



Friends of  
the Earth  
Australia

## Annual Report 2017-2018

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# VISION

Friends of the Earth Australia recognises First Nations sovereignty and recognise that the land on which work and meet was stolen during the Frontier Wars, upon colonisation. Friends of the Earth pay respect to their Elders, past and present and emerging, and acknowledge the pivotal role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the community. We work at the local level with specific Indigenous communities as well as participating in debates and campaigns at the national and international level.

Our vision is of a world where everyone's needs are met in a way which safeguards the future of the natural environment. We work for a world where environmental protection,

social justice and economic welfare for all people go hand in hand. Through our local, national and international networks, we work with the community to raise awareness, put forward alternatives, and take action for a fair and ecologically sustainable future.

Friends of the Earth operates from an environmental justice perspective. This means working towards a situation where all people live in a healthy environment and where the benefits and costs of economic activity are shared equally, including between nations and generations.

We understand that in an era of globalisation and international environmental problems, a global and co-operative response is required, and we are constantly seeking to develop strong relations with environmental and social justice movements in all parts of the world.







## LOCAL GROUPS

Friends of the Earth Australia currently has 8 local groups ranging in size from over 500 members in Melbourne with a dozen paid staff to 7 dedicated volunteers in Sydney. Local groups participate in and run campaigns at the local level and often collaborate with other member groups and projects within the network.

Many of the local groups, such as Far North Queensland, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne, have been active in the #StopAdani national campaign to stop the construction of the mega coal mine in Queensland.

They also co-presented the New Economy symposium at Murdoch University and saw a new Food Not Bombs collective join their fold.

Friends of the Earth Perth are negotiating a treaty based on acknowledgement of the sovereignty of Wadjuk Nyungar people on the land where they work and incorporating a 'pay the rent' praxis.

Far North Queensland continued its strong work with the Yidindji traditional owners of the area and assisted Yidindji youth campaigners and Elders to get to Australian Student Environment Network Students of Sustainability conference held in Melbourne.

Far North Queensland also continued work locally on:

- Poison and pesticides issues;
- Stop Adani;
- Cassowary Keystone, stopping spread of dangerous dogs in the social and natural environments;
- Opposition to the Koah airstrip; and
- Opposition to inappropriate resort development, KUR-World





Brisbane continues to hold a strong connection with Reverse Garbage with whom they share a building space. Reverse Garbage - also a Friends of the Earth Australia affiliated member - is a not-for-profit workers' co-operative in Brisbane that collects high quality industrial discards, diverting them from landfill to sell them at low cost to the general public. Brisbane houses Tipping Point staff, as well as the Peace, Antinuclear and Clean Energy (PACE) collective and Climate Frontlines work.

Friends of the Earth Adelaide continue to work in collaboration with Traditional Owners opposing three sites that are being actively considered as nuclear waste dump sites—Barndioota, near Hawker in the iconic Flinders Ranges, and two sites on farming land near Kimba on the Eyre Peninsula. They worked with other environmental groups, generating policy questions for candidates in the state election. They also continued work on the state's transition to renewable energy and move away from fossil fuel use in the energy sector.

Friends of the Earth Melbourne have seen a massive increase in campaign activity with the addition of strong Forest and Transport campaigns and a re-birth of the River Country campaign, which works to ensure protection for inland rivers in the Murray Darling Basin. The member-based group houses 10 campaigns, each with a strong group of volunteers and a staff member to

help facilitate that work. The Melbourne headquarters continues to run a social enterprise style Food Co-operative and cafe, which is housed downstairs.

The Melbourne local group have a radio show on the local 3CR community radio station. The show - called Dirt Radio - airs weekly on Tuesdays at 9:30am local time.

Many of the Friends of the Earth Australia member groups, projects and campaigns - such as GECO, WOTCH, ASEN, Healthy Futures, Emerging Tech, Defense of Earth, Tipping Point, Anti-Nuclear, Chain Reaction - also use the Melbourne headquarters to organise from.







## VICTORIAN CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

This year saw the rewriting of the Victorian Climate Act. In 2009, Friends of the Earth campaigned successfully in support of a Climate Change Act. However, with a change of government in 2010, the emission reduction targets were gutted in the Act. In 2017/18 Friends of the Earth once again campaigned for the adoption of a rebuilt Act, including generating cross party and independent support in the Upper House to ensure the safe passage of the Act through both houses of parliament.

This legislation requires the state to enact emission reduction targets in 5 year blocks. The Act commits the state to being net carbon neutral by 2050. Friends of the Earth has been working hard to ensure that the interim targets are sufficiently deep to be consistent with recommendations from climate scientists. With the continued failure of the federal government to act meaningfully on climate change, the work of progressive state governments in climate and energy is more essential than ever before.



Friends of the Earth believe it is essential to address the social issues, such as disproportionate use of resources, inequality, and colonisation, while responding to climate change.

Friends of the Earth are actively working to build resilient communities around the country to resist the spread of the nuclear, coal and gas industry, to protect forests - our beautiful carbon sinks - and to adapt and prepare for the already changing climate.

Our climate justice campaigns have forged the agenda on the human rights dimensions of climate change. We have supported the rights of those at risk of climate-induced displacement as well as exposing the social impacts of carbon offset schemes in countries of the global south.

