



Annual
Report
2017-
2018

Strategic Directions at a glance

Vision
An empowered and engaged community, actively cultivating long-term social and environmental well-being

Mission
To build relationships to inspire, educate and demonstrate sustainable environmental practice and reconnect people to the natural world

Values
Integrity, Inclusiveness, Creativity, Reciprocity, Respect for First Peoples' cultures

1. Education:
Provide and support educational programs that develop and share knowledge, ideas and skills which inspire and stimulate positive environmental action

2. Community Action:
Support people to care for the environment and address climate change

3. Partnerships:
Build strategic partnerships which maximise our environmental and social impact

4. Organisational Development:
Ensure the EcoCentre is run in an effective and efficient manner

President's Report



I am pleased and proud to introduce the 2017-18 Port Phillip EcoCentre Annual Report. It shows the wide variety and complexity of the EcoCentre's work and the outstanding outcomes and impact that we have had throughout the year, both for the people involved and the environment.

Perhaps more importantly, the Annual Report showcases the EcoCentre practice of collaborating with others – with the people and families of the communities where we work, and with businesses, schools and other organisations. This past year we partnered with over 284 organisations, including 156 Schools and Early Learning Centres and 25 Affiliate environmental organisations.

Since its inception 19 years ago, the EcoCentre has always believed in working with others. In the face of the sweeping and extreme effects of climate change on the environment and people, we must work together. Undertaking local activities together to restore, enrich and protect wildlife, waterways and community wellbeing is crucial now more than ever.

You will see from this report that the EcoCentre delivers a range of education, science-based research and community action programs focused on Port Phillip Bay and its catchments across Greater Melbourne. Programs include teaching in schools and Early Learning Centres and to adults, running seminars and excursions, conducting research and implementing on-ground activities. Through

these programs we aim to stimulate people to connect to their local habitats, to protect the environment and to influence decision makers so all life can flourish.

The range, scope, quality and impact of our work are documented in the following pages but I will highlight some aspects here.

Last year we directly engaged with 18,568 people, not including the thousands of digital interactions. Our work reached over 160 Melbourne suburbs.

We developed our new three-year Strategic Plan to guide and monitor our work. The plan ensures that we operate at the highest level in all areas including governance, and that we are at the forefront of change and innovation.

In conjunction with universities and other research institutions, our staff and volunteers continued to carry out research projects and to design and refine research techniques and reporting. Our citizen science initiatives grew by 40 per cent and conducted 422 activities, primarily with a focus on urban biodiversity, Port Phillip Bay, and plastic pollution.

We also made submissions on 10 local, state and federal plans, policies and strategies, concerning biodiversity, waterway health, waste management, climate change and more.

We launched new projects that expand community involvement in caring for the bay and its catchments. These included Living Water Workbees, Clean Bay Blueprint and Multicultural Coastal Ambassadors, which were all funded by the Victorian Government.

We doubled the number of young graduates from our flagship school program, Tomorrow's Leaders for Sustainability, where students build leadership skills and devise practical sustainability projects at their school.

Our team of qualified teachers refreshed our teaching programs and resources to further align with the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics elements of the Victorian Curriculum.

Environmental volunteer hours through the EcoCentre increased by 48 per cent – in total 3,869 volunteers contributed 16,327 volunteer hours. This included a doubling of the volunteer hours in our organic community

garden and community compost site, which processed an enormous 35 tonnes of compost from the organic scraps donated by local residents.

Our important work and impact are only possible because of the generous support of many organisations. I would like to offer a huge thanks to our primary funder and partner the City of Port Phillip, which provides an annual grant and use of the building at a peppercorn rent. Our successful working collaboration is an inspiration to many councils and others across Melbourne and beyond. The Port Phillip Council has also pledged financial support for a much-needed new building, subject to obtaining matching funding, which together we are seeking from the Victorian Government.

Other local government including Cities of Bayside, Stonnington and Kingston have also supported us financially and beyond. This has enabled an expanded, richer program and facilitated links to the local communities for the councils and us.

We were successful in winning a number of grants from the State Government through the Port Phillip Bay Fund, Coastcare and Community Skills Grants, and the Australian Government Citizen Science Grants. Most of these projects are in conjunction with partner organisations, which enables a broader reach and cross-fertilisation of ideas and action.

There are many other organisations and individuals who funded and supported us throughout the year and they are listed in this report on pages 29-31. An enormous thanks to you all: we could not do what we do without you.

Finally, I would like to thank our fantastic group of staff and volunteers. We really are a great team, led and managed by the Executive Officer, the extraordinary April Seymore, and the exceptional Committee of Management. It is because of the dedication, expertise, generosity and passion of each of you that the EcoCentre is such a valuable successful organisation and that together we are contributing towards a more sustainable world.

Pam O'Neil

Pam O'Neil

1. Education

Early Years, Schools and Community Education

Over 7,622 participants were inspired and stimulated by the EcoCentre's educational programs and projects this year.




Our award-winning **Tomorrow's Leaders for Sustainability** (TLfS) program trained a staggering 488 students from 16 schools. These students participated in a term-long program involving hands-on learning about behaviours that benefit the environment and how to be an example in sustainability leadership for their peers. Thank you to the City of Stonnington, City of Port Phillip and Bayside City Council for providing financial scholarships enabling local schools to participate and to each mayor for presenting the students with their graduation certificates.

Our ongoing collaboration with TLfS founders, Pat Armstrong and Jane Stewart, is reflected in their program continuing to thrive and expand.

EcoCentre excursion and incursion programs enjoyed a range of improvements, including the updating of our website with new online search engine features and the streamlining of our booking processes, making it easier for teachers and early years educators to book our services.

With the support of the PMF Foundation, the content of our excursions was refreshed to align with the learning outcomes in the **Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM)** curriculum. The pilot rollout has been highly successful and the team is excited to continue to implement these next financial year.

Our Early Learning Centre (ELC) and kindergarten program continued to grow with our **Nature Play**, sensory gardens and mini-beast safari incursions and excursions being popular. The Hamer Sprout **Mud to Mindfulness** project was an overwhelming success, especially the fully booked ELC educator professional development workshops.



*'All the information
was so beautifully
presented and
taught with so much
enthusiasm and love.'*

Early Years educator



'Belinda's passion and enthusiasm were contagious, and her flexibility and adaptiveness made sure our learning goals for the students were exceeded.'
Year 2 teacher,
Melbourne Girls Grammar



Responding to evaluation feedback received on our programs led to our schools and ELC excursions and incursions recording their most successful year to date, with the highlight being our first instance where a term was booked out in advance.

The EcoCentre secured funding to deliver the following place-based projects:

- City of Port Phillip's **Active Transport** project, which supported 14 local schools to participate in Walk or Ride to School initiatives.
- EcoCentre's facilitation of 20 local schools through the **ResourceSmart Schools** program on behalf of Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies (CERES). Schools progress through modules and apply for a 1-5 star rating to recognise their achievement of sustainability milestones. We supported seven schools to achieve star ratings, and six schools to complete seven modules. Congratulations to St Kilda Primary School, whose pinnacle 5-Star rating was presented at Parliament in May 2018.
- The **Penguin Friendly** 'zero waste' school fete project worked with Albert Park and St Kilda Primary Schools to reduce landfill and litter at their fetes through student and vendor leadership, and developed a Wash Against Waste kit for both schools.

We continued our celebration of student and teacher sustainability leadership with the organising and delivery of the 12th **School Sustainability Festival** (15 September 2017), and the **Steps to Sustainability Conference** (2 March 2018). These events continue to strengthen and deepen our school sustainability community through students and teachers showcasing their achievements, networking, sharing and supporting each other.

Presented by the mayors of Bayside City Council and City of Port Phillip, the **School Sustainability Awards** are a highlight of the School Sustainability Festival. We thank volunteer Annie Strutt for organising the prizes, and local businesses for their generous donations of sensational health- and green-themed prizes.

We are actively working towards being able to deliver funded education programs all year round, and during 2017/18, we delivered a variety of funded school holiday education sessions including **Nature Play**, nest box building and **Summer by the Sea** activities.

Our **Youth Wildlife Ambassador** continued to foster the mindfulness and monitoring of the extraordinary 1,000 resident and migratory species that have been recorded in our area by local naturalists. The **#Habitat3182** project, supported by Patagonia, helped the community build nest boxes, bat tubes and insect hotels to provide homes for native species in 3182 and neighbouring postcodes. Inspired by discovering the range of species thriving in the suburbs, the students of Camberwell Grammar School nominated us for an urban ecology themed Youth in Philanthropy grant from Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation. Through this support we produced two short films for **Inspiring Future Youth Wildlife Ambassadors**.

The **Teachers' Environment Network (TEN)** delivered six meetings on the topics of waste and recycling, Indigenous perspectives, climate change, citizen science, waterways, and biodiversity. There was a 25 per cent increase in school subscriptions and a 50 per cent increase in ELC subscriptions from the previous year. The TEN continues to provide and share environmental educational information and curriculum resources.

EcoCentre education staff conducted numerous **principal visits** to schools in Bayside. These visits provided an opportunity for the schools to share their sustainability achievements and for each school to find out what support is available for their sustainability journey.

Our **Sessions with Elders** allowed many schools within the City of Port Phillip to learn about Indigenous culture from Arweet Carolyn Briggs and educators from the Boon Wurrung Foundation.

