

The Sunrise Project

2015 Review

The Sunrise Project Australia Limited ABN 65 159 324 697



Photo: Michael Amendolia (Greenpeace)



Photo: Solar Citizens



Photo: Dean Sewell



Photo: Kate Ausburn



Photo: Beyond Zero Emissions

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Letter from Co-Chairs, Board of Directors



The global transition to clean energy is now inevitable and underway. Yet Australian governments are mostly still stuck in the 20th century, continuing to promote fossil fuel extraction and expansion at the expense of community well-being and a safe climate.

We are in a moment of significant disruption as a combination of social, political, economic and technological forces combine to drive a transformation of the global energy system.

In the conference halls in Paris, world leaders committed to transitioning our energy systems away from fossil fuels. And all around the world, communities and community leaders challenged fossil fuel expansion projects and took courageous action to protect their land and water resources.

While there's an enormous amount of work to do to ensure governments deliver on the promise of Paris, the agreement supported by our own government means that fossil fuel reserves must remain in the ground. The task now is to ensure these lofty commitments are translated into action and that we hasten the clean energy revolution.

In 2015 China reduced its coal consumption for the second year in a row, while smashing records for renewable energy investment. India is fast gaining ground on China and solar auctions there in recent months are delivering electricity at a lower cost than electricity generated from imported coal.

The US continues to shut down coal plants and transition to clean energy, and in Europe renewable energy is now meeting approximately 35% of electricity needs.

It is in the context of this global transition that The Sunrise Project is working to support local groups across the country to hasten the inevitable transition to renewables.

We're excited by the pace of change and the campaign successes of this year. We'd like to thank the talented staff of The Sunrise Project who have worked tirelessly to support communities and accelerate the transition.

The Board has also worked hard to ensure good governance standards for the organisation so that it is well equipped to fulfil its core mission of supporting communities and campaigns. Thank you to our dedicated Board members for your efforts.

Another big thank you goes to our donors who have supported and funded the vision of The Sunrise Project since our inception.

Finally, we'd like to pay our respects to the amazing communities and movements on the frontline of damaging fossil fuel projects, who are pushing back and saying 'Enough'. Hats off to those getting on with the job of building our clean energy future. It is a privilege and an honour to work with you all.

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is for Mark Wakeham and the second is for Aviva Imhof.

Mark Wakeham

Aviva Imhof

Co-Chairs of the Board of Directors

Letter from the Executive Director

For communities bearing the frontline impacts of the fossil fuel industrial complex, there can be some solace in the knowledge that the world is changing, but it doesn't make it any easier when you are literally having to keep the mine from the door.



When we think back on the history of human civilisation, the moments and events that are most important are those in which the course of the future were determined. The emergence of revolutionary new ideas that transformed how people live, conflicts that shaped the formation of nation states, ideas that fundamentally altered our societies – these moments matter because the world we inhabit today can be traced back to them.

Future generations will look back at this period of time through the lens of global warming – as the moment when their world was defined. It will be remembered as the era when human civilisation fundamentally altered the biosphere and the conditions upon which life depends.

We don't know what is going to happen in the future, but it is clear that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has consistently under-estimated the pace of global warming which is now unfolding before our eyes – with global temperature records tumbling by the month.

The response to global warming has proceeded at a snail's pace for decades, thanks to vested interests in the fossil fuel sector. But in 2014 it seemed momentum finally began to shift, and 2015 was the year we started to make real progress. Only a year ago, most people thought that the coal industry was in another one of its cyclical downturns. By the end of 2015, it was clear that it was structural. Not before time, we are now beginning the phase-out of the use of coal as a source of energy.

The impact of this shift cannot be understated. It is as though the story of our future has changed. The veil has been lifted. The bubble burst. The Emperor has no clothes and the future will not be powered by fossil fuels. Just for a start, the amount of solar panels installed in the world has been doubling every two years for the past decade or more. This is exponential growth. If the solar industry keeps on doing what it has been doing for the past ten years, the world will be powered by 100% solar energy in 14 years' time.

But this grand narrative obscures a thousand smaller stories – of people fighting to protect their homes, their land and their communities from an industry that has been allowed to grow out of control. These are deeply human stories of hope, fear, broken lives, friendship and courage in the struggle for environmental justice. We have had the privilege to work with many of these communities and are continually inspired by their resilience and optimism.

I'd like to thank all of our partner groups and grantees around Australia who, through their hard work and vision, are literally bringing a new future into being. I'd like to thank the incredible Sunrise Project staff whose passion, commitment and creativity continue to make a huge impact in the world. I'd also like to thank the Board for their ongoing leadership and, of course, our donors for investing in the future and for placing their trust in us.

While there is simply too many stories to capture, hopefully this annual review gives at least a glimpse into the highlights of another remarkable year.

