

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2026

Vets for
Climate
Action 
A Voice for all Animals



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Vets for Climate Action acknowledges our First Nations Peoples, the traditional owners who have cared for the country upon which we work and meet; its land, oceans and rivers, its trees and wildlife, for over 60 000 years. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge that this land was never ceded.



VFCA EXISTS BECAUSE...



Climate change is an animal health and welfare issue. Animals hold no responsibility for the causes of climate change, yet they feel the consequences most strongly. Approximately 3 billion animals were killed or displaced by the 2019-20 bushfires, hundreds of thousands more killed by floods, and domestic pets suffer from heat stress each summer. Veterinary professionals* and animal carers are on the frontline experiencing the impacts first hand.

Vets also carry deep responsibility for Australia's biosecurity and food production, with livestock contributing \$20.4b to our economy. One Health, where human and animal health needs intersect, is of increasing importance, with shared diseases (such as Japanese Encephalitis) spreading rapidly, facilitated by climate change.

Vets, vet nurses and the animal care community have a responsibility to use their knowledge, skills and influence to protect animals - and the people who care for them - from climate change

While climate change continues to pose a significant threat to animal health, welfare, production and biodiversity, the good news is we CAN halt catastrophic climate change. The work outlined in this Strategy forms part of this solution

VISION

A world where animals and people thrive in a healthy climate

PURPOSE

To lead those who love, care for and work with animals to act urgently on climate change

VALUES

- We care deeply about animals, humanity and the environment. Consistent with the One Health paradigm, we recognise the three are inextricably linked
- We value the commitment of our people and honour the trust our communities have in the veterinary profession
- Our actions and policies are based on the available research and scientific evidence
- We are proudly non-partisan. We support climate-positive policies and call out climate-damaging policies, regardless of the party or politician they are associated with
- We are driven to achieve our strategic goals and increase our impact

OUR NICHE & POWER



It's well understood that information from a trusted advisor is more likely to be well received than via other mediums. Veterinarians, vet nurses and those associated with our profession are well placed to be trusted advisors. We are:

- deeply embedded within our local communities; rural, regional and urban
- regarded by the general population as knowledgeable, empathetic and trustworthy
- scientists who communicate complex matters in a simple way, opening up opportunities for action
- passionate about protecting the health and welfare of both animals and people
- already experiencing first hand the impacts of climate change on livestock, wildlife and companion animals
- **trusted advisors to farmers, governments, and others, who are committed to the health of all animals**

OUR NICHE & POWER



Toto has his own social media accounts

We are protectors of our economy:

- Tourism experiences rely on our natural places, and native species
- Australia's \$20.4b Livestock industry
- Threats of serious, painful and expensive diseases incursions such as Lumpy Skin Disease

We have a responsibility to our First Nations people to continue to care for country, and in particular, its animals.

We reach a wide group of people through their love for animals:

