



Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

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HOPE E-news Bulletin 2024 #07 --- July 2024

The following items have been gathered from various e: newsletters received by HOPE in recent times; and/or prepared specifically by HOPE members and supporters. If you have any news to contribute, please forward to office@hopeaustralia.org.au. Deadline for articles is 15th day of the month.

Editorial

Welcome to the July issue of the newsletter! In this edition, we focus on climate change and clean energy again. Firstly though, there is an overhaul of our national nature laws, introducing a new 'Environmental Protection Agency'. Then we learn about the Australian Climate Roundtable and First Nations Clean Energy Network, enabling and empowering First Nations to play a key and central role in Australia's renewable energy transition. There is also a review of a recent Beyond Zero Emissions (BZE) report. Keeping to the theme of climate change, we learn about extreme climate events. Lastly, we learn about the Nature Conservancy Australia (NCA) agency.

Kind regards,

Nina Stick, Newsletter Editor – HOPE Inc.

2024 Environmental Observances

July

11 [World Population Day | United Nations](#)

August

9 [International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples | United Nations](#)

19 [World Humanitarian Day | United Nations](#)

29 [International Day against Nuclear Tests | United Nations](#)

September

7 Threatened Species Day

14 **HOPE quarterly Ordinary Meeting**

16 [International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer | United Nations](#)

21 [International Day of Peace | United Nations](#)

26 [World Maritime Day | United Nations](#)

26 [International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons | United Nations](#)

29 [Food Loss and Waste Reduction | United Nations](#)

Annual Pledge/Donation

<http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/annual-pledgedonation/>

We invite members and supporters to consider making an annual financial contribution to help cover our operating costs of approximately \$20,500 p.a.

Currently, our income is derived from project grants, fund-raising, corporate sponsorship and donations, but falls well short of our requirements.

Your financial support, by way of an annual pledge or donation, will considerably help us to achieve better financial viability.



Introducing a new national EPA

By Dr Megan Kessler, Nature Campaigner, Humane Society International Australia (www.hsi.org.au)

The Australian Government is currently undertaking a once in a generation overhaul of our national nature laws. This work responds to an independent 2020 review which found the current law, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), is not delivering for the environment, the community or industry.

As part of the overhaul, the Government has introduced legislation proposing the creation of a new national 'Environment Protection Australia' or EPA. The EPA will have significant responsibilities under the new laws, including making decisions on individual projects (where they have been given that role by the Minister for the Environment), and ensuring that projects comply with their conditions of approval.

With more than 2,000 threatened species and ecological communities facing extinction in Australia, a successful EPA can be an important tool in reversing our extinction crisis. We

must get the model right!

What is the Government proposing?

The EPA will be established as a "non-corporate commonwealth entity" with a CEO appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Minister. The CEO can then appoint an advisory group and seek their advice on selected matters.

The Minister will be able to issue a Statement of Expectations to the EPA but the EPA will not be subject to Ministerial direction.

The new EPA will be supported by stronger compliance and enforcement powers that will be added to the existing EPBC Act. This includes stricter penalties and new tools to help the EPA enforce the law.

Making the EPA stronger

Around the country, state and territory-based EPAs are governed by skills-based Boards that help preserve their independence and provide strong oversight of regulatory powers, culture, strategic direction, and operation. This is the model that we need at a national level as well. The Board should itself should have clear eligibility requirements defined in legislation, and include independent experts in environmental regulation and science, as well as First Nations representation as well as being responsible for appointing a skills-based CEO. There must be strict rules to manage conflicts of interest.

The EPA should also be guided by objectives, duties and purpose enshrined in law that give the EPA clear direction on its role in protecting Australia's environment, including in relation to delivering greenhouse gas emissions targets; efficient, outcome-focused and transparent decision-making with strong community engagement; and robust compliance and enforcement responses.

While stronger enforcement provisions and penalties are welcome, these penalties are only available to the EPA. This should be expanded so that any person with the right to enforce the EPBC Act can seek civil penalties against entities that have breached the law.

And of course, the EPA must also be adequately resourced and have secure, long-term funding to perform its duties and functions.

