

Green Action News

MOBILISING PEOPLE TO SAFEGUARD OUR ENVIRONMENT

ISSUE 22 • SPRING 2014

Countdown to the Victorian election

PLUS

The Future Economy –
linking a healthy economy
and a healthy environment





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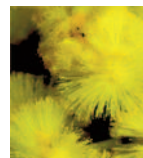
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Editorial

> **Mark Wakeham**, Chief Executive Officer

**It's here. We're entering the home straight of our state election campaign.
It's been so exciting to watch the campaign in full flight.**

MOST WEEKENDS OUR AMAZING

volunteers are out knocking on doors of undecided voters in key seats to have conversations about our environment. Every one of these conversations helps elevate the environment and climate change as an election issue.

Our Frankston Enviro Hub and campaign headquarters is abuzz; every Wednesday night we are making hundreds of calls to potential volunteers and undecided voters, and our advertising campaigns are in full swing. In August and September our billboards and newspaper ads will be seen by well over 1 million voters in the areas that will determine the outcome of the election. This is the best-prepared and deepest election campaign I have seen in the environment movement in 20 years.

The great news is that we're starting to see progress with positive policy announcements. In recent weeks the ALP and the Greens have released some good renewable energy and energy efficiency policies. The Coalition has not yet made any efforts to reverse its poor track record on the environment and climate change, but I am experiencing a dramatic increase in the number of phone calls and media requests from advisers and MPs!

But with little more than two months to go till the election all parties contesting the election have serious ground to cover. The next state government will need to take significant action towards decarbonising the state and restoring our environmental assets so that they can cope with the impending climate change and biodiversity crises.

And rest assured we won't be reducing the pressure on our Parliamentarians come the November 29 election. We'll continue our community organising efforts to ensure whoever is in office delivers and extends on their promises, and to ensure that the 2016 Federal election is a turning point for the environment.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming AGM and environment celebration, or one of our election forums. If you'd like to get more involved in our campaigns please call the office on 9341 8100. If you supported us financially or with your volunteer effort in the past year I can't thank you enough.

Now hold on to your hat for the final months of the election campaign.

The Economy of the Future



Mark Wakeham
CEO

For too long in Australia our political debate has assumed that we need to choose between a healthy economy and a healthy environment. At Environment Victoria we've always known that this is a false choice but haven't had the evidence to win the argument. Until now.

TWO YEARS AGO WE STARTED A conversation with progressive businesses who understand that a healthy economy depends on a healthy environment. Out of these discussions the Future Economy Group was born.

The first major task the group undertook was to commission research which explored the links between the performance of the Victorian economy and the health of our environment. We engaged the nous group, a respected consultancy who does a lot of work for the state and federal governments, and they developed a process which drew on the expertise of dozens of Victorian business leaders to undertake the economic modelling.

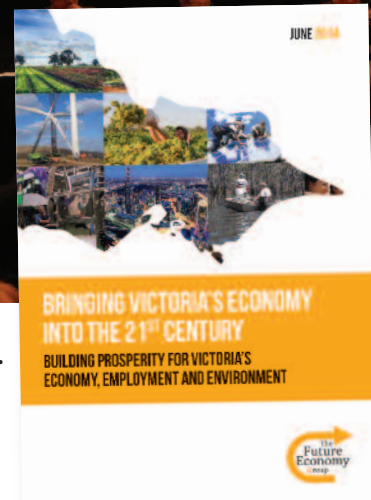
What the research found is very significant. Across eight key industry sectors in Victoria, we could create 225,000 jobs and increase the value added to the economy by 22 per cent (or \$36 billion) by 2028 by restoring environmental assets. Conversely Victoria could lose up to half a million jobs and \$78 billion dollars in industry value-add in the next 14 years unless more is done to protect and restore Victoria's natural capital.

We know there are strong environmental arguments for arresting environmental decline, but now we also have strong economic arguments, and business leaders who are leading these discussions with politicians and decision-makers. With elections being fought on issues like jobs and the health of the economy this adds a very powerful dimension to our campaigning efforts.

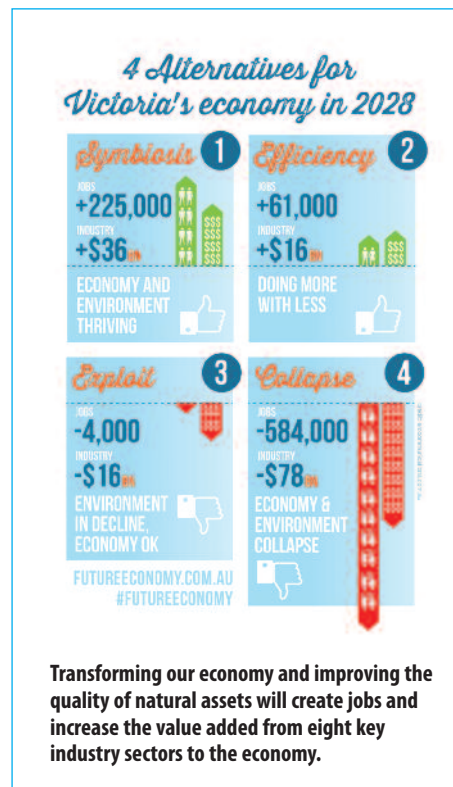
The Future Economy Group:



