

Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

• RESOURCES SECTOR •
AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Golden Gecko and Community Partnership Awards



2022 AWARDS CEREMONY

RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION
ACROSS WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S RESOURCES SECTOR.

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The Awards



Now in its seventh year, this award publicly recognises outstanding achievement and leadership between Western Australian community groups and their resources industry partners. These partnerships create mutually beneficial relationships and achieve positive outcomes that extend well beyond gaining a social licence to operate creating more cohesive communities.



For more than 30 years, the prestigious Golden Gecko Award for environmental excellence has recognised exceptional projects for demonstrating innovation, outstanding performance and positive environmental outcomes for WA. Since 1992 award winning projects have raised best practice standards and demonstrated the continual adoption of innovative techniques and skills across industry. Applicants continue to develop innovative and remarkable solutions to address modern challenges and regulatory requirements.

Minister's Message

As the world turns to renewable sources of energy to reduce carbon emissions, the demand for Western Australia's diverse and rich resources is increasing.

So too is the focus on developing a responsible resources sector that invests in people, communities and the environment.

The McGowan Government is committed to supporting the Western Australian mining industry as it transitions to net zero emissions by 2050.

The events of the past two-and-a-half years have been extremely challenging, with the COVID-19 pandemic affecting global health and economic conditions.

Western Australia has not only outperformed the national economy, it has been one of the strongest economies in the world. Thanks in no small part to our robust resources sector.

Our mining and petroleum industries continue to be the backbone of our economy, successfully navigating the pandemic to deliver record sales of \$230 billion and more local jobs than ever before in 2021.

Our State's environmental policies and requirements are streamlined and easy to understand, and our well-documented environmental, social, and governance requirements are world's best practice.

By showcasing these Resources Sector Awards for Excellence projects, the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety encourages others in the resources sector to continually improve and achieve positive social and environmental outcomes.



The finalists in tonight's awards demonstrate our resources sector is not limited to advances in new technology. They include innovative thinking, research and conservation strategies, meaningful collaboration and new methods of community engagement that aim for sustainable outcomes.

On behalf of the McGowan Government, I applaud all the entrants of the 2022 Resources Sector Awards for Excellence.

Congratulations on demonstrating the ability to push the boundaries and deliver long-lasting positive outcomes for local communities and the environment.

The Hon. Bill Johnston MLA
Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Energy

Care For Hedland – Securing the Future of Flatback Turtles in Port Hedland

BHP and Care for Hedland Environmental Association Inc

Care For Hedland operates in Port Hedland, in the north-west of Western Australia, home of the world's largest bulk-tonnage export port. Ancient Kariyarra rock art depicts sea turtles and demonstrates their historic connection with local people. There were no environmental groups based in Port Hedland until Care For Hedland commenced in 2003 with BHP joining as a partner in 2006.

While the partnership started with the provision of hats and water bottles, BHP recognised the opportunity for BHP employees to connect with the local environment through support for the Turtle Monitoring Program. From those humble beginnings in 2006, the partnership between BHP and Care For Hedland has grown and matured to be more holistic in its local on-ground environmental and sustainability benefits.

Importantly, it is commonly thought, that there would be no Flatback turtles still nesting in Port Hedland today, if it were not for the collaborative and long standing efforts of Care For Hedland and BHP.

Over the past 16 years, the successful partnership has brought together the on-ground passion of the local community, and the resources and people power of BHP to monitor, conserve and raise the awareness of the local environment and Flatback turtles in Port Hedland.

Together, Care For Hedland and BHP continue to make a significant difference and are forging a lasting legacy for the local environment.



Ngurra Kujungka

Newcrest Telfer and Ngurra Kujungka

Between the 1970s and 2000s, opportunities for sport and recreation remained limited in the remote Western Desert region of Western Australia. Any sporting options generally focused on Martu men, with very limited options available to Martu women and children.

Few opportunities arose for Martu people to express their views and engage in the design of sports and recreation programs for their own communities. This resulted in many talented and enthusiastic Martu people unable to learn, train, play, compete or participate in a meaningful way.

Newcrest along with key stakeholders and the Martu people initiated a partnership in the early 2000s. As a result of this collaboration it was decided to formulate an independent Martu organisation and Ngurra Kujungka was incorporated in 2012.

The success of Ngurra Kujungka can be attributed to its deeply rooted foundations in community engagement and collaboration. Community-driven development recognises lived experience, knowledge, and expertise in local environments, populations, and circumstances.

Ngurra Kujungka has since established strong foundations to ensure the continuing evolution and development of an effective, sustainable sport and recreation program to provide broad health benefits and development opportunities for the Western Desert communities.





Three Rivers, One Estuary

Alcoa of Australia, The Nature Conservancy, Greening Australia, and Peel-Harvey Catchment Council

Three Rivers, One Estuary aligns four partners with a shared vision – restore the Serpentine, Murray and Harvey rivers and the Peel-Harvey Estuary that they feed.

