



Sutherland Shire Environment Centre

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Putting the ECO into the ECONOMY

Shire businesses will have a chance to be recognised and rewarded for the contributions they make towards sustainability in an incentive being launched by Sutherland Shire Environment Centre.

The Centre is sponsoring a Sustainability Award, the first in the new Environment category, in this year's Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards.

'We're looking for businesses that make an outstanding contribution towards the environment,' said Dr Tassia Kolesnikow, a marine biologist and Chair of the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre. 'If we want to have a healthy planet for our children, we need businesses with sustainable products and practices.'

These could include products and practices to reduce the consumption of valuable resources such as water, energy and fuel. They could include actions to reduce the burden of human impact on the environment, such as air and water pollution and waste. They could include environmentally-responsible building practices or products, or services that make a substantial contribution to sustainability.

Sutherland Shire residents currently generate over a hundred thousand tonnes of waste per year and ultimately all of that comes from the products people buy. 'This gives us plenty of room for improvement,' Dr Kolesnikow said.

Businesses could reduce this impact by eliminating plastic bags, selling coffee in cardboard or reusable mugs instead of foam mugs, selling takeaway food in paper rather than foam packaging, replacing plastic straws with paper ones. Businesses can even package goods in 'plastic' bags made entirely of plant material that are 100% recyclable.

'Let's put the ECO into economics, said Dr Kolesnikow. 'Sustainability offers businesses a positive new direction for growth and we can already see that there's a ready market for it.'

'The sky is the limit when it comes to creative ways that people can contribute to sustainability,' says Jenni Gormley, Executive Officer of Sutherland Shire Environment Centre. 'For example, a sustainable café in Adelaide services home-made, organic food served by the local school. It's an effective partnership and a wonderful model for sustainability.'

As well as sponsoring the Sustainability Award, Sutherland Shire Environment Centre will be promoting some entrants' sustainable business practices online.

'We're proud of what Shire businesses are accomplishing and we want to reward and promote it,' Dr Kolesnikow said.

Entry forms for the Sustainability Award are available from ssec.org.au

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