'I love coming to Teachers' Environment Network meetings as I go away feeling motivated and inspired. I learn a lot that I can use.'

Secondary teacher





‘Gio delivered the content in a really easy to understand, inspiring manner. He is a marvel.’

*Year 5/6 teacher,
Elwood Primary School*

We delivered a range of community **Bush Tucker and Wildlife Walks** for local residents as part of the City of Port Phillip’s **Seniors Festival**, and Cora Graves diversity and inclusion programs. Participants learned how to identify and cook with local indigenous plants and sampled warrigal green bruschetta and lemon myrtle tea.

Building on the popularity of **Be the RE-Generation**, our **Alive Outside** project empowers 12-25 year olds to walk, cycle and snorkel around the beaches, foreshore and reserves within the City of Port Phillip. Participants protect our local wildlife by monitoring wildlife species, building nest boxes, weeding, and planting and growing native plants. The project has been developed to address many of the commitments within City of Port Phillip’s *Happy, Healthy, Heard: Youth Commitment 2014–19*. This year, the first nine events were delivered with 51 youth participating

in 77 hours of local habitat restoration activities for the penguins, microbats and foreshore migratory birds.

Operation STEAM Clean the Bay aims to transform the landscape, curriculum and leadership projects at St Columba’s Primary School. The Port Phillip Bay Fund is backing this three-year project to activate the local community in caring for the bay by understanding the connection between our everyday decisions and the health of our bay, and ultimately how we can improve it. A tireless parent team is redesigning the school grounds to reflect the area’s ecological history and eliminate run-off. EcoCentre staff rolled up their sleeves for a working bee to design and install a rain garden at the front of the school and to deliver a term-long **Expert in Residence** program to Year 5 and 6 students. The Expert in Residence program engaged the students in STEAM concepts and curriculum

with the students designing equipment to help them explore the underwater ecosystems.

This year we welcomed **Ben Francischelli, Deb Punton, Ella Ryan, Malcolm Dow** and **Matt McArthur**, who have enthusiastically joined **Gio Fitzpatrick** and **Peter Kelly** in our casual staff pool. Our casual staff have an incredible variety of skills and expertise ranging across ecology, botany, classroom teaching, school sustainability, marine biology, palaeontology, history and local knowledge.

Congratulations to **Karen Jones, Sharron Hunter, Belinda Daly, Reiko Yamada, Ben, Deb, Ella, Malcolm, Matt, Gio, Peter** and **Captain Trash** for your knowledge, skills, enthusiasm, dedication and commitment in delivering another successful year of sustainable educational support to our schools, ELCs and community.

Education

| What will success look like? | The success of 2017–2018 |
|--|---|
| 1. Schools and their students and teachers in our region involved in caring for the local environment | <p>Our programs engaged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 569 teachers • 6,058 students • 156 schools and ELCs <p>Types of care for the environment included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plant propagation and planting • habitat restoration and nest box building • microplastic litter audits and removal • citizen science including beach profiling, live mollusc surveys and shoreline shell surveys • creating School Environment Management Plans • creating Wash Against Waste kits |
| 2. Niche post-school youth programs implemented | <p>Engaged 995 participants aged 12–25 through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alive Outside • Be the RE-Generation • The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award |
| 3. Young people and community members take up environmental leadership roles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six secondary students joined us for work experience • 488 students graduated from the TLfS program • Scout Sam Perkins won the Bayside Youth Community Leadership Award • Brighton Sea Scouts won the Environmental Organisation Award for Bayside • Be the RE-Generation participants collectively won the Community Impact Award from the Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network |
| 4. Educational programs incorporate First Peoples’ cultural perspectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 178 students and 20 teachers participated in Sessions with Elders, cultural excursions and Boon Wurrung professional development for teachers • Three Boon Wurrung Foundation cultural educators employed |



Ecological footprints and nature play

2. Community Action

The EcoCentre was founded by and for people who don't want to wait for solutions when we can spark them. Together, we roll up our sleeves and conduct a range of activities to restore, enrich and protect wildlife, waterways and community wellbeing.



'My experience with the EcoCentre has given me a passion to learn more.'

15-year-old Baykeeper volunteer

Port Phillip Baykeeper

Your Port Phillip Baykeeper **Neil Blake** is an independent voice for Port Phillip Bay. For over 30 years, Neil has worked with schools, government, First Peoples, researchers, business and community to love and protect our bay.

A day in the life of a Baykeeper involves delivering education, advocacy and action to protect the health of our bay – and there is no plain sailing! Although there may be historic charts and navigational aids at hand to help interest groups understand the flow-on effect of their aims and projects, many give little consideration to how those aims and projects might affect the health of the bay over time, let alone how the new challenges of rapid population growth, rising sea levels and development across the bay catchments can be met.

The fact that stormwaters flow to the bay calls for a culture shift where all bay 'users' (any person or organisation based in the bay catchments) must accept responsibility for their impact on the bay. Can you, your local community group, business, or government agency be a Baykeeper too?

With this question in mind, a suite of **Street-to-Bay Citizen Science** activities has been designed to give people hands-on knowledge of the connection between where they live, their favourite beach and the wider bay environment. Methods to monitor and track plastic pollution to its source will gather data, increase awareness of issues, and provide for evidence-based advocacy to inform litter reduction strategies to be adopted by local councils in bay catchments.

While monitoring plastic pollution is a major focus, it is important not to lose sight of what we seek to protect. Tracking change in the natural environment through activities such as shoreline shell surveys, live mollusc surveys, and beach profiling (to record sand erosion on beaches) is popular with schools, community and corporate groups.

As well as gathering invaluable data that can be used to help shape the future, involvement in these activities serves to build relationships and a sense of identity that will be of immeasurable importance to the future of multicultural Melbourne.

Be the RE-Generation

From January 2016 to December 2017, the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust funded **Be the RE-Generation**, a Baykeeper youth volunteering project to research, restore and revegetate our coastal habitat. Over two years, we trained 1,540 youth to create a resilient Port Phillip Bay. Partnerships with youth services, Scouts and schools supported weekly and weekend programs for volunteers aged 15–25 to work with Port Phillip Baykeeper Neil Blake. Citizen science, desktop research and practical works focused on biodiversity and marine plastic pollution including:

- conducting audits of microplastic pollution on beaches in the bay
- recording beach and intertidal sand surface levels to monitor coastal erosion
- recording sandy seabed molluscs as indicators of a healthy bay
- planting native species for coastal bush birds
- installing sand, seaweed and plants on St Kilda breakwater to prevent erosion and enhance habitat for seabirds, including little penguins

Students on placement made invaluable contributions through desktop research to compile data on aspects of Port Phillip Bay. The research found very few studies had been conducted on sandy seabed mollusc populations, highlighting the need for live mollusc surveys to understand local food webs in the bay. Project reports produced this year included a *Vegetation Map of St Kilda Breakwater* and *Study of Sandy Seabed Molluscs in St Kilda Harbour*.

Our interns from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (USA) extensively trialled citizen science activities designed by Neil Blake and developed associated data sheets, promotional publications and recruitment strategies. They created a Citizen Science Rubric to evaluate the merits of any given citizen science initiatives through criteria for cultivating awareness, volunteer retention, and scientific contribution.

Be the RE-Generation upskilled and empowered young people as leaders over a total of 2,278 engagements. Most volunteers came for four reasons: social, scholarly, organisational (e.g. community service) or career path. While young volunteers are typically more likely to attend a one-off volunteering session, through Be the RE-Generation, 415 volunteers (27 per cent) attended multiple sessions.

The expected long-term social impact of this program is a significantly increased community stewardship of



‘The activities definitely raised things I’d never thought about. It was good to do something good!’

*Ed Krutsch,
Albert Park Scouts*



waterways and coastal habitats, through participation in practical habitat protection activities, advocacy for coastal management, and adoption of lifestyle choices that foster environmental wellbeing. This project was successfully designed as a pathway enabling numerous participants to launch their own projects, enrol in related tertiary studies, and even secure their first job in the environment sector.

Many partners advanced this project, including: Earthcare St Kilda, Parks Victoria, Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network (ieLLEN), Scouts Victoria, Brighton Sea Scouts, Elwood Scouts, Albert Park Scouts, Montague Continuing Education Centre, Albert Park College and Southern Autistic School.

For their microplastics work with the Baykeeper through RE-Gen, Sam Perkins and Brighton Seas Scouts were recognised with two Bayside awards. As a result, we have been proud and pleased to implement a new **Streets to Sea Litter Audits** project with Scouts Victoria for the next two years. The success of this project also inspired the new two-year project **Alive Outside** with City of Port Phillip Youth Services; and was recognised with a regional ieLLEN Community Impact Award.



'The opportunity to participate in varied activities was very helpful towards my gaining full-time employment with an environmental consulting firm.'

Ying Quek

Launching the microplastics report with Ministers

Clean Bay Blueprint

Clean Bay Blueprint is Australia's first litter research to monitor and map microplastic litter holistically across a city's streets, rivers and coast, to inform localised source reduction plans. In July 2018, *The Age* broke our team's findings that 828 million pieces of litter flow to Port Phillip Bay every year through our urban rivers. Seventy-four per cent of this is microplastics.

