

CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF WA

Annual Report

2019-2020



Conservation Council of Western Australia

ccwa

Look forward





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About CCWA

The Conservation Council of WA is the state's foremost non-profit, non-government conservation and climate organisation.

CCWA has been an outspoken advocate for conservation and a sustainable Western Australia for fifty years, working directly with the government, media, industry, community groups, and political parties to promote a more sustainable WA and to protect our natural environment.

Through advocacy, community engagement, policy development, science, and on-the-ground projects, we help create a sustainable future for Western Australia that we can enjoy for many years to come.

As WA's peak environmental group, we represent more than one hundred Member Groups throughout the state, as well as tens of thousands of individuals.

We connect with and amplify the voice of this growing network, which covers diverse aims and interests – from promoting renewable energy to the protection of native bushland and wildlife.

CCWA works to promote a clean economy that provides opportunities without polluting the ecosystems that support us or destroying the culture and beauty that inspires us. We work to protect our wild places and ensure that unique wildlife can thrive in their natural habitat.

CCWA works with communities and individuals to build skills, empower groups, and strengthen voices at a local level. We also combine the strength of our network to tackle critical environmental challenges at a much larger scale.

From the rugged far north of the Kimberley to the green forested South West, to our world-class coastline and unique marine life, the CCWA speaks for the protection and conservation of all nature in WA.

Whether protecting icons such as Ningaloo Reef, creating new National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, or saving old-growth forests, our work leaves an enduring legacy for future generations.



A message from our Director

Reflecting on this past year, once again I am proud to report that CCWA's leadership and advocacy have generated impacts that are far beyond what would be expected from an organisation of our capacity and resources. And once again I am confident that partnering and investing with CCWA is the most effective action our community can take towards a safer climate, healthier environment, and a more sustainable future for our state.

This year for CCWA was dominated by two things - the proposal for Australia's most polluting fossil fuel development on our doorstep, and the opportunity to 'build back better' following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the WA economy.

As always, responding to a diverse range of environmental issues across the state have kept the CCWA team busy, however, our principal focus has remained on climate change and fossil fuels and on the unique opportunities and challenges delivered by the Covid-19 Pandemic. At the same time, CCWA has provided real leadership and reshaped public debate towards a more sustainable WA through our unique Clean State initiative.

As Western Australia's emissions continue to rise, the development of a climate change policy by the McGowan Government has been an important focus for CCWA this year. Our leadership in this area has presented the first Paris-compliant carbon budget in WA and catalysed the largest-ever coalition of organisations to ever come together on climate change in this state.

During the year CCWA released a series of groundbreaking research reports which have set the policy agenda, raised awareness, and inspired action on climate change across our community. CCWA has also led efforts to prevent Australia's most polluting fossil fuel project; Woodside's Burrup Hub, from proceeding this year. This has involved rigorous engagement with multiple environmental impact assessments, detailed research, and thousands of submissions and other actions from members of the public, experts and other stakeholders.

With Covid-19 and its impacts eclipsing all other issues from the beginning of 2020, CCWA focussed our attention on the opportunity that this presented to influence the future of our state. When the McGowan Government turned to develop a recovery plan for the state's economy, our Clean State project was ready with a detailed Jobs Plan. This presented an inspiring vision for creating over 200,000 new jobs through projects and programs that cut pollution and make WA a fairer and more sustainable state. Through this and our community engagement and public outreach, the Clean State initiative has continued to open new doors and generate new partnerships, leading a new way of thinking and communicating about action on climate change that genuinely engages all West Australians.

The amazing group of staff and volunteers at CCWA has also continued to grow and evolve. This year saw the establishment of a management team comprising Melissa Wheeler (Operations), Maggie Wood (Communications Director) and Inan Ahmed (Finance Manager) and myself. With this core team, a focussed board, and an updated strategic plan, CCWA is positioned to continue to grow and develop to meet whatever challenges and opportunities the future may bring.

Like every year since CCWA was founded in 1967, the Council owes a special thanks to all those incredible and generous people and organisations who donate, support, volunteer, partner and promote the Council and our work across the WA community. CCWA is a passionate, diverse and inspiring community and every year I grow more proud and more humbled to be working with you.



Piers Verstegen
Director

A message from our President

This year has been a challenging one for everyone, including the conservation community in Western Australia. However, despite the limitations on holding public events and meeting with key players, CCWA staff still managed to make inroads on key issues and maintain a solid program of research, advocacy and representation, often while working from home.

While the economic damage inflicted by the Covid19 pandemic has been severe, we are fortunate that our “green” investments in the dedicated Trust and Bequest funds have fared reasonably well. In addition, support from Lotterywest and the government’s JobKeeper funding have assisted us in keeping staff employed and maintaining core activities, as well as planning for the coming State election.

CCWA, including the Clean State initiative, has maintained a steady stream of research, policy proposals and publicity on the climate risks from the continued expansion of the gas industry and the need for the WA government to develop a respectable climate change policy. One result of this activity – and that of many others – is that community attitudes are shifting, with a greater understanding that gas needs to be included in any assessment of climate change risk and damage and that Western Australia should play its part. A critical part of this campaign has been the identification of the many exciting opportunities for investment and employment that flow from a shift away from a fossil fuel-dependent society to one which embraces renewable sources of energy and environmental stewardship.