What else is needed?

The proposed new EPA is an important institution in its own right. However, introducing an EPA ahead of more comprehensive reforms means the EPA will be administering a legal regime that will still allow for poor decision making that fails to protect threatened species and their habitats.

Existing commitments to rule out allowing unacceptable impacts on our environment, to protect critical habitat and to implement strong National Environmental Standards must be brought into the current package of reforms to ensure better decision making.

We also need the government to close the loopholes and exemptions in the EPBC Act, such as those that permit unassessed land clearing and shark culling programs to continue without assessment. Climate change and deforestation must also be properly embedded in the existing laws.

And finally, we need a clear commitment to complete the rest of the reforms in this term of government. Nature simply cannot afford any further delays.

For more information on the stronger laws that nature needs, visit <https://hsi.org.au/australian-wildlife-habitats/strong-laws-for-nature/>

Advertorial

Healthier soil, healthier plants ... it is that simple



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Australian Climate Roundtable

Written by Frank Lee, HOPE researcher (NSW)



The Australian Climate Roundtable (ACR) is a coalition of businesses, environmental organizations, farmers, investors, unions, and social welfare groups in Australia to address the issue of climate change and develop consensus on climate policy. The ACR was established in 2014 and aims to provide a platform for constructive dialogue and collaboration on climate-related issues (1). This diverse representation ensures that a wide range of perspectives and interests are taken into account in discussions and policy development. ACR operates on a consensus-based decision-making model, where all members have an equal voice and decisions are made through discussion and agreement. A broad range of perspectives are considered and that ensures decisions reflect the collective interests of the member organizations (2). By finding common ground and working together, ACR can provide a unified voice on climate change issues. This collaborative approach increases the likelihood of effective and sustainable climate policy outcomes.

ACR Key Activities:

1. Climate Policy Principles (3):

The policy principles can serve as a unifying framework that captures the shared interests and concerns of ACR. The policy principles address the goals of climate policy, not a single solution or end to the debate, that provide a foundation of common ground on which more detailed policies can be built. These principles help shape the direction of climate policy discussions and provide a basis for constructive dialogue with political parties and the wider Australian community to promote understanding of the importance of effective climate policy in addressing the challenges of climate change.

The policy principles encourage a response to climate change that is both just and equitable, as well as effective and efficient. These principles likely emphasize the importance of considering social, economic, and environmental factors in climate policy formulation and implementation. *These policy principles, supporting an effective global climate agreement, long-term emission reduction goals, and promoting investment in clean energy technologies,* are evidence-based and draw on the collective expertise and perspectives of its member organizations. By providing arguments and proposed policy solutions, ACR seeks to influence the development of climate-related legislation and regulations.

2. Joint Statements (4,5):

ACR's joint statements are important vehicles for advocacy, public engagement, policy guidance, collaboration, and accountability. They communicate the collective stance and perspectives on various climate-related issues. It serves as public declarations of the ACR's views, positions, and recommendations, to contribute to informed discussions, policy development, and public awareness. How the joint statements can serve the purpose include:

1. *To advocate for specific policies, actions, or positions related to climate change. By issuing statements, ACR can influence public opinion, decision-makers, and stakeholders to consider and support their proposed approaches and solutions.*
2. *To engage the Australian community and raise awareness about climate change and its impacts. They provide a platform to communicate important messages, highlight key issues, and promote understanding of the urgency and significance of addressing climate change.*
3. *To inform policy discussions and decision-making processes for guidance and recommendations on climate-related policies, strategies, and actions.*
4. *To the building of a unified voice and collaborative approach to climate policy, fostering dialogue and constructive engagement with policymakers, governments, and other stakeholders.*
5. *To addressing climate change and to provide a public record of ACR's positions and commitments over time as a basis for tracking progress, evaluating actions, and holding ACR accountable to its stated principles and objectives.*

These statements, *providing a unified voice on key policy matters such as the need for emissions reduction targets, the role of renewable energy, and the importance of policy stability and certainty*, express key policy matters and provide a clear and consistent message to policymakers. By presenting a united front, ACR aims to amplify its influence and demonstrate broad support for specific policy outcomes. *Examples of public statements include:*