To quantify and map Melbourne's microplastics, this project:

- conducts monthly boat trawls of microplastic pollution in the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers to establish baseline data about microplastics pollution in the rivers and monitor changes over time
- supports community groups on six beaches and various streets in catchments around Port Phillip Bay to conduct quarterly litter audits using the Baykeeper citizen science audit methods

- initiated a 10-month pilot project to trawl for microplastics at the Port Phillip Heads, providing an idea of how much microplastic pollution enters the bay from Bass Strait

An analysis of these findings will guide the next two years of investigations for Clean Bay Blueprint as well as sister projects under the Victorian Government's Port Phillip Bay Fund, aiming to track and prevent the sources of plastic pollution on streets, waterways, beaches and Port Phillip Bay.

The first-year project report, *Microplastics in the Maribyrnong and Yarra Rivers*, was launched on the banks of the Yarra by the Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change, the Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio and our local MP, the Hon. Martin Foley.

The project is powered by incredible partners, including the Yarra Riverkeeper Association, Balcombe Estuary

Reserve Group (BERG) Mt Martha, Gordon TAFE, Seaford Beach Patrol, Werribee Riverkeeper, Rye Beach Patrol, Blair Stafford at Blairgowrie Yacht Squadron, Mandy Robertson at Dolphin Research Institute and Dr Chris Johnstone at Monash University. We are indebted to the students of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, whose support enabled us to design and refine methods within best practice.

If you are keen to help map our way to a plastic-free bay, citizen scientists are needed to conduct Baykeeper litter audits across streets of Greater Melbourne (the audits take approximately one hour to complete), and to work at the EcoCentre helping with counts of microplastic trawl contents (4-8 hours duration per month). Contact **Fam Charko** via fam@ecocentre.com to organise project training and induction.

Sunscreen and marine bay life

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University and the EcoCentre have teamed up under an Australian Citizen Science Grant to research the effects of sunscreen on marine life in Port Phillip Bay.

We all know that sunscreen is important in helping to protect our skin from sun damage. But what damage is the sunscreen we slip-slop-slap doing to the environment when it washes off?

For some years now, scientists have known that particular active chemicals in some sunscreens have a toxic effect on corals and their development. One of these chemicals is oxybenzone (aka bezophenone-3, or BP-3). Oxybenzone causes coral to bleach, damages its DNA and disrupts coral development by deforming and killing juvenile coral. This chemical is the active ingredient in over 3,500 sunscreen products.

In popular tourist areas where tropical coral reefs are present, researchers have detected levels of oxybenzone as much as 12 times the concentration needed to have a detrimental effect on corals. As researchers estimate that between 6,000 and 14,000 tonnes of sunscreen lotion are affecting coral reefs each year, this is a serious issue for coral reefs worldwide. In May 2018, Hawaii led the world by banning sunscreens containing oxybenzone and octinoxate.

Another development in sunscreen is the use of nanoparticles. As the nanotechnology industry is a booming new frontier, we need to make sure we understand the effects of nanoparticles in the environment.

To date, the effects of sunscreen chemicals on organisms in temperate waters such as Port Phillip Bay are still unknown. Our bay may not have the number of coral species that the tropics have, but it has a lot of other types of very specialised marine life: eighty percent of species found in Port Phillip Bay cannot be found anywhere else in the world.

To understand the potential impact of sunscreen chemicals on Port Phillip marine life, we are testing to see if it affects the phytoplankton and algae communities in the bay. Together with algae, phytoplankton is a group of various plant-based



microorganisms that form the basis of the food chain for all bay species, including jellyfish, whales, shrimp, and fish larvae. Since these microorganisms are the foundation of healthy marine ecosystems, it is important that we find out if sunscreen has an effect on their populations.

With the help of citizen scientists, we have commenced taking seawater samples at three beaches – St Kilda, Elwood and Rye – on warm, sunny days when the waters are full of swimmers wearing sunscreen. Each sampling day consists of taking a series of water samples every four hours from 6 am–10 pm. These samples have been tested at RMIT to measure the concentrations of sunscreen nanoparticles and chemicals, and the levels of phytoplankton and algae present. Scientists also measure how quickly sunscreen disperses in the water until it is diluted enough to have no harmful effect.

It is important we gather together a comprehensive data set to understand what is happening. This research project will take three years. We are taking samples on seven days during each summer, and on four days during each winter (as the control group). In June 2020, the results will be published in research papers that will contribute to the growing body of international scientific knowledge about sunscreen and its effects on the environment.

If any issue is found, it can inform advocacy to ensure sunscreens are equally healthy for humans and the water we swim in.

Meanwhile, remember to apply sunscreen 15 minutes before entering the water so that it is absorbed by the skin and will not wash off.

Email fam@ecocentre.com to organise project training and induction.

Multicultural Coastal Ambassadors

We live in a diverse society with approximately 40 per cent of Melbourne residents born overseas. Despite this, meaningful and sensitive engagement with multicultural communities regarding coastal management and natural resource values is a challenging task for environmental not-for-profits (NFPs). Limited resources, the language barrier and a lack of understanding of issues through a cultural lens, contribute to these communities being left out of volunteering and employment opportunities.

Through this program we aimed to enhance our own cultural knowledge, and to nurture leadership for long-term coastal and environmental action.

We were thrilled to appoint **Brisa Yonzon**, **Chenxin Tu** and **Oscar Chen** as our new Coastal Ambassadors. They joined a series of activities with the EcoCentre and partners, then designed culturally inclusive events to connect people with coastal care and inspire local environmental action among Melbourne's growing multicultural communities.

The long-term goal is to engage more culturally and linguistically diverse volunteers in long-term monitoring and management of key beaches and coastal areas around Melbourne, and to support them to become environmental professionals.

'I gained a great deal from this program, more than I had bargained for. I have a technical background from my studies and work. I had no expectations of walking away feeling emotionally connected to the land.'

*Brisa Yonzon,
Coastal Ambassador*



Reiko and Chenxin removing pest species

Living Water Workbees

Coordinated by **Reiko Yamada**, this project builds partnerships for biodiversity protection, water quality improvements, 'burbs-to-the-Bay' connection, and infrastructure for property 'behind gates' that can play a perpetual role in protecting our shared bay.

Living Water Workbees helped the community care for Port Phillip Bay through:

- mobilising 2,917 volunteers to care for Werribee River and Elster Creek
- translating volunteer hours into rebates for rainwater tanks and rain gardens at homes and schools in order to divert, filter and recycle rainwater and stormwater across public-private boundaries
- improving public understanding of catchment areas and their flow-on effects to the bay
- engaging Traditional Owners to present local cultural connections to water

The Workbee calendar of 72 events tackled street and beach clean-ups, weed and pest removal, revegetation, habitat improvement and wildlife surveys. Volunteers cleaned up approximately 4,900 kg of litter and planted 6,700 trees.

The events were hosted by the EcoCentre and Werribee River Association as well as our community partners: Nature West, Point Cook Open Spaces, Beach Patrol 3184, Beach Patrol 3182, Beach Patrol 3030, Earthcare St Kilda, Friends of Elster Creek, Love Our Street 3184 and Love Our Street 3162.

The 4,485 volunteer hours generated \$25 per hour towards rebate credits for rainwater tanks and rain garden infrastructure at St Joseph's Primary School, Elsternwick; Caulfield Primary School; Carranballac College; and local residents. Activating unplumbed rainwater tanks at schools (and installing new ones) is providing water resilience during both drought and flood.

Our partners, PJT Green Plumbing, installed rainwater tanks with a total volume of 16,102 litres, providing 528 kL of potable water savings in an average year. For our second year, we look forward to an exciting calendar of environmental events that will help earn rainwater tanks for Elwood College and other community sites. Sign up to earn a rainwater tank for your school, home or business, or join our free community events by visiting www.livingwaterworkbees.com. This project is funded by the Victorian Government's Port Phillip Bay Fund.

'Learning about plants and growing food is now a very important part of my life.'

Garden volunteer

'The way Fam ran the day kept us engaged and motivated – her passion for the environment is so clear to see, and has rubbed off on us also! It was surprisingly informative and lots of fun.'

Amanda, Corporate volunteer

Port Phillip Urban Fresh Food Network

This year Port Phillip Urban Fresh Food Network (PPUFFN) returned to its roots in the EcoCentre's Community Garden. Permaculture guru **Deb Punton** ran Friday working bees on food growing, harvesting and cooking at the EcoCentre with satellite workshops for people living in Port Phillip Housing Association (PPHA) properties.

City of Port Phillip and the EcoCentre co-sponsor this social inclusion program to bring people together for the growing, preparing and sharing of healthy, fresh and social meals. Our key partnerships included PPHA, Sacred Heart Mission, and Star Health. The Outlandish women's group has become a dedicated and bright presence.

In all weather, the garden team of 62 dedicated volunteers rolled up their sleeves for 1,404 hours of organic gardening, including our popular Community Compost. Our three large compost bays process food and garden scraps from local residents, many of whom rent or do not have their own garden space. Trained volunteers turn the bins twice weekly to generate 'gardener's gold', which is applied to our garden plots to grow crops for school programs and weekly community meals. With many people inspired by the ABC TV program *War on Waste*, organic material donations increased by nearly 500 per cent and we processed 35 tonnes of compost! What we did not use onsite was made available to locals.

Whether your thumbs are lush green or burnt umber, we welcome new volunteers to learn the joys of urban agriculture and fresh food shared with community.

