

habitat

AUSTRALIA

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One planet living

Changemakers, positive energy, universal values
& better ideas for a billion dollars



AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION

Count Me In

—JUNE 2017



ACROSS AUSTRALIA, hundreds of you from the ACF community came together for a dose of hope and connection with people who care at our annual Count Me In events. Many of you were there when we launched our involvement in Repower Australia, a national community campaign

to put a red hot spotlight on all political parties to get off coal and go 100 per cent renewable energy.

Let's continue to demand that Australia is powered with clean energy from the wind and sun!

In this issue

“To transform the world, we must begin with ourselves.”

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI



It's time to Repower Australia say our wonderful supporters at a Count Me In event in Melbourne. Photo: James Thomas

IN THIS ISSUE of *habitat* we tackle the question of environmental destruction. We don't pretend to be tinkering around the edges; this is the challenge of our times and we can't solve it alone. Indeed, it would be a brave person who claimed that imagining 'one planet living' was a simple job.

If the average Australian's current consumption habits continue, we would need an extra two to five planets to sustain them in the future. This is the stark reality that prompted ACF to lead research identifying the *causes* rather than the *symptoms* of environmental issues. The hope is that we can join the dots between where we are at and where we need to be if 'one planet living' is the ultimate aim.

The research confirmed that there is no single cause behind the destruction of our environment, rather many complex and intertwined causes.

Although the research identifies ten root causes of environmental destruction, we have narrowed our focus in this issue of *habitat* to examine the two underlying drivers that will help guide ACF's work; values and incumbency.




The research defines values as shifting from a system that prioritises economic growth above all, to a more broad-based system that intrinsically values our natural world. Incumbency refers to the difficulty in changing a system where the rules and structures are in the control of those who stand to benefit from them.

To learn more about the research, there's an interview with Professor David Griggs who co-authored the report

on p.6. Mark Chenery then delves into the Common Cause values-based methodology on p.10 and Simon O'Connor looks at ethical options for investing on p.18. Making economic decisions that support life, not damage it is the focus of our 'economy for life' work. It's a myth that we must sacrifice nature for a quick buck.

I was recently mesmerised by southern right whales breaching near Cape Schanck in Victoria. It brought home to me that 'one planet living' affects our entire living world and that we're interconnected. My inner pessimist thought, "We're all going down together" but the optimist in me swiftly replied, "We're all in this together". Tell me about your most recent awe-inspiring moment while out and about in our beautiful world at habitat@acf.org.au

Sara,
habitat Editor

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COVER ARTWORK
Marine pollution washed ashore by tidal movements on a remote Christmas Island beach, Indian Ocean, Australia.
Photo: Gary Bell/
OceanwideImages.com

habitat, our beautiful, bi-annual magazine features our natural world and stories, ideas, inspirations and issues we face as a community. Written by passionate advocates, community members and artists, *habitat* celebrates and speaks out for the most important thing on earth—life itself. Meet the people behind the work that we do and be inspired by our community who act for a world where forests, rivers, people and wildlife thrive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this country and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay respect to their elders past and present and acknowledge the pivotal roles that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play in caring for country and wildlife across Australia.

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The Australian Conservation Foundation is Australia's national environment organisation. We are more than 400,000 people who speak out, show up and act for a world where forests, rivers, people and wildlife thrive. We are proudly independent, non-partisan and funded by donations from Australians.



Stop Adani climate protesters in Environment Minister Josh Frydenberg's Kooyong electorate, June 2017. Photo: John Englart (Takver), flickr under CC

Letter from the CEO

Kelly O'Shanassy

MANY of you will be quite familiar with our campaigning and community organising work—in many cases, you've stood with us at rallies, signed petitions, volunteered for doorknocking, phone banking and more. Alongside this, some of our work takes place quietly, 'behind the scenes'. Our research into the root causes of our environmental problems is one such example.

The end goal for ACF over the past three years has been about 'fixing the system'—that is, taking on the laws, policies, decisions and practices that stand in the way of change. We do this by dismantling the dominant story of conflict between people and nature and building a powerful community of people. This strategy will result in real transformational change rather than just addressing the symptoms. But to do this we really need to understand the heart of the issues and focus our efforts there. To this end, over the past year we've done some exciting new research with the Monash Sustainable Development Institute to examine what is really driving the extinction and pollution crisis currently gripping our planet. You can read more about what we found in an

interview on the next page with co-author Professor David Griggs.

Our approach with the Stop Adani campaign is the perfect illustration of how we are addressing these underlying causes: by challenging a system where those in control seek to benefit, and by creating a future that cherishes our natural world, not economic growth above all. Make no mistake—together, we can and will change the story.

With the #StopAdani Challenge in full swing during July and August, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's office got used to receiving a call every 10 minutes from members of our community! I was deeply inspired to learn of the huge uptake of community screenings of the Stop Adani documentary, 'Guarding the Galilee'. Thank you. To my mind, and I'm sure you will agree, we have no option but to keep this huge momentum going. It's the campaign of our times and we will not give up until the coal stays firmly in the ground and our beautiful Great Barrier Reef remains free from pollution.

We have been thrilled with the thousands of new members who have joined us since our last issue of *habitat*. I believe

that you, our members, are the heart of our democracy and a powerful force for nature. Together, we are building a strong and united movement to show our elected representatives, key decision makers and business leaders that big polluters, like Adani, have no place in Australia's future. So, to those of you who are new to ACF membership and *habitat*, welcome to the fold! We will never give up.

Kelly

Honouring those who laid ACF's foundations

We recently learned of the deaths of three accomplished men who were hugely important to ACF in our early days. ACF's first director, Don McMichael CBE was a 'man for all seasons'. His work for our environment and Australian museums was unparalleled. ACF's first executive secretary, Warwick Deacock OAM was renowned for his passion for adventure and outdoor education, including establishing the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Australia. Max Day AO was a member of ACF's founding committee and dedicated his life to conservation and science. We honour their legacies and all that they did to create a better future for this, our one and only precious planet.

What's driving our planet's destruction

IN CONVERSATION WITH PROFESSOR DAVID GRIGGS

ACF COMMISSIONED RESEARCH INTO THE CAUSES OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEVASTATION TO DETERMINE THE BIG AND PERMANENT CHANGES WE MUST MAKE.

By Sara McMillan



Change is happening! Collective sustained action closed down Hazelwood, Australia's most polluting coal-fired power station. Photo: Doug Gimesy Photography

IF WE ONLY ever tackle the symptoms of environmental devastation such as habitat destruction or even climate change, and don't work on the underlying causes, we risk only making small, incremental changes to the state of our environment. We've realised that what's really needed are changes that are big and permanent.

To this end, ACF commissioned research to delve deeper into the causes of environmental destruction. The research identified ten 'drivers of unsustainability' that were complex and intertwined; read about them in the box over the page.

The researchers sought to determine if there were more underlying drivers that acted as connectors between the ten identified drivers, underpinning and therefore impacting on multiple drivers. The two drivers that were identified as fundamental to all other examples of environmental destruction in Australia were the power of incumbency and activating extrinsic values.

Report co-author, Professor David Griggs, gives some insights into what the research uncovered and what it means for ACF members and the broader movement. Professor Griggs is Professor of Sustainable Development at Monash University and Warwick University in the UK.

What did your (Drivers of Unsustainability in Australia) research set out to find?

The idea of the project was to try to address some of the causes of environmental degradation rather than just deal with the impacts. The higher you move up the value chain, the more effective you will be at tackling an issue. It's obviously much more challenging to tackle the issue at this level but there are much bigger and more sustained impacts.

What's a real life example of addressing the causes rather than the impacts?

I will use the problem of unsustainable logging as an example. You can stop logging impacts by blockading the logging site but if you are able to delve into the causes and address these, you will have a bigger impact. So, in this example, looking at the reasons why people are logging is key — asking if it is for economic, social, cultural or historic reasons — then dealing with the causes of the issue rather than the end result.

Why is this research important?

It's very important for a number of reasons. Identifying the end point of the issue means you're not dealing with spot fires but addressing root causes. This means

you're able to address many unsustainable outcomes by addressing one underlying driver. For example, if you focus on the driver of values, by which I mean shifting from a system that prioritises wealth and economic growth above all to a more broad-based system that intrinsically values our natural world, you can address issues as wide ranging as logging to polluting the Great Barrier Reef. It means that you are not having to deal with a million different issues as they're all intertwined.

Two underlying drivers of unsustainable practices which the research uncovered were values and the power of incumbency.

Can you explain a bit more about what these drivers mean?

We define values as 'shifting from a value system that prioritises monetary wealth and economic growth above all, to a more broad-based value system that intrinsically values our natural world'. Incumbency is 'the difficulty in changing a system when the rules and power structures are in the control of those who benefit from the system, and therefore have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo'. →

What was a key insight from your research?

One key insight was just how powerful values are in shaping people's beliefs. The importance of values has been known for a long time. If we worked in a fact-based world it would be simple but that's not the case because what people want to believe is driven by different values. Regarding the power of incumbency, this is relevant to our research because if you look at who holds the 'levers of power', you can see how only a few benefit at the expense of many; that the vested interests win out. This is the case across different contexts as the power of survival is the driving force. Changing the status quo is the solution but how do you do this?

Exactly. How do you suggest that this change happens?

There's no doubt that it's a difficult proposition. For example, most US citizens believe in climate change and gun control and most want change. Currently incumbents such as the National Rifle Association hold the 'levers of power', thereby making change very difficult. Nonetheless change does happen; look at the more local example of Hazelwood.