John Hepburn
Executive Director

Overview of The Sunrise Project

At The Sunrise Project, we share a vision for the 21st century where our homes, schools and workplaces are powered by the sun, wind and waves. Where a healthy democracy means that local communities make their own development decisions guided by a concern for community health and an ethic of stewardship for the earth.

Our mission is to support and empower Australian communities to protect our land, water, community health and the global climate from the negative impacts of the fossil fuel industry, and to hasten the inevitable shift to an efficient, renewable energy economy.

We pursue our mission in line with our **charitable purposes** which are to:

1. Protect, preserve and enhance the natural environment;
2. Protect the natural environment from pollution and over-exploitation;
3. Support and empower individuals, communities, governments and industry to make changes required to prevent dangerous climate change;
4. Facilitate public education about, and promote the transition to, a clean energy economy; and
5. Educate, empower and support communities to protect natural assets and promote the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources in their local areas.

What we do

Our view of social change is that it is social movements that change the world rather than individual organisations working in isolation. The climate crisis and the challenge of shifting beyond fossil fuels to a clean energy economy is so large and complex that it requires a society-wide response, with a diversity of organisations working for change across many different sectors at many different levels. Similarly, the challenges of protecting groundwater resources or the Great Barrier Reef include many different dimensions involving the community, industry, investors and all levels of government.

We see our role as nurturing and supporting the nation-wide social movement to protect our natural heritage and to hasten the transition beyond fossil fuels. We work together with small community groups, big NGOs, academics, religious groups, investors, analysts, farmers, scientists, politicians, philanthropists, lawyers, economists and environmental activists, each of whom is focussed on one part of the puzzle. Our role is to take a “whole of systems” view and to encourage and support collaboration between the various different players, so that they work together to have the biggest possible impact in protecting the environment.

We do this by running a grants program to help build the capacity of community groups, we conduct and commission research and analysis to help inform the community, we support training programs and we organise meetings, seminars and conferences.

Our model is based on the idea of Collective Impact – an approach that is gaining increasing prominence in a wide range of social change areas ranging from improving childhood education services through to environmental restoration and conservation. In a nutshell, Collective Impact encourages a wide range of community groups to work together to solve common problems. It recognises that social change is not a linear process and that many of society’s most difficult problems are so complex that they cannot be addressed by single organisations acting alone. It draws on the wisdom of local communities impacted by the problem and it recognises that, through co-operation, the whole can become greater than the sum of its parts.

The role of The Sunrise Project is continually evolving as the world changes and as we learn from our experiences. Because we are an inherently collaborative organisation, we try make sure that we’re not duplicating work of other NGOs or community groups so we can use our limited resources for maximum effect.



Photo: Jeff Tan

^ Protect the Plains

Objectives

Our overall **objectives** are to:

1. Protect natural assets and community health

- Secure 'no-go zones' and improved regulations to protect groundwater resources and river systems;
- Protect Australia's best farmland from the impacts of inappropriate industrial development;
- Protect community health from the impacts of pollution;
- Improve protections for the Great Barrier Reef and prevent inappropriate industrial developments that would impact negatively upon it;
- Improve protections for biodiversity hotspots and other special natural places from the reckless expansion of fossil fuel projects.

2. Hasten the transition to a clean energy economy

- Promote the uptake and expansion of clean, renewable energy;
- Reduce greenhouse pollution by preventing the large-scale expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure.

To achieve these objectives, we use the following **Strategies**:

Community Education

We conduct research and support community groups to run education programs in relation to the impacts of fossil fuel

extraction and the transition to a low carbon economy. While we recognise that education and awareness-raising alone is not sufficient to achieve change, it is a necessary and important part of the process.

Improve regulation and policy

We support efforts to improve regulation and government policy affecting resource extraction to make sure that important community assets are protected from inappropriate development and that the full social and environmental costs of the industry are accounted for.

Ensure Compliance

While existing laws are often inadequate to protect the environment, even they are often not complied with by companies that routinely breach license conditions with relative impunity. Ensuring compliance requires community groups to have technical, legal and organising capacity to hold industry to account.

Expose corruption and undue political influence

The mining industry has far too much influence over government. We support community advocates to expose corruption and to shine a spotlight on the undue influence of mining companies over our political process.

Build community capacity

We support training and other initiatives that build the capacity of local community organisations to more effectively advocate for the protection of the environment.

Highlights from 2015

Protecting Water

Clean water is our most precious natural resource, yet the expansion of coal and unconventional gas mining continues to threaten our vital groundwater and river systems from one end of the country to the other. Mining companies rely on dodgy modelling and adaptive management (otherwise known as “make it up as you go”) to secure approvals for projects, without really understanding the long term impacts on groundwater.

In the context of global warming, protecting our water resources should be a national priority. Instead, it is left to landowners and community groups to fight to protect water resources in a system that is rigged in favour of mining companies.

“We’ve had enough. AGL just doesn’t seem to know what they’re doing and it’s clear that the Government is asleep on the job. They let AGL pump chemicals into the ground, where it mixed with the toxic underground coal seam water, without properly checking that AGL had some way of dealing with it after they pump it back up.”