Corporate volunteering

Research now shows that time spent engaging with nature benefits our cognitive, psychological and physical wellbeing, and our capability for insight and resilience. Research also reveals that corporate volunteering contributes to increased job satisfaction – and we love hosting it too! This year, 330 professionals traded their blazer for a fluoro vest, joining us on the breakwater to **Pamper the Penguins** or become a **Marine Biologist for a Day**. Our tailored outdoor programs strengthen teams while having a positive impact on the spectacular plants and animals of Port Phillip Bay.

Thank you to the teams from National Australia Bank, Telstra, AGL, Vocus, Recoveries Corporation and SEEK. Together you propagated 1,200 noonflowers, picked up 94 kg of microplastics (that is a lot of 5 mm plastic pieces!) and moved 16 tonnes of sand and seaweed to create penguin habitat on the breakwater. Thank you also to Goodcompany and Landcare for helping great companies to find out about our experiences.

Proceeds support our marine research and youth programs, with a portion donated to Earthcare St Kilda. To learn about options for your team, email volunteer@ecocentre.com.

35 tonnes
of community
compost



Repair Cafe

Throwing away is going away! From November 2017, the Jewish Ecological Coalition (JECO) and EcoCentre launched a monthly St Kilda Repair Cafe powered by skilled volunteers. Repair is a joyful, often simple yet increasingly lost art. On the second Sunday of each month anyone can now get a hands-on tutorial by bringing their broken household items and learning to repair them – for free!

Originating in Amsterdam, the global Repair Cafe movement organises passionate volunteers to teach community the skills and techniques to revive beloved household objects, from electrical items to textiles. Participants in our first seven workshops repaired 144 items, diverting 267 kg from waste. Happy customers learned DIY repair skills to successfully resuscitate items from trousers to toasters and from lamps to lawnmowers.

This project is powered by incredible volunteers. If you love to tinker and can bring your toolbox, get involved by emailing stkilda.repaircafe@gmail.com.

Community Action

| What will success look like? | The success of 2017–18 |
|--|--|
| 1. Wide range of stakeholders positively engaged in environmental protection activities, including through social media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly engaged 18,568 people (excluding digital) • Worked with 284 organisations • 16% participation growth on social platforms • 3,869 volunteers contributed 16,327 volunteer hours • new final bullet point text: \$30,152 received as donations, direct giving and workplace giving (excluding one bequest) |
| 2. Specific studies completed, reported on, publicised and influencing positive behaviour change | <p>Studies and reports completed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Bay Blueprint: <i>Microplastics in the Maribyrnong and Yarra</i> • <i>Nairn Catchments Network: Potential Baywide network models for community water protectors</i> • Vegetation Map of St Kilda Breakwater • <i>Study of Sandy Seabed Molluscs in St Kilda Harbour</i> • Shoreline shell posters for various beaches <p>Submissions made in response to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Product Stewardship Act Review</i> • Victorian Climate Change Targets • <i>State Environment Protection Policy for Waters</i> • Melbourne Water <i>Healthy Waterways Strategy</i> • City of Port Phillip <i>Sustainable Environment Strategy</i> • City of Port Phillip <i>Waste Management Strategy</i> • City of Bayside <i>Biodiversity Plan</i> • City of Glen Eira <i>Biodiversity Implementation Plan</i> <p>Media coverage included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular host spots on <i>Radio Marinara</i> and <i>Out of the Blue</i> • interviews on Mornington FM, <i>Tuesday Hometime</i> on 3CR and ABC Drive • print media including <i>Broadsheet</i>, <i>Herald Sun</i>, <i>The Age</i>, <i>Diversity</i> and <i>Port Phillip Leader</i> |

| | |
|--|--|
| 3. Active engagements by community members in citizen research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engaged in more than 422 citizen science activities • Activities included habitat mapping; microplastics and litter audits and removal; beach erosion profiling; live mollusc surveys; shoreline shell surveys; and water sampling for sunscreen |
| 4. Community members confident and able to cultivate and have access to fresh locally grown produce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 62 PPUFFN participants learned organic garden skills • Provided garden workshop support for community housing • 2,717 volunteer hours contributed to our community garden • Our Affiliates include five community gardens |
| 5. Up-to-date, well-maintained suite of communications and promotional tools and systems used internally and externally | <p>Diverse communications tools included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • newsletters tailored for teachers, early years educators, members, youth, and volunteers • social media stories and posts • <i>Baykeepers</i> film • an instructional EPUB (e-book) about bat boxes |



3. Partnerships

We bring together people of all ages and backgrounds to spark solutions and inspire environmental leadership. Collaboration is core to the EcoCentre. By connecting knowledge, sharing resources and uniting our voices, our diverse network can maximise positive environmental and social impact. Collectively, we reach over 160 suburbs and most waterways of Greater Melbourne.

'Yearly EcoCentre membership is our small way of supporting the vital work that the EcoCentre does – and it gives so much more back in return.'

Sam Smith, Elwood

Port Phillip Bay Nairn Catchments Network

Our relationships with community groups, schools, businesses and government agencies collectively forge a strong, strategic network of environmental protectors for our waterways linked to Port Phillip Bay. In recognition of our positive partnership approach, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation (LMCF) invited the EcoCentre, Yarra Riverkeeper and Werribee Riverkeeper to envision models for a network of community water protectors and advocates covering all catchments around Port Phillip Bay.

The Nairn Catchments Network (named after the Indigenous word for Port Phillip Bay) will bring together the vast range of waterway protectors that exist throughout Melbourne under the principle that 'caring for catchments will care for the bay'.

The network would promote community stewardship and influence government policy through enhanced dialogue between statutory bodies and the many volunteer 'Friends of' groups that have detailed local knowledge, but often lack capacity to influence long-term agendas at a regional scale. Of central importance is the need for the network to support and strengthen local groups, as opposed to imposing burdensome administrative processes and participation requirements on them.

Through meetings, workshops and desktop research, we considered the perspectives of community groups, government agencies and existing environmental networks. We also attended Melbourne Water's innovative consultation labs. Held over 18 months, these sessions

brought community, government, industry and scientists together to co-design 50-year objectives for the Werribee River, Maribyrnong River, Yarra River and Dandenong Creek catchments, which together form the bulk of the Port Phillip Bay's catchment. The resulting *Healthy Waterways Strategy* includes objectives for community engagement and collaboration, which are consistent with the objectives of the proposed network.

On the basis of our detailed research on existing community waterways protector organisations, and the wealth of ideas and community stakeholders met at the Melbourne Water forums, we have submitted a comprehensive report to LMCF that includes a recommended model for the proposed network.

We gratefully acknowledge the many people whose wisdom we drew upon, including Andrew Kelly (Yarra Riverkeeper), John Forrester (Werribee Riverkeeper), Christina Cheers (Jackson's Creek Eco Network), Anthony Bigelow (First Friends of Dandenong Creek), Liz Barraclough (BERG), Ross Colliver (Community Learning for Environmental Action), Jerry White (Spokane Riverkeeper) and writer Cress Bradley.

This project highlighted the value of 'keystone' organisations like Melbourne's Waterkeepers to foster ongoing, potent connections between community groups and institutions that care for waterways, and to translate between community and statutory contexts.

EcoCentre partnership network maps filtered by types of resources shared



Community Skills Grants

The EcoCentre is pleased to offer a calendar of free professional development events to our wonderful Affiliates and partners, without whom we could not cultivate environmental wellbeing. These events are perfect for community groups that love the on-ground work but know that other skills are needed to recruit, influence, inspire and endure.

Our network members wish to demystify websites and social media, make the most of membership and fundraising, and share principles and templates for successful partnerships and marketing. The training sessions are tailored for small-to-medium groups with lean resources and run from May to December 2018.

The Community Skills workshops are funded by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. Our excellent delivery partners include OurCommunity.com.au, Hootville Communications and TreeTec.

Partnerships

| What will success look like? | The success of 2017–18 |
|--|---|
| 1. Partnerships focus on active mutual engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 Affiliate organisations • 12 Affiliates collaborated with us on practical action for education, habitat and citizen science, as well as advocacy and understanding best practice for our sector |
| 2. Partner relationships built across government, businesses, environmental organisations, schools, trusts and community groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 284 school, government, business and community partnerships • Outcomes included practical action, research, advocacy, venue sharing, auspicing services, in-kind contributions, training and education • In-depth analysis and interviews undertaken to map and analyse connections, types of knowledge shared, how it flows between the EcoCentre and partners, change potential through each partnership (individual, collective, or systemic) and the amount of time invested |
| 3. Engaged and increased memberships and effective membership system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained member numbers while undertaking a review of our membership model and systems |
| 4. A well-coordinated team of volunteers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,869 volunteers contributed 16,327 volunteer hours |



Captain Trash at the Latin Festival



Plastic free morning tea above the Yarra Riverkeeper boat

4. Organisational Development

Strategic Plan 2018–2021

Any living mission is difficult to pin down in a document. Our new Strategic Plan represents the most in-depth, frank and rich strategic planning process the EcoCentre has ever undertaken, primarily indebted to the pro bono expertise of **Jan Cossar** and **Pam O'Neil** (who each gave 40+ hours in addition to the numerous group workshops), with extremely thoughtful feedback from our members and partners as we shifted the way we describe our Vision, contextualise and distinguish our work, and quantify 'so what?' impact stories.

It is a strong, robust and vivid tool to tell our story and help drive critical sustainability changes in myriad ways. It is linked carefully to local and state government strategies.