## NATIONAL ENERGY LEADERSHIP FAILURE

Having helped secure Victoria the ban on unconventional gas drilling (like fracking), moratorium on conventional gas drilling and a state renewable energy target (the VRET), Friends of the Earth has also continued to advocate for the state government to adopt stronger climate policies and increase preparedness for climate change impacts.

Friends of the Earth Melbourne's Quit Coal, Yes 2 Renewables, Sustainable Cities and Act on Climate campaigns have worked tirelessly in these areas over the past few years and we pay tribute to the hundreds of volunteers who have helped achieve these truly inspiring outcomes.

Friends of the Earth offered practical campaign and strategic support to communities in WA, SA and the NT in their campaigns against unconventional gas drilling, including fracking. We helped organise a tour by farmers and community members from Victoria to the NT to share their experiences with affected communities in the NT.



Friends of the Earth continued work calling for a national ban on Underground Coal Gasification. This dangerous fossil fuel extraction technique has proven to be catastrophic in Queensland, where a ban is in effect, but continues to threaten areas in South Australia.

The Victorian Yes 2 Renewables campaign responded to the lack of action by the federal government by engaging deeply in the public debate about the National Energy Guarantee (NEG) and in the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meetings on energy policy. We generated media, held public events and rallies, mobilised a range of constituencies, and lobbied politicians.





Stella Miria-Robinson in Bonn

## CLIMATE FRONTLINES

In 2017 Climate Frontlines expanded from being a collective based in Brisbane to a national project with contributions from Friends of the Earth members in Melbourne and Brisbane.

In November 2017, Climate Frontlines sponsored member Stella Miria-Robinson, originally from Papua New Guinea, to join the Friends of the Earth International team at the UNFCCC COP23 in Bonn Germany. Stella had been the keynote speaker at the climate rally in Brisbane in 2015 to coincide with COP 21 in Paris. Her message from Bonn travelled far and wide on Friends of the Earth International's Real World Radio.

The outcome of four months of joint work between Climate Frontlines in Brisbane and the

Pacific Islands Council of Queensland (PICQ) was a 3-day event from 25–27 May 2018: *Where do we go? Displacement and Relocation Challenges for Communities in the Pacific Islands Region*. The forum featured six Pacific climate change experts, including Ursula Rakova from Friends of the Earth member group, Tulele Peisa, and inputs from regional research projects. One of the key aims was to expose members of the Pacific diaspora community in Brisbane to the issues and concerns, and a key outcome was the formation of an ongoing climate change committee within PICQ. Follow up with attendees from University of Queensland and Griffith University has since occurred, including a preliminary conversation about a forum in 2019 on human rights and climate change.

Climate Frontlines networked with other civil society groups to advocate for the inclusion of climate related migration into the now finalised UN Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to be agreed by governments in Morocco in December 2018.



Ursula Rakova with the St Johns 25

## TULELE PEISA

In response to increasingly severe climate related events, Carteret Islands Elders initiated a voluntary relocation program in 2006, named Tulele Peisa, or “Sailing the Waves on Our Own”. The project is an affiliate member of the Friends of the Earth Australia network.

The Climate Frontlines group based in Brisbane continues to serve as the liaison with Friends of the Earth affiliate, Tulele Peisa in Bougainville. In late 2017 Climate Frontlines was successful in negotiating the identification and transfer of funds donated many years earlier for a solar installation on Tulele Peisa's main administration building. A solar technician from Brisbane completed an on-site assessment and the final stages of the project are being worked out.

Ursula Rakova of Tulele Peisa was invited as a keynote speaker at Planet Talks during the 2018 WOMAdelaide festival, and arrangements were made for her participation in preliminary events at the

Sydney Opera House, with the Wheeler Centre in Melbourne, and at the University of South Australia. Friends of the Earth local groups in Melbourne promoted a local event and in Adelaide organised an interview for radio broadcast.

Tulele Peisa continues to expand its services to the wider community, including workshops on climate change for high school students and training in enhanced cocoa production for local farmers groups, cocoa being the major cash crop on the island. With the referendum on Bougainville's future political status scheduled for the end of June 2019, TP is involved in efforts to provide local communities with the information necessary to make an informed decision.

Major funding for housing to enable families to relocate remains elusive. Climate Frontlines and Tulele Peisa are working with Climate Wise Women and Caritas Aotearoa/New Zealand to identify and make applications to new potential funding bodies.





## TIPPING POINT

In July 2018 Friends of the Earth launched a new national project, Tipping Point. The Tipping Point team is a tight knit, hard working group with a track record of delivering quality projects in short time-frames, including helping to spearhead the Australian fossil fuel divestment movement, supporting the growth of the #StopAdani campaign, organising mass climate mobilisations and pushing major banks to say no to fossil fuels.

Tipping Point believes that the solutions are at our fingertips and aims to facilitate the turbo charging of a people-powered movement that will drive the social and political change the climate so desperately needs.

Since launching in July 2018 the Tipping Point team has supported the Stop Adani movement to continue to flourish by:

- Creating a new campaign push called Stop Adani Street by Street that comes with a full suite of resources for local groups to scale up the movement in their area and turn up the pressure on all politicians.
- Supporting 18 new groups to form in 3 months and over 100 community events (an average of 1 per day) to happen across the country.
- Running trainings, webinars and planning sessions to support the ongoing work of the existing 65 active Stop Adani groups.
- Working with local groups to get over 20 ALP branches to pass Stop Adani motions.