How can the power of incumbency be overcome despite the fact that incumbents such as big polluters are strong?

To take the example of closing down a coal-fired power station such as Hazelwood, this occurred through

collective, sustained action. This action held those in control of the system, as well as those who were set to benefit from it at the expense of our living world, to account. Another current example is the Adani campaign—this is both the power of incumbency and values related. It crosses both drivers absolutely.

Were there any surprises that your research uncovered?

If you knew the answer then you wouldn't need to do the research. The thing that did surprise me, is just how powerful these drivers are. I knew these drivers existed but I didn't realise how fundamental these drivers are and hence how critical they are to the issues we face.

What role do ordinary people have in addressing the causes of an unsustainable environment?

They have an absolutely critical role both individually and collectively. A common question I'm asked when I'm speaking about climate change is "how can I have an impact when I'm one of 7 billion people?"

I reply that yes they can and use an example of highly successful individual and collective action. For example, bribery in India is endemic and benefits the few people that are the incumbents of the system. Knowing this, an affected man set up a website called 'I paid a bribe' (ipaidabribe.com), and suddenly hundreds of thousands of people were documenting their bribes and the corrupt individuals

who asked them for a bribe. The founder found a weak point in the system and then exploited it for good.

What role do you think an organisation like ACF can play in addressing these challenges, particularly in relation to our current collective action to stop Adani?

It's really important for ACF to continue to tap into this sentiment of shared values and mobilise as many supporters from like-minded groups as possible to collaborate to stop Adani. Those in control of a system prefer a 'divide and rule' approach where everyone is in competition as this works for them. If everyone is competing against each other, they don't necessarily question the power structure. This weakens collective power, in turn strengthening their power.

The real power, I believe, lies in ACF's ability to reject the inherent competitive 'divide and rule' mentality and disrupt it with a collaborative approach towards the common goal of rejecting a coal mine. ACF really needs to be the vanguard of the community, leading the way to dismantle the vested interests and challenge those who control the 'levers of power'.

Do you think Australia's decision makers and politicians are able to tackle these issues of environmental destruction or are they seen as 'too hard'?

I think they're put in the 'too hard' basket for a lot of people. The political system

The 10 drivers damaging our living world:

1. THE DOMINANT WORLD VIEW OF FREE MARKETS, INDIVIDUALISM AND TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS
2. UNDERVALUING NATURE, INCLUDING AS A RESULT OF THE INCREASING DISCONNECTION FROM NATURE
3. THE ENDLESS PURSUIT OF ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH UNRESTRAINED FREE MARKETS
4. CORPORATE MARKETING AND OVERCONSUMPTION
5. SOCIAL TENDENCIES TO DISCOUNT RISKS THAT DON'T SEEM IMMEDIATE AND REJECT RISKS THAT SEEM OVERWHELMING AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DESIRE TO CONFORM
6. MEDIA THAT TENDS TO REFLECT AND REINFORCE ESTABLISHED POWER STRUCTURES
7. PERSISTENT HUMAN POPULATION GROWTH
8. TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT THAT IS AMPLIFYING OUR IMPACT ON THE NATURAL WORLD
9. GOVERNMENT AND MARKET INSTITUTIONS THAT IGNORE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION
10. LIMITED ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WITHIN THE LEGAL SYSTEM

The ten 'drivers of unsustainability' identified by the ACF-commissioned research were found to be strongly interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Graphic: Thomas Kinsman

we have at the moment is not set up to address issues like this; it's set up for short term gain. In theory we elect governments to govern in our best interests but it is so difficult to be able to do that effectively because of the way the system is set up. It takes leaders of real courage to say 'I'm doing this because it's good for you and society not because it's going to get me re-elected'. Leaders can be governed by a weekly media cycle now. It's quite extraordinary. It used to be 3-5 years with an election cycle but now it's determined by media cycles and the latest polling.

Are you optimistic that we can actually address the challenges of an unsustainable environment?

I oscillate on this. On good days, I see the enormous progress that's being made. I've been in this game for a long time. Thirty years ago no one had even heard of climate change. There has been an

incredible push towards renewable energy so we've come an immensely long way in an immensely short period of time even if it doesn't seem like it. On my bad days, I see that greenhouse gases are still rising and that change is not happening in the magnitude needed. I still think we are in a position that we could avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Some are unavoidable but not all if progress continues at an accelerated pace.

What will the future look like if we choose to address these challenges?

We need to stop focussing on the problems, as we have done historically, and paint a good picture of what the world would look like if we chose to address the causes of an unsustainable environment. It would be a wonderfully fair and open society, where we have addressed how we consume with minimal waste and have smartly designed cities. The

UN Sustainable Development Goals set a good roadmap for achieving this, ensuring the protection of the planet for future generations. It would be a future where we have truly addressed the three pillars of sustainable development: economic prosperity and social justice so that wealth is distributed more fairly and inequalities have been addressed, and environmental protection where we have safeguarded the environment for future generations.

What's your final message to our readers?

Everything we have comes from the natural environment. If we screw that up, we screw everything up.

► To learn about the future work we have planned to make the lasting changes needed, visit: www.acf.org.au/big_picture

A matter of values

JUST AS ACF'S 'DRIVERS OF UNSUSTAINABILITY' RESEARCH HAS UNCOVERED, VALUES ARE PART OF THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION. HERE, WE INTRODUCE THE 'COMMON CAUSE' METHODOLOGY TO EXPLAIN THE WAY INTRINSIC VALUES CAN BE USED TO MOTIVATE SUPPORT FOR A HEALTHY PLANET.

By Mark Chenery

IT'S EASY to feel despair at the state of our current world and, by extension, to feel despondent about human nature.

A cursory look around our world gives the impression human beings are driven more by fear, hatred and selfishness than by love, compassion and care for nature. Whether it is Australian politicians throwing lumps of coal around parliament as the Great Barrier Reef dies, US President Donald Trump's views on climate change, or the almost endless spate of wars and famine wreaking havoc with people's lives around the world—the evidence is damning.

But science tells us a different story of our humanity. It's a story that flies in the face of our current broken politics and collective obsession with economic growth over all else. It's a story about what we really value as human beings.

People often think about values as abstract and subjective ideals that rarely translate into people's actual behaviour. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Over the past three decades social psychologists have made incredible advances in understanding how the human value system works and why it matters. What they've discovered is that people around

the world share at least 58 universal values. These values range from honesty, loyalty and unity with nature, to pleasure, wealth and social recognition.

And while these values are universal, the difference between people is the degree to which they prioritise each value. These 'values priorities', in turn, influence the goals we set ourselves in life, the attitudes we hold and the behaviours we exhibit.

Hundreds of studies from around the world have now mapped the way in which different groups of values are associated with different types of attitudes and behaviours. In short, some values make us



act in more selfish and competitive ways, while others are associated with more cooperative and altruistic behaviour.

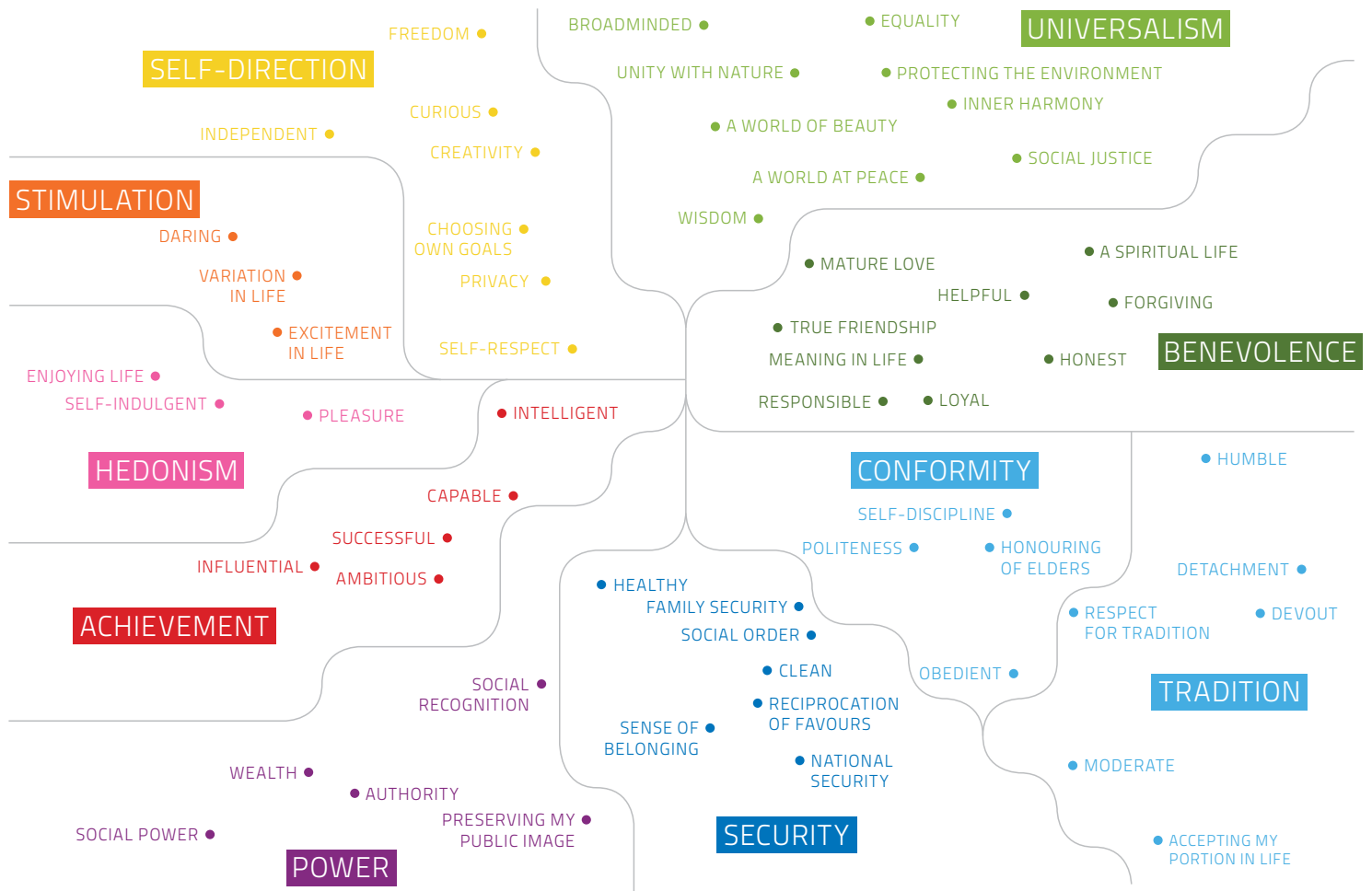
It turns out that people who prioritise a broad group of values known as intrinsic values—which includes a range of self-directed and compassionate values such as creativity, broadmindedness, unity with nature, responsibility and loyalty—are more likely to act in pro-social and environmentally responsible ways. For example, people who prioritise intrinsic values are more likely to volunteer, buy ethical products, reduce their environmental footprint and even pick up other people's litter.

