

GREEN TIP #24 – PARLIAMENT OF YOUTH SPEECH PART 1

At the end of Term 2, the SAM (Sustainability At Merici) team and Year 9 Sustainability students participated in the Parliament of Youth, with our Year 7's winning in their category.

Anna Garnock, the Coordinator of the Parliament of Youth, made such an inspiring speech in her closing presentation, that I have asked for her permission to share some excerpts with you.

"We are all here because we deeply care for our local environment and seek more sustainable ways of living.

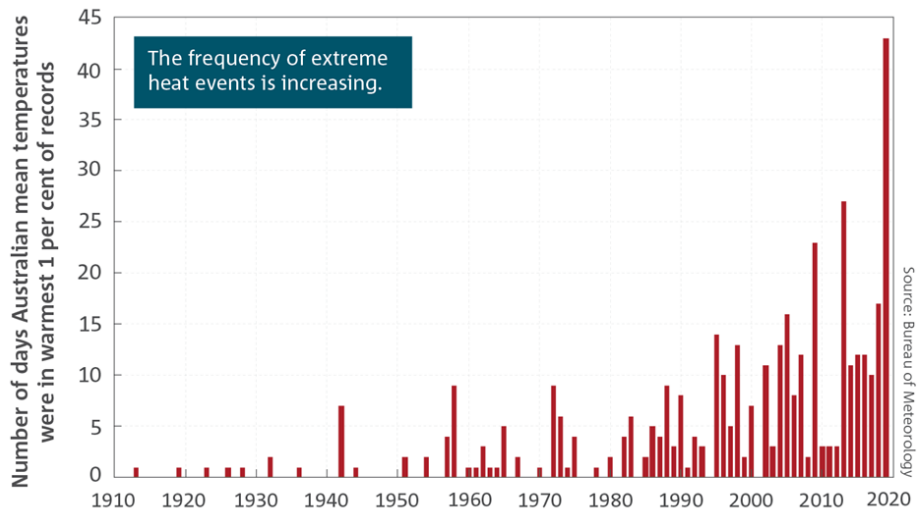
I wanted to start by telling you a few exciting things we have recently achieved here in Canberra, on Ngunnawal and Ngambri Country:

- We have passed laws banning single-use plastic.
- We have launched the first fleet of government hydrogen fuel cell vehicles AND opened Australia's first publicly available hydrogen refueling station in Fyshwick.
- We are powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity! This target was reached last year, with wind farms supplying most of our renewable electricity.
- We have set a target and is working towards net zero emissions by 2045.

Whilst this is all great news, we also face a number of challenges that can't be ignored.

According to the 2019 State of the Environment Report by the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, in Canberra:

- There's been an increase of over 1.5°C in mean maximum temperatures since 1926, with the number of hot days doubling since 1950.



- Each of us generates between 0.5 - 1.1 tonnes of landfill waste EVERY YEAR!



- We use cars for 78% of all our trips, and only use public transport for 4% of trips and cycling for only 2% of trips. As such, the majority of our greenhouse gas emissions is from transport.



- Water availability has declined significantly with mean storage volumes around 40% below the long-term average for the past 20 years.



- We have serious air quality issues with high pollution, likely to harm health for sensitive individuals,



AND Canberra's total ecological footprint is over nine times the size of the ACT!

Canberra's current level of resource use is not sustainable!"

Read next week's Green Tip to find out what Anna suggests you can do to be a part of the solution.

Felicity Maher
Sustainability Officer