Gloucester resident, Jenni O’Neill

Highlights:

As a partner in the Our Land, Our Water, Our Future campaign, The Sunrise Project has continued to push for stronger laws to protect water resources in NSW, including ruling out mining and gas projects in drinking water catchments. We supported the community of Gloucester in its epic and successful campaign to protect its valley from fracking at the hands of AGL, which would have had significant water impacts on the major rivers that run through the valley and supply more than 75,000 people downstream.

We supported communities in the NSW Central Coast, central and western Sydney and in the Illawarra to raise their concerns about the coal seam gas exploration licences that covered the dams and drinking water catchments of over five million people. All of these coal seam gas exploration licences were cancelled.

Through our grants program we have supported community groups in QLD, Victoria and NSW to do detailed research into the water impacts of mining and to engage robustly in project assessment processes.

∨ Gloucester rally against AGL

Photo: Kate Ausburn



Highlights from 2015

Protecting Farmland

“Can't eat coal, can't drink gas” is the refrain that has echoed around Australia as farming communities have stood up to the encroachment of mining into prime agricultural land. The failure of State governments to protect both agricultural land and water resources sees farming communities pitted against multinational mining companies in land use conflicts that have dominated the headlines.

Nowhere has this conflict been so intense than on the black soil of the Liverpool Plains in NSW, where Shenhua and BHP are proposing massive open cut coal mines on some of the best farmland in the country. But despite the projects making little economic sense, and despite widespread public opposition, there are still no laws that effectively protect farmland from the impacts of mining.

Highlights:

The Sunrise Project has worked alongside many farming communities around Australia to help them to make their voices heard – providing expert advice, training and support.

✓ Liverpool Plains farmers tractor drive protest against Shenhua mine

Through the Our Land, Our Water, Our Future campaign we helped to raise awareness of the threat of mining to agricultural land through a series of high profile public events, including an International Women's Day brunch where recently-retired NSW Governor Marie Bashir declared her strong opposition to mining on prime farmland. We also heard inspiring speeches from President of the NSW Farmers Association Fiona Simson, Liverpool Plains sustainable beef farmer Nicky Chirlian, and grandmother and Coonamble grazier Anne Kennedy and were entertained by the wonderful songstress Monica Trapaga.

On the first Sunday of Spring, more than 400 people came together for a Paddock to Plate Father's Day Luncheon at Centennial Parklands in Sydney. The Spring feast featured food and drink from farms in regions of NSW under threat from coal and coal seam gas expansion, including semolina from Moree, wines from the Hunter Valley, and beef from the Liverpool Plains.

In the Bylong Valley, we supported landholders to connect with experts to understand and respond to the Environmental Impact Statement for KEPCO's proposed coal mine. The pristine, National Trust listed Bylong Valley has some of NSW's best agricultural land and has historically hosted beef, dairy and crop farming and horse breeding.



Photo: Kate Ausburn

Protecting Health

Around the world, from capital cities like Delhi to the coal fields of NSW's Hunter Valley, the damage to human health from the mining and burning of coal is increasingly coming under the microscope.

New analysis of the latest annual National Pollutant Inventory data, and mapping of trends in the preceding five years, showed big hikes in air pollution from the nation's coal mines, coal fired power stations and coal terminals, contributing to spiralling air pollution.

In Victoria an inquiry into the Hazelwood coal mine fire, which raged out of control for 45 days in early 2014, focused attention on the health risks of coal. The Sunrise Project supported Environment Victoria to bring expert scientific evidence to the inquiry. After ongoing community pressure the inquiry was reopened, leading to findings that the mine fire most likely contributed to some of the increase in deaths in the Latrobe Valley at the time. Work continued to secure long lasting reforms in the wake of the inquiry, with calls for a planning process to help transition the Latrobe Valley beyond coal.

Highlights:

We supported the Climate and Health Alliance to produce a comprehensive report on behalf of its coalition of 28 key health organisations, to highlight the serious threats to human health from the rapid expansion of the Hunter coal industry. The report calculated the burden of this health damage to the local, regional and global economy and, significantly, called for a ban on new coal projects in the region and an orderly transition away from coal. At the same time, high profile figures including former Australians of the Year Professor Fiona Stanley and Professor Tim Flannery, and 22 other academics and public health experts, signed an open letter to the NSW Premier demanding the phase out of coal production in the Hunter.



^ Infographic by Environmental Justice Australia

Another highlight of 2015 was the second National Air Pollution Summit, which we again proudly sponsored. This meeting of experts, civil society organisations and coal pollution-impacted communities renewed the call for a National Air Pollution Prevention Act specifying national standards for air pollution that protect human health, and for an independent air pollution regulator.

With concern about air quality growing, a new national coalition called The Clean Air Action Network was formed. Led by Environmental Justice Australia and including Doctors for the Environment, the network has been actively campaigning for regulatory reform.

