

“Creating a Sustainable Gippsland. What are the Issues and Opportunities?”

On April 10th 2014 an Open Space Forum on this topic was conducted in the student lounge at Federation University Gippsland by RCE Gippsland (Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development Gippsland). 42 participants from many walks of life from 4 Gippsland Shires took part. RCE Gippsland is one of 127 centres under United Nations’ auspices throughout the world and one of 4 in Australia. “Education” is accepted to be formal, informal and non-formal. A diverse group of Gippsland community members participated. The open space format enabled individuals to raise topics and join groups that formed around these topics. The afternoon session changed from discussion to action planning.

The morning’s discussion topics chosen were

- Sustainability Education
- Is sustainability achievable within a minefield?
- Can Strategies be defined that assist in promoting and running successful Sustainability Education and Training
- A coordinated approach to school and community gardens in Latrobe
- Solar Heating / hot water
- Sustainability of Public Land
- Community Power (Energy Market)
- Permaculture – Plants and Animals in the school curriculum
- Biodiversity and Environment Education
- The future of Gippsland lies in large scale energy gen via renewables
- People in Gippsland have the skills and knowledge to use healthy & local produce
- Transitioning LV away from reliance on coal and changing people’s perceptions on the need for fossil fuels
- Making Morwell a swinging seat (or marginal seat)
- Connecting local food with local people for resilience, community, connectivity
- How do we encourage & support individuals to take sustainable actions in their homes and livelihoods?

Action Planning Topics

- Engaging Federation University and TAFE’s in Gippsland Sustainability
- Sustainable local food for local people
- Mobilizing opportunities for Education for Sustainable Development
- Transitioning the economy of the Latrobe Valley away from Coal
- Sustainability Plan for Gippsland

Action planning groups formed and aim to pursue actions identified. RCE Gippsland aspires to further collaborate with Federation University by engaging all levels of formal, non-formal and informal education in RCE activities; by engaging with other RCE’s, by including research in RCE activities and by contributing to the transformation of the current education and training systems to satisfy ambitions of the region regarding sustainable living and livelihood.

