



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

## June 2026 Newsletter

The question: “What does it mean to be human?” is and has been a constant among human communities over time. At this point in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, it is a major question as the development of Artificial Intelligence(AI) and its place in Earth life gathers apace.

Earth, our common home, and those made poor by the dominant economic system, are suffering under the weight of technology’s increasing footprint. Underlying this major question is the need for a BIG SHIFT in ecological consciousness and practice on the part of we humans, including our faith traditions.

**So... we are excited to announce a one day conference in Melbourne in partnership with the Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA):**



Melbourne Multicultural Hub, Level 1  
506 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne 3000



Join us in at **The Multicultural Hub in Melbourne** on **Saturday 3 October 2026** at our 1-day conference celebrating how the living world brings us together in Faith, and in care, hosted by The Australian Earth Law Alliance (AELA) and the Faith Ecology Network (FEN).

The full conference program will be available at: [www.faithecolony.net.au](http://www.faithecolony.net.au)

We are looking forward to listening and learning together with so many wonderful guests from diverse beliefs and disciplines including:

- **Sherry Balcombe-Maloney**

Olkola / Mularidji woman, Cross Cultural Educator, Story Teller with Djirra, and Contributor to "An Urgent Call: Laudato si' and Indigenous Wisdom in Oceania", published by the Vatican.

- **Prof Sarah Benessy**

Honorary Professor at RMIT University, 2020 Winner of the City of Melbourne Design Challenge, and Lead Councillor with The Biodiversity Council, which she helped to establish.

- **Dr Michelle Maloney**

Co-Founder and National Convenor the Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA), Adjunct Fellow, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney (UTS), and member of the Advisory Council, Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature

- **Andrew Skeoch**

Educator, author, naturalist, environmental thinker, and nature sound recordist with work featured at Sydney Wildlife World, on Peter Gabriel's soundtrack to Phillip Noyce's 'Rabbit Proof Fence', and Disney's 2016 remake of 'The Jungle Book'.

The conference will also feature panel responders from various faiths and sciences throughout the day. More speaker announcements to come!

Do not miss out on this opportunity to gather with like-minded people from around Australia who care about our Common Home.

**Special Offer:**

**Book your EARLY BIRD ticket by Sunday 12 July for only \$120 General / \$80 Concession.**

(After that date the regular ticket prices \$140 General / \$95 Concession apply)

[Book Now](#)

We are also looking for volunteers to assist leading up to the conference and on the day. Perhaps your faith organisation or governing body would like to get more involved by sponsoring this wonderful event. Please get in touch and let's chat about how we can work with you.

**FEN is a volunteer network.**

We rely on your support to employ a part-time Co-ordinator to assist us. We appreciate any assistance in achieving this goal. Donate Now.

---

## FEN Local News



### **An Islamic directive**

*By Zubeda Raihman, FEN Core Group Member*

The above is an illustrative example of a very powerful message to mankind.

Islamic beliefs, traditions and values provide an effective and comprehensive solution to our current environmental problems, exacerbated by the nuclear warfare, bombardments and destruction of flora and fauna. Islam has a rich tradition of highlighting the importance of environmental protection and conservation of natural resources. According to Islamic law, the basic elements of nature – land, water, fire, forest, and light – belong to all living things, not just human beings.

The Holy Qur'an and Sunnah, as well as all the major religions of the world, are a guiding light towards preservation of our environment. The omnipotent God of the Heavens and the Earth, commands human beings to avoid doing mischief and wasting resources as these acts cause degradation of the environment, and our lives. The privilege to exploit natural resources was given to the mankind on a guardianship basis, which implies the right to use another person's property on the promise that it will not be damaged or destroyed. Regrettably, we are currently witnessing our world being devastated by politics, power and money which are playing havoc on our environment, our wellbeing and the future of

humanity, our beautiful God's creation – The EARTH, our one and only World we call home - our provider and sustainer.

---



## **The Quiet Garden at Bellbrae Uniting Community Church**

*From the Bellbrae Community Newsletter on the Surf Coast of Southern Victoria*

An idea for a quiet garden germinated in August 2024, when a congregational member, Maxine Flakemore, was spending quiet time at home recuperating from COVID. In June 2024, Maxine had spent time in the Bush Botanic Garden at Halls Gap where she was inspired by how native plants were used by the indigenous people.

Our congregation embraced the idea of a reflective garden of Indigenous plants, meandering down the hillside to a quiet space of reflection, a place where outdoor events and Spiritual retreats can be held, with information about the plants' uses along the way.

On the church property, it was noticed that in areas neglected of regular mowing maintenance, the indigenous plants were regenerating and thriving, especially Wallaby Grass, a groundcover and native food source that never needs mowing.

Trial plantings began in September 2024, with tube plantings among the wallaby grass. The existing grass has provided nurture and shelter to the young plants. These have survived and flourished, despite the rabbits and drought. Planting commenced in July 2025.

