

Year 4 - HASS

Teacher Guide: Community values – past and present

In 2014, Hydro Tasmania celebrated 100 years of operation. Over that time, Hydro Tasmania (formerly the Hydro Electric Commission [HEC]) has experienced many political, economic, social, technological and environmental changes.

The development of industry and the requirement for electricity to operate machines was the impetus for the development of hydropower in Tasmania.

Waddamana was commissioned in 1916 and provided electricity to Hobart's zinc works. Many farms, mills, mines and factories were keen to receive electricity and during the 1920s, 30s and 40s more power stations were planned and constructed. The Great Depression and World War II slowed progress. This was somewhat due to a shortage of labour and materials.

Post-war the HEC recruited large numbers of migrants to construct dams and power stations. The Premier of Tasmania at the time, Sir Robert Cosgrove, was successful at securing grants to enable the expansion of hydropower schemes and attracting more industries to the state.

Sir Robert Cosgrove's motivation was to ensure that Tasmanian children had future career opportunities in Tasmania.

During the 1950s, insatiable demand stretched electricity supplies to the limit. Tasmania's industries boomed and most ordinary Tasmanians were enjoying fully electric homes. Laborious household tasks were made easier with electric stoves, irons, fridges, lights and heaters. The community valued electricity and how it had improved their lives and provided employment.

However, severe drought conditions in the late 1950s saw the introduction of power restrictions. At the same time the HEC proposed major new power scheme developments to meet the growing demands

from industry and communities. The Derwent, *yagina*/Great Lake South Esk and Mersey Forth schemes, all had dams and power stations constructed during this time.

Between the late 1960s and early 1970s, global attitudes towards the environment began to change. People came to place increased value on the natural environment, and there was a greater desire to conserve, protect and understand the influence of human activities on this natural environment.

In 1967 the construction of the Gordon River Power Development in Tasmania's south west was authorised by the Tasmanian Government of the time. During the 1970s and 1980s this would lead to significant public focus on the HEC's operations with growing controversy over the flooding of Lake Pedder and the plans for the Lower Gordon power scheme.

Eventually, opposition to this development would be the catalyst for the creation of the world's first green political party; the United Tasmania Group.

Saving the Franklin River became a national political issue. It divided friends, families and communities as they campaigned for the value of the environment or conversely the value of jobs and energy security.

The campaign went all the way to the High Court — the Tasmanian Dams Case — where it was decided that the Lower Gordon power scheme would not proceed.

The Tasmanian Dams Case was one of the most influential environmental law cases in Australian history. The decision confirmed the constitutional basis for the national environmental law at the time, and it formed the basis for many national laws we have today, principally the [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) (the EPBC Act).

Out of the days of environmental conflict came a deepened commitment by the HEC to the management of environmental and cultural heritage values for its existing lakes, dams and power stations.

Australian Curriculum

Learning Area	Content Descriptions
HA SS	
AC9HS4S01	Develop questions to guide investigations about people, events, places and issues.
AC9HS4S02	locate, collect and record information and data from a range of sources, including annotated timelines and maps.
AC9HS4S04	analyse information and data, and identify perspectives.
AC9HS4K05	the importance of environments, including natural vegetation and water sources, to people and animals in Australia and on another continent.
AC9HS4K06	sustainable use and management of renewable and non-renewable resources, including the custodial responsibility First Nations Australians have for Country/Place
Cross - curriculum Priorities	Sustainability
General Capabilities	Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability

Learning goals

Know:

- There are laws to protect Australian's environment.
- Hydro Tasmania's operation include managing and monitoring water in a sustainable way.
- Native flora and fauna, including aquatic fauna around Hydro Tasmania's lakes, rivers and dams are managed sustainably.

Understand:

- Humans can influence the characteristics of their environment.
- People have different views and these can change over time in accordance with their values.
- While we may not always agree with a range of opinions, it is important that we respect them.

Do:

- Listen to perspectives of different people and identify the range of viewpoints and opinions.
- Review a timeline and identify events that influence views and opinions.

- Research events that became catalysts for change in viewpoints.

Achievement standard

By the end of year 4, students:

Describe the effects of colonisation on people and environments. Students describe the importance of environments, and sustainable allocation and management of resources.

Teaching and learning resources

Hydro Tasmania education webpages

www.hydro.com.au/education

Materials	Number
Smart board or projector	1
Internet connection	
People of the Hydro	YouTube
Reference – Timeline of environmental change in Tasmania	1 each

Adjustments / strategies to include all students

	Enabling	Extending
Content:	Spend time identifying the location of Lake Pedder, the Gordon and Franklin rivers.	Have students investigate other developments in Australia that excited a community response for and against.
Process:	Guide students one-to-one where necessary such as by explaining language used on the website, video and resource sheets	Ask students to talk to their parents or grandparents and note their recollections of the Gordon below Franklin dam debate.
Product:	Identify within the school or community something of environmental value and determine arguments for saving or removing/changing it. i.e. tree, waterway, heritage building.	Invite students to draw their own timeline and interpretation of the history of Hydro Tasmania.

Assessment.

Refer to *Options for assessment and extension* in each

Lesson Plan

Evidence of student learning

- identify facts from opinions
- describe catalysts for change
- develop questions to research
- select appropriate resources to conduct an investigation

Group Reflection

Refer to *Elaborate and Review* in each Lesson Plan

Feedback

If you would like more information or to provide feedback please contact our Education team at education@hydro.com.au