Member groups have also managed to continue their activities throughout this upheaval, and we are grateful for the many submissions and interventions members have made to support CCWA in conserving our environment and in putting pressure on the government to deliver better policies. Activists from the Kimberley continue to press for fracking to be banned and for the protection of the astounding natural wonder that is the Fitzroy River; Ningaloo champions are continuing to resist inappropriate development and intrusion into the World Heritage-listed site and its surrounds which provide important habitat for so many marine animals; both local Indigenous communities and the Friends of Australian Rock Art are maintaining the pressure for governments to provide proper care of the peerless rock art at Muruja; strong partnerships with indigenous communities have so far kept uranium in the ground, where it should stay; and the WA Forest Alliance, with growing community support, is making a strong case for the end to logging our native forests, not least because they are critical habitat, but also because of the pivotal role they play in mitigating climate change. Successes in the partial protection of the western woodlands, the expansion of the conservation estate, and the government’s focus on removing plastic from our environment are welcome results of past advocacy by CCWA and its members.

Over the last 12 months, I have again had the honour of chairing CCWA’s Executive Committee, whose members give so generously of their expertise and time. I would particularly like to note the enormous contribution that David Harries has made, as President, Vice President and committee member, over almost two decades and to thank him for sharing his wisdom and scientific knowledge so generously. David is not standing for election this year, but he remains an example and a symbol of the

tremendous effort expended by so many people – volunteers, donors and staff – in endeavoring to produce better conservation outcomes in the face of considerable resistance, particularly from those who profit from the exploitation of our natural world.

The staff of CCWA and its Executive Director, Piers Verstegen, also deserve our thanks for working well beyond their contracts, whether it is commissioning research, planning and conducting events, organising and conducting citizen science programs to monitor and protect threatened species, producing engaging and timely communication, organising effective fundraising or strategic collaboration with partner organisations.

Achieving strong commitments on key environmental policies from the government and opposition parties in the lead up to the next election will be a critical task for Piers and the team, a challenge I'm sure they will meet. CCWA will continue to have a key role, in partnership with other like-minded groups, in shaping an agenda for the future which has at its core the defence and restoration of our threatened natural environment.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who continue to contribute their ideas, their energy and their money to the cause of conservation; we all know that the task is bigger than ever and many of the risks accelerating. While we should celebrate the wins that we have, we also need to mobilise more of our fellow citizens to assist in averting further damage and repairing what has already been damaged. I know I speak for all the Executive Committee members and the dedicated staff in committing us all to ensure that CCWA rises to the challenge.



**Professor Emerita, Dr Carmen Lawrence
President CCWA**

Our people



Current staff

Piers Verstegen Director
Inan Ahmed Finance
Melissa Wheeler Operations & Development
Maggie Wood Communications & Engagement
Sara Boranga Events coordinator
Guy McDonald Research & Advocacy officer
Stephanie Murphey Engagement & Development officer
Dr Nic Dunlop Citizen Science coordinator
Alison Goundrey Project coordinator
Kerrie-Ann Garlick Nuclear Free campaigner
Ben Lawrence Researcher
Leslie McNulty Researcher
Gita Sonnenberg Business analyst
Giovanni Torre Media advisor
Chantal Caruso Clean State policy & research
Luke Sweet Clean State communications
Rachel Rainey Clean State campaigner

Executive Committee

Prof. Carmen Lawrence President
Tim Barling Vice President
Jason Parish Treasurer
Lou Scampoli Secretary
Caroline Perks
Prof. David Harries
James Eggleston
Paul Jarvis
Lillian Ryan

Other staff serving in 2019/2020

Kristine Thompson Community engagement & events
Judith Brinkley Tending the Tracks Alliance
Tania Douthwaite Protect Ningaloo campaigner
Anjea Travers Clean State campaigner
Matt Curry Clean State campaigner
Dylan Eagles Clean State campaigner
Paddy Cullen Community campaigner

Volunteers & Interns

Our work would not be possible without the commitment and dedication of our many wonderful volunteers and interns. We are so grateful for your effort and tireless service towards the work we do together. Thank you.

MEMBER GROUPS

We are fortunate to work with more than 100 Member Groups from all over WA.