People often think about values as abstract and subjective ideals that rarely translate into people's actual behaviour. Nothing could be further from the truth.

On the other hand, people who prioritise a competing set of so-called extrinsic values—which include wealth, public image, social power, ambition and success—are more likely to act in anti-social and environmentally destructive ways. For example, they are more likely to be sexist and racist, more likely take advantage of others, and less likely to recycle or support environmental policies.

The good news is that in Australia, as well as in more than 60 other countries for which we have data, we know that the majority of people prioritise intrinsic values. They are more motivated by the internal rewards of pursuing ideals such as honesty, broadmindedness and curiosity than they are by external rewards such as money, fame or power. As it turns out, however, most people assume the opposite to be true.

For example, a recent study conducted by Common Cause Foundation in the United Kingdom and the United States found a wide gap between people's



Common Cause Values Map. Source: Redrawn by Common Cause Foundation from Schwartz, S.H. (2006) Basic Human Values: theory, measurement and applications. Design by Minute Works

perceptions of their own values, versus the values of others in their society.

When surveyed on their personal values, the vast majority of people were found to prioritise compassionate values like honesty, love, equality and unity with nature over selfish values like wealth, power, public image and success.

Appealing to people's compassionate values is a lot more effective than appealing to their selfish values.

However, when participants were asked to fill out the exact same survey, but this time reflecting on the values of the average British or US citizen, a clear majority thought other people were more driven by selfish values than they were. In

short, most people think that other people do not share their values.

This perception gap was significantly greater for politically progressive people than it was for politically conservative people. In other words, conservatives are better at judging the values of their fellow citizens than progressives.

What's more, this perception gap really matters, because it turns out that the more people think that others in their community do not share their values, the less likely they are to think that engaging in civic behaviours such as attending rallies, signing petitions and meeting with politicians actually makes a difference. And the less likely people were to have actually voted in the previous five years.

Think about this for a moment in the context of the two big political upsets of 2016—Brexit in the UK and Trump in the

US. In both cases, the winning campaign only won by a very slender percentage margin. In both cases, had the losing campaign managed to get more people to the polls, it would have changed world history.

So why do people, especially progressive people, have such a skewed view of other people's values?

One explanation is the fact that people don't always act in line with their dominant values. For example, we know that most Australians prioritise compassionate and environmentally responsible values over selfish values, yet continue to vote for politicians who choose to do very little about our climate pollution and prefer to torture people seeking asylum offshore than provide them a safe home in Australia.

That's not to say, however, that values aren't important. It's just to point out that

our dominant values are only half of the story.

Over the past decade researchers have been exploring the extent to which our values are primed by our context—the things we see, hear, read or otherwise experience. This includes the way corporations, governments and non-profits frame their communications.

In fact, studies show that our context can be a lot more important than our normal values in determining which values guide our attitudes and behaviours in that moment.

For example, in one study researchers wanted to see if values priming could be used to influence people's levels of helpfulness. To do this, they took 94 participants and split them into three groups. The first group was asked to write reasons for and against honesty and loyalty (intrinsic values). The second group to write about success and ambition (extrinsic values). A control group was asked to complete an unrelated task.

Then, one at a time, participants were told the study was complete and to proceed into a separate room to fill in a form before leaving. In the other room, a researcher pretended to knock over a cup of 10 pencils. The real test was to see how many pencils each unsuspecting participant picked up in the allocated time.

It turned out those primed with the intrinsic values of honesty and loyalty picked up more pencils than the control group. Not only that, but those who had been primed with the extrinsic values of success and ambition picked up *less*

pencils than the control group. In other words, priming people's extrinsic values doesn't just fail to boost helpful behaviour, it actually suppresses it.

The trick is to have faith in our shared humanity, appeal to our better natures and, in doing so, bring our intrinsic values to the fore.

Dozens of other studies have found the same effect using a variety of priming techniques and measures of pro-social and environmental behaviours.

The take-away lesson for people who care about creating a more caring and environmentally sustainable world is that appealing to people's compassionate values is a lot more effective than appealing to their selfish values. This might not sound particularly surprising, but if you look at the values often used to motivate support for social justice and environmental causes, you'll quickly see how often we get it wrong.

A city council, for example, ran a campaign a few years back in which it posted oversized price tags on trees that read: "The trees in this street give back \$10,613.80 worth of environmental benefits over the next 20 years". The objective was to encourage people to value trees. Instead, the campaign further reinforced the idea that trees have no value unless they also contribute to the economy. In other words, trees are worth protecting because of extrinsic values not intrinsic ones.

This campaign approach is sadly not unique, but part of a growing global trend of putting a price on discrete elements of nature to show they have value. Of course, this ignores the mountains of evidence collected over decades that most people already deeply care about nature and want to see it protected. In fact, when they are reminded of the extrinsic benefits of nature, this serves to reduce pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours, not increase them.

So instead of reinforcing this unhelpful story about human selfishness and greed, what we should be doing is telling a different story—a more *accurate* story about human nature.

Yes, it is true that we can be selfish, but this is only one part of our motivational system and for most people it's not the dominant one. Most of us are driven far more by love for our fellow humans and a deep connection to the rest of nature. The trick is to have faith in our shared humanity, appeal to our better natures and, in doing so, bring our intrinsic values to the fore.

Mark Chenery is co-founder and director of Common Cause Australia.

- For more on values and their role in motivating support for environmental causes visit: www.commoncause.org.au



Superpower: harnessing the power of our super

THE CONSCIENTIOUS INVESTOR'S POWER IS PROVEN AND AN EVOLUTION
OF OUR SUPER INDUSTRY IS TAKING PLACE.
UNTIL NOW, THE MISSING LINK HAS BEEN ENOUGH INDEPENDENT
INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR PEOPLE WANTING TO INVEST RESPONSIBLY.

By Simon O'Connor, CEO,
Responsible Investment Association Australasia

Give me the sun—Reef Not Coal snap action.
Photo: John Englart (Takver), flickr under CC

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME that you thought about the origins of your coffee beans or whether the eggs you're about to buy have been laid by happy, free-roaming chickens?

Chances are it's more recent than you've thought about your superannuation.

Yet for most Australians, our super is the second biggest investment we will ever make. Whether we like it or not, nearly 10 per cent of our wages are invested into superannuation every pay cheque, with only those of us fortunate enough to purchase a home ever making a larger investment.

This is a problem lined with a huge opportunity. The \$2 trillion+ sitting in Australian superannuation funds is shaping the social and environmental outlook of our country. We can choose to put this money towards smart, innovative, clean businesses of the future, or we can continue to prop up industries that pollute and damage our living world.

In reality, most of us who are concerned about protecting our planet will find ourselves scratching our heads in the supermarket aisle working out which brand of chocolate won't destroy the rainforests and will protect the livelihoods of cocoa farmers in developing countries. Yet meanwhile, our quarterly statement from our super fund collects dust on the mounting pile of unopened mail.

Thankfully we are starting to change. Finance—investments, super and banking—is never going to look the same again. More and more people are awaking to the fact they can align their money with their morals not just in a

philanthropic manner, but also to achieve great returns.

Campaigning organisations such as ACF have played a role in this awakening. Today, numerous civil society groups are encouraging their networks to target the business and finance industry, with divestment from fossil fuels alone playing a catalytic role in connecting citizens with their savings.

The Responsible Investment Association Australasia (RIAA) has been mapping the size and growth of ethical and responsible investors for the past 16 years. Over this time, demand for ethical investments (that is, investment in industries that contribute positively to society and the environment) had remained stubbornly low.

The \$2 trillion+ in Aussie superannuation funds slushing around the economy is shaping the social and environmental outlook of our country.

But change is happening. Funds flowing into ethical investments have doubled in the past two years, from \$32 billion in 2015 to \$65 billion in 2017. This is a jump of 2.5 per cent of the market to 4.5 per cent. And there are no signs of slowing down.

The trends are mirrored internationally. Responsible investing is now a major force across global financial markets. Around the world, people are choosing to use funds that invest in industries like clean energy, education, healthcare, innovative technology and medical solutions.

As this shift in capital towards ethical and responsible funds takes place, many super funds are taking note.

