

Author talks up benefits of environmentally sustainable city

Flick of the switch

By ANDREW STRUTTON

FOR journalist turned 'green' author Ken Hickson, Townsville's transition into a sustainable city starts with the simple flick of a switch.

Mr Hickson, the Brisbane-based author of *The ABC of Carbon*, this week spoke about the 'issues and opportunities' of climate change at a Sustainability Townsville Limited workshop.

About 50 people attended the workshop, which focused on explaining the climate-conscious options available to businesses and individuals in the city.

"As individuals, people often question what difference it will make if they turn their lights off, but it will make a con-

siderable difference if more and more people do it," Mr Hickson said.

"In fact having a city-wide energy efficiency program where homes, shops and offices are on board and making a real commitment would easily reduce the city's electricity usage by 20 per cent.

"And that's just one, relatively simple, example."

With the city already involved in a number of environmentally conscious programs, Mr Hickson said he had 'no doubt' locals and the business community could embrace the carbon challenge and still emerge a winner.

"Townsville has laid a very solid foundation in its drive to become more sustainable, and I think the notion of be-

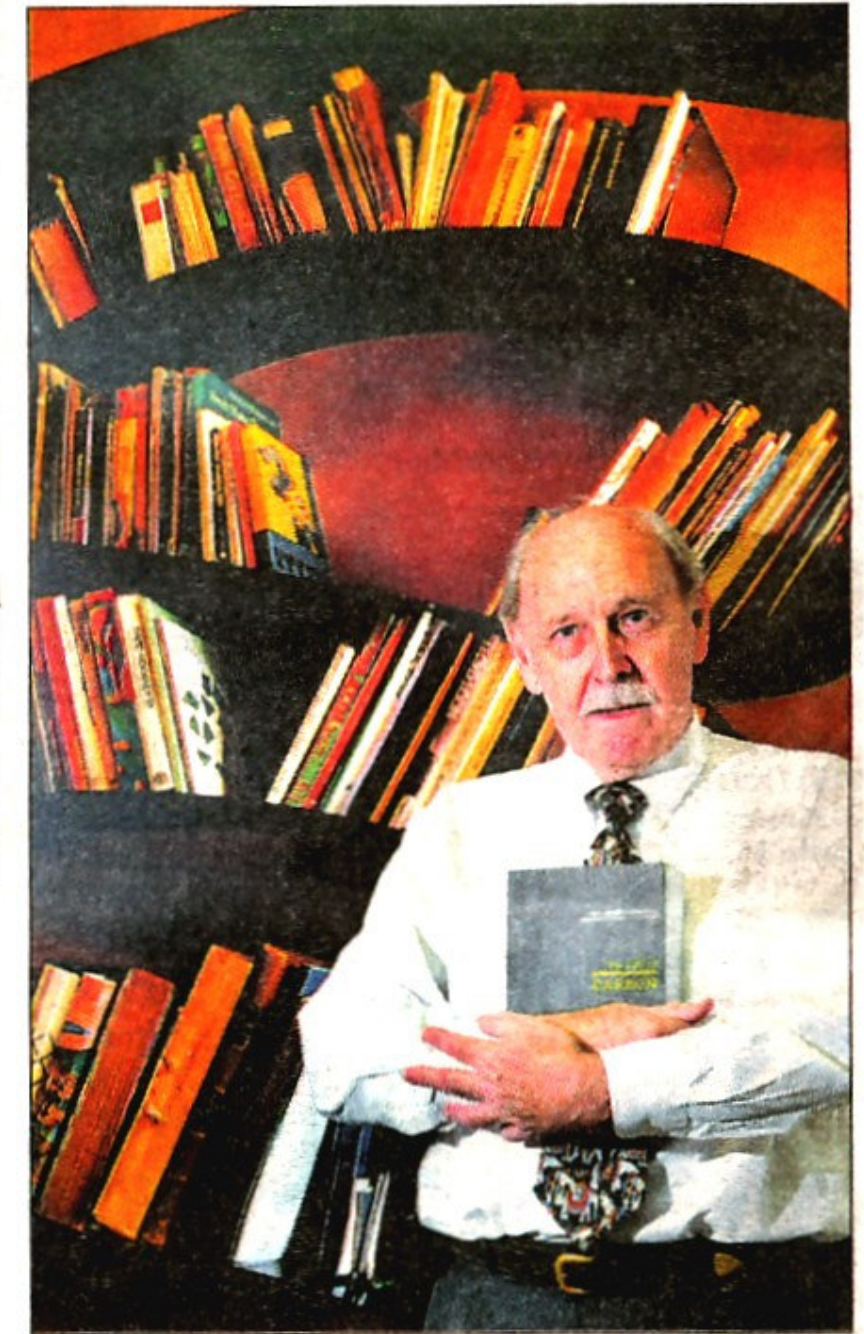
ing eco-friendly is one that is only going to grow in the city," he said.

"I also think businesses are starting to wake up to the fact that by being energy efficient they can save themselves money, as well as tap in to the associated green and eco-friendly market.

"So there are a lot of positives."

Sustainability Townsville Limited chairman, Townsville City Councillor Jenny Hill, said the workshop was one of many the not-for-profit organisation hoped to hold.

"Combating climate change does not have to be all doom and gloom," she said. "There are opportunities for businesses and homeowners to make changes for the benefit of the environment."



GOING GREEN . . . author Ken Hickson

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