350 Perth	Friends of Fitzgerald River National Park	Australia Inc. (SRGWA)
Albany Community Environment Centre	Friends of Moore River Estuary	Sustainable Energy Now (SEN)
Alliance for a Clean Environment	Friends of Paganoni Swamp	Sustainable Population Australia Inc. (SPA)
Animal Rights Advocates Inc	Friends of Porongurup Range Inc	Sustainable Transport Coalition of WA
Australian Marine Conservation Society	Friends of Star Swamp Bushland Inc	Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group Inc.
Australian Network for Plant Conservation	Friends of the Earth Southwest WA	The Black Cockatoo Preservation Society
Avon Valley Environmental Society Inc	Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise	The Rottnest Society
Balingup Friends of the Forest	Friends of Underwood Avenue Bushland	The Wilderness Society WA
Bassendean Preservation Group	Friends of Wireless Hill	Trillion Trees
Biophilic Cities Perth	Friends Of Yellagonga Regional Park (Inc)	UN Association Of Australia (WA)
BirdLife Australia WA.	Hands Off Point Peron Inc	Urban Bushland Council WA
Blackwood Environment Society	Inventors Association of WA	WA Native Orchid Study and Conservation
Bridgetown-Greenbushes Friends of the Forest	Jarrahdale Forest Protectors	Group (WASOCG)
Bunbury Bushwalking Club Inc	Joondalup Community Coast Care Forum	WA Naturalists' Club Inc
Busselton-Dunsborough Environment Centre	Lake Mealup Preservation Society	Walpole-Nornalup National Parks Association
Cape Conservation Group Inc	Leighton Action Coalition	Waterbird Conservation Group Inc.
Carbon Positive Australia	Margaret River Regional Environment Centre	Western Australian Speleological Group
Care for Hedland Environmental Association Inc	Nature Reserves Preservation Group Inc	Wetlands Conservation Society
Casuarina Wellard Progress Association	Northern Agricultural Catchment Council	Wildflower Society of Western Australia Inc
Cocanarup Conservation Alliance Inc	Peel Preservation Group Inc	
Cockburn Community Wildlife Corridor	Peel-Harvey Catchment Council	New members for 2019/2020
Darling Range Wildlife Shelter Inc	Perth Advocates for the Earth (PAFTE Inc)	Friends of Melville Bird Sanctuary
Denmark Environment Centre Inc	Perth Bushwalkers Club (PBW) Inc	Gnaraloo Wilderness Foundation
Doctors for the Environment Australia	Pilbara Wildlife Carers Association Inc	Preserve Gnarabup
Eco Faeries	Pollution Action Network	Save Ocean Reef Citizens Association Inc.
Ecocean Inc	Port Kennedy LCDC	
Enviro House	Preserve Gnarabup	
Environmental Defenders Office Ltd	Quinns Rocks Environmental Group	
Environs Kimberley Inc	Rethink Perth Freight Link Alliance	
Esperance LEAF (Local Environmental Awareness Forum)	River Conservation Society Inc	
FoodWatch WA	Rockingham Environment Centre (Naragebup)	
FRAGYLE INC. (friends of Ramsar Action Group for the Yal-gorup Lake Environment)	Roleybushcare Inc.	
Frenchman Bay Association	Save Beeliar Wetlands	
Friends of Australian Rock Art	Sea Shepherd Australia	
Friends of Bindaring Wetland Bassendean	Society for Kimberley Indigenous Plants and Animals	
Friends of Bold Park Bushland	South Coast Environment Group (SCEG)	
Friends of Brixton St Wetlands Kenwick	South West Environment Centre Inc	
	South West Forests Defence Foundation	
	Speleological Research Group Western	

Advocacy and Impact

Climate change and fossil fuels

This year our efforts to address the state's rising emissions and prevent Australia's most pollution fossil fuel expansion was a clear and compelling focus for the Council.

Western Australia is the only state with rising pollution and our lack of effective policy response is undermining global action on climate change and compromising Australia's ability to meet Paris Agreement targets. Despite accelerating momentum on climate policy globally and elsewhere in Australia, at the time of writing it appears the McGowan Government will release a climate policy that allows further pollution increases here in WA. This will place our state in the company of a tiny minority of countries including Saudi Arabia, Russia, and the Trump Administration. The principal reason for this is the almost complete capture of the McGowan Government by the state's biggest polluters in the gas industry who continue to see action on climate change as a threat to their profits.

This has meant that the Council has had to focus efforts elsewhere: engaging the community and stakeholders on positive climate solutions; engaging with environmental impact assessment processes; holding regulators to account; and engaging with shareholders and investors to educate them about the risks inherent in projects like the Burrup Hub that are not aligned with a safe climate.



This work has achieved some significant traction over the last 12 months.

A new EPA climate policy

After nearly two years of consultation and development, the WA EPA has released a new greenhouse gas and emissions policy.

The Authority has issued advice to the government on two new fossil fuel projects, recommending conditions requiring the projects to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. While this is not consistent with the science which demands no new fossil fuel developments and no increases to carbon pollution, it is a significant step forward from the previous position. With the assistance of the Environmental Defenders Office (EDO), the Council continues to engage with the EPA and environmental assessment processes to ensure they reflect the clear scientific understanding of climate change and carbon pollution.

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“In line with the science, we believe the new EPA Guidelines on greenhouse gas emissions assessment should include: The requirement of net-zero emissions for all new projects, from commencement.”

Western Australian Scientific Community (joint letter signed by 39 of WA's most respected scientists)



Holding WA's biggest polluters to account

Working with the Australian Centre for Corporate Responsibility (ACCR), CCWA engaged directly with Woodside Shareholders prior to the Company's 2019 AGM. This led to an Australia first - over 50% of shareholders voting in favour of resolutions demanding that the company increase the transparency of its carbon reporting and align its business plans with the Paris Agreement. Woodside has since made commitments to net zero emissions by 2050 and we continue to push for a credible plan to achieve that outcome. CCWA has also continued to apply pressure to Chevron and regulators to ensure the company complies with conditions requiring carbon capture and storage (CCS) at its Gorgon LNG facility on Barrow Island. After several years of delay and non-compliance, the CCS has now finally become operational. We continue to push for the company to offset its pollution including the emissions that Chevron has failed to mitigate through CCS.