Future Economy Group at Launch of the Report, introduced by John Hewson, former Premier of Victoria. 19 June 2014



The Future Economy Group report is available for download at futureeconomy.com.au



Reaping the benefits of sus



Tom Hartney
Communications Officer

While our state and federal governments struggle to comprehend the importance of a healthy natural environment to a prosperous economy, many businesses that rely on natural assets for their survival have already developed sustainable business practices and are reaping the benefits. We look at three businesses impacted by diminishing natural assets that have changed their practices to have less impact on the environment.

The Future Economy Group is seeking election policy commitments from all parties at the state election, holding public forums in Geelong and asking other businesses to sign on to the six powerful ideas and to provide case studies of businesses that are reaping the benefits of sustainable business practices. Here are some examples of businesses that have provided case studies. Go to futureeconomy.com.au to find out more.

Panel beater beating soaring bills with solar panels



When Fawkner Body Repairs went solar a few months ago it wasn't easy. Being one of the first panel repair shops in Melbourne to go solar meant there weren't many other businesses to model themselves on. But now they hope that they can serve as a model for other small businesses looking to do the same.

Fawkner Body Repairs was already environmentally conscious; recycling all cardboard, paper, plastics, metal, paint wastes, oils, coolants and gases and using more environmentally-friendly paints. But it was rising power costs – a particular burden on the industry – that really spurred them into action.

With a monthly power bill of \$2600, investigating options to cut energy use

seemed like a no-brainer. Initially they just looked at LED lighting, since their biggest single operating expense was on powering the 200-300 lights needed to illuminate the half acre factory. But when one company offered a hybrid solution of LED plus solar, factory owner Paul Sprunt decided to look into it.

After recording Fawkner Body Repairs' power use for a period of three weeks, the solar company estimated that by investing \$120,000 in a 60kw solar system, the business could go from paying \$2600 on their monthly energy bills to being \$100 in credit. The panels would be paid off in monthly instalments of \$2350, so, with the assistance of a \$50,000 government rebate, after a few years they'd be all paid off.

Seeing the potential benefits was easy, but getting them flowing took longer. It took 6 months to jump the various bureaucratic hurdles. There were safety issues – it took some engineering to make sure the roof could hold the weight of the panels – and insurance hurdles to clear.

Still, the solar model makes great sense for a business that does most of its operations in daylight, and with power bills continuing to skyrocket, Paul thinks it's only a matter of time until the rest of the industry cottons on.

If he saves as much power as he expects, he'll be the first to encourage the 100 other panel shops in his networks to follow his lead.

As he says, "Why wouldn't you do it, in this country?"

sustainable business practices

Super fund banking on sustainability

VicSuper is a \$12.5 billion-strong super fund with more than 19,000 participating employers, so its central operating principle may come as a pleasant surprise.

Sustainability is the guiding principle behind all of VicSuper's operational and investment decisions. And for its 243,000 members, this focus on environmental, social and governance considerations alongside traditional financial analysis means greater long-term rewards.

As part of their commitment to investing in Victorian projects that deliver financial, community and environmental returns, in 2007 VicSuper invested in the "Future Farming Landscapes" redevelopment project, which invests in sustainable farming techniques in the rich food bowl of the Murray Darling Basin between Kerang and Swan Hill.

Through improved yield productivity and the delivery of water-use solutions for agriculture and the environment, the Future Farming Landscapes project delivers more food and fibre, while utilising less land, water and management effort.

This sustainable approach to farming aims to create resilient landscapes which can cope with a variable climate whilst also delivering economic and environmental outcomes. The benefits are now flowing to VicSuper members through long-term generation of financial returns and to rural communities through job generation and local industry development.



Venus Bay Eco Retreat: where the environment, people and the economy meet

Since opening its doors to environmentally responsible travellers in 2009, Venus Bay Eco Retreat in Wilsons Promontory has invested heavily in a sustainable future.

With Advanced Ecotourism and Climate Action certifications to prove it, Venus Bay Eco Retreat is an innovative example of 'triple bottom line business management', where the natural environment, people and the economy are considered together.

It has protected 15 acres of pristine coastal bushland and its abundant wildlife and invested in an array of high-tech energy, water and waste-saving features, including solar, rainwater, recycling, composting, organic products, chemical-free cleaning and energy efficient buildings.

For owner/manager Mae Adams, this kind of investment in protecting, expanding and enhancing our severely depleted environmental assets is critical not only to her own business and the future viability of regional tourism, but to the health and wellbeing of all of Victorians.