You can find our *Strategic Plan 2018–2021* and the accompanying *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* on the EcoCentre website.

EcoCentre redevelopment

The EcoHouse no longer has capacity to host the growing numbers of residents, schools and groups inspired to use it for training, education, citizen science, and as a planning and meeting space for activities.

In 2017, City of Port Phillip funded a Strategic Business Case and committed \$3.2 million in capital funds, subject to securing matching funds. This provides a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to model sustainable design and living to households and businesses, and will optimise the variety of programs that the EcoCentre undertakes with our partners. A fit-for-purpose community facility will enable and accelerate imperative science, education for all ages and community leadership that tackles climate change, prevents pollution and fosters long-term wellbeing.

Melbourne has now reached a population of five million. As we face critical climate challenges, we need effective, collaborative, community-led environmental action, to capitalise on government investments and facilitate inclusive solutions. We will be even more effective in a new building that supports and enhances our work.

Over 140 community groups, individuals, schools and research institutions have written letters to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, attesting to the value of the EcoCentre as a hub that supports a wide network of expertise and community action, which reaches 160 suburbs across Greater Melbourne. Together with the City of Port Phillip and our partners, we will continue to advocate for visionary facilities.

Concept Design by
Zen Architects



EcoCentre's knowledge management and knowledge networks: designing and implementing a robust system

The commercial sector uses the term *knowledge management* (KM) to describe how people learn, record and share information that is core to the organisation. The not-for-profit world is very knowledge-rich but for a range of reasons, we are susceptible to losing key knowledge if a staff person, committee member or longstanding volunteer moves on. Like many community organisations, the EcoCentre's KM has more or less grown organically with the organisation, rather than systematically to meet our needs.

However, the tools and investments that are standard practice for large corporations are too complex, costly and unwieldy for community groups of our size and smaller. With the funding support of LMCF, we are working over two years to implement a robust KM system and build a learning culture with staff, committee and volunteers. The project formalises a biannual investment in time and consulting fees to improve record keeping and knowledge-sharing processes and tools among staff and volunteers; funding committee training and executive officer training; and organisation-wide strategy meetings, with a goal to trial a KM policy suitable for small-to-medium NFPs and community groups. Robust KM (including standardising

our IT practices) will enable our team to adapt to future thinking, disruptive environmental events, long-term planning and bringing new people on board smoothly. Less time spent reinventing the wheel means more time and headspace for organisational reflection.

Community groups face similar issues: how to get community members involved; how to find money; how to overcome silos in government agencies; how to influence long-term agendas and how to ensure that your group does not fold when long-time members leave. Our project therefore also aims to expand the EcoCentre as a knowledge hub, assisting in a range of practical and strategic needs that can benefit our Affiliates and like-minded organisations. This includes sharing learnings and creating effective channels for distributing knowledge and information to and between those organisations.

In the first year of this project we considered our culture of learning and teaching within the team and identified the knowledge bottlenecks where decisions get stuck. We also considered what knowledge is important to retain and organise in an accessible way. Our staff and

committee completed an assessment of our leadership, adaptive management and operational capacities. We held workshops for all staff and committee to align understandings of the EcoCentre history and future Vision. We fundraised for new cross-team staff positions, commencing in spring 2018.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute mapped knowledge flow between the EcoCentre and our partners to identify hubs where we can multiply connections for impact and resource sharing. A fortuitous partner project arrived in the form of Community Learning for Environmental Action, which explores similar questions within regional Landcare groups. Models include *knowledge sharing*, where groups share what they do and why it works; *peer inquiry*, where groups work together to crack a difficulty they each face; and *mentoring*, where a group with experience supports another group as it develops a capacity it needs.

As we navigate areas that community groups are generally too busy to discuss, we are grateful for the wisdom of Dr Ross Colliver, Professor Katherine Foo, Professor Lorraine Higgins and Ron Jore.



Community investments and strategic activities

Some activities conducted each year are outside funded projects; however, they provide strategic value on behalf of our members. These activities involve knowledge sharing, network building and practical support that accelerates sustainability in our daily lives, business best practice and government systems. They typically involve a mix of self-funded work (enabled by our donors) and time volunteered by our tireless team.

This year, staff and committee members strategically donated their time to:

- **Affiliate and partner support:** attending partners' annual general meetings and events, facilitating strategic planning workshops for groups, hosting 'grant writing bees', supporting project development and writing letters of recommendation
- **Building the next generation of advocates:** mentoring students and pre-service teachers, participating in research projects, providing career advice and references
- **Building community connections:** community radio appearances and radio program hosting, attending award ceremonies and celebration events, speaking at film screenings and partners' events, and providing volunteer support and social inclusion activities

Community Compost bays and IT for mobile outreach

Federal Member for Melbourne Ports, Michael Danby, invited the EcoCentre to apply to the Australian Government's Stronger Communities Programme, which matches fund grants for small capital projects that achieve social benefits. This funding enabled critical upgrades to outdated IT as well as the compost system, with funding matched by City of Port Phillip.

With the support of Johnson Building and Maintenance, our Community Compost bays were rebuilt to increase site safety, amenity, education value, food waste diversion from landfill, and methane emissions reductions. This resulted in a five-fold increase in compost, which is used to grow community garden crops for community meals; demonstrations for school and community education programs; and is donated back to locals as fertiliser.

Upgrading to lighter, more durable and mobile technology kits for outreach educators now allows our teachers to work as a mobile knowledge hub, commuting by bike to collect bay health data, facilitate meetings, track urban wildlife and to share multimedia activities to over 28 schools and project partners in Melbourne Ports. **David Giles** organised the purchase of refurbished laptops in line with our sustainable procurement practices.

- **Community outreach and initiatives:** advocating for environmental parklands at Elsternwick Park North, supporting campaigns for Rivers of the West and #SustainabilityBelongs, partnering with visiting artists, responding to community enquiries and reports of dead or injured wildlife, and peer reviewing citizen science
- **Cross-sectoral relationship building:** collaboration with, and consultation for, government and government agencies by attending events and participation in various co-design workshops, consultation panels, brainstorming sessions and forums (on topics ranging from waterways to volunteer support strategies and plastics pollution advisory groups)
- **Ecosystem-scale thinking:** hosting strategic flora and fauna mapping with community naturalists, providing expertise and advocacy for integrated water management and biodiversity in the Elster Creek catchment, advising Melbourne Water's *Healthy Waterways Strategy*, and aligning citizen science methods between various groups
- **Knowledge gathering and research on key issues:** literature reviews and leveraging networks to design informed position statements and background papers
- **Providing equipment and space:** hosting the St Kilda Repair Cafe, providing bikes for community housing rides, sharing tools, and providing meeting rooms, IT equipment and advice

Organisational Development

| What will success look like? | The success of 2017-18 |
|--|---|
| 1. Effective and satisfied staff in an appropriate organisational structure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual staff reviews and exit interviews for staff documented high staff satisfaction Monthly staff meetings Twice-yearly whole-staff and committee training days |
| 2. Financial security gained from a range of funding sources and financial surplus increased annually towards a long-term goal of one year's operating expenses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved a diverse income* mix of approximately 26% fee for service, 30% local government (grants and consulting services), 19% state government contracts, 12% philanthropic grants, 3% donations, 10% other Sustained our level of donor support Built financial surplus of one year's operating expenses |
| 3. An active and effective Committee of Management with appropriate range of skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee of Management achieved a 74% meeting attendance and led two Staff/Committee Strategy Days Skills matrix evaluated to inform committee recruitment One vacant seat on committee (due to resigning member) |
| 4. Revised efficient financial, human resources, KM, planning systems and communications systems in place and operating well | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our annual report has been compiled by all staff and committee Team work plans were reviewed monthly and quarterly Executive Officer and Treasurer held monthly financial reviews Secured funding for KM and IT reviews and improvement plans |

5. EcoCentre projects and programs align with relevant research and best practice

- Commissioned independent partner, participant, member and funder interviews; and review of all evaluations from 2015-2018
- Designed a Citizen Science Rubric to evaluate activities across aspects of engagement and scientific contribution
- Undertook environmental scans as part of Strategic Planning
- Joined the Australian Citizen Science Association

Our programs received award recognition including:

- Finalist - Melbourne Awards
- Finalist - Premier's Sustainability Awards
- Community Impact Award - ieLLEN Awards
- Clean Beach/Waterways Award - Keep Victoria Beautiful Awards

*excludes bequest



Allsorts EcoCentre Fundraiser, 2017

Corellas in Elsternwick Park North

Affiliates in Action



Australian Landcare International (ALI)

ALI is very fortunate to be able to call the EcoCentre home, from which it liaises widely to promote the cause. Twenty-five countries have some form of community land management they call 'Landcare'. The most prominent in Germany, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa, Iceland, Uganda, and Malawi. Individual Australians, small NGOs and government brought this about. The Landcare model offers flexibility, freedom from corruption through group decision-making, cross-sector partnerships, emphasis on training and resultant community empowerment, and awareness of climate change.

This year, ALI and Japanese colleagues ran the first overseas global Landcare conference in Nagoya, Japan from 5-8 November 2017. Seventy attended, half from

Australia. Recently, a three-person team went to eastern Uganda to train small landholders in marketing farm produce, mentor Landcare coordinators in network management, and to explore multi-country revegetation projects in southern Africa. Other projects include support for a Japanese student running Landcare-themed tours, and a Nepalese graduate investigating sustainable farming practices to bring home.

