

the first in a series of
CANBERRA
CONVERSATIONS

Thursday 26 February 2009, 6 - 9pm
ACT Legislative Assembly, Civic Square

presented by A CHORUS OF WOMEN

in collaboration with ANU CLIMATE CHANGE INSTITUTE

a chorus
of women

Canberra's Energy Future

THINKING TOGETHER ABOUT WAYS FORWARD

- At this conversation we will talk about Canberra's energy use now and into the future.
- We will find out where our energy comes from now and how much we use.
- And, in the face of our current climate change challenge, we will explore together future options for energy use and production in the city.

ABOUT CANBERRA CONVERSATIONS

Canberra Conversations are a series of citizen conversations on topics of importance for our future. They will include information sharing, small group and facilitated larger group discussions, and artistic expression. The aim is to see how community engagement and wise decision making could be helped by a more open dialogue among citizens, scientists, artists, business people and policy makers.

WHO WILL BE THERE?

DR HUGH SADDLER (Energy Strategies and ANU Climate Change Institute), and MR MIKE JOHNSON (former specialist engineer ActewAGL) will share information with us about current energy production and use in Canberra.

PROFESSOR WILL STEFFEN, Director, ANU Climate Change Institute, and other ANU researchers will provide background information on the nature of climate change and its implications for energy systems.

A CHORUS OF WOMEN will provide artistic input relating to the conversation and Chorus member DR JANET SALISBURY will facilitate the discussion.

OTHER PARTICIPANTS will include business people, policy makers, members of community and environmental groups, and concerned citizens of Canberra. WILL YOU COME?

HOW WILL CANBERRA CONVERSATIONS DIFFER FROM OTHER PUBLIC MEETINGS?

Most public discussion is based on debate, which is inherently adversarial. Canberra Conversations will take a different approach, based on dialogue such as that proposed by physicist David Bohm in his book *On Dialogue* (1996).

In a discussion (or debate) people usually hold fixed positions and try to convince others to change. At best this may produce agreement or compromise, but it rarely gives rise to creative solutions. If issues of fundamental importance are involved, positions tend to become more entrenched and the discussion may either become confrontational or turn into a polite avoidance of the issues. In this process, benefits tend to be exaggerated, and risks and uncertainties downplayed.

In a dialogue, participants listen to each other with sufficient interest and empathy to understand the meaning and motivations of other positions properly. Importantly, they bring an openness to changing or modifying their initial position as a result of the process. In this type of discussion, uncertainties and fears can be realistically acknowledged, while benefits and risks can be examined honestly. This allows the proper analysis of evidence that is needed to allow creative thinking and wise actions.

'...it is proposed that a form of free dialogue may well be one of the most effective ways of investigating the crisis which faces society, and indeed the whole of human nature and consciousness today. Moreover, it may turn out that such a form of free exchange of ideas and information is of fundamental relevance for transforming culture and freeing it of destructive misinformation, so that creativity can be liberated.'

David Bohm and F. David Peat, 'Dialogue and culture', *Science, Order, and Creativity*, Bantam, New York, 1987.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RSVP

- DATE** Thursday 26 February
- PLACE** Reception Room, ACT Legislative Assembly, Civic Square
- TIME** 6 pm – 9 pm (light refreshments will be provided from 5.30 – 6.00 pm)
- COST** \$5 to help with expenses
- RSVP** As numbers are limited to about 50 people, please let us know if you can come by COB, Tuesday 24 February. Please also contact us, if you want to find out more about this event.
- CONTACTS** JANET SALISBURY Phone 02 6282 2280 (BH) 02 6285 1054 (H) 0416167280 (mobile) or janetsalisbury25@gmail.com JOHANNA McBRIDE Phone 6286 2486 (H) 0402 050 885 (mobile) or johanna@incanberra.com.au

A CHORUS OF WOMEN WEBSITE www.chorusofwomen.org

THE ANU CLIMATE CHANGE INSTITUTE www.anu.edu.au/climatechange

Canberra Conversations is a community initiative of A Chorus of Women. This first Canberra Conversation about Canberra's Energy Future is presented by A Chorus of Women in collaboration with the ANU Climate Change Institute.



a chorus of women