But without accompanying government investment in nature conservation and fair reward for environmentally responsible businesses, Venus Bay Eco Retreat is one of many regional businesses that will be severely affected.

Hazelwood mine fire inquiry



Dr Nicholas Aberle
Safe Climate Campaign Manager

It's been eight months since fire broke out in the Hazelwood coal mine, engulfing the town of Morwell in acrid smoke and coal ash for six weeks, forcing a partial evacuation of the town and causing unknown long-term harm to residents. This month, the inquiry into the fire released its findings.



We want the truth: our team of experts, from L to R: Dr Nicholas Aberle, Environment Victoria; Lisa Nichols, barrister; Jennifer Trehwella, barrister; Felicity Millner, Environmental Justice Australia

THE FIRE AT HAZELWOOD WAS SO serious that the state government set up a judicial inquiry (one step short of a Royal Commission) to investigate what went wrong, what effect it had, and what can be done to avoid something similar occurring again.

Thanks to the support of people like you, Environment Victoria was at the Inquiry with a team of barristers briefed by our solicitors from Environmental Justice Australia, to cross-examine witnesses including representatives from Hazelwood owners GDF Suez.

We heard of the anguish of a young couple trying to decide whether to evacuate the town, not knowing what effects the toxic plume might have on their unborn child. When you hear a story like that you begin to understand how this disaster affected peoples' lives.

We heard admissions from GDF Suez and the government body regulating the mine that they had completely different understandings of when mine rehabilitation was supposed to take place – hardly a sign of clear communication. This was a particularly important point, since rehabilitation (covering exposed, coal with earth and clay) was acknowledged by all expert

witnesses to be the best way of preventing a coal mine from catching on fire.

Following a condensed and slightly rushed three weeks of public hearings, and two and a half months of deliberations, the board of the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry has now released its findings.

On the whole, the recommendations are a positive template for dealing with coal mine fires. Proposed improvements to fire-fighting coordination and public health responses are necessary changes, though it is hard to understand why such arrangements were not already in place, especially given some of the lessons from the Bushfires Royal Commission.

Disappointingly, however, the recommendations around rehabilitation in particular don't go nearly far enough. Despite hearing of the necessity of rehabilitation for fire prevention, the Board's recommendations amount to little more than asking GDF Suez to come up with a vague plan for reducing the risk of fire. No concrete steps are required to immediately rehabilitate the large unused sections of the mine.

The Inquiry made no

THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who has donated and taken action to help protect Victorians from the impacts of polluting coal. Together we will move beyond coal!



The Hazelwood Mine Fire.

PHOTO: CFA COMMUNITIES & COMMUNICATION

recommendations on the \$15 million rehabilitation bond, which all sides during the public hearings agreed was insufficient to cover the likely costs. The bond is supposed to be a key motivator for GDF Suez to progressively rehabilitate the dis-used sections of the mine. \$15 million represents such a small fraction of the total rehabilitation cost (estimated by GDF Suez to be around \$80 million) that it is entirely foreseeable that they'll forfeit the bond and simply leave the site. This means there's a real risk that the expensive rehabilitation of Hazelwood (and other coal mines) will fall on the public purse.

While we welcome the recommendations that the Inquiry has made, we believe all parties need to commit to going beyond the recommendations to ensure mine rehabilitation commences immediately. Without this, communities will continue to be exposed to the risk of coal fires.

Between now and the state election, we will be working with local residents to help keep people's concerns about rehabilitation on the political agenda, to make sure the coal industry cleans up its own mess.



ADVERTISEMENT

4 OUT OF 5 VICTORIANS SUPPORT RENEWABLE ENERGY*
SPOT THE ONE WHO DOESN'T

*Essential Media Communications Poll 2012

In the past 3 years the Napthine Government has:

- Scrapped plans to make homes and businesses more energy efficient and cheaper to run
- Made solar power more expensive for Victorian families and businesses
- Abolished targets to reduce Victoria's greenhouse gas pollution
- Destroyed jobs and investment in wind and solar energy industries

Find out more about how the Napthine Government is blocking clean energy and favouring big polluters here: 4outof5.org.au

Authorised by M. Wakeham, CEO, Environment Victoria, 80 Leicester Street, Carlton, 3053 and 3054

GetUp!

Napthine accused of attack on renewables

Josh Gordon
State Politics Editor

The Napthine government has been accused of systematically destroying renewable energy as green groups prepare for a ground offensive targeting key electorates before the November 29 election.

A report by Environment Victoria claims the government has made 25 attacks on clean energy, including "extreme" restrictions on wind farms, removing the 20 per cent emissions reduction target from the Climate Change Act, cutting and restricting the solar feed-in tariff, scrapping a commitment to replace street lights with energy efficient bulbs, and opposing the carbon tax.

Since the November 2010 election, the environment has remained on the periphery of state politics. In the latest Age/Nielson poll, it ranked sixth on a list of nine key issues for voters, behind health, education, jobs, financial management and public transport.