ALI continued to run its small projects fund, which over five years has raised some \$50,000 for over 40 small projects in 15 countries. Donations are tax-deductible and welcomed.

www.alci.com.au

Beach Patrol Australia

Our network continues to grow and now has 28 **Beach Patrol** groups around Port Phillip Bay from Bellarine around to Rye. **Love Our Street**, our neighbourhood version of Beach Patrol, is growing as well, with six groups now doing monthly beach cleans and several more groups in development. Since January 2018, just over 8,500 kg of rubbish has been removed in 3,961 volunteer hours, plus 16,888 bottles/cans are no longer polluting our environment. We conducted several beach and street surveys with school groups, as well as a few corporate beach clean-ups. Screenings of *A Plastic Ocean* and *Blue* were held. Some consultations were held with state government on plastics issues facing Victoria.

www.beachpatrol.com.au



Christ Church Community Centre

The **Garden Nomads** volunteer program is designed to assist frail or elderly local community members in maintaining their gardens. Mentoring and training are provided to volunteers and equipment is supplied. We welcome new participants to this program such as local residents with limited mobility who require help in their garden, volunteers who are seeking an opportunity to develop new skills, and experienced gardeners who are willing to assist and mentor beginner gardeners.

www.ccm.org.au/community-support/garden-nomads



Desert Discovery

Desert Discovery conducts biodiversity surveys in Australian deserts every two years at the invitation of the local Indigenous communities. An important part of each project is the involvement of Indigenous school children.

For our 2018 project, located on the eastern edge of the Little Sandy Desert, students from the Wiluna Remote Community School Training Centre, accompanied by three Traditional Owners, learned about the process of capturing, identifying and releasing small mammals and reptiles. The students helped set up trapping sites. They recorded their participation on video cameras specially purchased for the purpose through a grant from the John T Reid Charitable Trusts and auspiced through the Port Phillip EcoCentre. In turn, members of the Small Mammals and Reptiles Team participated in two-way learning exchanges with the students, gaining insights into Martu Country and culture.

The Wiluna students returned to their school community with new knowledge and experience of scientific survey methodology, with a video of their time at Desert Discovery that they had produced and edited, certificates of achievement and friendship bands made by the Small Mammals and Reptiles Team. The videos were shown at their school and to all the members of Desert Discovery. It was a memorable education program.

Earthcare St Kilda

Earthcare volunteers work on a number of marine and terrestrial projects aimed at protecting our local natural environment, as well as increasing the diversity and extent of indigenous flora and fauna. Key projects include research and providing visitor guides for the St Kilda Little Penguin colony; seagrass mapping, removing pest sea stars, and litter removal and revegetation of open space. We thank the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron for generous provision of equipment storage.

Penguin research was suspended for a time as we were no longer covered under Phillip Island's research permit. We successfully applied for a permit in our own right and research has resumed. Earthcare consulted and liaised with Parks Victoria throughout their penguin protection works and designing for the new St Kilda Pier. The penguin guide service expanded to operate year-round, with guides managing significant challenges through constantly increasing visitor and tour bus numbers.

Our Northern Pacific seastar removal program continued but was hampered by poor weather conditions. Seagrass surveys recorded stable levels of seagrass behind the pier kiosk, but less stable levels near shore. Monthly litter removal from the breakwater continued and planting was undertaken to provide the penguins with a greater source of nesting materials. Four winter revegetation tasks were held, which planted 2,570 native species in locations around Elwood.

Visit our website to become an Earthcare member or find upcoming volunteer opportunities.

www.earthcarestkilda.org.au



Friends of Elster Creek

Friends of Elster Creek aim to involve the local community in caring for Elster Creek and the Elwood Canal. Waterwatch monitoring continued with monthly water quality testing in Elster Creek and quarterly testing in the golf course lake. Our volunteers cleared a number of areas in the Elwood Foreshore Reserve to prepare for winter planting. After successful lobbying, Bayside City Council decided to close the Elsternwick Golf Course on 30 June 2018 and transition it into an environmentally focused public park. A number of saplings have been successfully grown from seeds of the Separation Tree, with the first saplings planted along Elster Creek and hopes for future planting in the new open parkland.

www.facebook.com/friendsofelstercreek



Elwood Flood Action Group (EFLAG)

EFLAG was formed after the severe weather event experienced in Elwood (and surrounding suburbs) in February 2011. We aim to understand how the area experiences flooding to advocate for flood mitigation, preparation and response to severe weather events. Two of our highlights for 2018 included representation on the New Street housing, Elster Catchment and Elsternwick Park North consultative committees and forums; and celebrating with Elsternwick Park Coalition when Bayside Council voted to turn the golf course at Elsternwick Park North into an enhanced wetland and environmental park. We had beautiful weather and a great turnout for the park opening. The future of the park presents a great opportunity for people to get involved with a fantastic environmental transformation.

www.sites.google.com/site/elwoodfloods

Environment Education Victoria (EEV)

As the professional association for environmental educators in Victoria, EEV took up the mantle to advocate for the continued inclusion of sustainability in the Victorian Curriculum F-10 on behalf of the sector. It has been a wonderful opportunity to work alongside all members, partners and supportive stakeholders to remind all Victorians that #sustainabilitybelongs in the school curriculum. Some key improvements for members included the launch of a more robust and efficient membership database and the **Out and About with EEV** series of member events. EEV also expanded the number of partnership projects, working with more local governments to work towards its vision of *active, aware and sustainable communities*.

<http://www.eev.vic.edu.au/>



Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots Australia

Our highlights of the past year involved a range of activities that saw us connect with many organisations and allowed us to inspire and educate on issues involving animals, people and their shared environment. Some of these included:

- a beach clean-up with Phillip Island Nature Parks with volunteers removing over 800 pieces of marine debris including discarded fishing items, plastic packaging, straws, bottle caps and microplastics
- hosting a Native Seed Ball workshop at Port Phillip EcoCentre's School Sustainability Festival, where we were able to connect students with an ancient technique used for replanting areas of large-scale deforestation
- holding an activity day at CERES Community Environmental Park, where youth heard an Iranian refugee speak about his experiences as a refugee in Australia
- a screening of the documentary *Jane*, for World Chimpanzee Day, where we hoped to make a wider audience aware of the plight of chimpanzees, and of Jane's inspiring work.

www.rootsandshoots.org.au



Jewish Ecological Coalition (JECO)

JECO was founded in 2003 to emphasise and deepen the Jewish commitment to sustainability and to raise awareness within and beyond the Jewish community about Judaism's strong environmental message. Each year we provide topical events including film showings, presentations and walks with expert guest speakers. We participate in events including In One Voice, Limmud Oz, Mitzvah Day, and Clean Up Australia Day. This year we hosted an edible weeds walk along Elster Creek, a St Kilda Botanic Gardens tour, and a 'reverse garage sale' to collect goods for donation. This year we launched the monthly **St Kilda Repair Cafe** in partnership with the EcoCentre, coordinating a team of volunteer fixers each month to teach repair skills in a social atmosphere. The event received significant media coverage and attracts a convivial crowd who teach and learn, with the satisfaction that we're diverting items from landfill. We welcome new volunteers.

www.jeco.org.au/
www.stkildarepaircafe.org.au

Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club

In 1973, when there were few bicycle touring clubs in existence in Australia, a small band of pioneer bicycle tourists formed the Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club. In its 45th year, the club continues the traditions of offering regular bike rides and tours for riders of varying levels, organising social gatherings and promoting the benefits of cycling to explore areas both far and wide. Our Vision is to provide a safe and friendly environment for cycling and cyclists. We run regular recreational rides, cycle tours and social activities, which can be found on our Meetup group and Facebook page. As a direct result of the passion, commitment and cohesiveness of the committee, membership of the club has grown this year and we offered 136 days of rides for 577 attendees. We have also put in place training and technology to improve rider and ride-leader safety.

www.mbtc.org.au



Port Phillip Bicycle Users' Group

Port Phillip Bicycle Users' Group (BUG) has been working towards making riding better for more people. This year, we took Port Phillip councillors on bike rides of their wards to show them what needs to be done to improve conditions on the roads and bike paths. We also made submissions to council's budget and transport strategy. And of course - we have been cycling together!

www.ppbug.org



Port Phillip Community Group (PPCG)

The past year has been another successful one for PPCG and further consolidated the organisation as a key welfare and education support in the City of Port Phillip, driven by our Vision: *A fair and just society that values all people.*

Our **Fresh Food Program** continued to provide fresh fruit and vegetables weekly, a daily food pantry, and we provided 1,450 community meals. Our **Back to School Program** helped over 100 families with funds for uniforms, books and school trips provided directly to suppliers. We led popular Saturday bushwalking activities, with an average of 16 participants joining us for nature walks to Trentham, Warburton, Point Cook, Lysterfield Park and the Dandenongs. We have also made much-needed refurbishments to our St Kilda site, expanded to a fifth delivery location and strengthened partnerships to deliver inclusion, education and employment programs.

