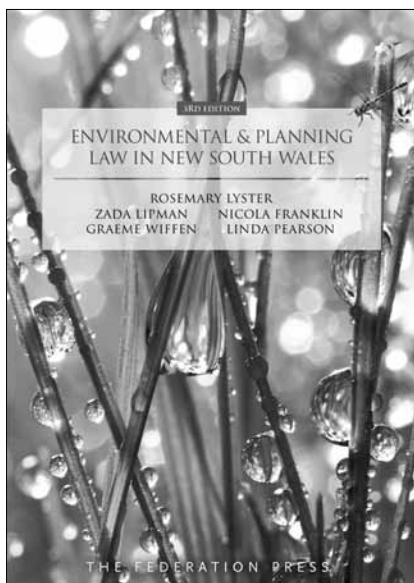


## Environmental & Planning Law in New South Wales (3rd ed)

By Rosemary Lyster et al | Federation Press | 2012



The five authors, all well known and respected commentators in environmental and planning law, preface their work with the understatement:

Writing a book entitled *Environmental and Planning Law in New South Wales* in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is, by anyone's account, a challenging project.

Despite the difficulty of the task it sets out to perform, this book provides a current and comprehensive overview of environmental and planning law as it operates in New South Wales. The 16 chapters cover subjects as diverse as land use planning, development control, environmental impact assessment, energy and climate law, water, biodiversity, heritage, pollution and contaminated land. In addition to covering the daunting list of New South Wales legislation which controls matter of planning and environmental protection, there is discussion of the Commonwealth environmental protection regime and even of some of the emerging

issues in international environmental law.

This third edition appears only three years after the second edition was published and follows the same format. Those three years have seen significant development in this area of law, particularly to the planning regime, including the repeal of Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* following an election promise by the new state government last year. New developments have been thoroughly incorporated into the new edition up to the date of publication. With a comprehensive review of the state's planning system well under way, it remains to be seen how different this whole area of law, and planning law in particular, will become as we head into 2013.

Covering a wide range of topics of both practical and more academic interest, this book's greatest strength is as a text book, and it is in that context that previous editions have already established it as the classic introductory text in the field. It will also remain a favourite reference for those working in the planning and environmental fields who do not have a legal background. A detailed table of contents, reliable index and useful list of abbreviations are user friendly features which have been retained from the second edition.

Given the breadth of subjects covered, it is inevitable that there is a limited level of detail and analysis of specific topics and issues. Some chapters cover topics which do not appear frequently or directly in environmental litigation and will be of more academic than practical interest to the practitioner on a day to day basis. The new or occasional

practitioner in environmental and planning law will find this book particularly useful as a starting point for their own research. In a field abundant with jargon and acronyms, newer practitioners may find it helpful that common terms are explained rather than treated as assumed knowledge.

Several of the chapters contain historical and background information which anyone with a genuine interest in planning and environmental policy will enjoy. The history of the planning regime can be helpful in understanding a system which can seem complex and sometimes strange to those who did not watch it evolve. Those who endeavour to keep up with recent developments and future policy directions in the field as a whole will appreciate overviews such as those set out in the last chapter entitled 'Corporate Social Responsibility'.

There is no question that this book would have been a challenging project, and undoubtedly it would have been impossible to please all of the wide range of potential users of such a book. Despite that, this book stands out as a valuable resource for anyone seeking an introduction to and comprehensive overview of environmental and planning law in New South Wales.

**Reviewed by Fenja Berglund**