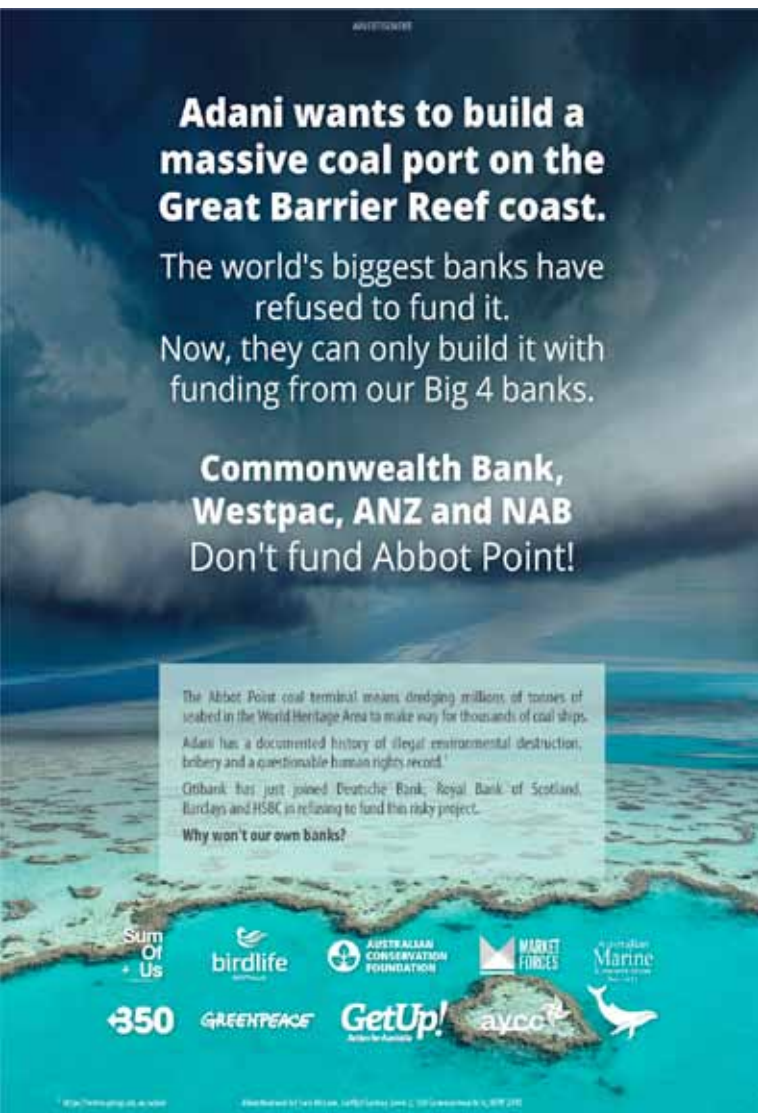
In the lead up to a December meeting of federal and state environment ministers the Clean Air Action Network called for tougher air pollution standards, with Australia's failing to adopt WHO recommendations. While Victoria and the ACT agreed to implement stricter standards, other Australian jurisdictions continue to lag well behind.



Photo: Frank Bergmann truevision.com.au

< Doctors for the Environment, Newcastle

Highlights from 2015



^ Advertisement urging divestment from Carmichael project



Photo: Tom Jefferson (Greenpeace)

Protecting the Great Barrier Reef

The campaign to protect the Great Barrier Reef from inappropriate industrial development continued to be a global issue, as Adani pushed forward with its destructive plan to build a massive coal export port at Abbot Point.

Highlights:

Through our grants program and work with our many partner groups, we supported local community awareness-raising and education about the threats to the reef and what can be done to protect it. This included documentation and research into the impacts of existing and proposed new industrial ports on the reef and the health of areas already facing pressure from inappropriate industrialisation.

Early 2015 saw a Queensland State election in which Reef campaign groups, working with the public, made their voices heard and persuaded the new Labor government to institute a range of reforms. After first overturning the LNP's terrible proposal to dump Abbot Point dredge spoil in the sensitive and ecologically significant reef-edge Caley Valley wetlands, the newly elected Palaszczuk government moved to pass the historic Ports Bill. This restricted development to four major Ports in Queensland, and was a major step forward in protecting the Reef from rampant industrial development, dredging and dumping.

The Sunrise Project continued its work with local reef communities and international NGOs, helping to raise awareness of the role global banks play in financing the proposed Abbot Point coal port expansion. In Australia, this saw the National Australia Bank rule out involvement in the project, with a NAB spokesperson saying that the bank, "is not involved and has no plans to be involved in any financing" of Adani's destructive projects.

Public campaigns focused on Australian banks saw the Commonwealth Bank cancel its advisory arrangement with Adani, while Westpac and ANZ also committed to strong climate policies, as well as to many billions of dollars of investment in renewable energy. Internationally our campaign partners persuaded Standard Chartered to cancel their arrangement with Adani.

