



DEREK WALTER MEIANZ  
SENIOR POLICY OFFICER |  
DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY  
INDUSTRIES, PARKS, WATER  
AND ENVIRONMENT

Joined the Institute in 1994

---

*"[EIANZ's] key role is to provide a networking forum for environmental professionals. Another very important role is advocacy to governments and private industry."*

---



Environment Institute  
of Australia and  
New Zealand Inc.

*What prompted you to join EIANZ?*

At the time I was undertaking postgraduate environmental studies at the University of Tasmania. My thesis supervisor (Dr John Todd) was active in the then EIA, and he encouraged me to join as a student member. He enthused me by explaining that the EIA had been founded to bring together environmental professionals, and of the hope that it would rival established bodies such as Engineers Australia.

*What have you found most rewarding about a career in the environment sector?*

It has been more personally satisfying than engineering, the field in which I previously worked. It has provided the opportunity for multidisciplinary work, and work in a field in which I previously had a keen personal interest.

*What is the biggest change that you have seen in the environment profession over the years?*

There are now many more graduates from explicitly environmental courses, and many more people who explicitly regard themselves as environmental professionals.

*What are some of the most important lessons you have learned (so far) over the course of your career?*

Referring to the phase of my career in which I've worked in the environmental field, the most important lesson I've learnt is that governments in Australia aren't really serious about tackling environmental problems at the fundamental level

at which they need to be tackled. And nor is the corporate sector. Only sustained public pressure, including pressure from groups such as EIANZ, can achieve the changes that are necessary.

*What do you see as EIANZ's key role in the environment sector?*

Its key role is to provide a 'networking' forum for environmental professionals. Another very important role is advocacy to governments and private industry, as mentioned above.

EIANZ should be lobbying for statutory registration of environmental professionals – along the lines of registration for medical professionals, architects, teachers, surveyors, valuers and others. Only statutory registration will provide the necessary professional standing and public status and recognition that is required.

*What advice would you give a colleague thinking of joining EIANZ?*

Join up and support it.

Celebrating  
**30**  
years  
1987 - 2017