

Media Release:

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Desert Park Helps Guide YOUth LEADing Australia

The Alice Springs Desert Park (ASDP) is showing Alice Springs students how to build their environmental sustainability ideas into projects for the local community.

The Desert Park recently hosted OzGreen's national youth climate action congress, YOUth LEADing Australia as one of 18 locations to simultaneously host a forum between 23 and 25 November 2010.

ASDP Indigenous Employment & Training Coordinator Jodie Clarkson said 63 students from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Centralian Middle School, St Philips College and Ltyentye Apurte Community Education Centre participated.

"YOUth LEADing Australia brings together thousands of young people to develop a shared voice, vision and action plans in order to tackle the biggest environmental challenges of our time," Ms Clarkson said.

"The YOUth LEADing group of Alice Springs has a vision for an ideal world where we are part of a sustainable ecosystem and where everyone is treated equally because everyone leads a sustainable lifestyle and has a fair ecological footprint.

"Some of the ideas and action plans presented at the community forum included: water restrictions, food trees in streets, community farms, recycling bins in public places, bike taxis, sustainable housing and development."

Ms Clarkson said the Desert Park is committed to providing a quality tourism experience with a strong focus on education for sustainability, and has recently collected their fourth Ecotourism Award at the 2010 Brolga Northern Territory Tourism Awards.

"We're really excited about being a part of the YOUth LEADing group in Alice Springs and providing expertise and guidance wherever possible," Ms Clarkson said.

"We aim to support students to reach their goals by helping them build contacts with environmental organisations within the local community to grow their ideas into projects.

"We will also assist with appropriate contacts to source grants to help build these projects, and provide them with direction to see through their ideas."

Representatives from the Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC), Incite Youth Arts, Alice Springs Desert Park, Live and Learn Environmental Education, Tourism NT, Desert Knowledge Australia, Alice Springs Town Council, Desert Smart Cool Mob, Natural Resource Management Board and the Central Desert Shire attended the community forum and have volunteered to assist the students to progress these actions in the New Year.

Ends

**Media Note – for more information / interviews contact Jodie Clarkson on 0419 827 804
Image – YOUth LEADing Forum at the Alice Springs Desert Park**

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