



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Citizenship
Minister for Regulatory Reform

Wednesday September 1, 2010

GLOBAL CONFERENCE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF THE LAND AND ENVIRONMENT COURT

NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos today welcomed delegates from planning and environment courts and tribunals from across Australia and the world to a three day conference hosted by the NSW Land and Environment Court and the NSW Judicial Commission.

“The conference offers a unique opportunity for a diverse range of planning and environmental legal bodies to discuss developments in their jurisdictions, share expertise and consider issues of international significance,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“For the first time, the Australasian Conference of Planning and Environment Courts and Tribunals (ACPECT) will feature international speakers and attendees including representatives from Brazil, Canada, India, Indonesia, Kenya, the Philippines, Thailand and the United States.”

Mr Hatzistergos said the international flavour of this year’s conference reflected the global impact of environmental issues and the importance of international cooperation in the area of environmental law.

“As more nations start to grapple with how to respond to international issues such as climate change through their own domestic laws, forums such as ACPECT become increasingly more valuable.”

Today also marks the 30 year anniversary of the Land and Environment Court which was the first specialist environmental superior court in the world.

“The NSW Land and Environment Court has a preeminent international and national reputation,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“Only this year the Court was identified as ‘a leading example of a specialised court’ in a report on a study of 33 environmental courts and tribunals in 21 countries conducted by the Access Initiative.”

Mr Hatzistergos said the Court is now internationally renowned for its innovative and flexible approach to practice and procedure in environmental and planning law.

“After three decades, the Court has matured beyond its early reputation as merely a place for resolving disputes over trees or gardens,” he said.

“The Court now operates as Australia’s leading specialist Court taking cases that deal with complex and mainstream issues ranging from ecological diversity to pollution.”