We are confident that the increased awareness and political interest in the Great Barrier Reef resulting from the campaign will lead to further reforms to help protect this global icon for future generations. We know, however, that the greatest threat to the future of the Reef remains climate change – making it all the more important to transition beyond fossil fuels and to secure a strong global climate agreement.

< Abbot Point

Protecting Precious Natural Places

Australia's natural heritage continues to face a myriad of threats from industrial development. Fragmentation of ecosystems, pollution and the pervasive threat of global warming are putting increasing stress on countless species from one end of the country to the other. In the Desert Uplands bioregion of Central Queensland, the Black Throated Finch is facing extinction if the Adani Carmichael mine is allowed to go ahead. From the Pilliga forest of NSW to Kings Canyon in the Northern Territory, vast areas that should be protected have faced the threat of industrial gasfield development.

"This sweet little bird, which has already lost 80 per cent of its former range over the last thirty years, cannot survive in a 40 km long open cut coal mine. Losing this rich habitat would be a major blow to the chances of this species persisting."

Dr April Reside, an expert on the Black Throated Finch



Photo: Lock the Gate

^ Save the Animals and Trees



Photo: Eric Vanderduys

^ Black Throated Finch



Photo: Cynthia Pursehouse

^ Liverpool Plains Koala



Photo: Justin McDowell

^ Pilliga Mouse

Highlights:

A key part of our work has been supporting grassroots conservationists to engage in the assessment process of major projects to bring a level of scrutiny and accountability that is so often lacking in the coal and gas industry. As well as supporting community organising efforts, we have provided grants for technical analysis and baseline ecological studies.

Through the NSW Our Land, Our Water, Our Future campaign we helped to raise public awareness and legal scrutiny of the impact that the proposed Shenhua coal mine on the Liverpool Plains would have on local Koala populations. We have continued to advocate for the creation of 'no go zones' to protect areas of high conservation value from industrial development.

Highlights from 2015

Hastening the Clean Energy Transition

The transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy is well and truly underway, with record investments in renewable energy and widespread acknowledgement that coal is now in structural, not cyclical, decline. It is no longer a question of 'if' we will transition beyond fossil fuels but of 'how' that transition is being managed. In financial markets, hundreds of billions of dollars of value have been lost from fossil fuel stocks over recent years as companies have failed to anticipate and prepare for the transition that is now underway. A failure of governments to plan for this transition has seen widespread job losses in the Hunter Valley and Central Queensland, with more to come as aging coal plants become economically unviable.

As well as the very real human and social impacts of job losses, unplanned closure can also lead to significant environmental legacies. Around Australia there are over 50,000 abandoned mine sites that have not been rehabilitated. We can't let this happen to the current generation of mines which are of much greater scale and impact to the mines from previous eras.

Highlights

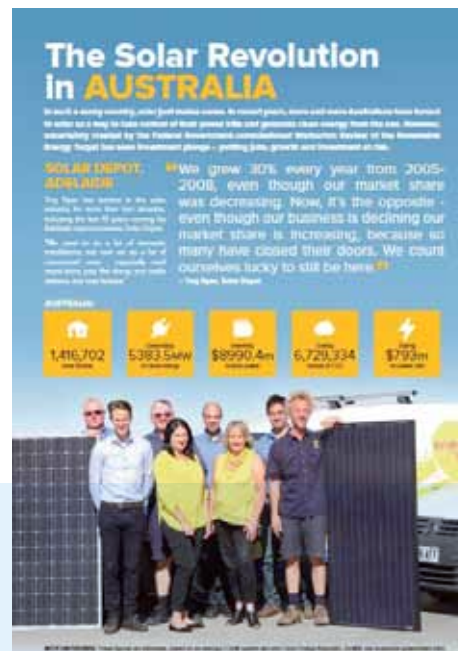
As part of our program to promote renewable energy, The Sunrise Project continued to support Solar Citizens to produce a series of briefing papers to provide up-to-date information to policy makers on the incredible growth of solar PV in Australia and the rapidly falling costs of renewable energy.

v Australian Divestment Day

Photo: 350.org Australia

Through our grants program we continued to back the grassroots divestment campaign which has seen a steady stream of local councils, universities and other institutions divesting from fossil fuels. We also helped to support a coalition of groups to campaign to force Australia's big four banks to develop more responsible lending practices – resulting in all four banks adopting policies in support of limiting global warming to 2 degrees.

We continued to back research and analysis into the dynamics and future trends in the global coal market, to raise awareness of the rapid transformation of energy markets now underway. We also supported research into the unfunded mine cleanup bills of the mining industry as the first step in pushing for stronger reforms in this area.



< Solar Citizens material





^ Community Organising Fellows, Workshop

Community Organising Fellowship

At The Sunrise Project, we believe passionately in the power of social movements to change the world. Time and again movements have accomplished their goals by organising and mobilising the community to become so powerful that they can no longer be ignored by decision-makers.