After fundraising and much work, on July 27th 2025, Reverend Tina Lyndon Ng blessed the garden and named it "Toombi Guyong." Toombi is the Wathaurong name for quiet.

A beautiful poem was written by Reverend Tina to commemorate the garden:



### **A blessing for Toombi Guyong Garden at Bellbrae Uniting Church**

The Entry

We stand at the gate

We stand at the pathway

We stand together

in unity and peace

and God stands with us.

Blessed be all who come to this place

Blessed be all who have created this place

Blessed be all who care for this place

Peace be to this garden and all who come

May God dwell in it and bless all who come

May this garden be called Toombi Guyong

Toombi being the Wathaurong word for peace and quiet

Guyong coming from Jeanne Guyong, who lived from 1648-1717

And was a devout Christian from France, a woman of prayer,

imprisoned in the Bastille for writing a book about prayer.

May all who come find God and peace

May all who come grow in God and faith

May they be like the trees

Strong and constant

Drawing life from the earth

From God's creation in this garde

Come to make it home

A place for prayer and meditation

A place for reflection and sitting quietly

A blessing on the tree

---



## **World Environment Day 2026 at the Sikh Gurdwara Sri Guru Nanak Darbar**

*From Harpreet Singh Kandra*

On Saturday 6 June 2026, we proudly hosted our successful 9th World Environment Day event focused on sustainable choices for reducing the cost of living.

The event brought together representatives from a wide range of community organisations, government agencies, environmental groups, faith communities, and local residents, creating valuable opportunities for learning, collaboration, and networking.

We were honoured to welcome Belinda Wilson MP, Member for Narre Warren North, Cr Samantha Jane Potter, Viv Nguyen and Sylvia Coombe from VMC.

We thank all attendees for contributing to meaningful discussions on sustainability, environmental stewardship, and community wellbeing.

A special highlight was the community's participation in the planting of a decorative green fence, helping enhance the Gurdwara grounds and highlighting our presence within Melbourne's unique Green Wedge Zone.

So far we have planted about 3050 trees at our Green Gurdwara.

Small actions. Big impact. A greener future starts with all of us.

---

CALM IN THE CITY · NATIONAL CONTEMPLATIVE INITIATIVE

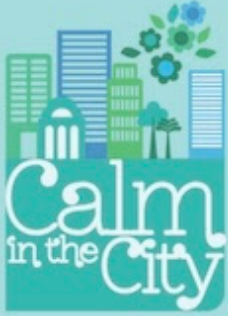
# 100 Days of Peace 2026

June 13 – September 21, 2026 · Every evening 9.00–9.15pm AEST

One hundred days. One hundred voices. One shared moment of stillness each evening — free, simple, and open to all.

REGISTER HERE FOR UPDATES

LINK TO JOIN MEDITATION



## Invitation to join 100 Days of Peace 2026

*From the Brahma Kumaris and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne*

**From June 13 - September 21, 2026**

**Every evening 9.00–9.15pm AEST join in:**

One hundred days. One hundred voices. One shared moment of stillness each evening from June until World Day of Peace in September – Bringing together people from diverse faith traditions and none to share 12 minutes of contemplative silence. Those from FEN who wish to join may choose to offer their silence in solidarity with the suffering of Earth's life support systems because of the impacts war. For details: [www.calmthecity.org.au/100daysofpeace](http://www.calmthecity.org.au/100daysofpeace).