Setting the policy agenda

CCWA led a statewide effort involving hundreds of experts, stakeholders and thousands of community members to make submissions to the McGowan Government Climate Change issues paper. This included statements from the broadest coalition of organisations ever to come together on this issue in WA and groundbreaking research to set out Western Australia's first-ever Paris-compliant carbon budget. Research that matters: CCWA delivered a series of groundbreaking research reports that have raised awareness and inspired action on climate change from across our community. These included:

- **Runaway Train: The impact of WA's LNG industry on meeting our Paris targets and national efforts to tackle climate change, October 2019**
- **A Paris-compliant carbon budget for Western Australia, November 2019**
- **Burrup Hub - Australia's most polluting fossil fuel project, January 2020**
- **A Clean State jobs plan for Western Australia, July 2020**

Clean State



The launch of the Clean State initiative in 2018 saw the establishment of a new voice for action on climate change in WA.

We have continued to develop and refine this initiative as a distinct advocacy voice that reaches and engages all members of the community, not just traditional progressive audiences. Through the Clean State initiative, we are committed to promoting positive solutions to address our largest pollution sources in ways that generate new jobs and economic opportunities for Western Australians. In this way, we are setting a new narrative that presents action on climate change as a positive for jobs, communities and the economy.

Clean State has continued to attract interest and active partnerships from a wide community including academics, businesses, and not-for-profit organisations, and continues to grow and develop its own distinct identity.

A major initiative for Clean State this year was the development of a Clean state Jobs Plan for Western Australia, outlining how over 200,000 new jobs can be created through initiatives that deliver action on climate change and cut pollution.

The report highlighted the many opportunities to create new jobs in ways that cut pollution while also addressing other, social, environmental and economic challenges.

Developing the Jobs Plan provided a unique opportunity for Clean State to partner with a wide range of audiences, some of which had never worked with a climate organisation before. Clean State has actively engaged with businesses and community organisations to build support for the jobs plan, with endorsement from over 220 businesses from across the State at the time of writing.

A core aspect of Clean State is building visible and active community support across Western Australian communities. Our community organising inspires people with positive solutions and encourages people to take ownership and initiative in how they engage with their local community and elected representatives. This has seen a range of activities from large public events and public workshops, creative actions, and meetings and briefings with Members of Parliament and other community leaders. A focus has been building capacity and capability within our volunteers and supporter base in key electorates across the state.

WA community attitudes to climate change

To ensure that our advocacy and communications are effective, it is important that we track the impact of our efforts and understand the attitudes of the community we are engaging with.

During the year, CCWA commissioned two independent polls to gain an insight into the attitudes and beliefs in the WA community on the issues we are working on. Some of the highlights of this research include:

West Australians overwhelmingly support action on climate change

- 85% of respondents support for stronger action on climate change by the WA State Government.
- One in five people surveyed agrees that climate change should be treated as an emergency, while just 4% of respondents believe there is no need to take action on climate change at all.

West Australians believe it is unacceptable for pollution to increase in WA

- 77% of respondents believe it is unacceptable for WA's carbon pollution to continue to rise in the short or medium term. Just 9% of respondents believe it is acceptable for WA's emissions to continue rising.

West Australians support phasing out of gas and fossil fuels.

- 64% of people surveyed strongly support phasing out gas and replacing it with renewable energy, with only 14% disagreeing with this proposition. Nearly 60% of respondents support a ban on new gas developments.

West Australians believe polluters should not be given a free ride

- An overwhelming 80% of respondents support requirements for big polluters to offset their pollution, with only 7% disagreeing with this proposition.
- Less than a quarter (23%) believe it is acceptable for efforts by the community or other businesses to make up for increases in emissions from WA's biggest polluters in the gas industry.

West Australians want to build back better

- Action on climate change is seen as a powerful job creator that can grow the economy faster than resource industries or road building.
- Investment in renewable energy and batteries receives the highest support for government stimulus investment (85% support), followed by aged care, social housing, public transport, Landcare and conservation projects.
- Voters do not support a 'gas led recovery' (just 43% support) or cutting red and green tape for mining projects (44% support).

Survey details: The polling was conducted in September 2019 and June 2020 by Patterson Research Group and Thinkfield Research operating in line with the international standard for market, opinion and Social Research (ISO 20252). The sample size for the survey is n=964 and n=925 with a survey error of +/- 3.4% at the 95% level of confidence. All survey participants were over the age of 18 and include both city and country residents.

Building Back Better: A sustainable recovery from COVID-19

The Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing response from government presents both a major threat and a major opportunity for action on climate change and conservation in WA.

