

## Four key peaks unite on challenges ahead

SA Unions, Conservation Council of SA, SA Council of Social Service, and Local Government Association of SA have compared notes on their state election priorities and agree that the major challenges facing the state include:

- Providing water security
- Strengthening local community and managing population growth
- Providing services and infrastructure to meet the needs of the growth
- Meeting the environmental sustainability challenge
- Creating and securing green jobs for the future

SA Unions Secretary Janet Giles said the four bodies had often discussed common issues separately, but this was the first time they had all met to discuss common state election priorities.

“We weren’t sure if there would be any common elements, but I think it sends a powerful message that four key peak bodies in SA have common views around three significant opportunities for South Australia,” Ms Giles said.

Conservation Council CEO Julie Pettett said the common opportunities backed by all four peak bodies were:

- The importance of sustainability, renewable energy and green jobs
- A state policy framework for community consultation and engagement; and
- Exploring the ‘royalties for regions’ concept

“I think this indicates that the next state government should be making these three areas a priority, in the knowledge that there are plenty of bodies willing to work with them,” Ms Pettett said.

LGA Executive Director Wendy Campana said that all the organisations believed that genuine open engagement of the community was vital to achieve key economic, social and environmental outcomes for the state.

“We believe the state should be establishing a common framework for community consultation and engagement that would be binding on all state agencies, and we think the International Association for Public Participation’s (IAPP) framework would be a good starting point,” Ms Campana said.

SACOSS Executive Director Ross Womersley said that his organisation saw sustainability, renewable energy and green jobs as the keys to ensuring ongoing employment opportunities and a more equitable future for SA.

“We think that the sustainability challenge presents some key opportunities for all South Australians to benefit from future growth, and to better protect the environment for future generations,” Mr Womersley said.

Ms Giles said the four bodies were issuing a joint challenge to political parties to commit to working with them on these issues.

She said the bodies had set out a range of indicators and wanted commitments to work to achieving them by the end of 2010.

The indicators to achieve by December 2010 are:

- Establish a binding MOU with SACOSS, Conservation SA, SA Unions and the LGA, committing government to genuine community consultation using the IAPP's framework as a reference.
- Convene a high level working group to recommend how a royalties for regions programme should be established, ensuring mining companies benefiting from the resources boom make genuine investments in the local communities surrounding their mining activities.
- Establish regulatory requirements ensuring any new business/mining operation needing access to energy has an obligation to generate its own energy requirements from renewable sources.
- Oblige all residential suburban developments to include renewable energy generation capacity, public transport infrastructure, and housing and neighbourhood design that ensure accessibility across a lifetime.

**### Release Ends ###**

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