Building a powerful, winning movement requires skilled and committed organisers who can engage and mobilise the community to take action. But skilled organisers need training. One of our flagship programs when The Sunrise Project began involved establishing a Community Organising Fellowship. Our aim, working with The Change Agency and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, was to help train a new generation of skilled community organisers.

This is now well on its way to being achieved. Two brilliant cohorts, of 25 campaigners each, have already graduated from the program, with more on the way. Many graduates played key leadership roles in the People’s Climate March in November 2015.

This is just one example of how its graduates are helping to grow a powerful social movement to protect our environment and to encourage the rapid transition beyond coal and gas to a renewable energy future.

“The fellowship has managed to achieve that elusive duo of being both a broadening and deepening experience... Learning as much from the incredible and diverse participants as the amazing facilitators, the ten days of the first workshop have flown by. I feel like I’ve come a long way as an organiser (and dare I say a person?!) already. I’m excited and a little bit scared to see where I end up.”

Alexandra Soderlund, Solar Citizens

Highlights from 2015

Our Land, Our Water, Our Future campaign

2015 was a huge year for communities raising their voices to protect the land, water and future of NSW. Widespread community concern meant the impacts of coal mining and coal seam gas fracking were a defining issue at the March 2015 NSW election, leading to significant policy change and engagement by all sides of politics with experts and impacted communities.

Highlights

During 2015 the NSW government continued to implement the Gas Plan announced in November 2014, following recommendations of the NSW Chief Scientist, which included buying back and cancelling 15 CSG licences.

Our Land, Our Water, Our Future hosted dozens of public information events and film screenings attended by over 10,000 people. As just one example, a packed public forum in Manly before the NSW election was attended by the NSW Minister for Planning and the Environment Rob Stokes and NSW Chief Scientist Mary O'Kane.

Thousands of volunteers took action, including going door-to-door to survey their neighbours and hear their views on coal and coal seam gas. In Manly, 250 people hit the streets, reaching over 8,000 households in what was the biggest single-day doorknock in NSW political history.

We collaborated with communities across NSW to put on events and conferences to bring people together and learn more about key issues. Highlights included the Liverpool Plains Harvest Festival, the Gloucester Sustainable Futures Convention, the Via Bylong Weekend, Bulga Beats Festival and more.

On International Women's Day, we brought together 150 women in Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens to celebrate the inspirational women who are standing up to protect our farms, forests, water and communities. We were delighted to welcome former Governor of NSW, Professor the Hon. Dame Marie Bashir to give our keynote address.

▼ Bulga residents rally

Photo: Kate Ausburn



“This is a clarion call I believe. I couldn’t be more passionate about a cause than this one. We must do something to protect our food producing land... This is, in as sense, a crisis, disguised though it is. The sale of our farmland, and the destruction of our farmland, must stop. That is my feeling, and I have never been so emphatic or political in my life.”

Dame Marie Bashir speaking about the importance of protecting our food producing land on International Women’s Day

Alongside our partners at the Nature Conservation Council and Lock the Gate Alliance, we supported the community of Bulga in their ongoing battle to halt Rio Tinto’s Mount Thorley Warkworth mine expansion because of its destructive impacts. Further north, the NSW government gave the green light to Chinese mining company Shenhua to put a massive new open-cut coal mine on the Liverpool Plains. We connected Sydney residents with local farmers aiming to protect land, forest and the important koala population from its impacts.



^ Marie Bashir, front page, The Land

v Gomeroi ceremony, Liverpool Plains Harvest Festival

v Shenhua public meeting in Lane Cove



Photo: Kate Ausburn

Highlights from 2015

Peter Gray Community Action Fund

The Sunrise Project is proud to be able to provide grants to community groups working to protect Australia's natural assets and the global climate from the destructive impacts of the expansion of the fossil fuel industry. The Peter Gray Community Action Fund was established in January 2013 to provide small grants to community groups in line with The Sunrise Project's vision and mission. Applications for grants of up to \$5,000 are open to non-profit community groups all over Australia through a simple online application form.

The fund is named after Peter Gray, an inspiring young activist from Newcastle in the Hunter Valley, who sadly passed away in 2011 following a battle with cancer. He is renowned for the landmark legal case *Gray vs (NSW) Minister for Planning* [2006] in which he successfully argued that the NSW Government needed to consider the greenhouse impacts of burning the coal from the proposed Anvil Hill mine in the Hunter Valley. Peter was a passionate grassroots campaigner for action on climate change and the protection of forests and was an inspiration to many. His memory embodies the spirit and passion of communities all over Australia who are standing up to protect the places they love.

