

IMAG40 PODCAST SERIES – PILOT EPISODE : IMAGINING A STRONGER COMBINED ROLE FOR ART, SCIENCE AND NATURE CONNECTEDNESS STORYTELLING.

EPISODE SHOW NOTES

Google Drive Link to audio file of episode:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aVkoZjw0s12rS3VxnVnolzBJRUhT_wyx/view?usp=sharing

The banner features a dark blue background with white text. At the top, the title 'IMAGINING 2040 – pathways to flourishing futures' is displayed in a large, bold font. Below this, the subtitle 'IMAGINING A STRONGER COMBINED ROLE FOR ART, SCIENCE AND NATURE CONNECTEDNESS STORYTELLING BY 2040' is shown in a smaller, bold font. To the left of the subtitle is a colorful illustration of a futuristic cityscape with a large, stylized '40' in the foreground. To the right of the subtitle are two circular portraits of the guests, Jennifer Waithman and Dr. Sarah Pye. Below the portraits are their names and titles. At the bottom of the banner is a 'Listen on:' section with icons for various podcast platforms (iHeartRadio, Spotify, Amazon Music, Apple Podcasts, YouTube, and a custom logo) and a 'Hosted by Optima HOPE' logo on the far right.

IMAGINING 2040 – pathways to flourishing futures

**IMAGINING A STRONGER COMBINED ROLE FOR
ART, SCIENCE AND NATURE
CONNECTEDNESS STORYTELLING BY 2040**

Exploring possible applications and opportunities
for better future outcomes in education, economy
and mental health

Jennifer Waithman,
Coordinator, Wide Bay
Burnett Environment
Council Inc. Queensland,
Australia.

Dr Sarah Pye, children's
books author and staff
member, School of
Science, Technology and
Engineering, University
of the Sunshine Coast,
Queensland, Australia

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Protect the Environment

TITLE: IMAGINING A STRONGER COMBINED ROLE FOR ART, SCIENCE AND NATURE CONNECTEDNESS STORYTELLING.

Exploring possible applications and opportunities for better future outcome sin education, economy and mental health.

Guests:

Jennifer Waithman, Coordinator, Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council, Queensland, Australia.

Dr Sarah Pye, children's book author and staff member, School of Science, Technology and Engineering, University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia.

Host introduction

You've probably heard the saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words," or "everyone loves a good story." these sayings show how powerful art can be in helping people understand important ideas—especially when we combine it with science.

When artists and scientists work together, they can help people see how important nature is for our health and the health of all living things. this teamwork can also help inspire people to speak up and support stronger rules to protect nature.

art and science are both great at explaining things—but in different ways. art uses feelings and imagination. science uses facts and research. when we put them together, they can help us see how humans and nature are connected—even in ways we don't always notice.

Through painting, music, storytelling, film, and more, art-science-nature storytelling can help us understand that we are part of nature—not separate from it. such stories can help show us how nature supports our lives, and how we've lived closely with the natural world for thousands of years.

But these stories can also show us the hard truth: that in more recent times, people have often hurt nature by taking too much from it and treating it like something to control or destroy. If we keep living this way, the damage to our environment and the human wellbeing that depends upon it will almost certainly get worse.

The good news is that through combining art, science and nature connectedness we can imagine and perhaps start working toward new ways of living—ways that are better for people, animals, plants, and the earth. Such visionary stories and ideas can help guide us toward fixing the damage, caring for the planet, and living in a more balanced and respectful way with nature.

In this episode we are going to imagine some opportunities for a future strengthening of the collaboration between art, science, and nature connectedness. How might the increased power of storytelling which emerges help us move toward achieving a climate safer, properly nature protected, socially fairer and genuinely more prosperous future? A flourishing future which leaves no-one behind?

I'm joined by two great guests to help explore this future vision imaginative question and others. Both are from Southern Queensland, Australia. Jennifer Waithman is co-ordinator of the Wide Bay Burnett environment council, and Dr. Sarah Pye is a staff member at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Both guests have great experience in combining art and science in imaginative storytelling aimed at helping educate audiences on the importance of proper protection of nature.

For Sarah, that has included writing children's books on the topic and Jennifer has extensive experience in interpretive guiding for nature.

INTERVIEW TALKING POINT SEGMENTS FOR EACH GUEST – with approximate time elapsed in minutes. And see IMAG GUEST GUIDANCE NOTE 2: RECORD OUTLINE SEQUENCE.

- GENERIC INTRODUCTION – 0.00
- GUEST FORESHADOWING COMMENTS – 2.52
- EPISODE INTRODUCTION – 3.25
- GUEST SELF INTRODUCTION AND WORK IN 2025 – 6.36
- IMAGINATION EXERCISE 1 TIME TRAVEL TO 2040 – 19.06
- IMAGINATION EXERCISE 2 SIGNALS OF THE FUTURE IN 2025 – 29.38
- IMAGINATION EXERCISE 3 THREE-POINT ACTION PLAN FOR 2025 – 41.41
- CLOSING COMMENTS AND AUDIENCE INVITATION – 51.58
- END OF MAIN EPISODE DISCUSSION – 54.41
- BONUS CONTENT – how to frame anthropomorphism in nature educational storytelling
- EPISODE CLOSE - 1.06.34

SELECTED RESOURCES LINKED TO INTERVIEW COMMENTS

INITIATIVES AND ORGANISATIONS

- Interpretation Australia – [portal website](#)
- Dr. Sarah Pye's book, conservation and schools education work [website](#).
- Dr Pye's [academic publication](#) record at University of Sunshine Coast, Queensland.
- The [Wide Bay Burnett Conservation Council](#) (WBBCC).

BOOKS

- Book by Lesley Head: *Hope and Grief in the Anthropocene: Reconceptualising Human-Nature Relations* (2016) [short review](#) based on discussion with the author (2018)
- Book by Geoff Mulgan: *Another World Is Possible: How to Reignite Social and Political Imagination* (2022) Mulgan is one of the foremost thinkers on the value of increasing the exercise of public imagination.
- Dr. Sarah Pye's children's books, conservation and schools education work [website](#).
- Dr Pye's [academic publication](#) record at University of Sunshine Coast, Queensland
- Freeman Tilden - [Interpreting our Heritage](#) (1957)

CONCEPTS

- Anthropomorphism - [background on the idea Ecological Citizenship](#) in relation to children's play areas – taken from tertiary level academic course at Wrexham University, UK (2025)
- Ecological economics – [a short video](#) introduction to principles and examples by Dr Dan O'Neill of the European Society for Ecological Economics.
- [Ecological or Eco Grief](#) – a short 2018 Conversation article on this issue
Experiential Education [a US perspective](#) on basic principles
- [Nature Connectedness](#) - taken from the portal site of the University of Derby, UK (2025)
- Radical Hope - [short introduction](#) set in a museums context.
- Rights of Nature – [an introduction](#) from the portal Australian Earth Laws Centre site
- Planetary boundaries – [Stockholm Resilience Centre](#)
- Gross Domestic Product – [a brief history](#) based on an article from the World Economic Forum (2025).

GUEST AND OTHER CONTACT DETAILS:

GUESTS:

Dr. Sarah Pye [WEB](#)

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PRODUCTION:

Produced for HOPE Inc. Australia by D. This episode recorded in Toowoomba, S.E. Queensland, Australia on 2nd June 2025

Music: [James Nicholson](#) or other credited composer. **Artwork:** Andrew Nicholson