Greetings from FEN, the Faith Ecology Network, an Australian hub for strengthening an interfaith dialogue between science and religion.

June 2025 Newsletter

Greetings FEN Friends and Supporters

As I write this introduction, the seasons have turned. It has prompted me to reread a very special book: "Ngangkari Seasons and Climatic Cycles" compiled by O'Neesed elder, Frances Bodkin from interviews with one hundred and six O'Neesed Elders/Ngangkari. Fran's knowledge, which she shared several times at FEN events in the early days, opened my mind and heart to a different way of learning to read the cycles and seasons where I live—by watching, listening and paying attention to the behaviour of the plants, animals and earth elements that have evolved over various lengths of time.

Fran teaches about the times of day, the times of the year, the times of twelve year cycles – and the deep time cycles of big change.

The sciences and technology inform us of seasons and cycles of deep cosmological, and geological time, calling this period of climatic change, the Anthropocene, brought about by human behaviour since the beginning of the industrial technological period. The various world religions teach about cycles and seasons in their faith teachings and celebrate them in ritualistic ways.

The ecological sciences inform us of the decline of those unique Australian species which have evolved to live in harmony with the seasonal and climatic cycles of this continent. We have been in this land. However, there is still a dominant disconnect from how intimately, interconnected and interdependent we human and other natural species are. Political, social and commercial decisions are still being made in Australia that do not consider their impact on biodiversity.

In the Faith Ecology Network we are helping to bring about a necessary shift in ecological consciousness. We realise that human induced extinction of species matters! And there is much that has been going on by our networks and partners as well as much more planned locally and globally in response to that growing ecological consciousness. Read on, get involved and CARE, share your activities back to us.

Anne Lanyon
FEN Co-ordinator

FEN Local News

FEN Workshop at AELA Conference

Members of the FEN Core Group: Sue Mellor and Anne Lanyon, were privileged to be able to present a Workshop on the Ten Ways to Care for Biodiversity at a National Conference in Brisbane on May 1-3. The theme of "Ethical Futures for People and Planet" brought together over 200 participants, with about 40 in our workshop. The Conference was a gathering from across Australia and the globe. The Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA) and The Australian Association for Professional and Applied Ethics partnered to co-host this thoroughly enjoyable learning event. The venue was appropriately Griffith University's Eco-Centre in Toohey Forest with a pair of Sacred Kingfisherfs sleeping in a tree at the entry and Wallabies grazing on the lawn. It was a very special place to participate in the 3 day event. About 25 people joined in the FEN workshop, shared ideas for actions and small addresses and were interested in being part of local FEN hubs.

Upcoming FEN Events

1. Develop and Use Green Calendars, and Share Successes – FEN's Ten Ways to Care Workshop 5.

Sunday 29 June 2025
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM AEST
Online via ZOOM

Book **NOW** for Workshop 5 of our Ten Ways To Care for Biodiversity workshop series focusing on 'Develop and Use Green Calendars' and 'Share Successes', featuring special guests.

Liz Buxton
Senior Lead at the Blue Mountains Planetary Health Initiative. Liz has extensive experience of sharing success stories.

Peter Bourjeois
Justice Estate, Anglican Church Southern Queensland. Peter has developed various green calendars for religious seasons including Lent, Advent and Season of Creation.

Booking Link:
www.trybooking.com/DCNLN

Book Now

2. Kinship Webinar: Faith Perspectives on Earth Kinship

Thursday 24 July 2025
1pm - 2pm
Online
(See details below in FEN Partner News)

3. FEN Enrichment Day, Brahma Kumaris Retreat Centre, Leura.

Saturday 2 August 2025
10.30am - 3pm
Spend a day in the Blue Mountains connecting to the local biosphere, learning more about Landcare, sharing a meal, meditating, and planning. More details to come!

Opportunity to bring Ecological Consciousness in Inclusive Narrative Project

The Australian Baha'i community is hosting a series of roundtable discussions to explore ways to strengthen social cohesion in Australia. These roundtables are part of **the Creating Inclusive Narratives Project**. The project aims to foster a deeper understanding of lived experiences and perspectives of people from diverse backgrounds to contribute to a more inclusive story of Australia - a story of who we are, where we want to be, and the shared values that can guide this journey. Such a narrative will help to strengthen a sense of belonging and inclusion, fostering greater social cohesion. We are seeking representatives from faith communities, Indigenous communities, diaspora communities, academics, academic think tanks, institutions, artists, authors, and government from across Australia to share their experiences, ideas, and explore fundamental questions underpinning the discourse together.