But with the Abbott government considering breaking an election pledge by scaling down Australia's renewable energy target, the state government is believed to be looking at options for an environment policy to counter voter concerns.

Environment Victoria is preparing to target key marginal electorates - including some of the crucial "swing" seats on the eastern side of Port Phillip Bay - using hundreds of trained volunteers.

Environment Victoria chief executive Mark Wakeham accused the government of running an agenda to destroy clean energy because it was "joined at the hip" with coal companies, risking billions of dollars of investment.

"Most of Victoria's policy agenda for a cleaner and more efficient energy mix has been deliberately dismantled over the past four years," Mr Wakeham said.

In a joint statement, Environment Minister Ryan Smith and Energy Minister Russell Northcote accused Environment Victoria of having a "complete disregard" for cost of living issues.

"Environment Victoria is clinging on to the outdated view that state governments must lead on emission reductions measures, when it was federal Labor that said that states should instead take the lead on climate adaptation and not mitigation," the ministers said.

Napthine's attack on clean energy

1. Made it almost impossible to get approval for a wind farm
2. Walked away from talks to phase out Hazelwood power station
3. Removed 20 per cent emissions reduction target from the Climate Change Act
4. Restricted household access to the solar feed-in tariff
5. Dropped an election commitment to introduce pollution standards for new coal power stations
6. Scrapped an election commitment to replace street lights with more efficient lighting

7. Scrapped the solar hot water rebate

8. Extended the operating licence of Angliss Power Station despite the closure of the Bayswater
9. Phased out energy efficiency scheme for households and small businesses
10. Cancelled a requirement for government agencies to purchase green power



Source: Environment Victoria

Newspaper advertising campaign in the Age, Geelong Advertiser, Bendigo Advertiser, Ballarat Courier, Whitehorse Leader, Frankston Leader and Mordialloc Chelsea Leader.

Attacks on clean energy



Dr Nicholas Aberle
Safe Climate
Campaign Manager

AS YOU MAY HAVE SEEN IN newspaper ads in the Age and local papers around the state, on our billboards or in the media, Environment Victoria has fixed our sights on the Baillieu/Napthine Government's legacy of attacks on Victoria's energy future. Environment Victoria supporters rallied

like never before and gave in unprecedented numbers to help make this advertising campaign happen. Environment Victoria released a report on the 25 attacks the state government has unleashed on clean energy, which were covered in a detailed article in *The Age* newspaper.

Since 2010 the Coalition has waged a sustained attack on both renewable energy and energy efficiency while simultaneously propping up our heavily polluting coal industry, and now more Victorians than ever know about it. Thousands of jobs have been lost, billions of investment dollars have gone elsewhere, Victorians are spending more than they should on their energy bills, and our greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.

The Coalition is yet to announce any new policies to deal with any of this - nothing of substance on either renewable energy or energy efficiency. With just months before the state election, Energy Minister Russell Northcote and his colleagues are running out of time to meet the challenge of bringing our energy system into the 21st Century. Come 29 November, Victorians will judge them on their efforts. Current status: could try harder. Much harder.



Billboard seen placed on Nepean Hwy, Bentleigh. Seen each day by 100,000 people in four key electorates.

THANK YOU

TO EVERYONE WHO HAS DONATED TO GET THE MESSAGE OUT ABOUT THE ATTACKS ON CLEAN ENERGY. TO HELP KEEP THE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN GOING, VISIT SUPPORTCLEANENERGY.ORG.AU/DONATE OR FILL IN THE DONATION PAGE AT THE END OF THIS GREEN ACTION NEWS.

Election 2014



Jane Stabb
Community Campaigner

With hundreds of new volunteers working in target areas, our 2014 state election campaign is going from strength to strength!

SIX MONTHS AGO, WE HAD AROUND 60 wonderful volunteers working tirelessly around Victoria to get the environment back on the agenda for the 2014 election. Now, after countless volunteer induction events, social events including BBQs and film nights, street stalls and public events, we have over 300 volunteers from our target areas working on our election campaign!

And we have our very own Enviro-Hub in the heart of Frankston, a community space where local people can get involved and where local politicians have been dropping in to see what's going on.

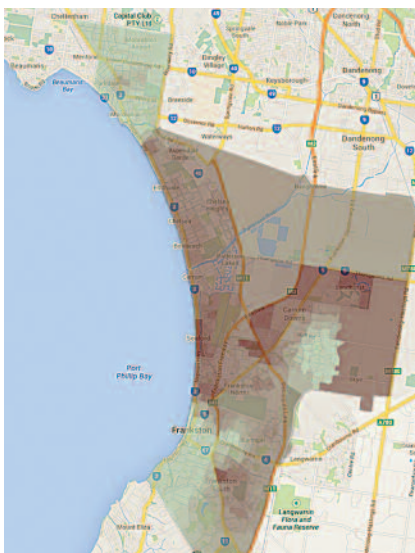
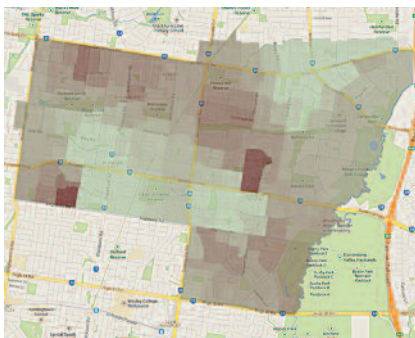
We've trained our volunteers in the leadership skills they'll need to run effective and strategic campaigns in the lead up to the November election and beyond. And we've teamed up with Victorian Trades Hall and Public Transport Not Traffic to run trainings on cutting edge campaign tactics.