During 2015 The Sunrise Project provided a wide range of grants for projects. For example, we supported young doctors to run a Healthy Futures campaign to have Australia's two largest health sector super funds divest from fossil fuels, helped a Christian community group to make a video to share stories of communities feeling the impacts of climate change and assisted a peak state nature conservation council organise a conference on mining.



v Peter Gray, who inspired our Community Action Fund

^ Healthy Futures divestment pledge



Photo: John Reid

International Small Grants Program

The Sunrise Project makes small grants to local community groups around the world to support them in their efforts to defend their land and rights from destructive mining and energy projects. We have seen that local communities which are empowered with information and resources can successfully resist destructive developments and promote better pathways for meeting future energy needs.

In 2015 we gave small grants to five community groups in five different countries. Some examples include:

- In South Africa, we supported a film in the Zulu language to educate communities about the impacts of a proposed coal mine. The proposed mine is sited only 40 metres from the boundary of the pristine iMfolozi Wilderness Area, the first declared wilderness in Africa, and home to a vast array of wildlife. The coal mine was later suspended due to community and environmental opposition.
- In Botswana, local communities in the Mmanabula area were provided with information about their rights and the impacts of proposed coal mining so that they could successfully advocate for alternatives to coal. In early March this year, Anglo American announced that it was terminating its exploration work on its two coal leases in the Mmanabula coalfields and closing its office in Botswana.
- We funded a community exchange between Kenya and South Africa to educate indigenous Lamu communities facing a new coal plant on their land about the impacts of coal and its alternatives.
- The Colombian government announced early in 2016 that it was officially banning all mining activities in its Páramo region – a sensitive upland ecosystem – after the country's Constitutional Court revoked a regulation that had allowed mineral exploitation in the area. In 2014 we had provided local community groups with a small grant to resist mining in this region.

v Páramo victory celebration in Colombia



Photo: Alberto Gonzalez (Greenpeace)

Organisational Report

2015 was another successful year for The Sunrise Project and we have now well and truly emerged from the 'start-up' phase while striving to maintain the agility of a start-up. After growing our team in 2014 we started and ended 2015 with nine staff. We continued to work hard to expand our donor base as well as supporting grantees and partner groups to build their own fundraising capacity.

Compliance

The Sunrise Project Australia Limited was registered as a company limited by guarantee in mid 2012 with the following charitable objectives:

1. Protect, preserve and enhance the natural environment;
2. Protect the natural environment from pollution and over-exploitation;
3. Support and empower individuals, communities, governments and industry to make changes required to prevent dangerous climate change;
4. Facilitate public education about, and promote the transition to, a clean energy economy; and
5. Educate, empower and support communities to protect natural assets and promote the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources in their local areas.

The Sunrise Project has endorsement as a charity from the Australian Taxation Office, is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and is on the National Register of Environmental Organisations.

We continue to place a high priority on governance and compliance and will carefully monitor foreshadowed developments in charity regulation so as to ensure that the Company responds quickly and appropriately to any changed regulatory environment.

Governance

The Sunrise Project is directed by a volunteer Board that seeks to uphold the highest standards of governance in the pursuit of our mission. As such, The Board seeks to ensure there is a range of appropriate experience and expertise represented within it. Miranda Nagy, Mark Wakeham and Erna de Vries were re-elected to the Board at May's AGM, at which Aviva Imhof was also elected. In June Bob Burton resigned from the Board and Mark and Aviva subsequently took on the role of Co-Chair.

In 2015, Beverley Pope, our Finance & Operations Manager, completed a Certificate in Governance for Not-for-Profits and became a Certified Member of the Governance Institute of Australia and was appointed as Company Secretary in May.

The work of the Board in 2015 continued to be assisted by the Finance, Risk, Audit and Compliance (FRAC) Sub-committee, consisting of John Hepburn, Miranda Nagy and Erna de Vries. The FRAC Sub-committee is advised by Beverley Pope. In 2016, the Board will continue to monitor and improve our governance processes and will work towards Board succession.

Board of Directors



Aviva Imhof, Director and Co-Chair

Aviva Imhof is Deputy Director of the International Energy Program at the European Climate Foundation. The International Energy Program is developing strategies for securing clean energy around the world and Europe's role in achieving this. Aviva has a particular focus on East and Southeast Asia, and joined the program in May 2015. Aviva has over 25 years of experience in energy sector policy and advocacy focusing on the hydropower and high carbon sectors with a special focus on the environmental, economic and social dimensions of energy options. Prior to her position at ECF, Aviva worked as Pacific Coal Network Coordinator with The Sunrise Project. She supported a diverse network of NGOs and community groups around the world working to stop the construction of new coal plants and mines and enable a just transition to sustainable, renewable energy systems. Before that, Aviva worked with International Rivers in Berkeley, California, first as Southeast Asia Program Director and then as Campaigns Director.