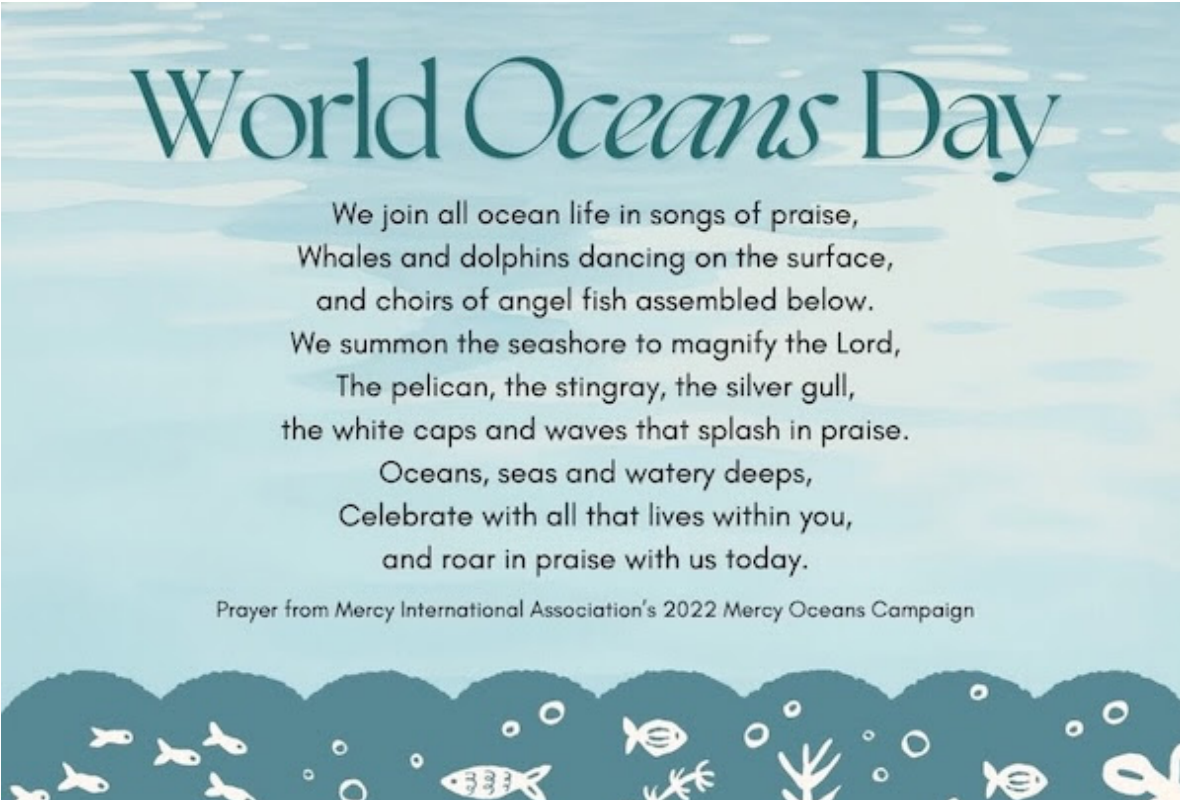
---

## FEN Global News

# World Oceans Day

We join all ocean life in songs of praise,  
Whales and dolphins dancing on the surface,  
and choirs of angel fish assembled below.  
We summon the seashore to magnify the Lord,  
The pelican, the stingray, the silver gull,  
the white caps and waves that splash in praise.  
Oceans, seas and watery deeps,  
Celebrate with all that lives within you,  
and roar in praise with us today.

Prayer from Mercy International Association's 2022 Mercy Oceans Campaign



# World Oceans Day & International Biodiversity Framework

June 8th was International Oceans Day. The above is a prayer from the Catholic Sisters of Mercy World Oceans Campaign which is ongoing.

As Australia is one of the 17 megadiverse countries of the world, FEN supports, educates about, and encourages action on the global 30x30 goals of the International Biodiversity Framework. [www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/international/un-convention-biological-diversity/global-biodiversity-framework](http://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/international/un-convention-biological-diversity/global-biodiversity-framework)

---

## FEN Partner News



### How to be a Voice of Nature in your organisation

June 23 – Nov 24, 2026

**Register Now**



## Become a Voice for Nature – Australian Earth Law Alliance's new initiative

Join us for Australia's first program designed to support people engaging in, or curious about, the emerging field of Nature-inclusive Governance (NG). This includes people working to represent and/or speak on behalf of nature within organisations and communities.

We are hosting the first cohort from 23 June to 24 November 2026 and are inviting those who feel called to help shape this practice.

**Places are limited. Expressions of Interest (EOI) close 15 June.**

[Visit our website](#) to read the Program Outline and submit your EOI.

---



## Australian Religious Response to Climate Change

### ARRCC welcomes new Executive Director

FEN, as one of the original group that was part of the formation of ARRCC, thanks our friend and collaborator, Thea Ormerod for her many dedicated years in her leadership role as ARRCC transitions to a new administration. Congratulations and Welcome Tejopala Rawls as the new Executive Director. We look forward to our ongoing collaboration in the future.

---



# Biodiversity Council

We congratulate the Biodiversity Council of Australia for its efforts to increase funding for biodiversity protection in the recent Federal Budget and express our disappointment that they fell on deaf ears. <https://biodiversitycouncil.org.au/news/scientists-and-young-people-send-joint-letter-to-pm-about-intergenerational-failure-of-the-budget-on-nature>

We look forward to listening to Prof Sarah Bokessey speak at the [October FEN Conference, Many Faiths One Planet, Together Caring for our Common Home](#). When it comes to biodiversity conservation, cities are often overlooked as important refuges for native plants and animals.

---

---

We rely on your support to [employ a part-time Co-ordinator](#) to assist us.  
We appreciate any assistance in achieving this goal.

[Donate Now](#)

Faith Ecology Network · Australia

This email was sent to [itspeterb@gmail.com](mailto:itspeterb@gmail.com). To stop receiving emails, [click here](#).

You can also keep up with Faith Ecology Network on [Facebook](#).

Created with [NationBuilder](#), software for leaders.