Visit our website for volunteer and donation options so that you can help positively impact lives and foster equity, participation and inclusion.

www.ppcg.org.au

Port Melbourne Uniting Church

One of the ways Port Melbourne Uniting Church connects with our local community is through the **Simply Living Project**. We continue to challenge ourselves about how we live and respond to environmental issues as a Christian community. During the past 12 months the Simply Living Community Garden in the church grounds has been the focus of regular gardening and community cooking activities, school holiday **Grow & Eat** programs, community composting, Seniors Festival gardening workshops and the annual 'Uniting for a Good Cause' community garage sale on the **Garage Sale Trail**. Reducing the use of plastics has been a focus this year, including participation in **Plastic-Free July** and sharing sewing skills and making re-usable bags at the monthly **Make & Mend** sessions.

www.spuc.org.au/port-melbourne-congregation/community-garden



Westgate Biodiversity

In June this year, Friends of Westgate Park and St Kilda Indigenous Nursery Coop (SKINC) merged to form a new environment organisation, Westgate Biodiversity: Bili Nursery & Landcare. (Bili is Boonwurrung for small lizard or skink). For over a decade our two groups have been friends and complemented and supported each other by exchanging expertise, plants and seeds, helping with event management and engaging with people interested in our work, particularly volunteers. The community will benefit as we grow and evolve; ensuring the park continues to be valued as a healthy, biodiverse, natural environment and we can continue to propagate and supply locally Indigenous plants to councils and the community.

We have exciting plans to move our Bili Nursery from Williamston Road to an area within Westgate Park at the end of Wharf Road, and combine it with a new works compound. This will ensure we have good facilities for our volunteers to care for the park. Visit our new website to find a range of ways to become involved in caring for our flourishing flora, fungi, wildlife and wetlands.

www.westgatebiodiversity.org.au

Our best mates

Major partner

City of Port Phillip has provided us with our council-managed building and an annual grant to cover basic operational costs, enabling us to build new partnerships and generate additional income. We value their longstanding collaborative support.

Major funding

- Helen Macpherson Smith Trust
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
 - EcoCentre's Knowledge Management and Knowledge Networks
- Victorian Government
 - Clean Bay Blueprint
 - Living Water Workbees

Projects funding

- Australian Government
 - RMIT University Sunscreen and Bay Marine Life
 - Community Compost and Outreach IT that Fits on Our Bikes
- Bayside City Council
- Coastcare
- City of Port Phillip
- City of Stonnington
- Hamer Sprout Fund
- Kingston City Council
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
 - Inspiring Future Wildlife Ambassadors
 - Nairn Catchments Network
- Melbourne Water
- Patagonia
- PMF Foundation
- Victorian Government

Government agency collaborators

- Coastcare Victoria
- Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP)
- Environmental Protection Authority Victoria (EPA)
- Melbourne Water
- Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group
- Parks Victoria
- Sustainability Victoria

Consultants

- Brett de Hoedt, Hootville Communications
- Dr Chris Johnstone, Monash University
- Cressida Bradley, Writer
- Ply Creative
- Ray Brown, Synchra Consulting
- Ronald Jore
- Dr Ross Colliver, The Training + Development Group

Benefactors

- Anonymous
- Anonymous
- John Leung
- Keith and Debby Badger

Affiliates

Animal Liberation Victoria
Australian Landcare International (ALI)
Beach Patrol Australia & Love Our Street
Christ Church Community Centre, St Kilda
Desert Discovery Inc
Earthcare St Kilda & Friends of Elster Creek
Elwood Floods Action Group (EFLAG)
Environment Education Victoria (EEV)
Friends of Westgate Park (now Westgate Biodiversity)
Get up! Melbourne Ports Action Group
Glen Eira Environment Group
Jewish Ecological Coalition (JECO)
Landcare Victoria Inc
Mammal Survey Group of Victoria
Mary and Basil Organic Community Garden
Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club
Melbourne Ports Stop Adani
Port Phillip BUG (Bicycle Users' Group)
Port Phillip Community Group
Roots & Shoots (Jane Goodall Foundation)
South Port Uniting Church
St Kilda Community Gardens Club
St Kilda Indigenous Nursery Coop (SKINC) (now Westgate Biodiversity)
Transition Port Phillip
Veg Out Community Garden

Partner organisations

1st Albert Park Scouts
1st Elwood Scouts
1st/14th Brighton Sea Scouts
3CR
3RRR
5 Gyres
AWARE Wildlife Rescue
Balcombe Estuary Reserve Group (BERG) Mt Martha
Bayside Friends of Native Wildlife
Bellarine Catchment Network
Blairgowrie Yacht Squadron
Boon Wurrung Foundation
Catholic Education Melbourne
Caroline Packham
Caulfield Love Our Street 3162
CERES
City of Greater Geelong
City of Wyndham
Community Learning for Environmental Action
Cool Australia Enviroweek
Darebin City Council
Deakin University
Diversity
Dolphin Research Institute
Elsternwick Park Association
Elwood Beach Patrol 3184
Elwood Love Our Street 3184
First Friends of Dandenong Creek
Frankston Beach Association
Friends of the Marine Discovery Centre
Friends of Williamstown Wetlands
Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria
Goodcompany
Gordon TAFE
Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network
Jackson's Creek Eco-Network
Johnson Building and Maintenance
Kids In Nature Network
Launch Housing
Monash University
National Centre for Coasts and Climate
Nature West
Outlandish
PJT Green Plumbing
Plastic-Free Victoria Alliance (PVA)
Ply Creative
Point Cook Open Spaces
Polperro Dolphin Swims
Port Phillip Housing Association
Remember the Wild
The Renegades
Rye Beach Patrol
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)
Sacred Heart Mission
Scouts Victoria
Sea Shepherd Australia
Seaford Beach Patrol
Seaside Scavenge
Sheree Marris (Melbourne Down Under)
Soxy Beast
St Kilda Beach Patrol
St Kilda Sea Baths
Star Health
Streamline Media
Take2
Tangaroa Blue Foundation
Trash Puppets
University of Melbourne
Victorian Litter Action Alliance (VLAA)
Victorian National Parks Association
Waterkeeper Alliance
Werribee Beach Patrol 3030
Werribee River Association
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Yarra Riverkeeper Association
Zoos Victoria

Schools

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Academy of Mary Immaculate | Civic Kindergarten Middle Park | Keilor Heights Primary School | Moomba Park Primary School | St Catherine's Junior School | St Louis de Montfort's School, Aspendale |
| Ada Mary A'Beckett Children's Centre | Copperfield College, Sydenham | Kew High School | Moorabbin Primary School | St Catherine's Senior School | Star of the Sea College, Brighton |
| Al Taqwa Islamic College, Truganina | Cornish College | Keysborough College | Mt Scopus, East St Kilda | St Cecilia's Primary School | Starfish Early Learning Centre |
| Alamanda K-9 College | De La Salle College | Acacia Campus Killara Primary School | Murrumbeena Primary School | St Clare's Catholic Primary School, Truganina | Stella Maris Primary School Beaumaris |
| Albert Park College | Dinjerra Primary School | Kinderclub, St Kilda | Nido Early School, Altona Meadows | St Clare's Catholic Primary School, Elwood | Strathaird Primary School |
| Albert Park Primary School | Damascus College Ballarat | Child Care Centre | Northcote High School | St Joan of Arc School, Brighton | Sunnyside Kindergarten |
| Armada Primary School | Elsternwick Primary School | King David Early Learning Centre | Our Lady's Primary School, Sunshine | St Joseph's Primary School, Black Rock | Suzanne Corey High School |
| Ashburton Primary School | Eltham College | King David School | Outdoor School, Bogong Campus | St Joseph's Primary School, Malvern | Tallygaroopna Primary School |
| Aspendale Primary School | Elwood Primary School | Kingston Heath Primary School | Parkdale Primary School | St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond | The Ridgeway, Ivanhoe |
| Baden Powell College | Explorers Early Learning Centre | Lady Forster Kindergarten | Peninsula Specialist College | St Kilda Park Primary School | Thomas Carr College |
| Beaumaris Primary School | Firbank Grammar | Lauriston Girls School | Phillip Island Early Learning Centre | St Kilda Primary School | TRY South Melbourne Children's Centre |
| Bentleigh West Primary School | Frankston Council | Littlecroft Kindergarten | Point Cook College | St Louis de Montfort's Primary School | Tullamarine Primary School |
| Bialik College | Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School | Mac.Robertson Girls' High School | Point Cook Early Learning Centre | St Macartan's Parish Primary School, Mornington | Uniting Kindergarten, Port Melbourne |
| Birmingham Primary School | Gardenvale Primary School | MacKillop College | Pomonal Primary School | St Margaret Mary's Primary School, Brunswick North | Valkstone Primary School |
| Black Rock Primary School | Genazzano FCJ College | Malvern Day Nursery | Port Melbourne Primary School | St Margaret's Primary School | Viewbank Primary School |
| Brighton Beach Primary School | Geelong College | Malvern Memorial Kindergarten | Port Phillip Specialist School | St Mary's Primary School | Wantirna Primary School |
| Brighton Primary School | Geelong Grammar School | Mansfield Steiner School | Presentation College | St Michael's Grammar | Warrnambool East Primary School |
| Brighton Secondary College | Toorak Campus | Marian College | Windsor | St Patrick's Murrumbeena | Wellington Secondary College |
| Camberwell Grammar School | Glen Huntly Primary School | Mary Immaculate Primary School | Roxburgh Rise Primary School | St Peter's Primary School | Westbourne Grammar School |
| Canterbury Primary School | Good News Lutheran College | Melbourne Girls' College | Sacred Heart School, Kew | St Peter's Early Learning Centre (Loreto Toorak) | Westbourne Primary School |
| Carey Baptist Grammar School | Goodstart Early Learning | Melbourne Girls Grammar School | Sandringham East PS | St Raphael's Primary School | Willmott Park Primary School |
| Carnegie Primary School | Goodstart Morwell | Mentone Grammar | Sandringham Primary School | St John Bosco Niddrie PS | Windsor Community Children's Centre |
| Carranballac College | Gowrie Early Learning Centre | Mentone Primary School | Southern Autistic School | St Brigid's Primary School | Windsor Primary School |
| Carrum Primary School | Grosvenor Early Learning Centre | Merewether High School | St Ambrose Parish School, Woodend | St John Vianney School, Parkdale East | Yesodei HaTorah |
| Caulfield Grammar | Hoppers Crossing School | Middle Park Primary School | St Bernard's College | | |
| Charlton College | Hornbrook Early Learning Centre | Montague Continuing Education Centre | St Catherine's Early Learning Centre | | |
| Cheder Menachem Early Learning Centre | Ingles Street Early Learning & Kinder | | | | |
| Christian Brothers College | Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar | | | | |
| | John McKenzie Kindergarten | | | | |