1. *Submission on the Climate Change Bills (August 2022)*
2. *Australians Working Together for a Successful Transition to Net Zero Emissions (November 2021)*
3. *Statement on climate impacts (August 2020)*
4. *Renewal of joint policy principles (December 2019)*
5. *Commitment to successful action on climate change (May 2019)*
6. *Support for the Paris Agreement (2017)*
7. *Ratification of the Paris Agreement (2016)*
8. *Release of the joint principles (2015)*

3. Workshops (6,7):

ACR's workshops address critical issues related to climate change and its impacts in Australia and serve as platforms for dialogue and knowledge sharing. They contribute to informed decision-making, policy development, and public engagement on climate-related issues.

1. *Exploring risks and impacts:* Aims to deepen the understanding of the risks and impacts associated with climate change in Australia. They cover a range of topics such as physical climate changes, sectoral impacts on land, water, nature, infrastructure, insurance, human health, disasters, communities, and macroeconomic risks.
2. *Sharing expert insights:* Aims to enhance the collective understanding of climate change and its implications for different sectors by scientists, researchers, policymakers, and industry professionals who provide valuable insights into the specific topics being addressed.
3. *Providing key information:* Generates key information and statistics related to climate change and its impacts in Australia. This information is summarized and made available to the public, facilitating broader awareness and understanding of the issues at hand.
4. *Supporting successful transitions:* Aims to identify strategies, best practices, and policy recommendations that can facilitate a smooth and effective transition towards a low-carbon economy such as exploring successful transitions to net zero emissions in electricity sector and industry.

Acknowledging the importance of public support for effective climate policies and by mobilizing public opinion and generating public pressure, ACR indirectly influences the government's climate policy agenda including public forums and educational programs which aim at increasing awareness and understanding of climate change issues among the Australian public. *Through public statements, workshops, and educational initiatives, ACR can help educate the public, promote dialogue, and mobilize support for climate policy measures.*

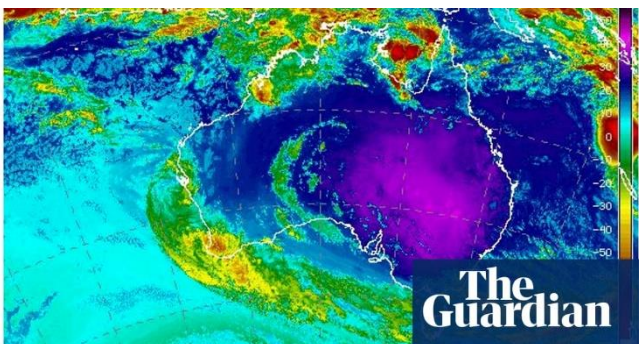
- 4. Engagement with the Australian government through various means to influence climate policy.**
 1. **Direct Engagement (8):** ACR engages in direct dialogue and consultation with government policymakers. This can take the form of meetings, workshops, and consultations where ACR has the opportunity to present their views and recommendations directly to key decision-makers.
 2. **Expert Advice (9):** ACR offers expert advice and insights to the government on climate-related matters. This can involve sharing research findings, reports, and studies conducted by member organizations that provide valuable information and analysis to inform policy decisions.

Conclusion

ACR has been a significant platform for dialogue and collaboration on climate policy in Australia. By bringing together diverse stakeholders and advocating for effective climate action, ACR has contributed to shaping policy debates and raising public awareness about climate change. However, ongoing evaluation and scrutiny of its activities is necessary to ensure that its efforts continue to drive meaningful progress towards addressing climate change in Australia.