In the past, super funds would rarely hear from their members. But funds are now receiving calls and emails from members wanting to know if their super is invested in tobacco or fossil fuels, offshore detention centres or coal seam gas and even how the fund is voting in relation to climate change resolutions at the AGMs of some of the world's largest companies.

Investors are responding to these concerns.

More and more, investment companies are realising that good investment relies on understanding more than just what is found in the financial statements.

Today in Australia, one in every two dollars is invested by people who are committed to considering environmental, social and corporate governance issues and opportunities in their daily investment decision making.

In the last three years, more than 35 Australian super funds have divested from tobacco, moving more than \$1.5 billion out of this industry. Beyond divestments, we are also seeing a sizeable shift towards socially and environmentally beneficial industries.

Our recent reports have showed a significant step up in 'sustainability themed' investments across green property funds and clean energy funds, sustainable agriculture and a growth in impact investments, indicating billions are flowing into responsible investments.

Super funds are realising they can have a positive impact whilst delivering strong returns in line with member



Photo: Stephanie Bradford

By ignoring our superannuation, we have ignored one of the most significant chances to influence the shape of our economy and nation.

The funds flowing into ethical investments have doubled in the last two years ... many super funds are taking note.

expectations. This has now reached a scale where this isn't just a passing trend, but an evolution of the entire sector that is being driven strongly by consumer engagement.

Research commissioned by RIAA shows most Australians would rather invest in a fund that puts people (and the planet) before profit. However, a lack of independent information was found to be a major obstacle to people switching to investing responsibly.

Last year RIAA decided to do something about this, launching the Responsible Returns web tool responsiblereturns.com.au. It fills the gap for Australians seeking information about ethical investment to products that match their interests and concerns. For example, this could mean investing in sustainable transport and education or avoiding investing in fossil fuels or companies with a murky record on human rights.

Australians are more willing than ever to move their investments to create strong social and environmental impact, to ensure their second biggest investment is aligning their money with their morals. This shift has only just begun, but is sure to continue to shape the investment industry for years to come.

If you're yet to think about the impact your superannuation is having, perhaps it's time to open that letter from your super fund. Inside lies one of your biggest opportunities to shape this world.

- ▶ Visit: www.responsiblereturns.com.au and find responsible super, banking and investment products to match your values.

An incredible moment for the #StopAdani campaign

NEWSFLASH

Four months after Westpac ruled out funding Adani, Commonwealth Bank has stated they are 'not among the banks who have been, or will be, asked to consider financing Adani'.

WE celebrated some big news in late April! In a huge win for people power, Westpac ruled out funding Adani. After an amazingly strong campaign led by the groups in the #StopAdani alliance—350, AYCC and Market Forces—Westpac released their climate change policy that rules out investing in new coal basins, including the Galilee Basin where Adani's coal mine is planned.

It doesn't matter which party your MP belongs to. We want MPs from all parties to feel the heat until they're screaming from the rooftops—no public money to prop up Adani's mega mine. This puts even more pressure on the Turnbull government!

The Turnbull government needs to hear loud and clear from the community and the politicians we elected to represent

us—we won't stand for our public money being used to prop up this disastrous mine.

If we can ramp up the pressure like we did for Westpac we can stop this in its tracks. We know we can win this! The project is now without funding from any of Australia's big four banks. Just like Westpac, and now Commonwealth Bank, our MPs will be worried about all the public pressure. So, let's get on with it.

- ▶ With the major banks rejecting funding, it is now more important than ever to sign our #StopAdani petition demanding no public funding for coal pollution. Let's turn up the heat on Prime Minister Turnbull to not prop up Adani's mine: www.acf.org.au/billions



People power in action at Westpac in Melbourne.
Photo: John Englart (Takver), flickr under CC

Better ideas for a billion dollars

WHEN THE TURNBULL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT THEY MIGHT HAND OVER \$1 BILLION OF PUBLIC MONEY TO PROP UP ADANI'S MINE, OUTRAGED ACF SUPPORTER SHARON FRANCE CAME UP WITH A NOVEL WAY OF MAKING MPS RECONSIDER THIS LOAN: THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE'S BANK OF BETTER IDEAS. THIS IS HER STORY.



Sharon at the March for Science collecting ideas of better ways to spend \$1 billion. Photo: Courtesy Sharon France

I LITERALLY woke up one morning thinking, “If everyone could spend \$1 billion on something beneficial, what would they fund? Certainly not a loan to a billionaire for a coal mine”. I searched for Australian icons, played with the cheque format, and voila!

I’m really new to acting on climate change and getting involved with environment issues. Mostly I have volunteered behind the scenes as a graphic designer because going to rallies and speaking with members of parliament was ‘uncomfortable’. But this issue—this mine—and all the problems around it just don’t stack up if we want our planet to be in good shape for generations to come.

I am a part of the ACF Bramble Bay group that formed after the recent ACF ‘Convergence’ event. It is full of wonderful people, many of whom are passionate about our native plants and animals but new to the issues around the Adani Carmichael coal mine.

A standout moment for me was sharing stories and ideas with Rachel Apelt from

the ACF Moreton Bay group. Rachel is a visual artist and she has produced a vibrant range of #StopAdani postcards targeting Queensland politicians and their portfolios.

I literally woke up one morning thinking, “If everyone could spend \$1 billion on something beneficial, what would they fund? Certainly not a loan to a billionaire for a coal mine”.

Her fun approach to engage with people visually is probably what inspired my \$1 billion cheque idea. I think the marriage of old-school petition meets fun design allows this activity to become very personal.

I’ve taken the cheques to events including the recent ‘March for Science’ and I’ve had wonderful reactions and conversations. People are against the mine but outraged by the proposed \$1 billion federal loan.

I have collected over 1500 completed cheques, with further face-to-face opportunities coming up. I have submitted a report highlighting the most popular and creative suggestions to the Senate Committee on the Governance and Operation of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF). I am now chasing up the Senate report which is yet to be published. Watch this space!

Some of your better ideas ...

Let’s protect the air we breathe, the water we drink and all the animals we share our world with—that’s worth more than anything!

If you have \$1 billion of OUR money to spend, please boost the tourism industry in Queensland by doing everything possible to rid the GBR of damage from polluted runoff, cargo ship damage, climate change, crown of thorns star fish.

\$1 billion could be used to accelerate the CSIRO invention to use sunlight to capture hydrogen using ammonia, and store it for later extraction and use to generate energy without carbon emissions. Australia could then be a net exporter of clean energy.

Honouring remarkable women speaking up for our planet



Wendy Bowman.

Photo: Courtesy Goldman Environmental Foundation

FOR THE FIRST TIME since 2003, the prestigious Goldman Prize, aka the ‘Green Nobel’, has been awarded to an Australian: octogenarian Hunter Valley farmer, Wendy Bowman. Wendy was one of six global recipients of the 2017 Goldman Environmental Prize, the world’s pre-eminent award for grassroots environmentalism.

For nearly three decades she has rallied her community to protect

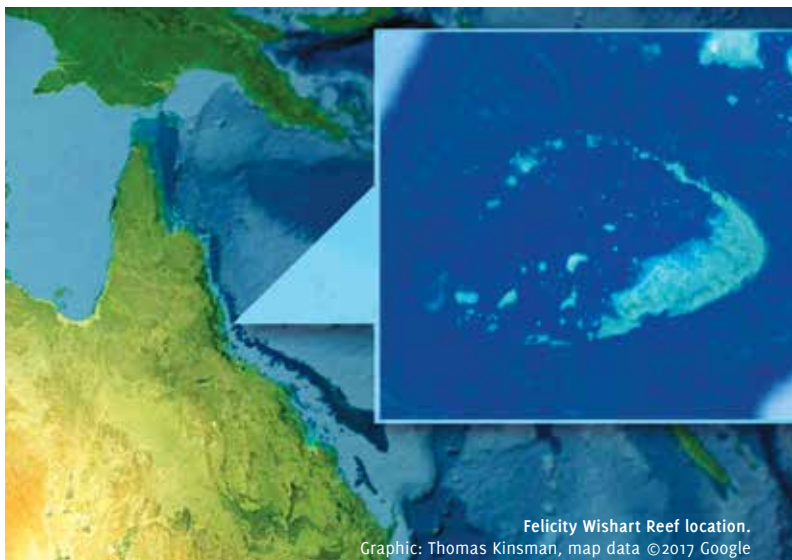
THE ‘GREEN NOBEL’ GOES TO WENDY BOWMAN, AN OCTOGENARIAN HUNTER VALLEY FARMER, AND LATE ENVIRONMENTALIST FELICITY WISHART HAS A REEF NAMED IN HER HONOUR.

AND THE WINNER IS ... WENDY BOWMAN

agricultural land and water from mining and stop its alarming pollution and health impacts. Twice she was forced off her land by mining companies. But when Chinese-owned Yancoal tried to mine her Camberwell farm, she drew a line in the sand. In December 2014, Wendy won an unprecedented legal victory against the development of a 315 hectare coal mine. The proposed mine would have consumed her farm and the surrounding landscape. However, the judge issued a condition of mine approval that required Yancoal to acquire her property before development could start. Because Wendy steadfastly refuses to sell, the mine can’t proceed. Wendy’s actions will keep 16.5 million

tonnes of coal in the ground and protect neighbouring farms and the environment. Yancoal lost its appeal against this decision in November 2015.