Tipping Point thanks the hundreds of people who attended their launch events and those who contributed to become founders of the exciting new project.



## HEALTHY FUTURES

Affiliate member, Healthy Futures, is an organisation of health professionals, students and community members taking action to address climate change and related threats to health.

This year Healthy Futures primarily focussed on calling on superannuation funds HESTA and First State Super to divest from fossil fuels.

Healthy Futures also organised and delivered an open letter from 11 health organisations to the Environment Protection Authority Victoria calling on them to set strong limits on pollution from Victoria's coal-fired power stations this year in order to protect health.

## THE HUB FOUNDATION

The Hub Foundation runs a number of projects in Central Victoria. Its community solar bulk buy project, More Australian Solar Homes (MASH), has now completed the installation of over 850 solar systems in Central Victoria and has given 7 free solar systems to community groups in the area, thereby reducing emissions by approx 5,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.

The Hub supports a range of local sustainability initiatives including:

- The Plastic Bag Free Castlemaine project, which has already brought half the shops in the town to announce they are now plastic bag free.
- Promotion of cycling through organising the Mt Alexander Shire's annual Ride to Work event.



## MARKET FORCES

Affiliate member, Market Forces, continued to lead the fossil fuel divestment movement in Australia in 2017/18. Market Forces currently supports over 30 organisations, including South and Southeast Asian groups, with fossil fuel finance research and campaign support.

### Banks

Australia's "big four" banks' exposure to fossil fuels has dropped by \$10 billion in two years. No Australian bank finances new coal projects that expands the scale of the industry in 2017-18.

Last year ANZ instituted a policy that limits lending to new coal power stations only if they produce less than 800 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per Megawatt hour.

In its November AGM, Commonwealth Bank signalled its lending to coal was shrinking and expects it would continue to decline over time.

Westpac's climate change policy released in April 2017 excludes lending to new thermal coal basins and mines with an energy content less than the "Newcastle high energy coal benchmark", and sets a target of reducing the emissions intensity of its power generation portfolio to 300 kg CO<sub>2</sub>/MWh by 2020, effectively prohibiting new exposures to coal power from its loan book.

NAB's new coal mining risk appetite statement goes further than any other major Australian bank by ruling out lending to new thermal coal mines or extensions. This policy means NAB joins the ranks of dozens of banks and insurance companies globally that are withdrawing from this most climate-polluting of industries.



### Other sector divestment work

Medibank announced that it will divest tens of millions of dollars from fossil fuels due to the 'health effects of climate change'. This means Australia's four biggest health funds are either not invested in fossil fuels, or are getting out.

Over 50 companies face scrutiny from shareholders over the management of climate risk.

### STOP ADANI

Once again Adani failed to reach its financial close deadline with the number of banks ruling out support up to 30, including four Chinese lenders. Furthermore, several engineering companies walk away from Adani's Carmichael coal mine. Market Forces, along with other affiliates and local groups, continues to play an important role in the national Stop Adani alliance of groups.





## NATIONAL ANTI-NUCLEAR CAMPAIGN

Friends of the Earth has been working hard to support Traditional Owners and other community members in South Australia fighting plans for a national nuclear waste dump. Friends of the Earth have also been at the forefront of proposing constructive solutions for managing the intractable problem of nuclear waste management.

With nuclear lobbyists acknowledging that nuclear power is in a worldwide crisis, the Australian uranium industry is also in a downturn and may be moribund. Nevertheless, companies are pushing ahead with uranium mine proposals in Western Australia in the hope of a market upturn, and Friends of the Earth are actively working with communities

opposed to these proposals. We've also helped to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the mass movement that stopped the Jabiluka uranium mine in the NT and published a detailed report on Paladin Energy's controversial uranium mines in Africa.

Friends of the Earth Australia's anti-nuclear campaign has written multiple submissions this year (on waste and uranium issues, nuclear power, the radiological risks of fracking etc) and written many articles for Australian and overseas publications. We've also done a major overhaul of the website – check it out at [nuclear.foe.org.au](http://nuclear.foe.org.au). We're also planning an update of the Australian Nuclear Map website: [australianmap.net](http://australianmap.net)

## THE RADIOACTIVE EXPOSURE TOUR

A highlight of the year was the return of the Radioactive Exposure Tour in April which left from Melbourne and toured around South Australian communities impacted by, or under threat, from the nuclear industry. The 28 participants heard from Arabunna Traditional Owner Uncle Kevin Buzzacott and Adnyamathanha Traditional Owner Vivianne McKenzie in Adelaide before heading to Port Augusta, where they heard about the successful campaign to stop SA becoming the world's nuclear waste dump, as well as current nuclear battles. The tour also visited Woomera and toured the missile park.

A number of participants in this year's tour have been heavily involved in international work culminating in last year's UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and

the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

The group toured Olympic Dam uranium mine, and heard from Kokatha Traditional Owner Glen Wingfield about his experiences with the successful campaign to stop the Howard government building a national nuclear dump near Woomera from 1998-2004. They camped at Lake Eyre and visited the Mound Springs – depleted by BHP's daily extraction of 37 million litres of water from the Great Artesian Basin for the Olympic Dam mine activities.