While the Morrison Government has attempted to pursue a 'gas led recovery' at the national level, CCWA has invested considerable work to influence the direction Western Australia takes in its recovery. This effort was critical to ensure that gas and other fossil fuel expansions did not feature in our state's recovery plans and to promote initiatives that deliver economic and employment stimulus while making our state more sustainable, cutting pollution and addressing other environmental issues.

CCWA has been one of the most active and effective voices influencing the direction of the Covid recovery in Western Australia.

Our efforts included:

- Releasing a groundbreaking Clean State Jobs Plan demonstrating how over 200,000 new jobs can be created in our state through action on climate change and conservation.
- CCWA Director representing the sector on the McGowan Government's Covid-19 Recovery Advisory Group
- Shaping the public debate and through extensive media coverage of our Clean State Jobs initiatives and the strategic idea of building back better.
- Commissioning research on community attitudes toward the recovery to demonstrate public support for our goals.

So far, the McGowan Government's Covid-19 response and 2020-21 budget have included a significant focus on projects that deliver clean jobs and climate action, and many of the initiatives identified in the Clean State Jobs Plan have been supported to some degree. While the level of ambition is certainly not matched to the size of the opportunity, collectively it amounts to the largest package of government investments ever made in action on climate change and conservation here in WA. Some examples include:

- \$60 million green jobs program supporting conservation projects in regional areas.
- \$60 million for renewable energy and battery projects around the state, including a 'solar schools' program, and a program to install solar on train stations and other government buildings.
- A program to retrofit government-owned social housing with energy efficiency and solar power.
- Announcement of WA's first 'big battery'
- \$17 million for batteries and solar in the Kimberley, including in Aboriginal communities
- WA's largest-ever investment in public transport (over \$5 billion), bringing forward new rail transit extensions for Perth suburbs
- \$15 million to boost emergency services and fire brigades who are dealing with the impacts of climate change.

Protection of wildlife and biodiversity

A core function of the CCWA is to support our member groups and local communities to protect nature and wildlife from the range of threats that are contributing to a biodiversity crisis for our state.

This continues to be an important part of the Council's work but the lack of a dedicated and coordinated effort to address these issues at a systemic level means that small gains have been hard-won on a case-by-case basis, while the overall condition of wildlife and biodiversity continues to decline across the state.

It was hoped that the McGowan Government would move ahead with promised action to update and improve the Biodiversity Conservation Act, reform native vegetation clearing regulations, reform rangelands and pastoral lease management, create a market driver for carbon farming to restore degraded lands, and transition to sustainable forest management. After nearly four years in office, we have seen little action on these critical reform areas although some policy adjustments have improved things at the margins.

WA Labor's promised reforms to the Biodiversity Conservation Act have been shelved and even the required statutory review of this Act has not been progressed. The Rangelands reform process has stalled. No local market driver or statewide strategy for carbon farming has been created, however, some pastoral leaseholders have been permitted to reduce stocking rates to create carbon credits in the rangelands. The opportunity to address native vegetation clearing was missed in updates to the Environmental Protection Act; public reporting on clearing has not improved; and the long-awaited policy on native vegetation has still not been released. Some welcome adjustments have been made to logging plans following campaigning led by the WA Forest Alliance, however, the McGowan Government has continued with the destructive and unsustainable Forest Management Plan established by the Barnett Government with little regard for biodiversity, carbon, or other social and economic values of our Southwest forests.



Clearly, there needs to be a coordinated, focussed and well-resourced education and advocacy effort to raise awareness in the broader community about the crisis facing wildlife and biodiversity in WA, and to build support for workable solutions across a broader range of stakeholders and sectors. While the path to meaningful, systemic reform depends on this work being done, it is clear now that the McGowan Government is not going to lead these efforts. This leaves the space open to leadership from civil society and this is something that CCWA hopes to develop into the future in consultation with other groups and stakeholders.

Expanding the conservation estate

One area where the McGowan Government has progressed meaningful action has been the Plan for Our Parks program to deliver 5 million hectares of new national and marine parks across WA, in what would be the single largest addition to the conservation estate in WA history. To the Government's credit, this was one of the few priorities that were not put on hold during the Covid-19 pandemic response. While it may seem that progress towards realising this target has been slow, it is important to get it right. Working with Traditional Owner groups to secure Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA's), establish Joint Management arrangements and create Aboriginal Ranger programs takes time and has to be done in ways that are respectful of decision making by Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders.

Waste management and recycling

Waste management and recycling is one area where we have seen some significant progress this year following years of dedicated campaigning by CCWA and others.

The commencement of the WA Containers for Change recycling refund scheme in WA has concluded over a decade of active campaigning on this issue led by CCWA, and we take this opportunity to acknowledge all those who have contributed to this outcome over the years. The initiative will dramatically lift recycling rates for some of the most commonly littered items while reducing carbon pollution and providing new employment opportunities across the state.

Responding to the dramatic increase in public concern around plastic waste, the McGowan Government has also taken welcome action in this area. Environment Minister Stephen Dawson has announced plans to ban a range of single use plastic products in WA over the coming years and we look forward to these commitments being delivered and extended. We recognise the tireless efforts of community campaigners such as Lisa Jane Hill and others in contributing to this outcome.