Wendy hopes the prize will shine a light on the environmental damage done by mining and its negative impacts on communities and farmland in the Hunter Valley. “This is for the community who haven’t been consulted about mining. It’s for everyone who has been fighting for the environment without a voice,” she said. “I hope the prize will help end the government’s cruel land acquisition policy for mining, which tears rural communities apart and leads to large areas of our best farmland being bought up by mining companies.”



Felicity Wishart Reef location.

Graphic: Thomas Kinsman, map data ©2017 Google

INTRODUCING ... THE FELICITY WISHART REEF

YOU MAY REMEMBER that Kelly paid tribute to the incredible life force of Felicity Wishart, past ACF staff member and highly respected environmental campaigner, in our 50th anniversary *habitat*. Recently, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority announced a reef had been named the Felicity Wishart Reef in honour of this remarkable advocate for our marine life. The Felicity Wishart Reef is situated within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area. It is a wonderful legacy to a much loved and respected conservationist. Flic believed in the importance of mentoring young activists, particularly young women. A Felicity Wishart Legacy Fund has been established in her honour and this year has supported two young women to attend the 2017 Women’s Environmental Leadership Australia program.

Standing up (on a paddle board) for the Murray



Tom Dunn, the first and maybe the last person to ever stand up paddle board down the Murray unless there is change. Photo: Courtesy Tom Dunn

ACF COMMUNITY MEMBER TOM DUNN'S
3,700 KILOMETRE PADDLEBOARD TREK DOWN THE MURRAY-DARLING
REVEALS ONE THING IS CLEAR: CHANGE IS NEEDED.
THIS IS TOM'S STORY.

MY IDEA WAS TO STAND UP paddle board the length of Australia's longest continuous river system — 3,750km, from the very source of the Murray-Darling Basin to the mouth of the Murray.

Before I started I imagined paddling down a wide winding river full of wildlife and water. What I got instead was something completely different.

A drought in Queensland made for a rough start to the trip. Forced to walk the first 900km of the trip was less than ideal and not what I imagined, but I couldn't make it rain so I had to walk.

I trudged through the river bed searching for water I could paddle on. Initially in the spots where there was water, gas bubbles and human waste made the river a foul mess.

Eventually when the river bed became impassable I left it behind and walked the roads and highways searching for water. In the middle of the summer heat, walking on the edge of the road I drew plenty of attention. My own attention however was on the paddocks I walked alongside. I noticed that the cotton crops were doing well and nearly all the livestock paddocks had full troughs too.

It was good to see, Australia was built on farming, and I'm from a regional area myself. I know how bad things can be in a drought, but if this was truly a drought,

how was there enough water to keep crops and stock going so well? The answer to that was in the river. Huge pumps lined the banks, manipulating the current and the water levels around, a few even managed to pull me back upstream as they sucked the water that was left from the already struggling river.

Everyone empathised with my attempt to paddle the length of the river system, a few even laughed.

As I moved further down river I spent more time with locals. Everyone empathised with my attempt to paddle the length of the river system, a few even laughed. It was common knowledge that up here, in the upper reaches of the Murray-Darling Basin, drought or not, there was never enough water.

I was an outsider and this was my first visit to the region, but I couldn't understand how there was 'never' enough water.

As I reached the Darling River itself I listened to the stories of how big and busy the outback towns used to be. I heard stories of the river boats and paddled past their old mooring points, now so high and dry. Everywhere I went people told me how towns were closing down. Whole

towns were crippled by the lack of population as people packed up and disappeared from the bush. Droughts happened, but this was something bigger. Those that were still left in the towns told me why, "This river system is dying".

I don't know enough about the government water buybacks, cotton farm water allocations, or the amount of water it takes to keep stock alive to give an opinion on the health of Murray-Darling Basin. I may have spent 113 days on every inch of the river, but it doesn't compare to the people who have spent their entire lives on the banks.

These people, no matter if they worked for government water management, on a cotton station or were a stock farmer, always agreed on one thing.

Change is needed.

I don't know the river, but I have met its people and they are scared. The river used to be a life source, but when it dies it will kill all the communities on its banks too.

I'd love to be able to return in 5 or 10 years and paddle down the river I imagined, but unless something significantly changes, I think I may be the first and last person to ever 'SUP' the length of Australia's longest river system.



Stories for the river

LEARN ABOUT AN ACF FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM THAT IS EMPOWERING 15 COMMUNITY LEADERS LIVING ALONG THE MURRAY-DARLING BASIN TO CAMPAIGN FOR HEALTHIER RIVERS.

By Sara McMillan

Emerging leaders becoming ACF river ambassadors. Photo: David Sickerdick

IT'S A CRITICAL TIME for our Murray-Darling Basin with recent disturbing evidence of alleged water theft and meter tampering in the NSW Barwon-Darling river system. A handful of giant rogue irrigators appear to have siphoned billions of litres of river water, purchased with public funds to protect our environment, for their own personal gain.

Meanwhile, ACF's Rivers Fellowship has been skilling up and empowering community leaders to run local campaigns to keep the lifeblood for our wildlife, farming and city communities flowing. Fifteen local legends, all passionate about our rivers, first came together in Renmark to change the story for the Murray-Darling Basin.

This diverse group of farmers, Traditional Owners, scientists, artists, pastoralists and community leaders are developing strong relationships with each other and coordinating on strategy, working towards the common goal of advocating for their lifeblood, the Murray-Darling Basin. "I think it's really important

that we're with a group of people that is diverse and that's the strength in our group. Everyone brings something to the table that is of value and will resonate with different people in different communities," says fisher Tracy Hill from Meningie in South Australia.

Participants develop their campaigning skills by launching community petitions, facilitating training, supporting local teams, hosting community events, lobbying politicians and standing up for the river in media. The nine-month program includes two weekend workshops, monthly webinars, coaching, access to campaigning tools and intensive support.

As ecologist Fiona Paton explains of the program, "It's people across the basin who represent a number of communities and it's about sharing our united story on the river and how to manage the system. We're not separate from that ecosystem, we're a real part of that environment".

The collective wisdom and experience of the river advocates is humbling. Citrus farmer Tuesday Browell from

Toorumbarry in Victoria says, "It's about the whole system. It's a living, breathing wet organism. We live on the river, we breathe the river, we are the river".

We expect these river fellows to use their passion and dedication to do great things for our rivers. Already, they've been active in talking to ABC for a Four Corners investigation on water theft as well as speaking on behalf of their communities in national media. As Glen Hill, a fisher from Meningie in South Australia, puts it: "Someone needs to step up and do something. It's me, it's you, it's everyone. This is an opportunity to create a movement of people who are caring for the rivers". Applications are now open for the 2018 Rivers Fellowship.

- Sign the petition to demand PM Malcolm Turnbull stick up for the Basin Plan and protect our rivers: www.acf.org.au/murray_darling_petition



2018 Diary on sale now!

Be awed by the incredible diversity of life in Australia –this ancient island continent, its seas and waters, its unique creatures and country.

In 2018, the much loved ACF diary features:

- > A picture for each week of the year
- > 58 spectacular colour photographs of Australian flora, fauna, sea and landscapes
- > Convenient size: 235 x 165mm, 120 pages

The ACF diary makes an ideal Christmas gift for friends and family in Australia and overseas.

By purchasing this diary, you'll help the Australian Conservation Foundation create a world where forests, rivers, people, oceans and wildlife thrive.

TO ORDER ONLINE, AND FOR A LIST OF STOCKISTS VISIT:
www.acf.org.au/diary



A Gift in Memory

for forests, rivers, reefs, people and wildlife



A gift in memory is a wonderful way to honour a loved one or colleague and their connection to nature. If you have lost someone close to you, you may wish to commemorate their life and pay tribute to what was important to them. We will publish their names on a memoriam page in our Annual Report and on our website. Give a gift in memory today and provide a short statement we can publish on our website to honour the person you are remembering.

To give a gift to the Australian Conservation Foundation in memory of someone special, or to arrange for donation envelopes in lieu of flowers for a funeral, call Upeka Kumarasinghe on 1800 223 669 or www.acf.org.au/gift_in_memory

A world united against nuclear weapons

EINSTEIN STATED THAT THE EXISTENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS HAS CHANGED EVERYTHING EXCEPT OUR WAY OF THINKING. A NEW CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVE IS NOW SEEKING TO DO EXACTLY THIS.

By ACF Nuclear Free Campaigner, Dave Sweeney



On 15 June 2017, as the second round of UN negotiations began on a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, members of the Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition held a vigil near the iconic A-Bomb Dome. Photo: Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition

THE PUBLIC UNVEILING of the nuclear weapons era in August 1945 ended many lives and created an awareness that all remaining life was now living in the nuclear shadow. The shadow remains. But there is a growing sense of life and light following a recent historic UN vote that provides our shared planet's best chance to get rid of its worst weapons. Nuclear weapons are the most destructive force on Earth and pose a continuing and existential threat to our shared planet.

They have held nations to ransom, fuelled a Cold War, diverted vast financial resources and scientific capacity from meeting pressing human needs, been the stuff of science fiction, pop culture, nightmares and a cancer on the global body politic. Through a combination of good hearts and good luck nuclear weapons have not been used in war since 1945—but their use

has been threatened, and they have been scrambled, tested and lost.

And they have always been challenged. There is an important, proud and powerful tradition of protest, opposition and action.

It is very hard to take the sticks from the biggest kids in the schoolyard and diplomatic efforts to wind back the nuclear clock have failed, been derailed or reached only partway.

Nuclear weapons are obscene and have no place on a living planet.

Institutional barriers to real disarmament are very high—from the hypocrisy of the nuclear armed permanent members of the UN Security Council, the political clout and donations of the weapons

corporations and the flag waving and hand wringing of politicians.