References:

- 1: Australian Climate Roundtable: <https://www.australianclimateroundtable.org.au>
- 2: Australian Climate Roundtable: Business, union, environmental, investor and welfare groups form unusual coalition on climate policy - ABC News: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-06-29/australian-climate-roundtable-business-unions-policy-alliance/6579106>
- 3: Climate_roundtable_joint_principles-Updated_November_2020.pdf (australianclimateroundtable.org.au): https://www.australianclimateroundtable.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Climate_roundtable_joint_principles-Updated_November_2020.pdf
- 4: Australian Climate Roundtable statement: Australian working together for a successful transition to net zero emissions - Business Council of Australia (bca.com.au): https://www.bca.com.au/joint_statement_australian_climate_roundtable_working_together_to_transition
- 5: ACR_Successful_transition_statement_8Nov.pdf (australianclimateroundtable.org.au): https://www.australianclimateroundtable.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ACR_Successful_transition_statement_8Nov.pdf
- 6: Far-reaching climate change risks to Australia must be reduced and managed | Ai Group: <https://www.aigroup.com.au/news/media-centre/2020/far-reaching-climate-change-risks-to-australia-must-be-reduced-and-managed/>
- 7: Long-term strategies for emissions reductions Importance, opportunities, current commitments and lessons from other countries (australianclimateroundtable.org.au): https://www.australianclimateroundtable.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Aust_Climate_Roundtable_Workshop_2_2_Sept2020.pdf
- 8: A bit rich: business groups want urgent climate action, after resisting it for 30 years (theconversation.com): <https://theconversation.com/a-bit-rich-business-groups-want-urgent-climate-action-after-resisting-it-for-30-years-145302>
- 9: Experts workshop climate change responses - Utility Magazine: <https://utilitymagazine.com.au/experts-workshop-climate-change-responses/>



[Australia faces potentially disastrous consequences of climate change, inquiry told | Climate crisis | The Guardian](#)



First Nations Clean Energy Network
- <https://www.firstnationscleanenergy.org.au/>

Australia's rapid transition to renewable energy will require access to vast areas of land and waters, including for thousands of kilometres of new transmission infrastructure.

Enabling and empowering First Nations to play a key and central role in Australia's renewable energy transition goes beyond just social licence issues - it presents a unique opportunity for Australia to design a system that is fair and just and which can also positively impact and result in other social and economic benefits for First Nations.

With many First Nations communities at the forefront of the devastating impacts of climate change and struggling with unreliable and expensive power, coupled with the substantial rights, interests and responsibilities (through traditional ownership, cultural heritage, native title and land rights schemes) held by First Nations across Australia's land and seas, now is the time to position First Nations as co-designers and drivers of systems, policy, legislation, and projects needed to facilitate the transition.

Put simply, by including and embedding First Nations as partners in the transition, and the right to free, prior and informed consent in systems, policy, legislation and projects, the transition can be fair and just, occur at the pace necessary (and avoid legal contestation), and will deliver mutual cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits to people and country.

With First Nations now more than ever looking beyond benefit sharing agreements in relation to major energy projects to opportunities to own all or part of those projects and to participate in the decisions required in their development and management, the clean energy transition presents a unique opportunity to pursue First Nations self-determination aspirations through ownership and participation in climate solutions infrastructure.

Ownership interests in long life energy infrastructure assets and the reliable financial returns that they can produce are seen by First Nations as a way to participate in the broader economy and generate own-sourced revenues to provide improved socio-economic, cultural, health and education outcomes for their communities.

Working towards these goals, and with a vision to address climate change, protect Country and culture for generations to come, elevate community-led solutions and ensure First Nations have a 'seat at the table', the First Nations Clean Energy Network was launched on Arrente Country in Mpartntwe (Alice Springs) just over two years ago.



The First Nations Clean Energy Network represents our First Nations people, groups, community organisations and land councils members from around the country, with the support of unions, academics, industry groups, technical advisors, legal experts, renewable companies and others - working in partnership to ensure First Nations share in the benefits of Australia's energy transition.

With guidance from our twelve-member Steering Committee and numerous conversations and engagements with First Nations groups around the country, the Network has worked hard since our launch to be a trusted source of information, advocacy and support for First Nations communities.

As a national, First Nations-led coalition, the Network aims to enable and empower First Nations to participate in, benefit from, respond to, and shape clean energy projects that impact their communities, land, waters and Sea Country.

The Network's approach is built on three pillars:

● **Community**

The First Nations Clean Energy Network supports First Nations communities to shape the design, development and implementation of clean energy projects at every scale.

