

REPRESENTING THE PUBLIC INTEREST

The Environmental Defender's Office (EDO) welcomes requests for assistance from individuals and groups working to protect the environment in the Pacific and South-East Asia.

We have expertise in a broad range of areas, including climate change, forestry, Indigenous and human rights, biodiversity conservation, wildlife protection, mining, pollution and contamination issues.

We work in partnership with local groups to develop their capacity to protect the environment through law. The EDO has provided assistance to groups working in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu and Indonesia.

LEGAL ADVICE AND LITIGATION SUPPORT

The EDO can assist local lawyers conducting litigation. Our solicitors can provide telephone and email support for legal research, review of documents and advice on strategy. For major cases, we may be able to travel to assist lawyers during litigation.

The EDO can also assist groups to obtain assistance from barristers and other legal experts.

POLICY AND LAW REFORM

The EDO can provide assistance on environmental policy and law reform. We can help with advice, research, drafting and review of submissions on government proposals, reviews of legislation and proactive policy work. For key issues, such as climate change and the international law developing around avoided deforestation, the EDO may be able to travel to present workshops and briefing sessions in partnership with local organisations.

We can also arrange assistance from experts, including academics and specialist lawyers.

The EDO attends key international meetings, particularly on climate change, biodiversity and Indigenous peoples. The EDO can support groups and individuals seeking to influence and participate in international policy and law reform activities.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVICE

The EDO's two in-house scientists provide scientific and technical advice to EDO lawyers and clients.

The EDO maintains an expert register, comprising over 100 experts in a range of disciplines. These experts can be called on to provide pro-bono assistance in public interest matters.

TRAINING

The EDO can arrange training for lawyers, community groups, judges, prosecutors and others working to protect the environment through law reform and litigation. We can also provide tailored training in environmental law to complement existing training programs.

The EDO hosts lawyer exchanges in our Sydney office for lawyers from the region. Participating lawyers can gain experience working with EDO lawyers, attend formal training and meet with judges, counsel and other environmental law practitioners.

The EDO may be able to help with the costs of travel, and can assist lawyers to apply for external funding for these exchanges and other training in Australia.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The EDO can provide training and support on strategic planning, management and administration issues for public interest environmental organisations.

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VOLUNTEER PLACEMENTS

The EDO can assist environmental organisations to find volunteers to work in the region for 3 – 24 month periods. These placements are funded by the Australian government through AusAID's Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD), Volunteers for International Development Australia (VIDA) and Australian Volunteers International (AVI) programs.

Current volunteers are working in Fiji, Samoa, Cambodia and Mongolia. We are developing new placements in Papua New Guinea and China.



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ABOUT THE EDO

The Environmental Defender's Office (EDO) is a non-profit community legal centre specialising in public interest environmental law.

The EDO assists individuals and community groups to protect the natural and built environment in four main areas:

1. Legal advice and litigation;
2. Policy and law reform;
3. Community programs, including education; and
4. Scientific review and advice.

Since 1999, the EDO has received funding from the MacArthur Foundation to provide capacity-building support for public interest environmental law organisations in the region.



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