The tour finally met with Traditional Owners and Flinders Local Action Group about the current campaign to stop a national nuclear waste dump being built near Hawker in the Flinders Ranges.





## PEACE, ANTI-NUCLEAR AND CLEAN ENERGY

Friends of the Earth Brisbane's Peace, Anti-Nuclear and Clean Energy (PACE) Collective has played a consistent and concerted role in challenging the nuclear industry in Queensland for many years. PACE continues to support Friends of the Earth's national anti-nuclear campaign and showing solidarity with affected communities around Australia, and the world.

PACE are working for a nuclear free reality by:

- Providing ongoing support for a nuclear weapons ban.
- Calling for a de-militarisation of our local community and environments.

This demilitarisation includes calling for a halt to the biennial US led military exercises, Talisman Saber, that take place on the Central Queensland coast. Talisman Saber 2017 saw 30,000 US and Australian troops engaging in land, sea and air combined exercises in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and on RAMSAR listed wetlands. Creative responses included animation production and theatrical action during nuclear ship visits to Brisbane Port.

PACE also enjoyed supporting events that highlighted Brisbane's radical anti-nuclear and anti-war history - such as the 50 Years of Direct Action Queensland conference, put together by organisers of the 1967 Civil Liberties March in Brisbane which kicked off an era of pro -civil liberties, anti-war and anti-uranium action in Queensland. And being invited to share our skills in supporting local communities in their actions to protect local habitats .







## LAND & WATER

One of Friends of the Earth's primary objectives is to conserve, restore, and protect the land and water. This task is the responsibility of every Australian, just as they have been for the first peoples of this continent for millenia.

Friends of the Earth campaigns resist the destruction of sacred land, habitat, natural wonders, and transform our society to one that lives in harmony with the land, as well ensuring that life giving water is treated with the value it deserves.

### KUARK FOREST PROTECTED

After decades of work, GECO welcomed the Victorian State Government's announcement that some old growth forests in East Gippsland's Kuark forest will be protected. However, there is still concern over continued logging in environmentally sensitive forests under the recently renewed Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs)



## FORESTS

Friends of the Earth Australia welcomed new affiliate member this year, Wildlife of the Central Highlands (WOTCH).

Friends of the Earth affiliate group Goongerah Environment Centre (GECO), WOTCH and Friends of the Earth Melbourne's Forest Collective all worked in collaboration towards the goals of the creation of the Great Forest National Park, to the east of Melbourne, and the Emerald Link Reserve system in far east Gippsland.

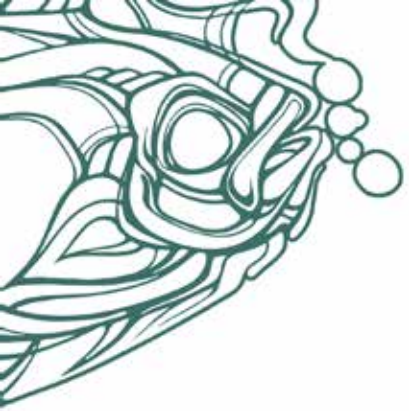
WOTCH and GECO engaged in citizen science lead wildlife surveys around key endangered species. The information gathered by community members and subsequent awareness raising exercises lead to government intervention to protect the habitat of Greater Gliders, Orbost Spiny Crayfish, Leadbeater's Possum and other important species.

GECO were also involved in legal action against VicForest after it unlawfully impacted on warm temperate rainforest at Serpentine Creek Rainforest Site of Significance near Cann River.

To mark National Threatened Species day, Friends of the Earth Melbourne and GECO and released a report - *Lawless Logging: An investigation into breaches of the regulatory framework governing logging operations in Victoria* - documenting 27 unlawful native forest logging operations in protected threatened species habitat and rainforest. The Lawless The report was also made in conjunction with Flora Research Collective (FFRC).

WOTCH extend great thanks to community members who voted for them to receive an Australian Ethical community grant to continue their citizen science program.





## NEW BRATAUALUNG FOREST DECLARED

The Victorian State Government announced that the first hand-back of the new Strzelecki Reserve would occur in the Strzelecki Ranges in Gippsland during 2018. In July 2018, the Brataualung Forest Reserve was formally announced by the State Environment Minister Lily D'Ambrosio. 2,400ha of high conservation forest was reserved, with another 5,600ha to be added to the Reserve over the next decade. The ranges were heavily cleared during the 19th century and contain few conservation reserves. The new Reserve doubles the amount of Reserved land in the Strzeleckis and was the result of 20 years of work by groups including Friends of the Earth and Friends of Gippsland Bush.



Say hello to  
Victoria's newest  
forest reserve:  
Brataualung  
Forest park



## PESTICIDE FREE WATERWAYS

The Australian Drinking Water Map ([water.australianmap.net](http://water.australianmap.net)) was created in November 2017, with data slowly being entered to the site from across the country. The website is attempting to quantify which pollutants are detected across Australia and where. Data has been difficult to obtain in Queensland, but New South Wales remains the most difficult state to gain information about drinking water contaminants. E.coli, Trihalomethanes and Lead are the three most commonly detected pollutants across Australia.

