

The National Environment Officers Report April – June 2009

The NEO has been hard at work ensuring that student environmental and social justice continues to be strong across the country. He has done by working closely with people from the Australian Student Environment Network, the Student Environment Activist Network and the Cross Campus Environment Network.

Students of Sustainability Conference

This year the annual conference of student based environmental activist is on in Melbourne and the NEO has been participating as part of a collective organising the conference. The NEO has been organising the program ensuring that voices less heard such as those of our Indigenous elders are represented at the conference. The Neo has also been running around ensuring that things such as facilities, ground logistics and grievance procedures are prepared for the conference.

Supporting State Networks and Campus Collectives

The NEO has been providing support to the Victorian network both through the Students of Sustainability Conference and through checking in and providing support to campus convenors. This has included visiting Melbourne and going to collective meetings and events as well as talking with collective members about my role in NUS and how I can support them. It's great to see collectives being really active at the major Melbourne campuses and the new collective at Geelong. However there is more work to be done to see new collectives in Bendigo and Ballarat and a stronger state network which can provide the support to these new regional collectives. The SOS conference will act as the springboard to a livelier and vibrant network in Victoria and the NEO intends to continue to be involved in this process come semester two.

The network in NSW has been very active over the past few months with students attending camps in Bulahdelah in support of traditional owners, performing anti-coal direct actions, participating in forest actions in the Red gums and offcourse helping organise rallies and actions calling for action on climate change on world environment day. The NEO has been working with students on these campaigns, this support has ranged from helping organise fundraisers to providing leaflets and info-sheets for stalls to putting people in contact with local campaigners.

Anti-Nuclear Campaign

The NEO has been working with the Anti-Nukes and Indigenous Sovereignty working group with in the Australian Student Environment Network. Together we have been building towards fighting the proposed nuclear waste dump sights in the Northern Territory. We are currently working hard along with the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance to raise the funds to fly representatives from the Sovereign Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory to Sydney for the National Labour Party Conference. Getting elders from the affected communities to Sydney is key to NUS policy in working with Indigenous communities, once in Sydney elders will also speak to collectives about there campaign and how we can further support it.

Climate Change Campaign

The national climate change campaign has been enthusiastically taken up by many collectives across the Country. The NEO has focused his energy in helping the campaign in NSW. Together with members of the Student Environment Activist Network we have been establishing networks with Rivers SOS who are represented by coal affected communities across the State. We have been researching the potential sites for our campaigns and talking with local activists about what our potential role can be in their campaign.

Unfortunately this years Education Conference conflicts with the SOS conference and with my weekend job which I have not been able to schedule off. I send my Apologies

Dany Boulos
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National Union of Students