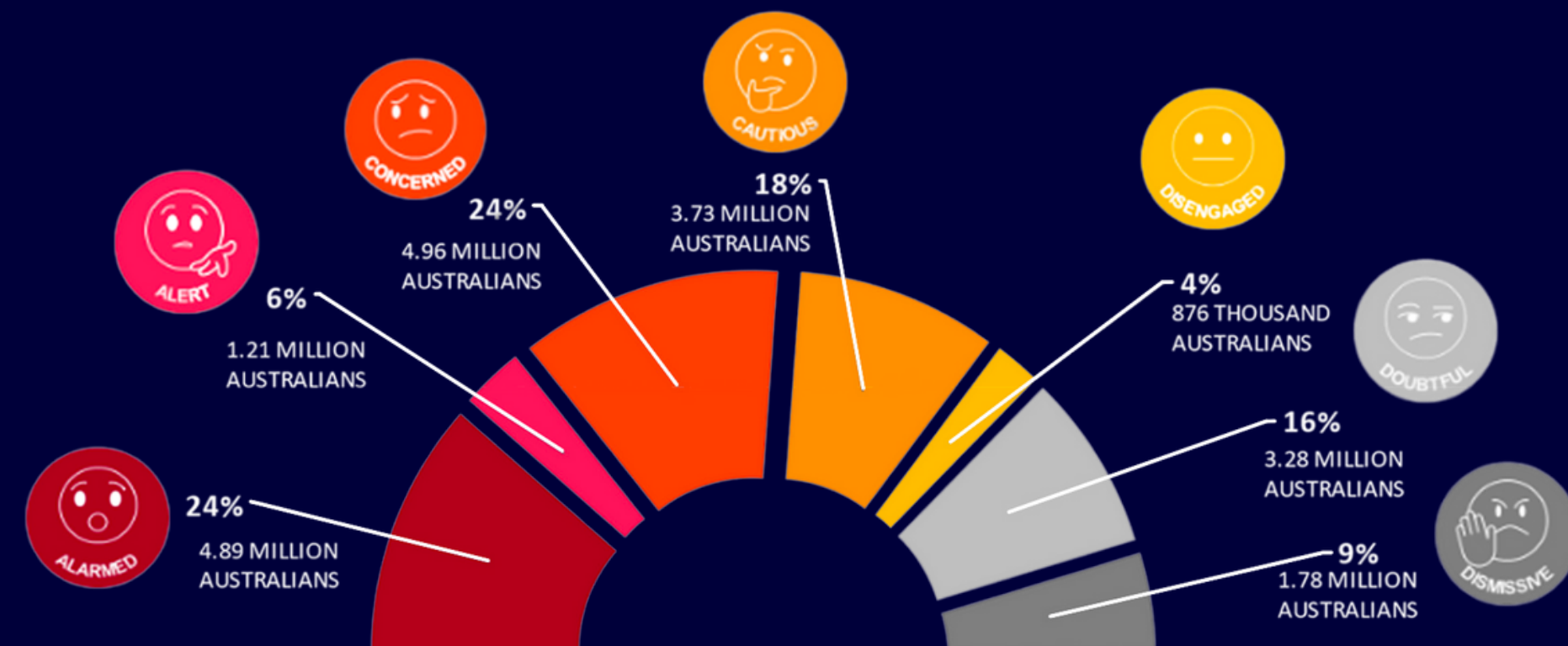
- Animals evoke strong emotions and inspire people to take action
- Australia is a nation of animal lovers, with 90% of Australians having owned a pet at some time
- Love of animals crosses party lines. Our political leaders own family pets

OUR AUDIENCE



Australians can be divided into seven groups by their attitudes on climate change, from most worried and motivated (the 'Alarmed' group) to least worried (the 'Dismissive' group). The two most worried groups 'Alarmed' and 'Alert' are already activated on climate change, engaged and mobilised by traditional climate organisations.

A key audience the current climate movement must influence is the next most worried: the 'Concerned' group. This group makes up 24% of the Australian population, many in key electorates represented by politicians who advance policies that are regressive on climate or put forward policies that support fossil fuel industries. These people are aware of climate change as a problem but they are not personally engaged with it. **This is the primary audience VfCA will focus on, followed by the 'Cautious' audience as a second priority.**

