



# Introduction to Sustainable Schools

## The Sustainable Schools Approach

The Sustainable Schools Initiative provides a customised program to schools to assist them to develop sustainable operational practices integrated with a sustainable curriculum.

The program and school activities focus on four key areas of sustainability: waste, energy use, water use and school biodiversity. The program offers training for schools in each of these areas as well as an introductory session on becoming a sustainable school.



## What does it involve? - Roles and Responsibilities

Your QESSI Regional Hub will:

- Coordinate your school's involvement in Sustainable Schools
- Work with the school community to:
  - Develop a customised program for your school
  - Develop a School Environmental Management Plan
  - Set targets and developing action plans for resource use, operations and curriculum
  - Measure, monitor and report environmental, educational, social and financial outcomes of your involvement
- Provide assistance and support to your school through:
  - School visits
  - Professional development to school staff and interested community members in each of the theme areas
  - Providing specialised student activities linking curriculum to practical action
  - Assisting you to access mentors, scientists and natural resource management specialists
  - A quarterly newsletter
  - Providing access to a resource and equipment library
  - Assistance with promotion of your achievements
  - Be on the other end of the phone, e-mail, fax to answer questions, offer support and share your celebrations and frustrations.



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In return your school will be expected to:

- Adopt a whole school approach, with a commitment from all, including students to participate – we suggest forming a team or committee to support the program
- Undertake a 'State of the School' assessment at the start of your schools involvement to determine what is already happening in your school and areas for further action
- Develop a School Environmental Management Plan in conjunction with your Regional Hub to outline activities to be undertaken in all areas of the school to improve your school's sustainability.
- Participate in monitoring and evaluation of the program in your school. This will involve providing your QESSI Regional Hub with a brief report (dot points) on the achievements of your school at the end of each school year. Students are asked to provide a one short (two minute) overview of the schools achievements using Photostory or other electronic story telling software.
- Communicate – let your community know the great things you are doing!



## For More Information

To read the stories of schools involved in Sustainable Schools across Australia visit <http://www.environment.gov.au/education/aussi/case-studies.html>

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