The Australian Pesticide Map ([pesticides.australianmap.net](http://pesticides.australianmap.net)) is currently receiving about 30,000 visits a year and remains a good source of information concerning pesticide pollution across Australia. In mid 2018 a national PFAS map ([pfas.australianmap.net](http://pfas.australianmap.net)) was also created.

Thanks to Glenn Todd from Dvize Creative with his help in building these maps.



## INLAND RIVERS

The Murray Darling Basin Plan is intended to ensure the ecological survival of the largest river system on the continent. While the plan itself had significant shortfalls because of the power of the irrigators lobby, the federal government has been planning to reduce protection of the system by allocating water that had been earmarked for environmental flows into agricultural use. They removed 605 billion litres of water from the Plan (which is more than the amount of water in Sydney Harbour).

With a severe ongoing drought across much of the country and science making it absolutely clear that survival of inland farming relies on a healthy river system, retaining existing allocations for the environment is simply common sense.

However we need to keep campaigning against these attempts to reallocate water to agriculture and get back meaningful environmental flows if we are to have a hope of retaining a functioning river system in coming decades. Tied to this change, the federal government is providing funding for states to build "Supply measure" projects; engineering projects, like levees, and pumps to hold environmental water in the forest. These projects are intended to deliver "equivalent environmental outcomes" with less water. We are tracking these proposals carefully as the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists says that of the 36 projects put forward by Basin states, only 1 stands up to scientific rigour.





## ECONOMICS FOR EARTH

Everyone should be able to put healthy food on the table, access clean energy and enjoy a thriving environment. Yet we live in a world facing growing inequality, climate change and pollution. Some corporations are using their money and power to take too much for themselves and destroying our planet.

Friends of the Earth acts in solidarity to stop corporate crime, demanding rights for people and binding rules for business. Empowered communities and social movements working together across borders can build a sustainable and just future.



## ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Friends of the Earth Australia were proud to support the work of Friends of the Earth International and Friends of the Earth Netherlands on a court case against Shell with solidarity actions, petitions and communication work. This ground-breaking case, if successful, would significantly limit Shell's investments in oil and gas globally by requiring them to comply with global climate targets. Friends of the Earth Netherlands' case is part of a growing global movement to hold companies to account for their contribution to dangerous climate change.

Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) is a dispute resolution method included in hundreds of trade and investment agreements designed to give exclusive legal protection to foreign companies investing abroad, giving them the right to sue host

governments in a private tribunal over any perceived breach of the rules around the treatment of investors. This secret corporate court system is a threat to Australia's democracy and environment and Friends of the Earth believe it should be banned.

In May 2018, Friends of the Earth published a briefing paper, *The case for banning Investor State Dispute Settlement in Australia*. Friends of the Earth also contributed and gave evidence at the most recent Senate Inquiry into the revived Trans Pacific Partnership deal (TPP-11). The committee urged the Government to adopt several recommendations submitted by Friends of the Earth and other stakeholders such as AFTINET which included removing the Investment State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clause from all trade agreements and legislating to ban ISDS from future trade agreements.





## EARTHWORKER COOPERATIVE

The Earthworker Cooperative has been making strides this year as the co-operative network begins to flourish both in the Latrobe Valley and Melbourne. Their Morwell based factory, Earthworker Energy Manufacturing Cooperative, has been recruiting prospective local members and preparing to begin manufacturing solar hot water systems.

The project is partnering with community-based organisations in order to establish a sustainable market for the product, with the project aiming to create secure and dignified jobs within the worker-cooperative enterprise. This is part of the long-term goal of ensuring the just transition to sustainable industries in the Latrobe Valley.

Meanwhile, the Redgum Cleaning Cooperative launched in Melbourne in early 2018 and it's five members have been busy at work providing eco-friendly cleaning services, and serving as an important example of workplace democracy in action. Earthworker members continue to promote the worker-cooperative model and it's value in forming a practical, community response to the climate emergency.

Earthworker Cooperative and Friends of the Earth thank the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund for their ongoing support of this work.



## AUSTRALIAN STUDENT ENVIRONMENT NETWORK (ASEN)

Affiliate group Australian Student Environment Network (ASEN) have continued to educate and engage with the broader community about environmental and social justice, including presenting workshops on topics such as sexual violence and transformative justice. They hosted their annual Training Camp at Minto Heights in January where 150 people attended workshops about decolonisation and local environmental campaigns.

With the support of Friends of the Earth Melbourne, ASEN organised the annual Students of Sustainability conference in Melbourne this year, with almost 500 people from around the country attending over 120 workshops, excursions and panels over 5 days in July.

Many of Friends of the Earth's member groups sent along participants and also ran workshops in support of this important grassroots conference.



Smoking ceremony with Elders from many First Nations at ASEN's Students of Sustainability conference





Friends of the Earth is a strong supporter of sustainable technologies such as solar power, wind farms, and energy efficient devices. However, we believe technology development should serve community needs—not simply corporate and military interests—and should pay heed to the precautionary principle.

We believe public scrutiny of the environmental and social impacts of new technologies is essential and support community involvement in technology assessment and public policy development.



### EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

In early 2005 Friends of the Earth Australia established the Nanotechnology Project in response to the rapid development of the nanotechnology industry with little or no critical debate or regulatory oversight. In response to growing field of new, barely regulated technologies, the project expanded in 2015 to become the Emerging Tech Project. These new technologies include synthetic biology and geoengineering, which both operate in a similar regulatory vacuum, and pose grave potential threats to human health and the environment.