But a new global civil society initiative is bypassing these barriers by not looking to convince the nuclear weapons states, but rather to isolate them.

Modelled on the approach taken around chemical and biological weapons, the new ban doesn't seek the approval of the nuclear weapons states, instead it aims to shrink any legitimacy these weapons and their defenders might have.

In July over one hundred and twenty nations agreed on the formal text of a treaty ban, despite opposition and undermining from nuclear weapons states and their deputies, including—sadly and shamefully—Australia. The ban treaty includes:

- > A prohibition on developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, transferring, stockpiling,

Join outgoing ACF President Geoff Cousins at his last AGM as chairperson. Photo: James Thomas



AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
INCORPORATED

51st Annual General Meeting

SHARING THE ACF STORY

**Save the Date: 6.30 pm on Friday
24 November 2017, in Melbourne**

ACF's greatest strength is our community: 400,000 people who speak out, show up and act for a world where forests, rivers, people and wildlife thrive.

Join ACF President, Board, Council and staff at our 2017 AGM, to celebrate the achievements and challenges of the past year and to hear about our important work planned for the year ahead.

The agenda will include reports from the President, Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer, items submitted by members and the 2017 ACF Peter Rawlinson Conservation Award.

Proposals by members for agenda items must be made in writing, signed by at least five ACF members, and be addressed to The Honorary Secretary: executive.support@acfonline.org.au, or ACF, Level 1, 60 Leicester Street, Carlton Victoria 3053. Agenda items must be submitted by midday on **Thursday 26 October 2017**.

The agenda will be available on the ACF website, and on request from Jane Macaulay (executive.support@acfonline.org.au; T: 03 9345 1233) after midday, on **Friday 3 November 2017**.

using and threatening to use nuclear weapons.

- › A prohibition on assisting, encouraging or inducing anyone to participate in any of the above activities.
- › Recognition of the disproportionate impact of nuclear weapons activities on Indigenous peoples, and;
- › An obligation for all states parties to provide victim assistance and take measures towards environmental remediation.

With an increasingly fractured, complicated and nuanced geopolitical landscape nuclear weapons are an unwieldy and obsolete defence tool with scant strategic purpose. They are also obscene and weapons of indiscriminate and mass destruction that have no place on a living planet.

Yami Lester was a senior Aboriginal man who was blinded by British nuclear testing in South Australia in the mid 1950s. His daughter Karina told the recent nuclear ban talks in New York that while her dad had lost his eyesight "he has never lost his vision of a cleaner and safer future free of nuclear threats from weapons and waste".

VALE YAMI LESTER

IN JULY 2017, Yami Lester, mentioned above, passed away. Yami was blinded at an early age as a consequence of British nuclear testing at Maralinga. Although blind, Yami possessed a clear and continuing vision for justice and an end to nuclear threats and he consistently advanced this work throughout his 75 years. Yami was tireless and courageous in highlighting the suppressed history of the nuclear tests and their impact on Aboriginal people who at that stage were not even counted

Many others hold this vision and the ban push is gaining traction around the world and across Australia with polls showing clear majority support.

ACF is a foundation member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, a key driver of the push to ban nuclear weapons, and played a role in facilitating Indigenous voices from Australia and the Pacific region being an active part of the treaty process.

The ban treaty opened for signature in September and will enter into force and become part of international law three months after fifty nations have signed on. Despite the efforts of the nuclear weapons states, this will happen.

Australia now needs to realise that the momentum towards ending nuclear weapons is strong, supported and sane. Australia now needs to sign on to what is literally a global smoking ban. Our politicians need to raise their hands against nuclear arms, quit the excuses and butt out nuclear weapons.

in the national census. He played a major role in the establishment of the Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests in Australia. Yami also played a major role in the return of both the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) lands straddling northern South Australia and the return of Uluru. ACF acknowledges and thanks Yami and the Lester family for his life, work and exceptional contribution to our shared land.



Heat and hope at Camp Warrawee

EARLIER THIS YEAR, ACF'S 'PEOPLE POWER' TEAM ORGANISED AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE FOR ACF COMMUNITY MEMBERS CALLED 'CONVERGENCE'. ITS AIM WAS TO RE-ENERGISE MEMBERS WITH A WEEKEND OF LEARNING HOW TO HOW TO BUILD PEOPLE POWER, CHANGE THE STORY AND FIX THE SYSTEM. ACF MEMBER DAVID COSTELLO WAS THERE. THIS IS HIS STORY.

IT WAS GETTING SERIOUSLY HOT under the marquee at the ACF 'Convergence' event at Camp Warrawee. I could feel beads of sweat running down my back. There was no breeze and the humidity was suffocating. Maybe I should have had an escape plan in case I was stricken with heat induced nausea. Maybe I would faint. Anyway, what was I doing here? Could this little group of well-meaning citizens do anything to stop catastrophic climate change and Adani's massive coal mine?

Then something happened that banished the doubts in my feverish brain. Something that brought wonderment and hope to our gathering. Mark Gillow, a mild-mannered learning designer from Greenslopes, was asked to take the microphone and tell his story. He began speaking in a gentle Canadian accent.

He told of how he took his children Zoe and Bradley to Lady Elliott Island in 2007 to show them the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef. There was a problem.

Bradley was frolicking among the fish but 10-year-old Zoe was terrified and tearful. It took a lot of coaxing before she finally put her head under the water. Then something miraculous happened

"The wonder of the reef took over and Zoe's fears left her," Mark said.

"For the next three days, she was in the water constantly, swimming here and there and rescuing turtle hatchlings."

Mark says that holiday forged a special bond with his children and gave him a



Photo: Eddie Safarik

powerful motive to get involved with ACF and attend 'Convergence'.

"I feel that unless people like myself do something, the reef won't be there for people to take their kids and grandkids to," he said.

After Mark finished speaking, the 'Convergence' group seemed energised and focused. Kathryn McCallum, ACF Communications and Mobilisation Manager, had been speaking about public narrative and the 'story of self', and how a powerful story could galvanise people more than a string of fact and figures. Mark's story was a perfect example of this principle in action.

Later that day I told my story. I said I was sick of feeling helpless. I had spent too much time reading the reports about a warming world, of bleaching reefs, melting glaciers and record heatwaves. Too many hours reading the words of denialists who said CO2 was harmless plant food and climate change was a scam. Maybe the battle was already lost. Then I said I had been inspired by an article by

the great Australian author Tim Winton who argued passionately that there was no room for despondency in the fight to save the Great Barrier Reef. A planet that could not support the reef would eventually become a planet which would not support human life. We were in a battle for survival and had to fight as hard as we could.

I concluded that I had come to 'Convergence' to meet like-minded souls, to get organised and take action.

I spoke those words late on Saturday. By Sunday evening, I was a member of the newly-formed South Brisbane-Logan ACF Local Action Group. We had planned our first meeting and first event. Our aim is to support ACF in its campaigns to stop Adani and promote a shift to renewable energy.

As I was driving home, I thought about the many highlights of the weekend. About the infectious enthusiasm of ACF CEO Kelly O'Shanassy, the fierce determination and passion of Aboriginal elder Kenny Peters Dodd, and the kind assistance given by ACF staff including Isabella Morand, Karl Goodsell, Asren Pugh and

Michael Pulsford. And the long swim in the (very clean) Camp Warrawee pool. After all that heat, it was a life saver.

And I was thinking of another story which came right at the end of the weekend.

It was told by Rob Gordon, a sprightly and elderly man who hails from Melbourne but spends a lot of time in Brisbane with his relatives up here.

Rob is a tireless activist and has put up almost 1800 ACF posters in 950 shops in Brisbane and Melbourne. He says that most shop owners are overwhelmingly supportive.

"Sometimes I get permission to put up posters in six shops in a row," he said.

"I am so moved that I am almost weeping."

With people like Rob in our ranks, there is no way we can lose.

David Costello is a journalist, songwriter and activist who now lives in Logan City. He attended the ACF Convergence event at Camp Warrawee on March 17-19.

Our campaigns

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO AT ACF OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS?

By ACF Director of Campaigns, Paul Sinclair

THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN to #StopAdani is fast becoming one of the biggest and most significant in Australia's history. The Adani Carmichael mine has become a symbol of the urgent need for Australia to get off coal and onto clean energy. Where politicians stand on Adani is now one of the key tests of how serious they are about taking action to avoid catastrophic global warming.

Our supporters have been extraordinary activists in this campaign. They've been organising their friends into action groups all around Australia (you can find your local group at www.stopadani.com). Over 1 million people have viewed just one of our great films about Adani, and over 50,000 new supporters have joined ACF as a direct result of the Adani campaign.

The national campaign to #StopAdani is fast becoming one of the biggest and most significant in Australia's history.

While the Turnbull federal and Palaszczuk state governments remain Adani's major supporters and have been relentless boosters and approvers of the project, the coal is still secure in the earth. We have to keep it there for the sake of places like the Great Barrier Reef and our planet.

Both the federal ALP and Turnbull Government must now realise that the Adani mine will be a huge issue at the next federal election in 2018 or 2019. It's an issue that will increasingly haunt members of parliament in their electorates.

We are also leading work with other environment groups on a national

community campaign to 'Repower Australia'. This campaign will put a red hot spotlight on all political parties to get off coal and go 100 per cent renewable energy. We launched the Sun-powered Queensland pledge in Brisbane with fantastic community support and massive billboards right around the city. If you're in Brisbane you should drop into our beautiful new office in West End.

But wait, there's more!