Now, with three months to go before the election, our community campaign is going up another gear. In the lead-up to November, we will knock on 20,000 doors across our four target areas and talk to thousands of Victorians about the environment issues that matter to them.

Our goal is to get 2000 undecided voters to pledge to vote to protect their environment. In some areas, we are already halfway to reaching our goals!

This month our advertising campaign rolled out across Victoria with newspaper ads and billboards and in target areas with posters, bike billboards and local activities... and it's making waves.

Our volunteers will continue to be out on the streets – knocking on doors, making phone calls, holding street stalls, meeting with our MPs and political candidates and running community events. So look out for us in our blue t-shirts!



We've done the research and are seeking 2000 pledges from undecided voters in the target electorates.



Frankston mayor Darryl Taylor officially opens the Frankston Enviro-Hub



THANK YOU!

Thanks to the generous support of people like you and the tireless work of hundreds of volunteers, the ground-breaking campaign to put the environment on the agenda this state election is gaining traction. This is how we'll safeguard our environment for all Victorians, now and in the future.



Six month countdown to the Victorian State Election

JUNE 2014

- Enviro Hub opens
- Future Economy Group report launch
- Not a Greenie But ... advertising launch

JULY 2014

- Ground campaign Pledge to Vote for your Environment official launch

SEPTEMBER 2014

- Attacks on Clean energy report, advertising campaign and media blitz
- State Election Environment Forums

OCTOBER 2014

- Election Policy Scorecard released
- Advertising continues

NOVEMBER 2014

- Scorecard and final election advertising push
- Victorian State Election



Faces of the 2014 state election campaign

There are over 300 campaigning volunteers out there every week, making our election campaign tick. They're an inspiring bunch, giving their time and talents to ensure a brighter future for all Victorians. Here are the stories of a few.

GABRIELA



"While there continues to be a need and while I have the energy, I feel it is my duty to the younger ones."

I've come to activism late in life.

To me climate change has been a topic of concern for years. Initially I believed that if enough people understood the facts, then action would follow to minimise the likelihood of harm to our Earth. About two years ago it dawned on me that this was not realistic, especially in our political climate.

Joining Environment Victoria to get the environment on the political agenda has given me an outlet for my frustration – action is preferable to depression! We have to try because 'all that is necessary for evil to succeed is for good men (or good women) to do nothing'.

Much to my surprise I've gradually become comfortable with door knocking, phone calling and asking people in the street to sign petitions – all for an important cause.

In November last year, I took my long-haired 23 year-old son and his friend to their first ever protest rally. Mingling with thousands of like-minded people gives me hope for our future.

Now in my sixties, I've attended rallies and marched about renewable energy and climate change. While there continues to be a need and while I have the energy, I feel it is my duty to the younger ones.

LANCE



"Environment Victoria is a great place to work as a volunteer!"

Lance has been volunteering with Environment Victoria for four years. He has been instrumental in setting up the 'Westies' group currently running weekly stalls around Melbourne's Western suburbs to elevate the environment as an election issue.

About four years ago I felt that I must take an active part in environmental protection, and that governments were not putting sufficient effort into addressing the scientifically acknowledged concern of global warming.

The environment and looking after it has always been a priority for me and my family and, now being mature-aged and retired, this volunteering opportunity was the thing for me to give something back to the environment.

I am not scientifically accredited but felt that I might be able to give those people working in an environment protection organisation some assistance to rectify this terrifying lack of government concern for the environment.

The local, mainly single-issue suburban environment groups, although doing great work, were not where I wanted to be. I started looking at organisations connected with the broader environment argument that would stimulate people power, confront government decision-making and engage with environmental concerns that affected the global environment.

My decision to volunteer for Environment Victoria was confirmed by the fact that this organisation was Victorian state-focused, was confronting government environmental inactivity and was a group where I felt that I could assist the campaigners at a grass-roots level.

While at first I felt intimidated by this committed younger generation of environmentally concerned people, all beaver away to save our planet, Environment Victoria is a great place to work as a volunteer!

THANKYOU to everyone taking action to build a strong voice for our environment in the places we need it

KYLIE



"It is amazing when people go outside their comfort zone to take action. That's just plain awesome."