This year the project:

- Exposed the federal government's plans to deregulate a range of new genetic engineering techniques such as CRISPR. We've mobilised scientists, the food industry, civil society and concerned citizens to oppose these proposed changes.
- Forced our food regulator Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) to hold a formal review of these techniques after we revealed its plans to deregulate these techniques based on advice from scientists with serious conflicts of interest and with no public consultation.
- Revealed that CSIRO and the University of Adelaide are being funded by the US military research agency DARPA to develop a dangerous genetic extinction technology, called gene drives, in mice.
- Revealed the presence of illegal and potentially toxic nanoparticles in baby formula and exposed FSANZ's misrepresentation of its own laws and the advice of its Scientific Nanotechnology Advisory Group (SNAG) in claiming that the ingredient was safe.
- Continued to expose FSANZ's failure to regulate the use of potentially toxic nanomaterials in food – whilst other regulators globally take action to remove them from the food supply.





## GM-FREE AUSTRALIA ALLIANCE INC

The GM Free Alliance brings together individuals, companies, organisations, and communities which represent society's wide ranging concerns about Genetically Manipulated (GM) food and farming.

The GM Free Australia Alliance has continued to push a united response to the many threats of unregulated GM techniques being allowed into the natural environment and our food supply, while GM farming is countered by the regenerative agriculture model.

This year the Alliance :

- Held a pre-election candidates meeting for the South Australian election, where all parties presented their GM policies and Greens MLC Mark Parnell proposed statewide labelling of food products that contain GM ingredients.

- Worked with stakeholders and informed the public about the threats of new techniques entering the food chain and our environment.
- Organised a national tour by Dr Jonathan Latham PhD, co-founder and Executive Director of the *Bioscience Resource* Project and the Editor of *Independent Science News*.
- Continued to survey and build our database of GM-free food producers, building towards the release of the 2018 Truefood Guide and future GM-free shopping lists.
- Submitted and contributed via teleconference to the West Australian Inquiry into compensation for economic loss to farmers in Western Australia caused by contamination by GM material.

## GENE ETHICS

Gene Ethics has been working for several decades to highlight the environmental and public health concerns attached to GMOs.

In 2017/18, key activity included:

- Defending South Australia's GM-free status in two concurrent inquiries.
- Promoting a no-fault Compensation scheme in a Western Australian parliamentary inquiry, for those suffering economic loss or harm from contamination with genetically manipulated bio-materials;
- Campaigning for the removal of Roundup herbicide from the weed management programs of local government.
- Advocating to all Australian governments that new CRISPR GM techniques and their products are not deregulated, as the federal government and GM regulators - OGTR and FSANZ - propose.

## FOOD IRRADIATION WATCH

Affiliate group Food Irradiation Watch continued to monitor the irradiation scene and challenge the irradiation industry, primarily through social media presence and involvement in food events.

Food Irradiation Watch are following Application 1163 – definition of herbs and spices - which seeks clarification of the law, rather than a new approval in regards to irradiated food.

The group have been involved in and will continue to support local food initiatives and food sovereignty events.



## CAIRNS COMMUNITY FOODS

Affiliate member Cairns Community Foods celebrated 20 years of continuous running as Cairns' only non-profit, community run food co-operative. Celebrations open to stakeholders included community dinner, film night, whale watching, anniversary party with local artists.

The cooperative continued the core mission of providing locals with a social shopping environment for minimally packaged, quality wholefoods and household consumables that are ethically and environmentally responsible.

The cooperative members attended a series of public events/expos and engaged with local radio and print to further the messages of ethical and sustainable food, quality nutrition and waste minimisation.





## HOW WE WORK

We are a national federation of groups that work through community engagement, education and mobilisation. We have a strong focus on working in alliances with others in the environmental and social justice movements and with organisations in the broader community.

In recent years we have developed stronger links with communities and organisations in regional Australia and with the renewable energy sector. We engage in advocacy, and support community mobilisations and peaceful direct action in appropriate circumstances.

Friends of the Earth have strong regional and global connections through our international network.

Our local groups and affiliates act as a training ground for many emerging campaigners and in 2017-2018 we began development on a series of training workshops that help new volunteers and staff to understand our unique structure and way of doing things.

We bring a strong human rights perspective to all our campaigns.

We support a range of not for profit social enterprises, including an organic cafe, food cooperative, the Earthworker cooperative and 'Reverse Garbage' enterprise, which finds commercial uses for materials which would otherwise go to landfill.

We are politically non-aligned and seek to develop working relations with a range of Parties, businesses and others in civil society.

## WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE?

Friends of the Earth Australia's federation structure means that local groups work in ways that are most appropriate to their local circumstances. Our grassroots focus and strong volunteer basis means we are able to work effectively with a vast range of groups and community groups.

Friends of the Earth Australia is acknowledged as being the leanest of the large environmental groups in terms of minimising administration costs and overheads.



## STRUCTURE & GOVERNANCE

Friends of the Earth Australia is composed of independent member groups. Each group is self-managing in terms of its campaigns, decision making structures and fund-raising and needs to meet certain membership criteria. These are assessed on an annual basis. In addition to their local work, groups co-operate on specific campaigns at an appropriate and sustainable level.

