Gearing up for EU Climate Diplomacy

To help promote climate action and the health benefits of cycling, @EUinAus organised the 'VeloMai' lunch-time bike ride around Canberra's lake Burley Griffin. The cycling challenge helped kick off Climate Diplomacy Week, the EU initiative shining a spotlight on positive global collaboration to address climate change.

EU Ambassador to Australia Michael Pulch joined ambassadors from Austria, Bernhard Zimbarg, Germany, Anna Prinz, Poland, Michał Kołodziejski, Estonia, Andres Unga and UK High Commissioner Victoria Treadell for the 14km bike ride on Friday 24 May.
Colleagues from across the European diplomatic community, local government and cycling organisation Pedal Power ACT – which aims to get more Canberrans cycling, more often - also took part.

The ride was part of the VeloMai month-long campaign where colleagues from EU institutions pedaled to work to promote cycling as a mode of transport. It also kicked-off Climate Diplomacy Weeks 2019 (27 May to 9 June) which highlights positive global collaboration to address climate change.

Launching the initiative, EU Ambassador to Australia Michael Pulch noted that Europe is home to 18 of the world's top 20 cycle-friendly cities. And questioned if Australia could be next? Anne Napier from Transport Canberra and City Services said the Moving Canberra – transport strategy 2019-2045 aims to deliver a modern, sustainable, integrated transport experience that provides real alternatives to driving.

Colleagues from the German and Danish embassies also shared European best practice.
In Copenhagen, there are more bikes than people. So how do you get so many people on bikes? Asked Marie Lund from the Danish Embassy. The answer? Seriously user-friendly bike paths.

Kai Schaefer from the German Embassy said people from all over the world travel to Germany for cycling holidays. You can take one of the 10 most popular tours (pictured) or try a thematic-flavoured trip like the ‘cucumber cycle tour.”
Ian Ross, CEO of Pedal Power ACT said leadership, investment, separating cars from bikes and slowing speed limits were just some ways to encourage more Canberrans to take up cycling.