● **Industry partnerships**

The First Nations Clean Energy Network acts as an innovation hub, promoting best practice standards and principles that companies should adopt and investors should require before committing capital to a clean energy project.

● **Policy reform**

The First Nations Clean Energy Network advocates to lift significant federal and state regulatory barriers and stoke government investment, provide meaningful opportunities for energy security and clean energy generation for First Nations.

With close to 800 First Nations members (individuals and organisations) and nearly 2000 supporters, we are working hard to elevate First Nations in the energy transition.

The Benefits of Volunteering



Benefits of volunteering

Volunteering is of great benefit to the community, it also benefits you personally in a range of ways:

- **Gain work experience and develop new skills** – Boost your career prospects. Update your resume with a whole new skill set.
- **Make new friendships and connections** – Meet like-minded people. Create professional networks.
- **Enjoy new social & cultural experiences** – be immersed in all kinds of environments, people and causes.
- **Be a part of your community** – Discover, connect, make an impact and have fun.
- **Enjoy better physical and mental health** – Studies show volunteering makes us healthier and happier.
- **Develop personally and build confidence** – Expand yourself. Enjoy a sense of achievement and fulfilment.
- **Act on your values** – Try something new. Follow your passions and interests.
- **Step out of your comfort zone** – Challenge yourself in a supportive environment.
- **Stand up for what matters** – Be inspired and be an inspiration.
- **Make a difference** – The feel good factor of supporting Queensland communities.

Enjoy the benefits of being a volunteer today!

To find out about volunteering opportunities in your area, please visit:

Volunteering Australia - <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/>

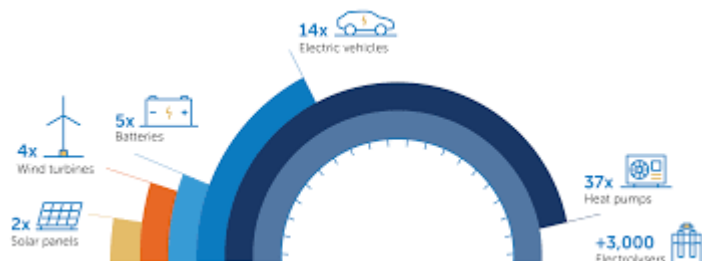
Volunteering Queensland - <https://www.volunteeringqld.org.au/>

Householders' Options to Protect the Environment - <http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/membership/volunteer-form/>

Beyond Zero Emissions (BZE): In summary

The Beyond Zero Emissions (BZE) Emissions Impact Report 2023, outlines a comprehensive plan to achieve an 81% reduction in Australia's emissions by 2030 through the large-scale deployment of clean technologies.

The report emphasises that the necessary technologies are already developed and available:



- Wind turbines
- solar panels,
- energy storage systems,
- heat pumps,
- electrolysers,
- electric vehicles (EVs).

Source

<https://www.bze.org.au/pages/solar-panels>

Key highlights from the latest 2023 report include:

1. Technology Deployment: BZE calls for a significant scaling up in the installation of renewable energy technologies over the next five years. This includes doubling the annual installation rate of solar panels from 2021 levels, quadrupling wind turbine installations, and substantially increasing the deployment of batteries, EVs, heat pumps, and electrolysers ¹

2. Job Creation: The implementation of this plan is expected to create up to 195,000 jobs, particularly in manufacturing regions, thereby bolstering local economies and reducing reliance on the volatile fossil fuel markets ^{1 2}

3. Economic and Environmental Benefits: The proposed technology rollout aims not only to reduce emissions but also to lay the foundations for modern and competitive export industries. It highlights the potential for Australia to become a global leader in clean technology manufacturing and deployment ^{1 2}

4. Policy and Coordination: Successful implementation will require coordinated efforts across all levels of government and active participation from the private sector and communities. This includes addressing infrastructure needs, such as residential and public EV charging stations, and promoting behavioural changes to further reduce emissions. ^{1 2}

The BZE report underscores that achieving these ambitious targets is both feasible and necessary to meet international climate goals and ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for Australia. For more detailed information, you can access the full report on the [BZE](https://www.bze.org.au/) website. <https://www.bze.org.au/>

Please see related organisations cited below for further information

1. [CleanTechnica](https://cleantechnica.com/): "Deploy!" Says Beyond Zero Emissions (CleanTechnica)
<https://cleantechnica.com/>
 2. [NewH2](https://www.newh2.net.au/): Beyond Zero Emissions research report outlines national cleantech potential
<https://www.newh2.net.au/>
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Save the date: Climate extreme events are coming!