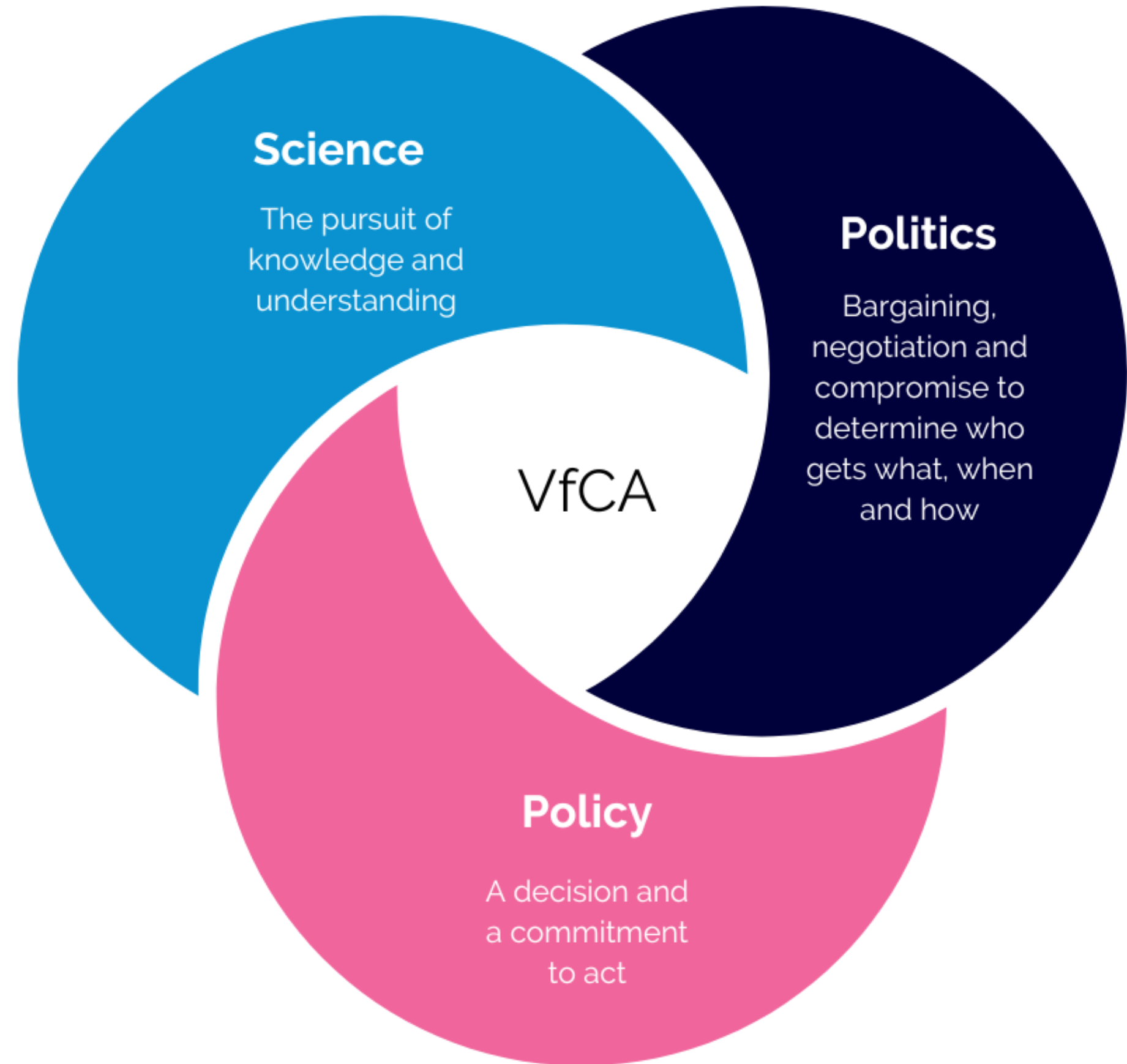


Key findings from Rebecca Huntley's 2020 research regarding Australians' attitudes to climate change

PATHWAY TO IMPACT

At the centre of Science, Policy and Politics, VfCA inspire, educate, mobilise, collaborate with, and act as a trusted advisor for the veterinary profession and animal care community to take climate action.