The initiative brings together Alcoa's global charity, the Alcoa Foundation, and three leading environmental NGOs – Peel-Harvey Catchment Council, Greening Australia and The Nature Conservancy Australia.

It recognises that these waterways are the environmental, economic, cultural and social lifeblood of the Peel region of WA, and that a concerted and multi-faceted approach is needed to address the impacts following 200 years of European settlement.

Science drives targeted and often ground-breaking activities with community engagement and involvement at the forefront.

Key activities to date include the installation of the trial shellfish reefs in the Peel-Harvey Estuary, detailed river health assessments and action plans, in-stream and river bank improvements, and extensive planting across the river catchments.

To date, more than 100 organisations and 3,000 people have been upskilled in waterway conservation through more than 60 community events.

Extensive knowledge sharing has been undertaken with Traditional Owners and about 500 fee-for-service hours provided to associated ranger groups, providing sustainable ways for Bindjareb Noongar people to reconnect with Country.



Best Practice Guidelines for Management of Phytophthora Dieback in the Basic Raw Materials Industries

Hanson Construction Materials Pty Ltd and Dieback Working Group Inc.

The 'Best Practice Guidelines for the Management of Phytophthora Dieback in the Basic Raw Materials (BRM) Industries', was led by Hanson Construction Materials and developed in collaboration with the Western Australian Dieback Working Group, Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, Main Roads, local government authorities, Curtin and Murdoch Universities.

The guidelines provide simple and easy to understand ways in which BRM producers and suppliers can minimise the spread of Phytophthora dieback. Phytophthora dieback causes significant plant disease in native ecosystems and plant productive sectors globally, and devastating damage to native vegetation and horticulture in the southwest of Western Australia. Dieback damages ecosystems and wildlife habitats, expanding desertification, increasing erosion and changing groundwater hydrology. The recent Australian Government, 'State of The Environment Report' identified Phytophthora as the second most significant threat to Australia's biodiversity.

Dieback spreads in soil and water. The BRM industry poses a significant risk of spreading this disease, when using material sourced from infested sites. The guidelines provide advice on hygiene, dieback management plans, green card training, contractors, sales and marketing.

These techniques also aim to minimise the spread of other pathogens, pests, and weeds from ground disturbance activities and helps protect the South West region's biodiversity – an internationally acknowledged biodiversity hotspot.



Flora Restorer – Sowing a Diverse Ecosystem

Iluka Resources Limited

Flora Restorer is Iluka Resources’ innovative rehabilitation machine that dramatically improves the diversity and growth of revegetation of Eneabba’s kwongan ecosystem after mining.

At Iluka’s Eneabba mine site, located in the Mid West of Western Australia, wind and water erosion of the region’s sandy soils limits seedling emergence. Very few broadcast seed establish in rehabilitation even though the seed is viable.

Increasing the rate of emergence improves the quality and increases the area of rehabilitation while reducing impact on natural vegetation where seed is collected.

Research trials over many years have verified a novel combination of processes that increased seedling emergence, plant diversity and growth of revegetation. These processes are:

- scarifying the soil surface for seed burial;
- sowing a diverse size and shape seed mix by air-seeding;
- land imprinting to create mini-reservoirs increasing rainfall infiltration; and
- stabilising with a soil crust of dilute bitumen emulsion to prevent erosion.

To combine these processes, Iluka worked with local businesses to design, build and commission a bespoke tractor-drawn machine – Flora Restorer. Flora has more than doubled Iluka’s annual area revegetated within the diverse kwongan ecosystem and can be used at other restoration sites.



Ludlow Tuart Forest Post-Mining Rehabilitation

Tronox Mining Australia Ltd

The Tronox Ludlow Mineral Sands mine is an industry benchmark in Tuart Forest rehabilitation - the first of its kind. Stakeholder engagement and innovative environmental practices raised industry standards and achieved great outcomes for community, industry, and the environment.

The development of the mine was initially faced with fierce public opposition while also managing an existing degraded forest ecosystem. Tronox was able to turn this into a functional Tuart woodland that the community deems a success and industry uses as a benchmark. With biodiversity and vegetation health far exceeding what existed prior to mining, as well as the development of a historic walk trail, this project delivered a wide range of improvements and benefits.

Studies indicate the rehabilitated mine site has higher levels of structural, floristic and faunal diversity than the neighbouring state forest, notably as the rehabbed area has an understory – the result of Innovative mine planning, extensive stakeholder engagement, with an unwavering focus on excellent environmental outcomes.

This project has achieved the proposed future land use outcomes including conservation of biological, physical, cultural and landscape values - an example of industry excellence, innovation, showcasing the positive impact a mining operation can have when industry and community work together.