By Karyne Maurmann, HOPE researcher Qld

Last Christmas, severe storms battered the Gold Coast, causing significant damage and disruption and tragically resulting in nine deaths. Now, on Mother's Day, the southern region of Brazil faces the largest flood in its history. With 447 affected cities, nearly 90% of *Rio Grande do Sul* state impacted, 537,380 displaced persons, over 800 injured, 147 dead, and more than 120 missing, the numbers continue to rise amid relentless rainfall with no forecast for the floods to recede. China, Russia, Tanzania, among others, also experienced a catastrophic week. This is no coincidence.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines climate extreme events as "events, either meteorological or hydrological, that differ significantly from the average or usual weather patterns of a particular location or region." These events encompass a wide range of phenomena, including heatwaves, heavy rainfall, droughts, floods, tropical cyclones, and other severe weather occurrences. Recently, an increase in the frequency and intensity of these extreme weather events, such as floods and heatwaves, has been observed, attributed to global climate change.

It is no longer sufficient to rely solely on calculations and predictions about global warming; the consequences of global climate change are already unfolding. Urgent efforts are needed, such as Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), exemplified by initiatives to inject CO₂ into the Great Artesian Basin. Some models show that limiting warming to 1.5°C, compared to 2°C, would noticeably reduce the frequency of extreme heat events in Australia, for example. But still, these events will occur.

Therefore, heavy investment in preventive and mitigation measures for tragedies is essential. Especially in developing countries lacking adequate infrastructure and facing poverty-related issues, creating projects for the future poses a significant challenge.



Photo: A city submerged under water, highlighting the devastating impact of flooding. Source: Reuters Agency

References:

- IPCC, 2012 – Field, C.B., V. Barros, T.F. Stocker, D. Qin, D.J. Dokken, K.L. Ebi, M.D. Mastrandrea, K.J. Mach, G.-K. Plattner, S.K. Allen, M. Tignor, and P.M. Midgley (Eds.) Available from Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8RU ENGLAND, 582 pp. Available from June 2012. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/managing-the-risks-of-extreme-events-and-disasters-to-advance-climate-change-adaptation/>
 - King, A., Karoly, D. & Henley, B. Australian climate extremes at 1.5 °C and 2 °C of global warming. *Nature Clim Change* 7, 412–416 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1038/nclimate3296>
 - Herring, Stephanie C., Martin P. Hoerling, Thomas C. Peterson, and Peter A. Stott. "Explaining Extreme Events of 2013 from a Climate Perspective." *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society* 95, no. 9 (2014): Si-S97. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26219424>.
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The Nature Conservancy Australia - <https://www.natureaustralia.org.au/>

Written by Cassandra Adofo-Kissi, HOPE researcher ACT



Main Aims

Established in the United States of America (USA) in 1951, The Nature Conservancy Australia (TNC) is a global environmental nonprofit that aims to create a world where people and nature can thrive. Their objective is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends on to survive.

Spearheaded and supported by a dedicated and diverse team that encompasses over 400 scientists and millions of members, TNC has achieved major impact across 79 countries and territories, 37 by direct conservation impact and 42 through partners.

By taking a non-confrontational, collaborative, and action-based approach to conservation, TNC has invested in policy formulation, public awareness campaigns, and field-based conservation action to ensure a direct impact on conservation.

In collaboration with their partners, internationally and locally, TNC continues to drive conversation around climate challenges and complex conservation. TNC constantly seeks new pathways to and develop practical solutions that will produce real outcomes underpinned by global evidence-based knowledge. These partners include traditional custodians, state/territory, and federal governments. Landowners, industry, not for profits, and the community.