In May, the Wuthathi, Kuuku Ya'u, and Northern Kaanju Traditional Owners on Cape York received a handback of the Bromley property of 160,730 hectares. This property adjoins Shelburne and 30 years ago was the proposed site of the Cape York space port. The handback included the declaration of a new 51,030 hectares Bromley National Park. These are places of extraordinary beauty, biodiversity and cultural importance to traditional owners.

In June after a fantastic community campaign the South Australia Premier announced that the international nuclear waste dump proposal was "dead". ACF has played a key role in this campaign. Every time the "let's go nuclear" issue rears its head ACF has been there to knock it down, and propose alternative, clean solutions. One month later, a UN conference led to the successful negotiation of a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons; this is a big step towards their total elimination.

Our work within the Murray-Darling Basin is now focused on building a network of river champions to make sure water is returned to the river system to let it flow and live. We have a network of community champions throughout the MDB who are training in communications

and community organising. They are doing a fine job from the top to the mouth of the river system.

As we speak, VicForests is logging the habitat of endangered species. It's critical that all of our supporters continue to get behind this campaign.

ACF staff and supporters were of great assistance to the Kimberley Land Council in May and helped a successful trial tourism tour—the 'Kimberley Ranger Experience'. The idea is traditional owners can generate income from such tours that can be used to support Indigenous rangers manage and care for country.

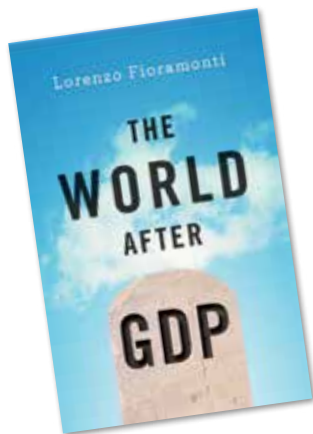
And in Victoria the effort to create a Great Forest National Park continues. The Andrews Government is yet to deliver on promised forest protection, and unsurprisingly are being put under pressure from industry and forestry unions. ACF continues to work closely with a large alliance of forest conservation groups to pressure government. As we speak, VicForests is logging the habitat of endangered species. It's critical that all of our supporters in Victoria and around the country continue to get behind this campaign.

Our team are recharged and reenergised by the faith, passion and dedication of our supporters. Thank you (and keep it coming)!



“Activism is
the rent I pay
for living on
this planet.”
Alice Walker

ACF supporters were lucky enough to spend campfire time on the recent ACF and Kimberley Land Council ranger trip with Joe Edgar, Director at Karajarri Traditional Lands Association. Photo: Julia Rau



The World After GDP by Lorenzo Fioramonti

In *The World After GDP*, Fioramonti builds on several years of scholarship into the problems of Gross Domestic Product, casting his gaze into the sunny uplands of a world beyond GDP. He envisages new systems of economics, politics and institutions. Fioramonti's thesis is that without GDP boxing policy makers, media, and businesses into decisions

that exclude environmental concerns and which downplay impact on communities, a world of 'horizontal' linkages is possible, with fewer hierarchies and less power imbalances.

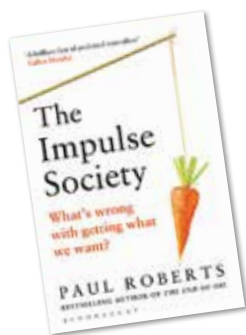
Many will recognise Fioramonti's critique of GDP—GDP ignores much of what humanity needs most, and counts as a positive what the world needs to curtail (environmental pollution an obvious example). His vision, however, will challenge those who think addressing the crises faced by communities around the world—inequality, environmental degradation, alienation, precarious livelihoods—simply entails making GDP growth 'inclusive' or 'green'.

Instead, what Fioramonti calls the 'vertical system' is profoundly disrupted. Barriers between consumption and production will fade as 'prosumers' do more for themselves; obsession with ownership will be eroded as people focus on quality and the service provided, rather than the 'thing' itself; the 'core economy' (vital activity outside the money system)—currently unseen in GDP metrics, will be cherished and supported; and new relations of power and influence will emerge as the world recognises global leadership is about sustainability and social justice, not size of economic output.

The World After GDP thus offers both an astute critique of our current world and a hopeful and radical message of change.

More details and how to purchase book at www.lorenzofioramonti.org

Guest contributor—Dr Katherine Trebeck, Oxfam GB



The Impulse Society by Paul Roberts

It's harmless to move to an area with little social or cultural diversity, isn't it? Not according to Paul Roberts, author of 'The Impulse Society—What's getting what we want?', who provides a compelling case for why myopic vision—on both ends of the political spectrum—is part of our

global problem. Roberts draws upon many such examples to illustrate the unintended cost of the intensifying drive

to craft lives that reflect our image—a trend he coins the "crisis of hyperpersonalisation".

Roberts' tone is more exploratory than judgemental. He acknowledges that it makes perfect sense to want to associate and live around people with similar views, values and preferences, building communities with a sense of shared purpose. However, he also opens the reader's eyes to the fallout: a lack of social cohesion and a missed opportunity for a vigorous civil society. Through historical case studies, Roberts gives examples of society coming unstuck through delaying pain and putting short-term interest ahead of long-term social good. He then explores the flow-on effects to both individuals and the communities in which we live.

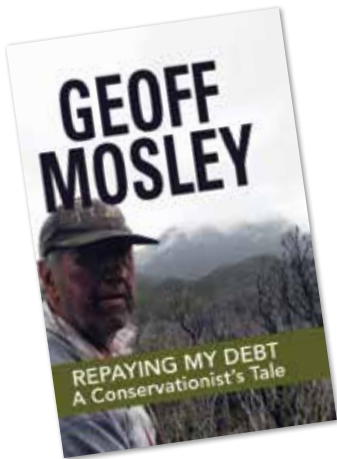
As Roberts explains, "the brute fact is that some of the most important things in life, and certainly most of the biggest challenges we face as a society, are anything but personal ... they are generic, collective, and often unpleasant, requiring patience, a tolerance for the unfamiliar, and a willingness to compromise and even sacrifice...the challenges we face require us to confront the very irritations and inefficiencies that our desire-driven, efficiency-obsessed Impulse Society has persuaded us we shouldn't have to deal with."

An insightful read which will join the dots for anyone who has a sense of foreboding about where society is headed but can't articulate exactly why or what can be done to change the status quo. (hint: a great deal!)

More details and how to purchase book at www.allenandunwin.com

Review by Sara McMillan

"Here is the central paradox of the Impulse Society: an economic model that empowers us to destroy the very things that sustain us".



Repaying My Debt—A Conservationist's Tale by Geoff Mosley

This memoir documents and shares the story of a significant actor and shaper in the history of both ACF and the wider Australian environmental story.

Geoff's journey started in the early 1930s in the Derbyshire Peak District.

Against the gritty days of the Great Depression he was shaped early and deeply by the sense of space of a region that was 'little short of being a paradise for us children'.

This place not only provided a home, it also provided a life course. Two decades after his birth the area became Britain's first national park causing Geoff to ask 'how could I possibly have avoided becoming both a geographer and a conservationist?'

We join Geoff's journey from the high country to Nottingham University, national service and a range of travel experiences across Arctic Scandinavia, Ireland, Morocco, Canada and New Zealand before arriving in Canberra to start a PhD at the Australian National University in 1960.

Geoff's exploration of recreation in Tasmania included extensive field work, starting a pattern of close connection to the landscape that continues today.

One of the most revealing parts of the story covers the years from 1973–1986 which saw Geoff at the helm of ACF.

It was a time that saw large scale environmental gains and protections including Antarctica, the Australian Alps and the Wet Tropics.

The book delves behind the scenes of the often hard fought and bitter organisational politics of making history and shaping politics.

Mosley's style delivers results, but at high personal cost. He is uncompromising, opinionated, passionate and relentless in pursuit of environmental protection.

Mosley remains engaged in policy debates and willing and able to pull the boots on either to walk the bush or talk and engage in community action.

And his debt—one we share to protect the planet that sustains all life—would have to be stamped paid in full.

More details and how to purchase book at www.envirobook.com.au

Review by Dave Sweeney



New release: Those Wild Rabbits —How they shaped Australia

Written by long-term ACF member Bruce Munday, 'Those Wild Rabbits – How they shaped Australia' traces the history of wild rabbits in Australia and examines the importance of rabbit control now and in the future.

"The tale of Australia and the rabbit is really a tale of its people and their relationship with it. The people who brought it here, had fun shooting it, wept over its devastation of everything they valued, lived off trapping, dreamt of controlling, searched for cures, rejoiced when it finally got sick. Rabbits exhausted our emotions, our wits, our natural garden and our bank accounts."

More details and how to purchase book at www.wakefieldpress.com.au

Meet a member: Mike Norman



THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHOSE COMMITMENT TO MAKING OUR WORLD BETTER IS UNSTOPPABLE. SELF-PROCLAIMED ‘GREEN GUERRILLA’ AND LONG-TERM ACF MEMBER MIKE NORMAN IS ONE OF THEM!

By Sara McMillan

SOME OF YOU might remember reading about Mike exactly a decade ago when his work restoring a kilometre stretch of coastal reserve in West Australia was profiled in *habitat*. This one kilometre has now turned into the full restoration of 2.5 kilometres of coastal reserve in Marmion and Sorrento in WA.

A finalist in the ‘Local Hero’ category of the WA Australian of the Year Awards for 2017, Mike was the only finalist in his state with a conservation focus, in recognition of his voluntary conservation work over many decades.