Kylie is a mum of two and keen member of the 'Southies' group who are active in Frankston and surrounding areas.

I had been aware and concerned about climate change for many years and had been trying hard to engage people around me on this issue. I started attending rallies, letter writing events and phone banks and took my children along too whenever I could.

I often felt isolated and frustrated by the lack of action to address climate change, so when an opportunity to join up with other like-minded people came at Environment Victoria I went for it. At the time – and now – I found Environment Victoria to be approachable and passionate. I found they were welcoming and engaged in tackling the issues I thought important, but I also noticed they embraced others who had completely different environmental concerns than mine.

As a member of the 'Southies' group I have been involved in phone banks, doorknocks, street stalls, petition signings and advertising campaigns for rallies, and more recently I've been volunteering at the Enviro Hub in Frankston.

I've been inspired by people who take their first tentative step towards becoming more active about protecting the environment. I really admire the people who have taken a train and a bus to come for the first time to an event and then meet with people they have never seen before. It is amazing when people go outside their comfort zone to take action. That's just plain awesome.

To people thinking about joining the campaign I would say that taking the first step to move from thoughts to action is really the critical point. If enough people care and move from thoughts to action then that is the game changer. It's a numbers game.

Numbers determine policy. What makes governments change their behaviour and policies is a sense that there is a groundswell of opposition to the choices they are making. This is exemplified by the recent proposed changes to the Racial Discrimination Act. It's all about local people contacting their local member and expressing their opposition.

Whenever I feel like not putting in the effort, or would rather lie in bed, I say to myself 'Whatever It Takes'. 'Whatever It Takes' pushes me to do just a little more. 'Whatever It Takes' is the attitude the world needs us to have if we are going to change the trajectory of global warming we are currently on.

KEITH



"Walking up a footpath to knock on someone's door invariably reinforces the old adage 'you cannot judge a book by its cover.'"

Keith has been volunteering with Environment Victoria for just a few months, but in that time he's been door knocking in Frankston, Carrum and Forest Hill and hitting the phones every Wednesday evening at our weekly phone banks.

Funnily enough, one thing that led me to contacting Environment Victoria to see what I could do was a broadcast on Fox Television - the remake of Carl Sagan's Cosmos. The biggest take-out of the program for me was that the universe does not owe us a climate in which civilisation can continue to flourish and that it is entirely possible that we are engaged in triggering an early demise of the conditions which support us (and so many other creatures).

We are being threatened by human action, but human action can save us and the diversity of life on our planet.

Politics is about which actions will prevail. Distorted short-term self-interest has a history of funding and politicising resistance to public interest changes - tobacco and leaded petrol come to mind. Those distortions were defeated and so will the current distortions on climate and renewable energy.

This is not just about stopping something. There is the entire upside of opportunity - particularly here in Australia - to be gained from research, investment and employment in renewables.

Walking up a footpath to knock on someone's door invariably reinforces the old adage "you cannot judge a book by its cover". The look of the house, the look of the garden, the look of the person who opens the door - none guarantees the nature of the response you will have. People really are different and the vast majority are prepared to engage with you in a positive way - even if it is just a polite "no thanks".

most. It's not too late to join! Email Jane at jane.stabb@environmentvictoria.org.au to join in.

Moo-ving stock off our river banks



Juliet Le Feuvre
Healthy Rivers Campaigner

The campaign to remove livestock from our river banks is gaining momentum.

OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS WITH your support we've been raising awareness about the damaging impacts that cows, sheep and other hoofed animals have on our river banks. The solution is quite simple - put up a fence! But of course fencing stock out of rivers and revegetating the river banks needs government commitment and cash.

In June the Victorian Auditor-General released a damning report on how the money raised by the environmental contribution we all make through our water bills is spent. This levy - which currently raises about \$100 million per year - is required by law to be spent on sustainable water management and repairing the damage caused to rivers by our water use. But the report revealed that the Naphthine Government has no clear criteria for deciding how to spend the money and is increasingly spending it on projects that either should be part of core government business or don't meet the legal requirements for the levy. Even worse, there's a tendency not to spend the money at all and send it straight to the government's bottom line.

The government could use this environmental contribution to increase its investment in fencing off riverbanks - the number one achievable action to improve river health - especially on public land. As the state election gets closer we'll be revving up the pressure on the Coalition and the ALP to make a bigger commitment and spend the money on the river bank - instead of keeping it in the bank.

We'll be doing this in different ways; cows will be popping up in all sorts of (in)appropriate places to get the message across. We're getting noticed in regional media and we are working with people who want more action for their rivers and creeks (see boxes). With your continuing help and support, this is a campaign we can win!



The restored King Parrot Creek

The restored King Parrot Creek – job almost done

Luxurious vegetation and even platypus habitat have returned to once weed infested and eroded stretches of King Parrot Creek near Flowerdale, thanks to the revegetation work of The Strath Creek Landcare group. Terry Hubbard, the Group's President, would love to be able to continue the good work and fence off the whole creek to create a continuous corridor of vegetation, but he's frustrated by lack of funding and support and the inability to get reluctant landholders to fence off the Crown land on their river frontages. Terry believes the Cut the Crap campaign will help restore the creek and nature corridor.

