



# Environmental Defenders Office

## **Senior Solicitor/Special Counsel – Freshwater – Position Description**

EDO relies on our people to use their skills and experience to provide the best possible support to our clients and other staff. While this job description aims to outline the fundamental reason the role exists, the role may evolve as EDO evolves.

If you see a way to play to your strengths in a way that achieves EDO outcomes, please don't be limited to this list. We have important work to do and need everyone to be operating at their best.

### **Job title: Senior Solicitor / Special Counsel – Freshwater**

### **Reporting to: Managing Lawyer - Nature**

#### **Purpose of the position**

Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) is the largest environmental legal centre in the Australia-Pacific, dedicated to protecting our climate, communities and shared environment by providing access to justice, running ground-breaking litigation and leading law reform advocacy.

EDO's national Nature legal practice to use your legal skills to provide legal advice, representation and education to clients to achieve EDO's strategic outcomes, with a specific focus on protecting biodiversity.

The Nature Program is part of our national Systemic Change Team and the position reports to the Managing Lawyer, Nature. It includes two components – Freshwater and Biodiversity.

#### **Key responsibilities & duties**

Senior Solicitors and Special Counsel will be expected to work closely with the Managing Lawyer to develop and implement planning for each program, and work with a higher level of autonomy and self-direction. This may include leading on media work, seminars, publications, as well as having carriage of litigation, law reform and advice work. They also have a mentoring and/or supervisory role with staff.

Special Counsel will also be expected to act as the solicitor on record for litigation work, authorise court documents and other work, increased supervision of other lawyers, and represent the EDO in the media.

#### Key responsibilities

- Provide legal advice, representation and education to clients on public interest environmental law issues and disputes, including in relation to:
  - the sustainable, equitable management of Australia's scarce water resources; and
  - biodiversity, particularly native forestry and nature conservation.

- Engage in litigation, policy and law reform, and outreach to achieve EDO's strategic outcomes.
- Comply with EDO's policies and procedures, and legal obligations.
- Deliver legal services in a culturally competent manner and work with clients from a wide variety of backgrounds.
- Supervise the work of volunteers who undertake tasks such as legal research, document preparation, etc.

### Duties

- Provide legal advice and representation to the public on the sustainable, equitable management of Australia's scarce water resources and on a wide range of legal matters relevant to biodiversity, particularly native forestry.
- Have carriage of litigation undertaken in Australia.
- Undertake public education and outreach, including developing online resources and fact sheets, and the conduct of workshops or seminars with a focus on outreach for vulnerable communities.
- Engage in law reform related to environmental law and policy, including participating in government policy processes and by developing and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.
- Comply with professional obligations.
- Participate in and support EDO fundraising.
- Other reasonable requests made by the Managing Lawyer (Nature) or Director, Legal Strategy from time to time.

### General

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Develop and maintain a good knowledge of EDO's role and policies.
- Represent EDO in a positive and effective manner by actively demonstrating EDO Values.
- Attend, and contribute actively and constructively at staff meetings.
- Maintain appropriate records, assist with office administration, such as files, computer and precedent systems.
- Seek opportunities for personal and professional development, particularly related to the team and position's specific areas of responsibility.
- Respond to requests by clients and fellow staff in a knowledgeable, professional, constructive and respectful manner.
- Provide accurate and timely data and information for reporting, fundraising and communications purposes.

### **Commitment to EDO's Values:**

#### Commitment

- We are committed to; a united organisation, to each other, to collaboration, to justice, to our communities and to creating a world where nature thrives.
- We are committed to providing excellent legal services and resources, informed by the best available science, in order to empower clients and communities.
- We are committed to improving our planet and society.

- We care for EDO's clients and stakeholders.
- We are fearless in the face of adversity, and care for each other as we face this adversity.

#### Diversity

- We are respectful of and welcome diversity of staff, volunteers, offices, environmental regions, communities, stakeholders.
- We respect First Nations Peoples' knowledge and experience, and work with them to protect their country and culture.
- We acknowledge that the law has not always been just.
- We dedicate ourselves to understanding the diversity of our people and culture.
- We welcome and respect our own differences and learn from them, and collaborate to achieve our greatest potential.
- We are great lawyers and great people, with open hearts and open minds.
- We respect the different places our stakeholders come from and strive to help them, even if their worldviews don't align completely with ours.

#### Integrity

- We work effectively, efficiently, strategically, professionally and ethically; "justice is in our nature".
- We are truthful with ourselves and others.
- We are nonpartisan and inspire trust in our clients, stakeholders and government.
- We respect the world's resources and make maximum productive use of the resources entrusted to us.

#### Vision

- We lead change and environmental empowerment using innovation, creativity, and courage.
- We expand the boundaries with creativity and skill, pioneering new legal pathways to a healthier, safer world and inspiring others.
- We are inquisitive, curious and persistent: exploring new ideas and embracing change.
- We boldly challenge the status quo while providing solutions to our most pressing challenges.