As such, we grow, diversify, and strengthen the climate movement and embolden politicians to take urgent positive action to mitigate and adapt to climate change



OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS

Board, Staff and Volunteers



EDUCATE

We will develop, distribute and/or sell high quality learning experiences for the veterinary profession and broader animal care network, in a way that is strongly aligned to our values and brand proposition



COLLABORATE

Partnerships are fundamental to our success. We partner with like-minded, values-aligned organisations to achieve our purpose



TRUSTED ADVISOR

Being a trusted advisor within the veterinary profession, to the broader community and to Government is key to the potential power of VfCA. We respect and steward this role



GOVERNANCE

We achieve financial, social and ecological sustainability through ethical practice, and meeting all legal requirements

Activity Area: **EDUCATE**

GOAL

100% of veterinary professionals* understand the impact of climate change on companion animals, livestock and wildlife, and are willing to act on behalf of animals

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL

Develop and deliver a quality Climate Care Program (CCP) to educate and empower Vet Clinics to understand and take action to reduce carbon emissions

Work with key partners to have climate change mitigation and adaptation included across the veterinary and vet nurse curricula at Australian Universities and TAFEs

Encourage and empower Vets to work with veterinary and animal care suppliers to: apply pressure to reach net zero targets by 2035; and work collaboratively with international organisations already engaged in this area.

Engage, inform and educate veterinary professionals* through a refreshed membership program, hosting online events, attending and speaking at industry events, securing media and social media coverage, providing media training, curating an online Knowledge Centre, and implementing strategic campaigns

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

CCP running in 350 Vet Clinics by Dec 2025

Vet Professionals & Animal Care Sector research shows increased understanding of climate change impacts on animals, and the urgency of what needs to be done, with 100% understanding the impacts by Dec 2025.

Climate change included in Veterinary Tertiary Education and training by Dec 2025

Veterinary professionals* use buying power to influence the supply chain to implement sustainable packaging and production processes

VfCA has >3000 Members by Dec 2025

50% increase in supporters across all social media accounts by 2026; 10 online seminars held annually and significant increase in media exposure

Presence at all major industry events

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

All across Australia veterinary professionals* understand the impact of climate change on companion animals, livestock and wildlife, and are taking action. They are reducing the carbon emissions of their clinics, and many are active members and volunteers at VfCA. They continue to advocate for more sustainable practices from suppliers, and have started seeing real change with the reduction of carbon emissions

The Media is running regular stories about VfCA's approach and results, as well as the stories of our members.

Members are getting real value from our membership program including its seminars, resources, and networking opportunities.

Students and new graduates are entering the profession knowing the impact climate change has on animals, and they are ready to take urgent action.

Activity Area: **COLLABORATE**

GOAL

100% of the broader animal care community* understand the impact of climate change on companion animals, livestock and wildlife, and the urgency of what needs to be done

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL

Using a **joint stewardship** approach, we bring animal communities together as a voice for the animals we love and need

Driven by a common purpose, our values-aligned **partnerships** with animal care organisations drive strong collective impact

Our **partnerships** with other climate action organisations bring synergies and opportunities to further deliver upon our Mission and Purpose.

We **cooperate internationally** to enable veterinary communities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals **13** (Climate Action), **14** (Life Below Water) and **15** (Life on Land) within our spheres of influence

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

We have **8 signed MoUs** with industry associations in the animal care community. These may include AVA, VNCA, VBG, VNCA, ZAA, RSPCA, Alliance for Animals, WWF

We meet at least monthly with other constituents of the climate action network

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

VfCA with our partner organisations are driving best practice for mitigation and adaptations to climate change in the animal care community and as a public voice for all animals

Activity Area: **TRUSTED ADVISORS**

GOAL

Veterinary professionals* have an increasingly influential voice for action on climate change

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL

We influence policy change by offering sound solutions for the Government to achieve their goals

We educate and empower Rural & Regional veterinary professionals* to bring positive action to climate change through our Rural & Regional Program. We will offer training and resources including how to talk to clients about climate change, how to write letters to MPs, how to attend meetings with MPs, storytelling for impact and media training

VfCA makes it easy for veterinary professionals* to have a strong voice through media opportunities and supporting correspondence to government representatives. We offer access to training in these areas with support from our partners

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Our 4 areas of focus for working with Govt:

- Prioritise an effective national climate action plan, with stronger net-zero emissions targets via deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and a rapid transition to renewable energy by 2030;
- End destruction of native vegetation, including old growth forests and increase plantings of native vegetation and timber;
- Strengthen environmental and wildlife protections afforded by the EPBC Act 1999, including incorporating a climate trigger;
- Position Australia as an agricultural leader in the world, with a commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030 and development of a National Ruminant Emissions Reduction Program