Lynas' Transformational Mt Weld Tailings Journey

Lynas Rare Earths Ltd

As with most mineral production, the mining and concentration of rare earths generates tailings. At Lynas' Mt Weld operation, tailings were an issue as they did not settle and consolidate, which led to the rapid filling of tailings storage facilities (TSFs), potential stability issues, low water recycling and a requirement to expand tailings footprint to meet increased production rates.

In 2016, Lynas reviewed a range of technologies that could improve the tailings deposit while remaining cost-efficient. Following extensive research and review of other industries and their processes, Accelerated Mechanical Consolidation was identified as the best solution for Mt Weld's tailings.

Since the implementation and ongoing use, Lynas' Mt Weld tailings have seen transformational results, including:

- a 50 per cent reduction in tailings volume;
- an increase in the shear strength to more than 30 kPa consistent with closure objectives;
- 70 per cent water recovery; and
- a reduced Life of Mine environmental disturbance footprint needed for TSFs.

These results have given Lynas the opportunity for effective segregation and consolidation of tailings based on potential for future reclaim and processing as technologies advance.



Pluto to North West Interconnector

Australian Gas Infrastructure Group

The Pluto-North West Shelf Interconnector (PNI) is a 3.3 km-long buried steel natural gas pipeline, constructed in 2021 in the industrialised section of the Burrup Peninsula in the Pilbara Region of Western Australia.

Environmental management was incorporated into the design, route selection and construction of the PNI including key consideration given to:

- heritage protection directly adjacent to National heritage and registered sites;
- flora conservation;
- reinstatement planning process; and
- protection of rock fall process including erosion and drainage controls.

The Traditional Owners were consulted throughout the project. This included initial project briefings, archaeological and ethnographic surveys and the involvement of the Traditional Owners in the detection, isolation and protection of the heritage sites.

Construction was also designed as a narrow footprint averaging 10 to 15 metres, significantly less than the industry average of 20 to 30 metres, which was critical to the protection of adjacent heritage sites.

The Traditional Owners were engaged in the final reinstatement of the corridor, which was a key characteristic of the project. This included the placement of external facing weathered rock to ensure final blending of the constructed areas with the adjacent land.





Western Turner Syncline 2 Project Site

Water Supply and Distribution, and other projects in the WTS2 area
UON

UON is a Western Australian integrated energy and water solutions company providing turnkey solutions to the resources sector and beyond.

UON is committed to developing Energy for Every Future, through smarter, more reliable energy solutions that improve performance and help integrate renewable and decarbonising technologies to operations.

Throughout its delivery of work at Rio Tinto's Western Turner Syncline 2 site, UON proactively instigated a range of environment initiatives to protect surrounding flora, fauna and Indigenous lands.

Actions included the protection of the Spotted Quoll, alternative pipeline securing mounds to enable fauna, especially reptiles, to cross over pipelines and the establishment of additional precautionary windrows to protect restricted and culturally sensitive areas.

UON instigated a practice of capping HDPE pipework during works to prevent the entrapment of fauna, with catch bags controlling construction swarf during flushing processes.

Waste offcuts of HPDE pipe were saved from landfill and 7 tonnes up-cycled including as nesting hollows for endangered black cockatoos. UON established Containers for Change collections donating to a Pilbara Wildlife group, along with undertaking voluntary roadside rubbish clean-ups in the region.

Aboriginal heritage site markers, fibrous material remediation, ablation water management and site dust suppression initiatives were all instigated to protect the environment.



About the Award Trophies



The Community Partnership Resources Sector Award

The Community Partnership Resources Sector Award celebrates communities who work with the resources sector to grow lasting relationships and generate outcomes that will benefit future generations.

The logo for this award represents the cohesive relationship between the resources sector, communities and the environment. The tree represents the growth that meaningful partnerships can create for a region or community.

Two trophies are awarded to the winning partnership with one going to the community group and the other to the resources industry partner.

The perpetual trophies, with the names of all the previous recipients, is displayed in the foyer at DMIRS, Mineral House, 100 Plain Street, East Perth.



The Golden Gecko

Geckos are a barometer of a healthy environment and can be a good indicator of ecosystem health. Geckos are sensitive to change and have specific habitat requirements, so their return to areas after disturbance such as mining indicates that the ecosystem is becoming healthy, functional and resilient.

Recipients of the Golden Gecko Award receive a Golden Gecko Sculpture, designed and made by Western Australian artist George Kosturkov, since 1997.

Mr Kosturkov carves each gecko in polystyrene and then casts it in bronze, meaning no two Golden Gecko Awards are ever the same.

Recipients of the award often ask Mr Kosturkov to make them additional Awards so that they can display the Golden Gecko around their operations in Western Australia.



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety**

Where can I find more information?

More information about the
Resources Sector Awards for Excellence
is available at: www.dmirs.wa.gov.au/excellenceawards

Any questions about the awards can be directed to:

Golden Gecko Awards Coordinator –
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Community Partnership Awards Coordinator –
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