The insights and contributions offered will be synthesised into the 2nd edition of the Creating Inclusive Narratives publication. The **first edition of the publication** was launched in 2020. **Register here** to participate in a roundtable near you. Nine roundtables will be added regularly, so please check if you cannot find a date or location that works best for you.*

5Rs to Help Stop Plastic Pollution: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle.

Frenchs Forest Catholic Parish in Sydney NSW, has created a poster to encourage their communities to help deal with the plastic waste problem.

FEN Global News

The Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology

The **Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology** is a foremost leader in **cultivating dialogue** within religious/spiritual communities and in partnership with scientists and policy makers to inform and **inspire people to preserve, protect, and restore the Earth community**. They solicit and have religions of the world transmit ecological wisdom and patterns of their scriptures, rituals, and contemplative practices as well as in their moral and ethical commitments.

Mary Evelyn Tucker is Founding Director along with her husband John Grim. Her latest book, Handbook of Ecological Civilization (Springer, April 2025), explores how Confucian values of harmony, relationality, and moral cultivation can guide sustainable development in China and beyond. We recommend reading this article:
https://fore.yale.edu/disciplines/Religion/Ecological_Civilization_MET_2025.pdf

Wheat and Barley, Plants of the Bible

Plants of the Bible

This is a series of videos introducing the viewer to the Biblical landscape, and to the stories and symbolism of some significant plants of the bible.
https://thepeaceinstitute.com.au/5-series/plants-of-the-bible

Others may like to send us some information about plants of other religious texts for the next newsletter!

Al-Mizan: A Covenant for the Earth featured on Earthrise

Al-Mizan: A Covenant for the Earth is featured on **Al Jazeera's documentary series, Earthrise**! Called Restoring the Balance, Earthrise in this video follows the progress of Al-Mizan, an Islamic Covenant for the Earth. In the year after its launch, Earthrise explores the vital role faith can play in confronting the environmental crisis, through the lens of Al-Mizan, and its developing Islamic environmental charter coordinated by United Nations Environment Program.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFWmI3BbZMM&t=419s

FEN Partner News

On Work Environment Day, Thursday 5th June, URI and Religions for Peace Australia hosted a webinar: **Celebrate the life of Pope Francis and honour his living legacy on integral ecology, peace and interfaith harmony.**

It was a wonderful example of representatives from diverse faith groups coming together globally to honour a global religious leader who humbly lived and inspired people from the sciences, societies, cultures, religious traditions or none to care for Earth our Common Home and especially those made poor through the effects of the current Climatic, economic and military system.

Just look at the range of speakers: Professor **Desmond Cahill**, OAM, Professor Emeritus of Intercultural Studies at RMIT University in Melbourne; **John Lochowiak**, Kaurna Elder, Chair of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Commission; **Morris E Crespo**, from Argentina, who met Pope Francis several times in her work with URI; **Rabbi David Ashton**, Chair of the Australian Council of Jewish Rabbinical Authorities; **Venerable Theresa Kirkwood**, a Papua New Guinean born Bahai living in Melbourne Australia; **Ajan Ware** of Quaker heritage, 2009 Right Livelihood Award recipient, international nuclear disarmament and peace campaigner; **Philippe Roudaut**, a Benedictine Buddhist, President of Multifaith SA and Chair of Religions for Peace Australia; **Kanti Jinna** OAM a founding member of Religions for Peace and Chair of Religions for Peace **Executive Body**; Director for the Centre for Islamic Studies and Civilisation at Charles Sturt Univ. ERA, the Islamic Sciences and Research Academy; Well Done URI and Religions for Peace Australia.

Many FEN networkers are also supporters of ARRCC. Following their work is the lead up to the Federal Elections ARCC reports that their *"supporters can be proud of our significant contribution to the Climate Emergency collective determined effort to create this outcome. Hundreds of ARRCC people were involved."*

"That we take a stand on the climate as people of faith sets weight to our messaging – our basic motivation is not ideological but to create a better society, one organised around caring relationships with people and the natural environment upon which life depends. Collectively we stand against greed and for a safe, flourishing future for all." Well done ARRCC!

The Biodiversity Council and the Australian Marine Conservation Society have published research findings on **The cost of preventing extinctions in Australia's marine environment.** The report found that Australia needs to invest $34Million per year in order to prevent the extinction of marine species (mammals, seabirds, sharks, seagrass, bony fish, cephalopods). https://biodiversitycouncil.org.au/resources/the-cost-of-preventing-extinctions-in-australia-marine-environment

FEN is a volunteer network.

We rely on your support to envelop a cold-blow Co-ordinator to assist us.
We appreciate any assistance in achieving this goal.

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