

Monday, 23 April 2018

Community engagement champion becomes Young Environmental Lawyer of the Year

The Law Council of Australia has announced Revel Pointon – Law Reform, Education and Advice Solicitor with Environmental Defenders Office Queensland – as the winner of the 2018 Mahla Pearlman Award for the Australian Young Environmental Lawyer of the Year.

The Award honours the memory of Mahla Pearlman AO, the former Chief Judge of the Land and Environment Court and former President of the Law Council of Australia. It is presented to a young practising barrister or solicitor who has made a significant contribution to environmental law.

The 2018 award was announced last Thursday following the Mahla Pearlman Oration delivered by former High Court Chief Justice, Hon Robert French AM.

Jess Feehely, Chair of the Australian Environment and Planning Law Group of the Legal Practice Section of the Law Council, said the calibre and diversity of nominees for this year's award had been outstanding.

"Revel has topped a truly exceptional group of nominees. The aspect of her work that most impressed the Committee was her dedication to constructive community engagement," Ms Feehely said.

"In a field of law often dominated by compliance and enforcement issues, the value of effective laws and a community that understands them can too often be overlooked.

"She has engaged on initiatives covering a wide range of successful law reform and outreach projects, including on the Great Barrier Reef, third party costs provisions, and emission reduction targets.

"Revel has developed easy to understand community resources, and made the time to meet with farmers, NRM officers, catchment managers, and community groups to make sure they understand how laws might affect them, and what they need to do to comply.

"Her work demonstrates how effective collaboration can be across the environmental sector, legal profession, community, and government.

"Revel's clients said her support gave them the tools and confidence to advocate for better environmental outcomes. They described her as pragmatic, considerate, and tireless. The Committee agreed that these were traits that Mahla Pearlman embodied and applauded."

The Mahla Pearlman Oration followed the Law Council's Future of Environmental Law Symposium, which this year featured a presentation honouring former Federal Court judge, Hon Murray Wilcox AO QC. The tribute noted his Honour's long-standing commitment to access to environmental justice and Aboriginal cultural heritage protection, and his continued calls for stronger action on climate change.

[Photos of Revel Pointon and the Hon Murray Wilcox AO QC are available here.](#)

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