



The Place To Be

Media release

From the Minister for Environment and Climate Change

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\$6 MILLION PROGRAM TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

New residential developments designed with innovative environmentally friendly technology under a \$6 million Brumby Labor Government initiative will give Victoria Australia's first zero greenhouse gas emitting communities.

Environment, Climate Change and Innovation Minister Gavin Jennings today announced the Zero Emission Neighbourhood (ZEN) scheme to assist developers, local governments and community groups develop innovative projects that would be implemented in new residential developments to help make them carbon neutral.

"By supporting sustainable living and development, the Brumby Labor Government is creating jobs and taking action to protect Victorian families now and in the future from the uncertainties of climate change," Mr Jennings said.

"These best-practice residential developments will focus on innovative water, waste, transport and energy solutions. They aim to prevent up to 100,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas from being released and reduce energy and water consumption by an average of 75 per cent.

"In addition to the environmental benefits of these residential developments, tackling climate change through the development of innovative technologies has the benefit of creating new employment opportunities for Victorians in the green housing industry."

Under the ZEN initiative, interested parties would submit a proposal detailing their ideas and would potentially receive funding for research. Should the idea be selected for business case development, the project would be co-funded by the ZEN initiative with the potential for future capital funding to bring the project to fruition.

"The types of projects we expect to see in these carbon neutral communities are such things as integrated transport systems, local renewable electricity supplies that can provide unused electricity back to the grid or onsite water recycling that would help make a community self-sufficient in terms of its water," Mr Jennings said.

Up to six communities will be built under the ZEN scheme over the next four years.

The scheme's launch was attended by Pooran Desai, founder of BioRegional which initiated one of Britain's best-known eco-neighbourhoods, BedZED (Beddington Zero fossil Energy Development).

Mr Desai applauded the ZEN initiative saying such programs were vital to achieving true sustainable development.

"We will only be able to build a sustainable future if we create places where it is easy for people to adopt a sustainable lifestyle. In a growing society like Melbourne it is crucial to create places with minimal greenhouse gas emissions that protect our climate but also strengthen the sustainable development of economies," he said.

The Zero Emission Neighbourhoods program is a Sustainability Fund initiative, managed by Sustainability Victoria. For more information, visit resourcesmart.vic.gov.au/zen

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