EcoCentre people

Staff

April Seymore, Executive Officer
Karen Jones, Education Manager
Neil Blake, Port Phillip Baykeeper
Belinda Daly, Schools Educator
Ben Francischelli, Schools and Community Educator
Coco Riverossa, Project Officer
David Giles, IT Specialist
Deb Punton, Educator and Project Officer
Ella Ryan, Schools and Community Educator
Fam Charko, Marine Biologist and Project Officer
Fiona Second, Bookkeeper
Gio Fitzpatrick, Youth Wildlife Ambassador
Malcolm Dow, Schools and Community Educator
Matt McArthur, Schools and Community Educator
Peter Kelly, Schools and Community Educator
Reiko Yamada, Schools and Community Educator
Sharron Hunter, Schools and Early Learning Educator

Key Volunteers

Allan Pringle, Compost engineer
Alkira Orlindhia, Admin
Annie Strutt, Sustainable Schools Festival
Em Hui, Microplastics research
Gill Upton, Wominjeka Garden
John Hillel, St Kilda Repair Cafe
Lorraine Chabrat, Science and social media
Louise Kyle, Admin
Mark van Wijk, Graphic design
Melissa Hailes, Worm Whisperer
Ron Jore, IT and photography
Stephen Hanna, Community Garden
Tif Alp, Community Garden
Tim Naylor, Redevelopment sub-committee
Ying Quek, Microplastics research

Committee of Management

Pam O'Neil, President
Liz Fenwick, Vice President
Tony Flude, Secretary
Keith Badger, Treasurer
Anne Callaghan
Dan Coleman
Jan Cossar
Geoff Love
Jo Wallace

EcoCentre Public Fund Managers

Louise Kyle
Michele Hodes
Nic Capes

Multicultural Coast Ambassadors

Brisa Yonzon
Chenxin Tu
Oscar Chen

Work experience

Amelie Kleinschmidt
Leewuleena Horler Skiot
Maggie Dugen
Xanthe Fitzpatrick
Angel Grylls
Pippa Collodetti

Interns

Cassie Ngoc Han, Melbourne University
Coco Riverossa, Monash University
Chanaka Suriya, Deakin University
Erika Stark, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Jake Lewis Wilson, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Jamie Choi, Deakin University
Justine Millson, Deakin University
Madison Healey, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Mike Savoie, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Nick Bergstrom, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Nick Sorensen, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Sarah Duquette, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Seles Li, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Stathi Paxinos, Monash University



Financial Report

Detailed income and expenditure statement for the year ended 30 June 2018

| | 2017/2018 \$ | 2016/2017 \$ |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Administer projects | 107,043 | 95,767 |
| City of Port Phillip grants | 228,894 | 202,195 |
| Consulting | 169,754 | 161,439 |
| Donations | 668,152 | 28,204 |
| Interest | 5,480 | 3,685 |
| Membership | 3,160 | 3,533 |
| Other grants | 380,183 | 187,396 |
| Seminars & Education | 78,626 | 54,327 |
| Product sales | 8,911 | 9,804 |
| Sundry income | 50 | 70 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 1,650,253 | 746,420 |

| | 2017/2018 \$ | 2016/2017 \$ |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| LESS: EXPENSES | | |
| EMPLOYEE BENEFITS EXPENSE | | |
| Salaries and Wages | 491,494 | 558,233 |
| Superannuation | 43,666 | 50,712 |
| Workcover | 10,851 | 7,419 |
| TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS EXPENSE | 546,011 | 616,364 |
| DEPRECIATION & AMORTISATION EXPENSE | | |
| DEPRECIATION | 7,066 | 7,655 |
| TOTAL DEPRECIATION & AMORTISATION EXPENSE | 7,066 | 7,655 |
| OTHER EXPENSE | | |
| Accounting and audit fees | 14,081 | 15,150 |
| Auspicing | 100,658 | 88,848 |
| Bank charges | 1,097 | 806 |
| Cleaning | 6,451 | 4,777 |
| Computer expenses | 12,734 | 4,321 |
| Consumables | 14,940 | 8,849 |
| Electricity | 2,581 | 2,373 |
| Insurance | 3,650 | 2,910 |
| Equipment and materials | 7,767 | 10,334 |
| Printing, postage and stationery | 6,280 | 4,632 |
| Professional services | 128,784 | 141,842 |
| Repairs and maintenance | 5,180 | 1,212 |
| Seminars and training | 4,851 | 2,577 |
| Sundry Expenses | 11,935 | 11,498 |
| Subscriptions | 1,042 | 5,733 |
| Telephone | 3,375 | 2,878 |
| TOTAL OTHER EXPENSE | 325,406 | 308,740 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE | 878,483 | 932,759 |
| NET PROFIT/(LOSS) | 771,770 | (186,339) |

Statement of financial position 30 June 2018

| | 2018 \$ | 2017 \$ |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 1,142,441 | 489,888 |
| Trade and other receivables | 28,312 | 52,873 |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | 1,170,753 | 542,761 |
| NON-CURRENT ASSETS | | |
| Land and buildings | 223,803 | 229,542 |
| Plant and equipment | 3,979 | 5,306 |
| TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS | 227,782 | 234,848 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 1,398,535 | 777,609 |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | |
| Trade and other payables | 44,963 | 19,120 |
| Grants received in advance | 88,557 | 279,390 |
| Employee provisions | 52,672 | 38,526 |
| TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES | 186,192 | 337,036 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 186,192 | 337,036 |
| NET ASSETS | 1,212,343 | 440,573 |
| MEMBERS' FUNDS | | |
| Retained profits | 1,212,343 | 440,573 |
| TOTAL MEMBERS' EQUITY | 1,212,343 | 440,573 |



PORT PHILLIP ECOCENTRE INC
ABN 66 852 809 680

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

We, Pamela O'Neil and Keith Badger, being members of the Committee of the Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc, certify that -
The statements attached to this certificate give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc during the end of the financial year of the association ending on 30 June 2018.

Dated: 25 July 2018

Pamela A O'Neil

Pamela O'Neil (President)

Keith Badger

Keith Badger (Treasurer)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF PORT PHILLIP ECOCENTRE INC

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Qualified Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2018, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and other explanatory information.

In my opinion, except for the effects of the matter described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion section of my report, the accompanying financial report of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2018 is prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

Basis for Qualified Opinion

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc to maintain an effective system of internal control over receipts until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, the audit in relation to receipts was limited to the amounts recorded.

As mentioned in Note 3 to the financial statements, accounting records are not available to substantiate buildings and plant and equipment amounting to \$283,017 cost and \$55,235 accumulated depreciation at balance date. The committee of management has determined and is of the opinion that these assets exist and that the carrying value approximates the value in use. However in the absence of a valuation and stocktake we are unable to ascertain the details and carrying amounts of these assets.

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of my report. I am independent of the Association in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my qualified opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

I draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report is prepared to assist the Association to comply with the financial reporting provisions of the Associations Incorporations Reform Act 2012 (VIC) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My report is intended solely for the Association and should not be distributed to or used by parties other than the Association. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance

The committee of management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, and for such internal control as the committee of management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee of management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

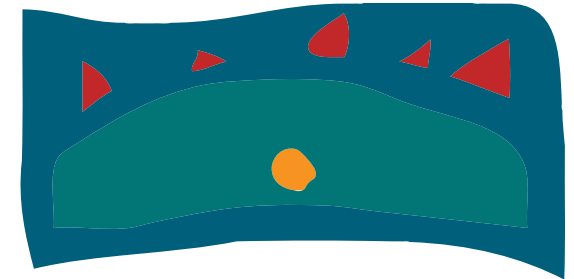
A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.aasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>. This description forms part of the auditor's report.

LS Wong

LS WONG C.A.
Registered Company Auditor

Melbourne: 25 July 2018

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Australia
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P O R T P H I L L I P
ecocentre

Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc.

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w: www.ecocentre.com

ABN: 66 852 809 680

Incorporated Association No. A0038897K

proudly partnering with



Boon Wurrung Foundation

 **EcoCentre**

 **@ecocentrestkilda**

 **@ecocentrestk**

Registered on Environment
Australia's Register of Environmental
Organisations and entitled to receive
tax-deductible donations.

Port Phillip EcoCentre Inc is a
Waste-Wise Organisation

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