Back in 1979, Mike was a founding member of the ‘Men of the Trees’ group in WA, coordinating many planting projects throughout the southwest of WA during the 1980s and 90s. The project resulted

in hundreds of thousands of trees being planted. During that time, Mike recalls he heard a front end loader starting up and rushed down to his local park to save a rare stand of Mallee trees located there. “I stood in front of it, stopping the machine in its tracks”. The trees are still there today.

The new millennium saw Mike turn his attention to local projects. He became a founding member and Chairman of the ‘Joondalup Community Coast Care Forum, Inc’ and Coordinator of ‘Friends of Sorrento Beach and Marmion Foreshore’. He has also been restoring coastal reserves within the City of Joondalup. “I partner with businesses and ‘Conservation Volunteers Australia’ as well as mentor young people and educate school groups about coast care,” Mike tells me. He

became a safe cycling advocate to reduce car use and improve health, becoming an accredited cycling coach for beginners.

Mike heard a front end loader starting up and rushed down to his local park ... the trees are still there today.

Elected a Councillor to the City of Joondalup in 2007, he has been an advocate for many sustainability initiatives, including the ‘Environmentally Sustainable Design Checklist’ for new commercial buildings. He also coordinates community tree planting projects at a number of parks within the city. Recently in his Councillor role he initiated a trial to allow local communities to build nature play facilities in small parks that otherwise don’t qualify for such facilities. The playgrounds encourage children to play outdoors—combating the dreaded ‘nature deficit disorder’.

Mike’s ‘green guerrilla’ work involves growing local native trees on his backyard propagation bench then planting them unannounced “on public land that I consider secure but nobody really cares about”.

So, what’s next for Mike? He intends to spend more time looking at the fracking issue in WA, given nearly all the groundwater reserves in the state are now covered by gas exploration licences.

“I think over the years I have well and truly covered my carbon footprint!” Mike says. We agree. Well done Mike, on your inspirational and community-minded approach to ‘one planet living’.

Inspirational and hard working Mike Norman collected, propagated and planted the seed of a Tuart, a native gum tree, which grew to this size in only two years. Photo: Courtesy Mike Norman



Eco twists, tweets and turns

Amellia Formby getting out of her comfort zone by flying high to raise awareness of shorebirds facing extinction. Photo: Courtesy Amellia Formby

KEEPING YOU UP-TO-DATE WITH INTERESTING NEWS ABOUT OUR NATURAL WORLD.

Australia to Siberia in a microlight

It's been said that 'a comfort zone is a beautiful place but nothing ever grows there'. Perth zoologist Amellia (Milly) Formby clearly subscribes to that view — in fact, she is planning to fly from Australia to Siberia in a microlight to raise awareness of the plight of a group of shorebirds that are facing extinction. Milly will follow the annual migration path of the Red-necked stint; a 12,500 kilometre journey which she anticipates will take around three months to complete.

"Understanding how we are connected to each other and all living things via global ecosystems is crucial if we are to improve things for the future for all species," says Amellia.

Earlier this year Milly ran a crowd-funding campaign that raised over \$18,000 towards a deposit on a microlight aircraft. Milly will be testing her wings at the beginning of 2019 with a shorter flight from Melbourne to Broome, visiting key Australian shorebird sites to produce a documentary film. Her next stop will be Siberia in 2022. Milly has recently received

sponsorship from Australian Geographic to assist in her endeavour.

Shorebirds feed in intertidal areas or around freshwater wetlands, and make up around 10 per cent of all birds in Australia. The smallest of these migratory species, the Red-necked Stint, weighs as much as a Tim Tam, but every year makes the trek thousands of kilometres from its coastal Australian home to breeding grounds in Siberia. Flying up to 3,200km at a time, these birds depend on stopover points along their migration path in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) — stretching from Australia and New Zealand up to Far North Russia and Alaska — for shelter and to feed.

But degradation and the loss of wetlands along this pathway — a result of increasing economic development — means the critical stopover areas these shorebirds need are decreasing. This is forcing them towards extinction.

"I see shorebirds as a living expression of global community. Their migration path is a thread that links billions of people, living in 22 countries across four

continents, together in the EAAF," says Amellia. "By mimicking their journey, I aim to show how important our environment, and the connections we all have to it, is to our survival and that of other species". Follow Milly's incredible project at www.wingthreads.com

Craftivism

Are you crafty and an activist? If so, craftivism might be the missing piece in the jigsaw puzzle of your life. Sarah Corbett started doing craftivism (craft and activism) in 2008. Due to demand Sarah set up the global Craftivist Collective in 2009 providing projects, tools and services to individuals and organisations wanting to learn effective craftivism, 'changing our world one stitch at a time'. Learn how to tackle issues in a slow, kind and beautiful way at www.craftivist-collective.com then be sure to get in touch with us to tell us about your skills for ACF's new *Art for Activism Collective* — a network of creative volunteers to channel your creativity into social change. Just search 'Art for Activism' on Facebook to join the group.



I LOVE A BEAUTIFUL REEF

Let's protect our Great Barrier Reef.
No more coal pollution.

Photo: Chris Ahrens

www.acf.org.au



**AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION**

A personal (eco) challenge

ACF CONTENT PRODUCER, ALEXANDRA NASH, WRITES ABOUT HER MISSION TO LIVE A PLASTIC-FREE LIFE.

FOR THREE YEARS NOW, I've been getting close and personal with a dirty issue. It all started, unexpectedly, at Glastonbury Festival in 2014, where I was volunteering for a water and sanitation charity called WaterAid. Being in the business of toilets, I had the glamorous job of supervising the ShePees (a.k.a the female urinals)—but that's a different story.

The story I want to tell is about a different kind of waste: single-use plastic. While at the festival, I came across a small non-profit whose volunteers were cheerfully refilling water bottles at various points around the festival. The organisation, called the Raw Foundation, opened my eyes to a startling fact that has stuck with me ever since: right now, every bit of plastic ever made still exists somewhere in the world.

As I left the festival, I couldn't ignore the ocean of plastic that surrounded me. Thousands upon thousands of plastic bottles, disposable cups and cutlery—convenient items most likely used for a matter of minutes, but made from material that was designed to last forever. I knew the trash I was trudging through would outlive not just my lifetime, but the lifetimes of the next year's festival-goers. And the next year's. And the next.

Although we know plastic harms habitats and wildlife, our consumption of disposable plastic is continuing to soar—so much so that recycling centres are struggling to keep up. The Guardian reported in June that the world buys one million plastic bottles every minute. And of the 6,300 million tonnes of plastic waste thrown out since 1950, only 9 per cent has been recycled. The rest is, in most cases, sitting in landfill—releasing planet-warming methane into the atmosphere as it breaks down—or swimming in our oceans, putting sea life at risk of entanglement or poisoning.

Certainly, recycling is one way to stop plastic entering our oceans, but this

solution simply addresses the symptoms of plastic pollution—not the cause. Unfortunately, no matter how diligent we are in separating our plastics from our perishables, we won't stop the problems of mass-production, mass-marketing and over-consumption. That's not to say that recycling is not important.

Ever since my Glastonbury experience, I've been doing my best to follow the '5 Rs': refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle—ideally in that order of priority. It is a harder task than it seems. Anyone who has been out for a drink with me has likely witnessed my frustration when returning from the bar with disposable plastic in my drink, despite asking for “no straw”.

Already, much of the plastic in our oceans is turning up on our plates.

Single-use plastic is so commonplace I sometimes feel self-conscious pulling out my reusable cutlery in public or taking my own container to buy take-away sushi. Speaking of sashimi, a study published in 2016 warned that—unless the world takes drastic action to reduce plastic pollution—there will be more plastic than fish in the sea by 2050. Already, much of the plastic in our oceans is turning up on our plates. Scientists from the University of Ghent in Belgium suggest that seafood eaters ingest up to 11,000 pieces of plastic every year, due to sea animals mistaking micro plastic for food.

Saying no to a straw in your drink might not seem substantial in the grand scheme of the problem. But I recently saw a quote—shared by Melbourne zero-waste advocate the Rogue Ginger—that I think summarises why small acts matter. It was a quote from American environmental lawyer Gus Speth, who said: “I used to think that top environmental problems were biodiversity, ecosystem collapse

and climate change. I thought that thirty years of good science could address these problems. I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with these we need a cultural and spiritual transformation”.

We can be the cultural transformation—we are already making it happen. Today, more and more people are choosing to ditch the packaging and live a zero-waste or low-waste lifestyle. As I write this, it is 'Plastic Free July'. Starting with humble beginnings in Western Australia in 2011, the initiative inspired more than one million people worldwide to take the challenge in 2016.

I first attempted a plastic-free July in 2015, pledging to avoid the four most common single-use items: straws, plastic bags, plastic bottles and coffee cups. For the most part, I've managed to keep this up for the past two years, always carrying with me a KeepCup, foldaway shopping bag and an undeniably fashionable spoon-fork (or “spork”, for those in the know).

I'll also admit I've become a hoarder of jars, which I take to bulk food stores to stock up on staples like rice, pasta, nuts, spices and even cleaning liquids. People often say it sounds like a lot of effort. But think about the effort that goes in to producing plastic in the place: extracting oil and gas from the ground, shipping it to a refinery, turning it into plastic, trucking it to a store. That's a lot of unnecessary pressure on our little planet.

I try to live by the motto that every dollar you spend is a vote for the kind of world you want to live in. It's not easy—often I fail, or get strange looks standing at food counters with my Tupperware. But we can all play a part in disrupting the status quo—even if it is with sporks and old Vegemite jars. If enough of us show we care—with our words, our wallets, or whatever it might be—we can drive a transformation.

