most inspiring things they'd ever heard, rooms full of workshops on topics unlistable, forums and plenaries and a video phonelink up direct to a Mexican Zapatista media collective, amazing gigs every night, soccer matches with balloons on wet grass, delicious cake and chai drunk in a tent full of happy people and old rugs, a talent quest which unearthed some truly beautiful voices and musical abilities, kids from all over the country getting to know each other, children whizzing round on free cooperative bikes, amazing vegan food for every meal - including rice balls with sweet chilli sauce and greens gathered each morning fresh from previous guerilla gardening exploits, state network chats, new working groups forming on high schools and oceans, and much much more besides.

what were students of sustainability and climate camp?

As a first year student, I wondered the same thing throughout first semester, and eventually after reading through the outline and some friendly reminders I decided to go along to both and investigate what the fuss was about. They were both conveniently held concurrently in Newcastle during semester break. I went with an open mind and no expectations, and left inspired with high hopes.

Students of Sustainability (SoS)

I was surprised when I arrived at Newcastle University (this years host of SoS), it was clear that some of our fellow students had put in a significant amount of work to create an organised and informative conference. I also welcomed the diverse range of people whom had also made the journey, from all around Australia, to be there. It was a positive space to share ideas, skills and information about all things Sustainable.

There were a lot of forums, workshops and tours available to participate in. They centred around topics such as Genetically Engineered Food, Permaculture, Community Gardens, Guerilla Gardening, Waste Management, Old

Camp for Climate Action

climate camp was pretty awesome. lots of asen kids stayed on for more camping, more workshops, more hanging out together, and for some sweet direct action.

on the day of mass action, over 50 people crossed the fence and brought coal trains to a halt; many more watched and cheered. The next day kids locked on to the railway tracks and to the Koorgang coal loader. Others marched to Costa's office, dropped banners, and guerilla gardened.

the organisers of the camp for climate action had a special thankyou for ASEN for all of those who came, took action, and especially to those climate camp organisers who worked so hard to promote the camp, run direct action trainings, and help get students from all over Australia to participate. thanks ellie, cassie, ness, nicky, sam, lucy, caleb, riley, dave and belinda.

Growth Forests and many others. The easiest way to see how diverse the conference was is to have a quick look at the SoS 08 guide (<http://www.studentsofsustainability.org/>). It is very accessible even for a quick look.

Climate Camp

Much like SoS, Climate Camp hosted a diverse range of people, workshops, and forums along with a day of non violent direct action (NVDA) on the Sunday. There were workshops explaining what NVDA was and what legal implications there were in participating. It was very clear that this was a well organised event, designed to empower individuals and the wider community to take action on an issue we all feel very deeply about. I urge you to visit www.climatecamp.org.au and review the outline of the camp to see for yourself what ordinary people like you and me can and are doing about the environment in a peaceful way.

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www.studentsofsustainability.org

www.climatecamp.org.au

the river red gums

Have you got 2 minutes to help protect our red gum wetlands and recognise the rights of Aboriginal people to manage their land?

Victorian Premier John Brumby is about to decide whether to protect our River Red Gum forests and wetlands for future generations, or leave them to be degraded by unsustainable logging and cattle-grazing.

After three years of rigorous independent investigation and over 9000 public submissions, the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) has given the Brumby government detailed proposals for a chain of National and Regional Parks to protect the Murray corridor. The proposals will protect nearly 300 threatened plant and animal species, and improve health of the Murray by removing logging and cattle grazing from the sensitive floodplain and wetlands.

The proposals will also establish joint management agreements with many Indigenous Traditional Owners along the Murray, in an historic act of reconciliation and justice.

You can show your support for river red gum national parks by sending an email to Premier Brumby using our online form at <http://www.saveredgum.org/email-the-premier>

COMING UP: sean (nsw) and qean (qld) road trips!!
email kathryn@asen.org.au or get in touch with your state convenor! contact details at www.asen.org.au

Oceans working group

"How inappropriate to call this planet Earth, when clearly it is Ocean." - Arthur Clarke

The world's oceans are under immense stress from global warming, overfishing, coastal development, pollution and destructive shipping practices. The Ocean Action Group seeks to address these issues through raising public awareness and directly acting to stop the destruction of fragile marine ecosystems upon which our lives depend.

if you want to join the new oceans working group, email Tom.sonofmurchy@gmail.com or Cecilia.celiavagg@gmail.com



END THE INTERVENTION

CONVERGE ON THE CENTRE

As the federal government hands down its "review" of the NT Intervention converge in the Centre to protest the racist legislation. Come to Mparntwe, Alice Springs, for a rally against the Intervention and travel to affected Aboriginal communities to meet the people who are suffering under the laws and yet still finding ways to resist.

27 September to 7 October
(Approximate departure and return dates to Sydney)

GET ON THE BUS

JOIN THE RALLY IN SYDNEY ON THURSDAY
25 SEPTEMBER, 6pm TOWN HALL

Contact Stop the Intervention Collective Sydney Monique 0415 410 558 or Sarah 0409 148 226
Donations to the campaign at the Commonwealth Bank, Stop the Intervention Collective, BSB 08 2221, Account # 1045 2726