Thomson River – 40 years of work

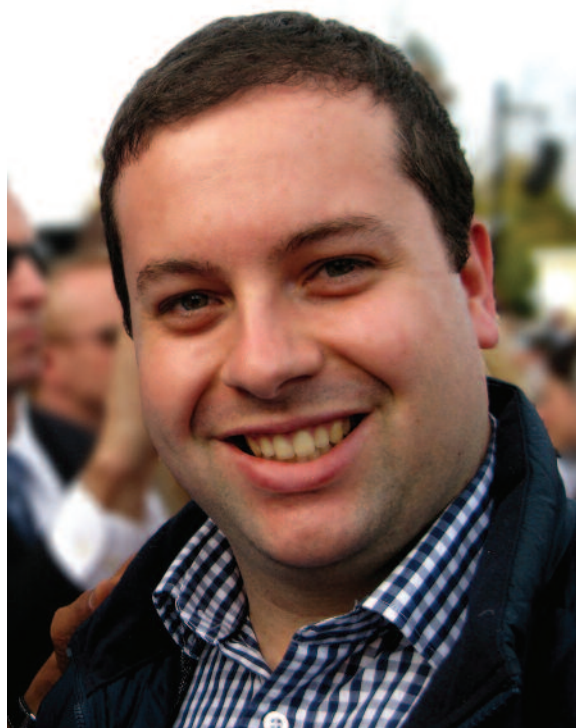
After spending the last 40 years working to improve the health of the Thomson River, Phil Taylor from Heyfield in Gippsland is thrilled that the Cut the Crap campaign is starting to elevate the work being done to clean up Victoria's rivers. Through his tireless efforts he's managed to get cattle fenced out and willows removed from many sections of the river, but he's now concerned that the battle is being lost. Phil hopes the Cut the Crap campaign can help draw attention to the problems he's been battling for so long on the Thomson.

THANK YOU to everyone who has signed our petitions and supported the campaign. Our rivers are our lifeblood so action to restore them is vital for the health of Victoria!

Introducing our new campaigns director



Alex White
Campaign Director



Our new Campaigns Director, Alex White, started this month. Here's what he has to say about what inspired him to come to Environment Victoria.

BACK IN 2012, I SPENT THREE

months working with the Obama campaign in Boston and New Hampshire. Mo, an amazing volunteer with the campaign, as well as being bemused by my hard-to-understand Australian accent, asked why I had travelled seven and a half thousand miles from Melbourne to work on another country's election campaign. "Alex, he said, "why do you care what happens here, when you live so far away?"

I replied that the outcome of the US election would impact the rest of the world. For me, it was important to do everything I could to assist a president who was committed to taking action on climate change, reducing carbon emissions and investing in renewable energy. Mitt Romney, an out-of-touch multi-millionaire, had stood up multiple times in 2012 to deny that climate change was real. The risk was that international action on global warming would be stymied by a climate-denying Romney presidency.

Another thing was in the back of my mind as I coordinated call centres and doorknocking teams in Boston. I was expecting the birth of my daughter a few months after the election. Although I had been committed to climate action for years, it was now personal. What kind of world would I leave her? Was I doing everything I could to stop the climate catastrophe?

Global warming is the greatest

"I'm pleased to be joining with you to change Victoria and secure our future."

challenge facing our community and our nation. We are all affected by it. The ecosystems across our continent are in peril, from our oceans, our rivers, and our forests. The changes are happening now. And they're going to get worse.

Environment Victoria consistently takes on the big issues and runs smart, strategic, community based campaigns.

For many years I've been impressed that Environment Victoria has led on the important work calling for Victoria's coal mines and coal-fired power stations to be retired. Environment Victoria has also taken the lead on the difficult policy discussions to help save the Murray Darling Basin, a topic close to my heart.

More recently, I've seen that Environment Victoria has committed itself to community organising to put the climate and the environment back on the agenda. Community organising empowers everyday people to reclaim our environment. It is hard work, but enormously important and very strategic.

That's why I've chosen to come to Environment Victoria.

I've previously worked in campaign and organising roles at unions, supporting the most vulnerable workers in our community. Climate change and the biodiversity crisis will affect people on low incomes worst, and the solutions like renewable energy and energy efficiency will assist them the most.

As a supporter of Environment Victoria, you know that there's a lot to do to safeguard our environment. I'm pleased to be joining with you to change Victoria and secure our future.

I'm excited by the challenges, and I'll be doing everything I can in the lead-up to November, and beyond, to make politicians listen and commit to taking action for a safe climate and healthy ecosystems.