Mark Wakeham, Director and Co-Chair

Mark Wakeham is the CEO of Environment Victoria (EV), one of Australia's leading environmental charities. In his previous role as Campaigns Director with EV he led campaigns for the decarbonisation of Victoria's energy supply, the successful campaign to prevent the proposed HRL coal-fired power station in Victoria, and numerous other Victorian and national campaigns. Prior to working at EV, Mark worked as a campaigner with Greenpeace Australia Pacific for three years where he successfully campaigned for the introduction of renewable energy and energy efficiency targets in Victoria, New South Wales and nationally. Before that he was Coordinator of the Environment Centre of the Northern Territory for 5 years where he grew the organisation considerably and ran successful campaigns to prevent uranium mining in Kakadu National Park and land clearing in the Daly Basin. He has degrees in Economics, Australian History and Adult Education.



John Hepburn, Executive Director

John Hepburn is the founder and Executive Director of The Sunrise Project. Prior to founding The Sunrise Project in 2012, John spent ten years working in senior positions with Greenpeace Australia Pacific, where he performed a wide variety of roles, including managing the climate and energy campaign, the genetic engineering campaign, and the outreach and mobilization department. Prior to working for Greenpeace, John co-founded several non-profit recycling businesses and worked on a wide variety of environmental campaigns at a grassroots level. John holds degrees in Manufacturing Systems Engineering and Business Management from the Queensland University of Technology and prior to becoming an activist worked for several years as an engineer making components for the oil, gas, coal and nuclear industries.



Erna de Vries, Director

Erna is a retired petroleum geologist and financial analyst with a keen interest in sustainability and corporate ethics. She grew up in the Netherlands where she studied Earth Sciences before starting a career as a geologist with international oil and gas companies including Shell, BHP and Ampolex. After working in the UK and Brunei, her career brought her to Australia in the early 1980s. She was immediately struck by the beauty of the landscape and decided to stay. After obtaining her MBA in Sydney, Erna worked as a senior executive in corporate and institutional banking. After working with Bankers Trust, Erna was appointed as Head of Resources Research with Westpac Corporate Banking before moving to a senior risk management position with Commonwealth Bank. During this time she was involved in the financing decisions of many major mining and energy projects. In 2003 she moved to rural NSW, where she became active in community and social justice issues with various volunteer organizations. Beside a passion for protecting the environment, Erna has a keen interest in philosophy, ethics and corporate governance. She is committed to helping steer Australia on a genuinely sustainable course.



Carmel Flint, Director

Carmel has lived and worked all her life in regional NSW, having spent most of her time in north-west NSW. Carmel has trained as a botanist and linguist and now works as an environmental consultant. In her role as Campaign Co-ordinator for the Lock The Gate Alliance, Carmel works with a wide cross-section of the community, including farmers, Traditional Owners, environmentalists, and town residents, to prevent the uncontrolled expansion of coal and gas mining. Carmel is committed to providing support for people and communities that are facing massive pressure from mining giants who threaten their land and water resources. She recognises the power of collective effort and the importance of genuine participation from grassroots groups and the community to deliver lasting social change.



Miranda Nagy, Director

Miranda is Special Counsel at Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, Sydney. She has advised and conducted litigation on behalf of various environmental organisations on many occasions and also practises in the areas of class actions and human rights. From 2004 to 2006 she was a co-chair and board member of the Mineral Policy Institute Inc. She has worked with the Central Land Council and with an Aboriginal community corporation in the Northern Territory and has a particular interest in the interaction between mining development and Indigenous land and native title rights.

Financial statements

The Sunrise Project Australia Limited
ABN: 65 159 324 697

Statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
REVENUE		
Grants and Donations	5,089,393	4,541,750
Other income	98,369	173,228
TOTAL REVENUE	5,187,762	4,714,978
EXPENSES		
Grant funding and donation expenses	(3,093,202)	(2,868,602)
Program expenses	(1,088,498)	(1,120,492)
Operations and administration expenses	(650,228)	(634,298)
Other expenses	(633)	–
TOTAL EXPENSES	(4,832,561)	(4,623,392)
NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	355,201	91,586
Other comprehensive income	–	–
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	355,201	91,586

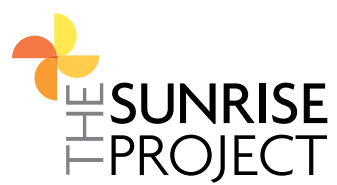
Pictured: Breeza farmland

The Sunrise Project Australia Limited
ABN: 65 159 324 697

Statement of financial position as at 31 December 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,350,801	1,180,977
Trade and other receivables	158,129	115,898
Other current assets	22,152	8,676
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,531,082	1,305,551
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Plant and equipment	5,045	6,422
Other assets	17,000	–
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	22,045	6,422
TOTAL ASSETS	1,553,127	1,311,973
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	104,156	159,580
Other liabilities	59,680	136,214
Short-term provisions	53,853	35,942
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	217,689	331,736
TOTAL LIABILITIES	217,689	331,736
NET ASSETS	1,335,438	980,237
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	1,335,438	980,237
TOTAL EQUITY	1,335,438	980,237

Note: The financial statements have been extracted from the audited financial statements. Surplus funds as at 31 December 2015 will be used to continue the work of The Sunrise Project in 2016.



www.sunriseproject.org.au

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