Communication between local groups is facilitated by the National Liaison Officers. This year we had three National Liaison Officers:

- Claire Anderson (Perth)
- Phil Evans (Melbourne)
- Cam Walker (Melbourne)

A Committee of Management is appointed at the AGM and has strategic oversight for finances, governance, and legal issues.

Friends of the Earth Australia's Committee of Management is made up of members of local groups and in 2017 - 2018 were:

- Chair: Chloe Aldenhoven (Melbourne)
- Treasurer: Franklin Bruinstroop (Brisbane)
- Secretary: Sam Castro (Melbourne)
- June Norman (Brisbane)
- Jim Green (Melbourne)
- Karun Cowper (Perth)

A separate public gift fund committee appointed at the AGM manages the FoE Australia Fund. This year the Gift Fund Committee was served on by

- Cam Walker, Ila Marks, Linda Marks, Wendy Flannery and Fosco Ruzzene

The International Liaison Officers are responsible for communication between Friends of the Earth Australia and Friends of The Earth International (FoEI). Over the past year, the International Liaison Officers have been Chloe Aldenhoven, Emma Harvey, Franklin Bruinstroop, Pat Simons, Madeleine Egan and Sam Cossar-Gilbert.

National spokespeople are nominated by local groups at the AGM and are approved to speak on behalf of Friends of the Earth on specific issues.

Decisions are made at two national meetings which are generally held in February and October. The AGM is held as part of the October National meeting.

Various communication structures keep groups informed during the year.

Friends of the Earth Australia places great value on collective consensus decision-making systems and internal information sharing.



## GLOBAL CONTEXT AND CONNECTION

Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) mission:

- To collectively ensure environmental and social justice, human dignity, and respect for human rights and peoples' rights so as to secure sustainable societies.
- To halt and reverse environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources, nurture the earth's ecological and cultural diversity, and secure sustainable livelihoods.
- To secure the empowerment of indigenous peoples, local communities, women, groups and individuals, and to ensure public participation in decision making.
- To bring about transformation towards sustainability and equity between and within societies with creative approaches and solutions.
- To engage in vibrant campaigns, raise awareness, mobilize people and build alliances with diverse movements, linking grassroots, national and global struggles.
- To inspire one another and to harness, strengthen and complement each other's capacities, living the change we wish to see and working together in solidarity.



Friends of the Earth International has a democratic structure with autonomous national groups which comply with the guidelines established by the federation. Friends of the Earth International member groups are united by a common conviction that these aims require both strong grassroots activism and effective national and international campaigning and coordination.

They see Friends of the Earth International as a unique and diverse forum to pursue international initiatives, taking advantage of the varied backgrounds and perspectives of its members.

More information about the work of Friends of the Earth International groups around the world and copies of the Friends of the Earth International annual report can be found online at [foei.org](http://foei.org)

Details on the FoE I Executive Committee (ExCom) is available at: [foei.org/about/excom.html](http://foei.org/about/excom.html)

## ORGANISATIONAL MILESTONES

Friends of the Earth Melbourne received the Premiers Sustainability Awards in the field of Environmental Justice.



**Friends of the Earth with Victorian Climate Change Minister Lily D'Ambrosio after being awarded 2017 Premiers Sustainability Award for Environmental Justice**





## SUPPORTERS

Friends of the Earth Australia gratefully acknowledges the many members and supporters who support our local groups and national campaigns through our regular giving program.

Friends of the Earth would like to thank the following for their support:

- Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund

We would like to acknowledge all the individuals and organisations who have supported Friends of the Earth through in-kind support such as donation of time, skills or materials for our campaigns and projects over the 2017/18 financial year. They include:

- Action Skills
- Dvize Creations
- Dirt Radio presenter John Langer for his years of service
- Environmental Justice Australia
- Photographer Rob Blakers
- Photographer Julian Meehan
- Videographer Sean Bedlam
- Web Designer Glenn Todd

## OUR BEQUEST PROGRAM

Thank you to our many members who have let us know that they are including Friends of the Earth in their wills. Every gift, whether large or small, makes a real difference.

If you would like further information on remembering Friends of the Earth in your will, see [foe.org.au/bequests](http://foe.org.au/bequests) or call **Phil Evans in the Melbourne office: +61 03 9419 8700 or toll free 1300 852 081.**

Friends of the Earth Australia has the following active national campaigns and projects

- Chain Reaction magazine - published 3 times a year
- Anti Nuclear and Clean Energy
- Climate Frontlines
- Emerging Technology
- Economic Justice
- Pesticide Free Waterways
- Defense of Earth - war, militarism and the environment
- Tipping Point - climate change

Friends of the Earth has offices in Brisbane, Adelaide and Melbourne.