Eric Bottomley (4.6.1944 – 2.2.2014) was a bedrock of Victoria's environment movement. An elder of CERES who received an Order of Australia for his service to the environment, his legacy will continue through the fruits of his work and his generous support for the environment beyond his life. We remember him and say thank you for his life's work and for leaving a bequest to Environment Victoria to create a Victoria that is Forever Green

The Legacy of Eric Bottomley



Lena Herrera Piekarski,
Fundraising Officer

ERIC BOTTOMLEY WORKED

tirelessly at CERES for 25 years to create one of the largest bodies of environmental and cultural education resources and networks in Australia, and bring awareness of sustainability into the 'mainstream'. We talked to his family and work colleague about his work and passion for the environment.

How did Eric feel about the Environment?

Mirasol Bottomley (Eric's wife): He loved nature and wild places. His life motto was to 'Aim each day to leave the earth better than we found it'. And this motto reflected not just on his work but also on his daily life. Everything at home

was about energy saving and conservation.

Where was Eric's favourite place?

Mirasol: Eric's favourite place was the Jumping Creek on the Yarra at Warrandyte River. He would swim there after work and in summer we would go there with our grandchildren. He even asked us to spread part of his ashes in the Jumping Creek in a private family ceremony.

Philip Island is another of his favourite places. One of our family friends owns a shack with no electricity, where you can just relax. We would enjoy having a swim and listening to his songs by candle light.

What was he most passionate about?

Sian Chambers (Eric's daughter): Dad was acutely aware of the fragility of this oasis in space on which we live and was passionate about educating the younger generation to be the guardians of the future. He was a rebel, a visionary who could see things the way they should be. He originally taught Geography and after many years did his masters in environmental science. After that he

took the job at CERES 25 years ago and played a crucial role in its growth and success. His earlier travels around the world with only a backpack and his guitar, gave him an appreciation for humankind's connection to the environment and the utmost importance of its stalwart protection.

How did Eric feel about the work that environment groups do to protect the environment?

Kirsty Costa (CERES): Eric was passionate about the work of environmental groups. He was a networker and would often bring together people from different organisations to have round table discussions about different projects. Besides helping to build CERES, he would constantly look for opportunities to partner with others in order to get projects off the ground. Eric's focus was on community building and education. He once wrote, "we have to nurture our relationships and our responsibility for other's well-being; that's what nurtures community and we are sustained by these communities".

BECOME FOREVER GREEN

You can help Victoria become Forever Green. Simply fill in the form on the next page and we'll send you a Forever Green Information Pack.



Dear Mark,

Yes! I want strong action on climate change at the upcoming state election. Please accept my donation of:

☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1000 ☐ Your choice \$ _____

Please find enclosed: ☐ **Cheque** OR ☐ **Money Order** (payable to Environment Victoria Inc.)

Or charge my credit card as follows. ☐ Amex ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Cardholder's name: _____ Expiry date: ____ / ____ Signature: _____

Card number:

☐ Please send me information about how I can create a Victoria that's **FOREVER GREEN** by making a gift to Environment Victoria in my Will.

☐ Please send me information about how I can safeguard Victoria's environment for the long term by becoming a Green Action Partner.

Are your personal details correct on your letter? Or are you moving soon? Please update your personal information here if necessary.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title: _____ First Name: _____ Family Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

Email: _____

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Please complete this form, tear off this page and return it to Reply Paid 12575, A'Beckett Street, Melbourne, VIC 8006 or visit www.environmentvictoria.org.au/give and make your donation online. **Thank you for your generosity!**



Join us for a fabulous night of laughs, celebration and inspiration at the Environment Victoria AGM and Environment Celebration!

Come and celebrate Victoria's magnificent environment in style as we recognise the extraordinary achievements of Victorian communities and enjoy the hilarious musical stylings of Bob Downe.

WHEN

Wednesday 29 October 2014

AGM 5:30pm

Environment Celebration 6:50pm

WHERE

RMIT Building 80,
445 Swanston St, Melbourne

RSVP

Essential by Friday 24 October at
environmentvictoria.eventbrite.com.au
or by calling 9341 8100

WHO'S WHO AT



Chief Executive Officer
Mark Wakeham

CAMPAIGNS & PROGRAMS

Campaign Director
Alex White

Healthy Rivers Campaigner
Juliet Le Feuvre

Safe Climate Campaign Manager
Nicholas Aberle

One Million Homes Campaigner
Anne Martinelli

Sustainable Living Manager
Michele Burton

Future Powered Families Project
Manager **Domenica Settle**

Future Powered Families
Project Officers
Robyn Erwin
Amy Yang
Wendy Hopkins

Future Powered Families
Administration
Assistant **Monique Edwards**

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Jane Stabb
Claire van Herpen

Communications Manager
Alex Merory

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Nadine Ponomarenko

Accounts Officer
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Administration Officer
Cate Hoyle

Fundraising Manager
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Fundraising Officer
Lena Herrera Piekarski

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REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

Environment Victoria would like to thank our amazing crew of regular volunteers, who are now too numerous to mention.

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