TNC has three overarching strategic goals and embedded within these are eight specific objectives designed to achieve large scale conservation and to promote a thriving world for people and nature.

Goal 1: Conservation, Science and Scale

TNC conserves essential ecosystems to protect biodiversity, address climate change and enable people to thrive:

- Objective 1 To have an enduring impact by scaling up the most successful solutions.
- Objective 2 To build and publish globally significant evidence of the drivers and solutions for climate and ecosystem decline.
- Objective 3 To pilot conservation solutions and commercial models that catalyse investment and outcomes for people and nature.

Goal 2: Trust and Collaboration

Fostering collaboration by building continuing and trusted relationships to help TNC achieve their shared and ambitious vision:

- Objective 4 To pragmatically build diverse partnerships that deliver nature-based solutions.
- Objective 5 To inspire people to join us in achieving our goals through the telling of powerful stories.
- Objective 6 To strengthen policy and practice by sharing our knowledge to accelerate national progress.

Goal 3: Healthy Organisation

We are a sustainable organisation that values and develops its people:

- Objective 7 To diversify revenue streams and increase income to accelerate our impact.
- Objective 8 To be an inclusive and culturally competent organisation that employs great people from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Major Achievements

TNC are global experts and have been named as one of the World's Most Ethical Companies by Ethisphere Institute, an independent research centre five times.

In 2015 TNC established the **Murray Darling Basin Balanced Water Fund** (The Fund) to provide water security for farmers, while protect culturally significant wetlands that support threatened species and ecosystems. The Fun supports various wildlife living with and around the Basin surrounds and the restoration of environmental flows to conserve sites of Aboriginal cultural and spiritual value. The Fund invests in permanent water rights in the Southern Murray-Darling Basin and allocates those water rights in an efficient way.

Conservation outcomes achieved by the Fund include:

- Improved waterbird and native fish habitats including breeding habitats.
- Improved health for wetlands, floodplain forests and woodlands
- Sustainability of plant and fish refuges
- Increased wetland plant health and growth
- Supported the return of 7,109 megalitres of water to wetlands across 24 **wetlands** in the southern Murray-Darling Basin, covering 630 hectares (to 30/6/2021).
- 125 native wetland plant species have been identified across the wetlands to date, with increased growth noted.
- An increase in bird diversity of up to 212% and an increase in bird abundance of 282% following the inundation of wetland areas.

Awards:

- 2021 Victoria Winner 2021 WINNER Victoria Premier's Sustainability Awards. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Australia's shellfish reef restoration project in Port Phillip Bay, [won the Industry Leader of Healthy Environment category](#) at the Victoria Premier's Sustainability Awards.
- 2020 WINNER Australian Museum Eureka Prize - Applied Environmental Research, Project: rebuilding Australia's Lost Shellfish Reefs.
- 2020 WINNER Australian Museum Eureka Prize - Excellence in Interdisciplinary Scientific Research, Project: Coral Reef Bright Spots.

For more information regarding TNC's awards and achievements please visit their website at <https://www.natureaustralia.org.au/about-us/who-we-are/how-we-work/our-awards/> and <https://www.natureaustralia.org.au/about-us/who-we-are/how-we-work/>

Major Projects/Campaigns.

The Tasmanian Giant Kelp Restoration Project

Is a partnership between The Nature Conservancy, the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) at The University of Tasmania, Natural Resource Management South (NRM South) and the CSIRO, Australia's national science agency.

The objectives of the project are to develop methods for large-scale Giant Kelp restoration using the knowledge, expertise, experience and capacity of various stakeholders and partners. Through collaboration and knowledge sharing to the Giant Kelp restoration efforts can be expanded in Tasmania.

The project will benefit Tasmanians, visitors, and the underwater world by recovering one of the State's most productive and unique marine ecosystems. It is funded by several partners including google.org, Charitable Giving, *the James N Kirby Foundation*, and *the J and M Wright Foundation*.

For more information on the Work of The Nature Conservancy Australia (TNC) and how you can get involved, visit their website at <https://www.natureaustralia.org.au/>