In 2017/18 it had Friends of the Earth following affiliate members:

- Australian Student Environment Network (ASEN)
- Community Foods (Cairns)
- CounterAct
- Earthworker Co-operative
- Food Irradiation Watch
- GM-Free Australia Alliance
- Goongerah Environment Centre (GECO)
- Healthy Futures
- The Hub Foundation Castlemaine Ltd
- Market Forces
- No Fracking Way (WA)
- Reverse Garbage
- Sustainable Energy Now. WA.
- Tulele Peisa — “sailing the waves on our own”
- Wildlife of the Central Highlands (WOTCH)





# Financial Report 2017/18

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018

	2018 \$	2017 \$
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Publishing Income	2,977.68	2,356.97
Donations	1,002,427.46	848,441.29
Campaign Income	11,208.11	1,991.55
Grant Income	760,499.46	413,243.30
Bank Interest	20,591.89	18,326.08
Miscellaneous Income	6,839.92	9,942.34
Administration Income	0.00	102,549.02
Legacies and Bequest	100,000.00	0.00
Fundraising	2,177.37	1,266.79
Chain Reaction Sales	8,006.82	8,156.18
	1,914,728.71	1,406,273.52

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Publishing Cost	4,080.00	4,579.00
Wages and Assoc. Cost	723,507.58	553,882.60
Administration Expenses	168,327.43	262,415.81
Subscriptions	24,283.88	26,522.02
Telephone and Fax	2,211.71	2,478.95
Campaigning Cost	62,268.79	65,668.79
Bank Charges & Fees	7,987.97	5,515.84
Consultants	174,863.97	155,720.16
Insurance	12,334.00	10,990.13
National Meeting Expenditure	6,250.61	3,203.51
Audit Fees - Audit or Reviewing the Financial Report	6,320.00	3,000.00
Donations Expenditure	266,387.34	260,921.87
Travel Cost	53,669.44	47,785.38
Miscellaneous Expenses	147,505.54	54,513.42
Depreciation	2,643.29	1,611.64
Cost of Good Sold	86.70	117.27
Bad Debts	0.00	0.00

	1,662,728.25	1,458,926.39
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>	252,000.46	(52,652.87)

<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>		
Items that may be reclassified subsequent to Profit or Loss	0.00	0.00
Items that will not be reclassified subsequent to Profit or Loss	0.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME/ (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>	0.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME/ (DEFICIT) ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE MEMBERS</b>	252,000.46	(52,652.87)





These figures represent the financial statements of Friends of the Earth Australia.

Friends of the Earth Australia's administrative functions are hosted by, and receive substantial logistical and in-kind support from FoE Melbourne, including the part time allocation of one staff member to national functions.

The finance manager at FoE Melbourne manages the national accounts.

This keeps overhead costs extremely low. In particular, almost all costs associated by processing donations for overseas work is absorbed by the office budget of FoE Melbourne, ensuring an absolute minimum of funds donated for overseas projects are used for administration.

The following is a summary of the financial report for Friends of the Earth Australia for 2017/18.

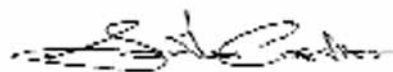
Copies of the full audited financial report are available upon request.

## STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

In the opinion of the members of the committee the financial report:

- Represents a true and fair view of the financial position of Friends of the Earth (Australia) Inc as at 30 June 2018 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.
- At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Friends of the Earth (Australia) Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2018

	2018 \$	2017 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash on Hand and at Bank	1,376,716.35	507,919.43
Short-Term Bank Deposits	400,000.00	400,000.00
Accounts receivable & other debtors	137,987.99	107,672.35
Inventories on hand	200.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>1,914,904.34</b>	<b>1,015,591.78</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Plant and Equipment	8,721.99	10,616.30
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>8,721.99</b>	<b>10,616.30</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,923,626.33</b>	<b>1,026,208.08</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payables & other payables	402,030.07	305,918.68
Grants/Income received in advance	654,277.79	175,753.80
Employee Provisions	30,655.14	13,588.90
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,086,913.00</b>	<b>495,261.38</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Borrowing's	0.00	0.00
Employee Provisions	71,755.80	17,989.63
Other Payables	0.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>71,755.80</b>	<b>17,989.63</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,158,688.80</b>	<b>513,251.01</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>764,957.53</b>	<b>512,957.07</b>
<b>RETAINED SURPLUS</b>		
Opening Retained Surplus	512,957.07	565,609.94
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	252,000.46	(52,652.87)
<b>TOTAL RETAINED SURPLUS</b>	<b>764,957.53</b>	<b>512,957.07</b>







# Contact Us

## Friends of the Earth Australia.

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**Toll free:** 1300 852 081

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**Website:** [www.foe.org.au](http://www.foe.org.au)

**Email:** [foe@foe.org.au](mailto:foe@foe.org.au)



## Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Director:  
A.R Ager CA, BEc  
Registered Company Auditor

Assur Pty. Ltd.  
PO Box 987  
Level 1, 189 Coleman Parade,  
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E: tony.ager@optusnet.com.au

Authorised Audit Company  
No. 453122

### Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Friends of the Earth (Australia) Inc (the association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2018, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Friends of the Earth (Australia) Inc is in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2018 and of its performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) that the financial records kept by the association are such as to enable financial statements to be prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon

The committee of the association is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the association's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2018, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Victoria under the Associations Act 2012, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



**Friends of the Earth (Australia) Inc**

**Independent Auditor's Report to the Members**


Signed on: 11<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2018

ASSUR PTY. LTD.

ASSUR PTY LTD

Authorised Auditor Company Number: 453122

Chartered Accountants

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony Ager

Director - Audit & Assurance

Chartered Accountant