

Rights on Show

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EACH YEAR IN THE SUPREME COURT THE DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE HOSTS AN ART EXHIBITION REFLECTING THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS THEME OF THAT PARTICULAR YEAR; BOTH VENUE AND HOST SERVE AS SUBTLE REMINDERS THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE ENSHRINED IN AUSTRALIAN LAW.

Amidst the colour and vibrancy of the 168 entries submitted to the 18th Darwin Community Legal Service *Rights on Show* exhibition was an important human rights request - the hope for 'Sustainable Energy for All'.

Artists ranging from novice through to professional from Katherine, Alice Springs, prisons, detention centres, mental health services, asylum seekers, disabled groups, homeless people, schools and community groups grasped the opportunity to 'have their say' about human rights. A local school has included *Rights on Show* in their curriculum, evidence of the community support for this annual celebration of human rights and protest at their denial.

Truly a community event, *Rights on Show* both depends and thrives on the assistance of many

community groups, sponsors and generous individuals. The 2012 exhibition catalogue was written by Emily O'Connell, Principal Lawyer and Executive Officer of the Environmental Defenders Office (NT) Inc and is reproduced below:

Civil society plays a fundamental role in motivating governments to make sustainable decisions about sources of energy for current and future generations. In 2012, the UN has called on governments, businesses and the community to act to achieve the goals of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative by 2030:

- Providing universal access to modern energy services;
- Doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and
- Doubling the share of renewable energy in the

global energy mix.

The aims of the initiative tie in with the Millennium Development Goals, particularly goals to end poverty and achieve environmental sustainability.

The UN states that:

- Sustainable energy powers opportunity. Yet 1.3 billion people—one in five globally—lack electricity to light their homes or conduct business.
- Recent scenarios estimate that renewables will contribute more to a low-carbon energy supply by 2050 than nuclear power or fossil fuels using carbon capture and storage.

The UN believes that achieving these objectives will 'power opportunity, maximise



The first prize winner -Rights on Show Award- by Anna Reynolds entitled 'Ludmilla Creek - Rezoning'

development benefits and help stabilise climate change'.

These objectives demonstrate the interrelationship between human rights and the state of the environment. Ahead of climate change talks in Doha in November 2012, the United Nations Environment Program has reported that nations need to do more to cut global greenhouse gas emissions to limit warming for a stable climate. The World Bank called nations to immediately cut greenhouse gas emissions from sources such as energy production ahead of climate change talks in Doha in November 2012.

The President of the World Bank has said that the world 'will never end poverty if we don't tackle climate change', describing it as the 'single biggest challenge to social justice today'.

The recent release of the Energy White Paper shows that Australia needs to embrace renewable energies to phase out reliance on fossil fuels. With governments around Australia still approving and investing in coal mining, the public plays a crucial role in encouraging investment in renewable sources of energy.

Sustainable energy for all is particularly relevant in the Northern Territory which faces rising power costs, challenges of accessible energy for remote locations and opportunities to embrace renewable energies, such as solar, to power communities and businesses.

People in the community play an important role in engaging with government policy development and decision-making to encourage more equitable and sustainable outcomes and community-based

models of energy development.

I wish to congratulate Darwin Community Legal Service for providing this opportunity to the community to share their experiences and views on the theme of 'Sustainable Energy for All' in a creative and imaginative way.

Darwin Community Legal Service wishes to extend sincere thanks to the legal community of the Northern Territory, for their strong support for *Rights on Show*.

Particular appreciation is noted for the Northern Territory Practitioners, Firms, Commissions and Chambers for their financial support and in-kind assistance.

Sincere thanks are also due to Robyn Tranthem for judging the Ian Tranthem Award and to the many individuals whose generous efforts support *Rights on Show*. ●