CCWA Vice President Tim Barling has continued to represent the Council on the WA Ministerial Waste Reference Group this year. As the policy response to waste matures in WA, we continue to promote a more fundamental shift towards a sustainable circular economy where resource use is reduced and waste is eliminated at all stages of production and consumption in WA.

Representation on boards and committees

CCWA continues to actively represent the sector on a range of government advisory boards and committees.

This provides opportunities to influence government policy outcomes and prosecute the case for action on conservation and climate change.

- Covid-19 Recovery Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Environmental Protection Authority Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Water Reform Stakeholder Reference Group
- Department of Mines and Petroleum Environmental Liaison Committee (inactive)
- Cockburn Sound Management Council
- Perth Air Quality Management Committee
- Department of Environmental Regulation Stakeholder Reference Group
- Rehabilitating Roe 8 Advisory Committee
- Container Deposit Scheme Stakeholder Advisory Group (concluded this year)
- Ministerial Waste Advisory Group
- Ministerial Reference Group for the Non-Lethal Shark Drumline Trial



Supporting our community

Supporting community campaigns to protect special places or prevent inappropriate developments is an important feature of the Council's role as Western Australia's peak community-based conservation organisation.

This year was no different with CCWA staff and volunteers supporting a number of ongoing and new community conservation campaigns and initiatives. The support we provide is highly varied and can range from fundraising, media support, strategy development and advice, facilitation, research, events, representation and lobbying, supporter engagement and many other functions that are required to support a successful campaign or initiative.

This year the community campaigns and initiatives supported by CCWA included:

- WA Forest Alliance campaign
- 350 Boorloo Perth
- Friends of Gelorup Corridor
- Protect Ningaloo
- Frack Free Western Australia
- Save Perth Hills
- Save our Jarrah
- Sustainable Energy Now (SEN)
- Binningup Community Group
- Save Ocean Reef

Nuclear Free WA

2020 has been an active time for people and communities taking action to protect country and culture from the threat of nuclear activities in WA.

The four uranium projects - Kintyre, Wiluna, Yeelirrie and Mulga Rock, remain actively contested and none have substantially progressed.

In early January, the Nuclear Free campaign joined the Japanese based Peace Boat and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) to support ongoing efforts towards nuclear disarmament. CCWA supported Anangu Spinifex traditional owner, Debbie Carmody to tell her story of the impacts of nuclear testing at Maralinga in the 1950s and '60s, and her current efforts to stop uranium mining at Mulga Rock. Internationally, the ratification of the ICAN-initiated Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in October was a significant step that is strongly welcomed here in WA.

The state environmental approval for mining the Kintyre uranium deposit expired in March 2020. Rehabilitation of the proposed mine site has commenced and discussions are underway with a view to restoring protection of this area as part of the Karlamilyi National Park as well as Native Title rights for the Martu Traditional Owners. Approval for the remaining mine proposals at Mulga Rock, Wiluna and Yeelirrie

are all set to expire by Jan 2022 if mining has not commenced. This is looking increasingly unlikely given the poor uranium price and the strong continued opposition to each of these projects.

Despite the pandemic, the Nuclear Free campaign has continued working with communities affected by uranium mining and maintained community awareness of the need to keep WA nuclear free. Hosting regular webinars has been an effective way to connect communities and allies across the broader movement nationally and internationally. The webinar on Yeelirrie – A Case for Environmental Law Reform gained a national audience to highlight how current laws can be administered in ways that place developers interests ahead of environmental protection. Yeelirrie continues to be an important case study in federal environmental law reform, especially through the current EPBC Act review.

While we celebrate another year with no operating uranium mines in WA the threat remains present and we remain vigilant and we thank those who have contributed to the WA Nuclear Free campaign.



Events & Engagement

At CCWA we are powered by our community, and we understand the importance of people coming together to help build a more sustainable future. This year we were grateful to receive support from Lotterywest to run community events across the state.

Annual Conference 2019

Our Conference and AGM were held in November 2019 at the Perth Waldorf School in Bibra Lakes.

With the theme of *building strong communities ready for action*, we heard from inspiring speakers about the work they were doing to create real change.

Community Conservation Awards 2019

Our annual awards celebrate the incredible volunteer achievements of community conservation groups and individuals throughout the year.

In 2019, the prestigious Bessie Rischbieth Conservation Award went to Dr Nic Dunlop for his tireless dedication to the protection of Western Australian environment over several decades, and especially recognising his central role in CCWA's Citizen Science Program.

Other award winners included:

- Hans Lambers, John Oldham Conservation Employee Award
- Siobhan Sutton, Young Environmentalist Award
- Gnaraloo Wilderness Foundation, Len Howard Community Group Award
- CCWA Honours List - Bee Winfield; Angela Rossen; Barbara Sing;
- Extinction Rebellion WA, CCWA Direct Action Award

Environment Matters Forums

Earlier this year we were able to continue with our popular Environment Matters series. CCWA's 'Environment Matters' seminar series explore different conservation and sustainability themes and issues in front of a public audience. The events bring together experts and stakeholders from government, industry, and community to discuss environmental issues and challenges in a forum where members of the public can participate and contribute to the conversation.