By June 2024 our Rural & Regional program will run in 5 key electorates resulting in 50 veterinary professionals* joining the campaign, 40 letters sent to MPs, 4 meetings with MPs, 10 clinics displaying posters, 4 media stories, and 2 storytelling videos produced

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

It is accepted that vets and other animal health professionals have a social licence to advocate for the health and welfare of animals. VfCA makes it easy for veterinary professionals* to have a strong voice. This includes rural and regional communities where vets are seen as trusted advisors on climate change, and are now working with their broader communities, and some local MPs, to take action and advocate on climate change

Activity Area: **GOVERNANCE**

GOAL

VfCA has the resources we need to realise our Vision and Purpose

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL

Board & CEO undertake Strategic Planning annually, with a major plan each 3 years

CEO & staff develop annual Operational Plans transparently linked to the Strategic Plan

Grow the organisation's income through memberships, fundraising, partnerships, philanthropy and the Climate Care Program

Ensure all Board positions are filled and aligned with strategic objectives, and Company Secretary is fast-tracked

We offer our staff and volunteers a safe, enjoyable, flexible, and learning-rich environment, and support them with tools and resources needed to achieve outcomes

We measure and evaluate impact to ensure we're implementing the things that matter most, while also being able to share the impact that our work is having.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Our comprehensive 3 year Strategic Plan is owned by the Board, Staff and Volunteers

We release 12 month Operational Plans that are transparently linked to the Strategic Plan

Annual income targets of \$1m across income streams are achieved

Board vacancies are filled within 2 months

Staff are appointed into all roles in our organisational structure, and our staff turnover is low, with satisfaction ratings high

We have a clear volunteer engagement and management process run by a Community Engagement Manager, that is attracting and retaining volunteers to assist VfCA to achieve our Vision and Purpose

Impact Measurement Framework activated by June 2023 to ensure the actions we are taking are having the desired outcomes

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

VfCA is a strong, active, well respected and sustainable organisation with a clear mandate. Our human and financial resources have grown to create a solid and stable foundation to deliver upon our Vision and Purpose. We attract and retain highly skilled and values aligned staff and volunteers, and our influential Board is active and engaged. Our Impact Framework is sound and clearly articulates the direct and indirect impact our work is having

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dr Jeannet
Kessels (Chair)



Dr Helen Scott-Orr,
AM PSM



Nobel Laureate
Professor Mark
Howden



Dr Liz Clarke



Indigenous Advisor
Ben Tyler



Ambassador
Dr Geoff Wilson AM
Veterinarian, Polar Explorer



Wildlife Advisor
Kerrie Bennison



Patron
Nobel Laureate
Professor Peter
Doherty, AC FRS FMedSci

ADVISORS

TEAM



CEO
Steff Goldring



Programs Lead
Clare Werbeloff



**Regional Lead
Rural & Regional Program**
Dr Elise Anderson



**Climate Care Program Advisory
Committee Chair (Volunteer)**
Dr Jeremy Watson

VOLUNTEERS

As a registered charity, VfCA relies entirely on donations and we thank our donors for their continuing support. VfCA is also deeply grateful for the time and energy our wonderful volunteers give to ensure urgent climate action for the animals we love and need from climate change.



Vets for Climate Action



A Voice for all Animals

www.vfca.org.au



***Veterinary professionals** include Veterinarians, Veterinary Technicians, Veterinary Nurses, Specialists, Vet Physios, Vet Public Health practitioners in private practice, research or government
The **broader animal care community** includes animal carers, farmers, RSPCA, Zoos, Aquaria

Veterinarians for Climate Action Ltd (ABN 16 636 944 191) is an ACNC registered charity with Donor Gift Recipient (DGR) status.
Address U1, 21 Technology Drive, Augustine Heights QLD 4300