Topics covered included:

- Proposed Reforms for the EPA Act
- A Carbon Budget for WA
- Landcare & Climate Change
- Browse Basin and the Burrup Hub
- How can WA's native forests help solve climate change?



Citizen Science

Our Citizen Science field program was curtailed somewhat this year due to the unavailability of some key observers and the limitations imposed by Covid restrictions. However, less field time meant an opportunity to analyse various data sets and get things reported or published.

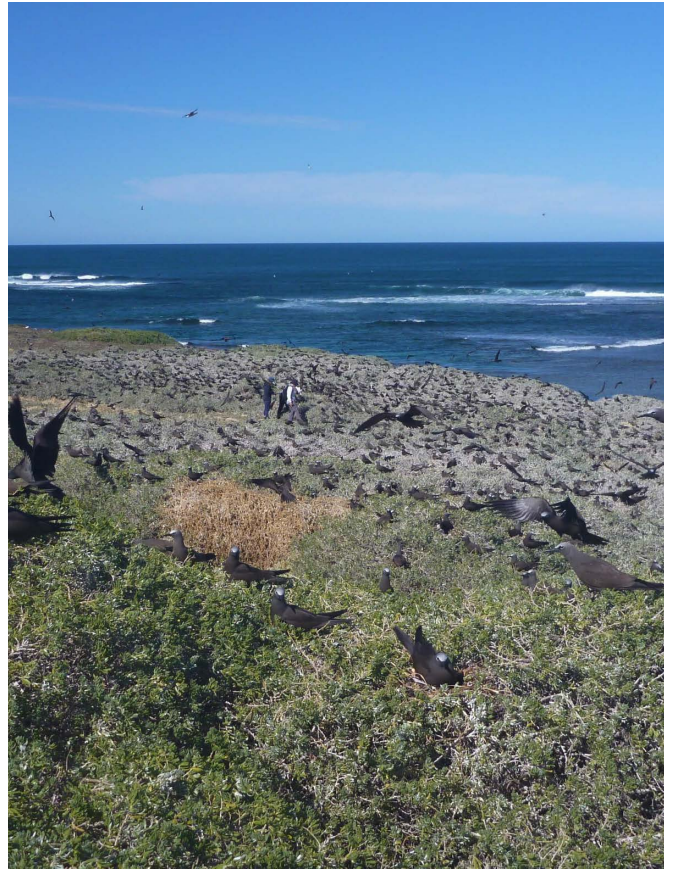
The most important milestone was publishing the results of the work done by our CCWA citizen science team and the observers in the WA Fairy Tern Conservation Network.

The paper is entitled ‘Seasonal movements and meta-population structure of the Australian Fairy Tern in Western Australia’ was published in June 2020 in Pacific Conservation Biology. This paper reveals most of the mysteries that have surrounded the migrations and demographic structure of this threatened species in Western Australia and provides some insights that may assist in conservation in the more threatened, or endangered populations in south-eastern

Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia. It also provides a framework for future conservation planning in WA and a model for community engagement in threatened species conservation.

CCWA’s citizen science program assisted the Murdoch University ‘antimicrobial resistance laboratory’ in sampling gulls, penguins and feral pigeons for resistant E.coli bacteria on Penguin Island. The results were published in Applied and Environmental Microbiology in October 2020 (Mukerji et al. 2020). There are significant public health implications in this work both for the management of waste disposal and landfill sites and for the future clinical availability of critical antimicrobials in Perth.

The analysis of our large data-set on bird-communities as indicators of ecosystem development in natural regeneration, biodiverse restoration and in carbon-sequestration plantings is nearing completion. The results of these projects will be presented at our citizen-science forum in December. A paper will be prepared for publication over the summer break period.





Tending the Tracks Alliance

Managed by the Citizen Science program with the support of the Western Australian Government's State NRM funding Tending the Tracks is an alliance between the Conservation Council of WA and the state's major 4 Wheel Drive organisations. The vision of the Alliance is the development of a model for the community management of our coastal off road environments.

TTTa worked across 3 major coastal project sites with land managers in the Northern Agricultural Region, a hot spot for off road activity. Across the year 16 events and working field days were completed.

High points of the calendar included two Turquoise Coast Aboriginal, Cultural and Environmental Education weekends in partnership with the Yued Traditional owners and The Hill River Estuary Values and Condition Survey weekend and subsequent Workshop (additionally supported by NACC).

The culmination of the year was the Jurien 2020 Celebration and Future Planning Workshop attended by Environment Minister Stephen Dawson during which he officially opened the Wanagarren Track. The Track is the result of the TTTa partnership with the DBCA to create a formal managed coastal 4 Wheel Drive Track with regulated nature camping.

349 TTTa volunteers contributed over \$150,000 worth of hours to the projects, supported by over \$50,000 worth of co- contributions from land managers.

Financial Summary

For the year ending 30 June 2020

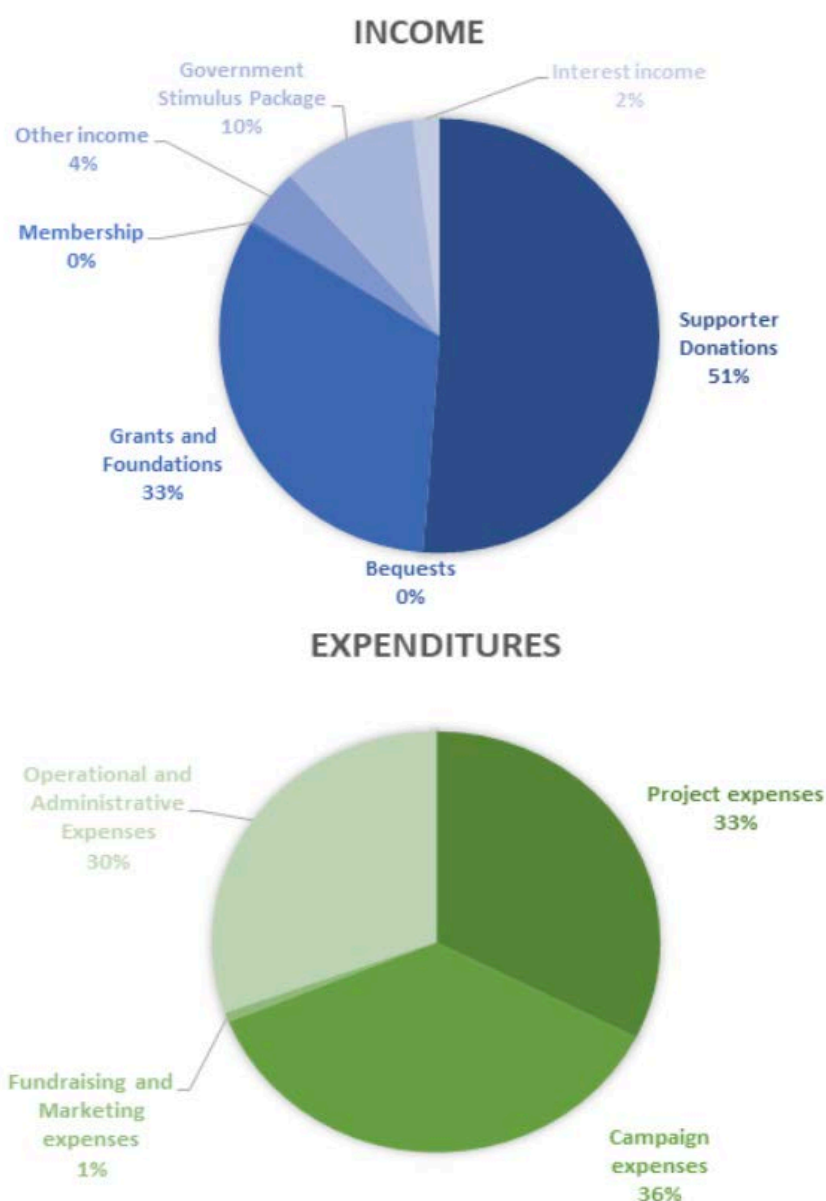
2020 has been a year of uncertainties including for CCWA and our finances. CCWA has not been immune to the impacts of recent events, however with the help of our generous supporters, assistance from government stimulus measures and prudent financial management, the Council was able to end the financial year with a modest surplus. This will help maintain the continuity of our operations and activities into 2021 and beyond.

Total consolidated income for the financial year was \$2,447,887, and total expenditure was \$2,169,818.

The majority of CCWA's income continues to come from the generosity of our donors. This is followed by Grants and Project income, including payment for services delivered by CCWA which contributes to meeting the Council's operational expenses and our charitable purpose.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, like most other organisations in Australia the Council received assistance from the Commonwealth Government Job Keeper program and also the Cash Boost initiative from the WA State Government. CCWA is most grateful have received this assistance to continue providing our important functions, services and activities in the WA community.

Expenditures were similar to the previous financial year with over 60% of expenses on specific campaign and project activities supported by ties income. The slightly higher Operational and Administrative expenses compared to the previous year reflects payroll expenditure supported by the continuing Job Keeper assistance program enabling CCWA to maintain higher staffing levels that would not have been possible without the assistance of this program.



The Conservation Trust of WA

The Conservation Trust of WA continues to be an important endowment that provides financial security for the Council while allowing the Council to receive tax-deductible gifts to support our charitable work. Over \$1.8m was received by the trust in tax deductible donations during the last financial year, of which 5% was retained by the Trust to contribute to the ethically managed endowment fund.

The Trust investments were inevitably impacted by the pandemic, when share markets plunged earlier in the calendar year. Since then, the investments have grown to deliver an increase in overall equity by the end of the financial year. The Trust ethical investments were valued at \$1,049,817 at the beginning of the financial year and by the end of the year this had risen to \$1,117,614 - an increase of almost 6%. The ethical investments have continued to equal or outperform market benchmarks demonstrating that ethically managed and sustainable companies deliver stronger financial returns.

Members of the Conservation Trust of WA include: Professor Carmen Lawrence (President), Jason Parish (Treasurer), Sue Graham-Taylor (Trustee), Philip Jennings (Trustee), Peter Ewing (Trustee).





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