

Healthy futures for arid lands and people
ARID LANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTRE
www.alec.org.au

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018



*Front Cover Image: Alex McClean
Spencer Gorge, West MacDonnell Ranges*

The Arid Lands Environment Centre would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands we work on and their crucial role in caring for country. We acknowledge their Elders, past, present and future and the important role Aboriginal people continue to play within our community.



**Arid
Lands
Environment
Centre**

Vision:

'Healthy futures for arid lands and people'

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'Action on climate change in the arid lands'

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Our Vision:

'Healthy futures for arid lands and people'

Hilton Chilvers from Arid Edge, repairing the Larapinta Trail (Section 9) near Giles Lookout



The Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC) is central Australia's peak environmental organisation that has been advocating for the protection of nature and growing sustainable communities in the arid lands since 1980.

We are a strong and trusted voice for Australia's iconic desert country.

We stand up and speak out for the protection of land and water, animals and plants, special places and the communities that depend on them.

We demonstrate courageous leadership and work with partners

across vast landscapes to deliver solutions to the ecological challenges we face.

We understand the importance of knowledge, science, research, education and engaging the community on the issues that matter.

ALEC is catalysing change and building momentum with our supporters towards our vision of healthy futures for arid lands and people.

Community members gather after the NT Government decision to lift the fracking moratorium in April 2018



CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME

Welcome to the 2017/18 Arid Lands Environment Centre's annual report. It has been my absolute pleasure to be chairperson for this wonderful organisation and to be involved in the work that has been done over the last 12 months.

It has been yet another big year for ALEC. We continue to experience the effects of climate change and our Governments are still making decisions that go against improving the situation.

I know that when this changes and we are no longer fighting things like fracking, mining and the unnecessary use of fossil fuels that ALEC will still be busy working in community, keeping us connected and caring for this beautiful country and central desert region.

Earlier this year the NT Government lifted the moratorium on fracking. This was despite a strong voice from the community wanting a ban. ALEC has continued to work hard on this issue. Despite the NT Government's best efforts to rush through the process of getting fracking started we have managed to hold them at bay for yet another year. This is the perfect demonstration of how our small population can make a loud enough noise to be heard and that we continue to stand strong against fracking.

A highlight for me this year has been the Eco-Fair. It is great to see so many different local organisations and talent running the workshops but the best part for me is seeing the hundreds of young people that engage in the activities and leave feeling motivated and inspired. Congratulations to all of the staff and volunteers involved in this event. There is a lot of hard work that goes into creating such a successful event.

Alongside our long-term staff we have welcomed some new people over the last couple of years that have brought so much to the organisation through their knowledge, enthusiasm and fresh perspective. There is a strong team there that are proving to be a force to be reckoned with. I commend each of you for your contributions and the work you have done.



This year the board has been working hard with staff to strengthen our systems, strategic direction and tighten up our governance. With funding still an ongoing challenge this has meant we have run at a loss this year to achieve some of these things but we have also been working toward setting a direction of financial sustainability.

Arid Edge continues to grow and will form a part of ALEC's financial sustainability. It is also our members, regular donors and desert defenders that keep us going so if you aren't already doing one of these I strongly encourage you to join us and support the important and critical work that ALEC does.

In the next couple of years we will be working toward celebrating 40 years of ALEC. Keep an eye out for this as it comes together. We will be tracking down people that have been involved over the years to share their stories.

Stay connected, be part of creating the change and the best central Australia we could imagine.

Jodi Lennox
Chairperson

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

2017-18 has been a tough year for the environment and the Arid Lands Environment Centre. We're constantly being bombarded with the stream of news stories of our warming planet, biodiversity loss, the continued failure of our national government to develop an energy or climate policy, the NT Government's decision to lift the ban on fracking and the time limits on the incredible heavy lifting required by all of us to stave off the impending climate catastrophe.

At ALEC, we are working on restoring the balance. We know that the stakes are high and the efforts required are huge, but we also know that the future isn't written yet. We can make a difference and with every action that is started, followed up and built upon, we create a cascade of changes that can help restore the balance.

This balance is a dynamic process that dispels complacency. As the goalposts remain (clean water, air and country), opportunities to achieve them can emerge daily. The challenge for ALEC and its staff is to maintain healthy work-life balances as we push on all fronts towards our

vision of 'healthy futures for arid lands and people.'

In talking about balance, this year at ALEC we have had to balance our books from last year. On paper, ALEC's loss is more than \$100K. However this needs to be taken in context. In 2016-17 we reported a surplus of \$51 906, but due to the timing and reporting of the NT Government (\$100K) Project Officer grant, it should have been only \$1906. Therefore, operationally in 2017-18, ALEC lost \$17K and Arid Edge \$34K. It's not a great financial outcome and ALEC faces significant challenges in securing enough funding to maintain capacity in 2018-19 and beyond.

The lifting of the moratorium on fracking this year was a disruptive and disappointing decision by the NT Government. ALEC was part of a concerted effort to engage thousands of people to make submissions to the NT Scientific Inquiry Into Hydraulic Fracturing, and as such the result has damaged relations between the community and the government.

Despite the 135 recommendations to be

ALEC CEO Jimmy Cocking at the Ten Deserts Project Launch in Canberra with NT Senator Malarndirri McCarthy, MP Warren Snowden and ALEC Board member Brenda Shields.



ALEC's greatest assets are its people. We have a fantastic group of committed staff and volunteers who continue to work tirelessly towards our vision of 'healthy futures for arid lands and people.'

implemented prior to unconventional gasfield development, the trust has been broken. ALEC has continued to engage in the process through supporting community action, advocating to government through submissions, letters and media whilst also being appointed to the reference group overseeing the implementation of the inquiry recommendations. ALEC has to work on all fronts in an increasingly complex world, where a systems approach is needed to catalyse and grow the transition towards a just and sustainable society.

Making a transition is a conscious choice. It requires moving or changing from one state to a more desirable one. ALEC has been in transition this year and this will continue into 2018-19 as more operational changes are required to get ALEC to the desired state of financial security and operational effectiveness.

The notable transitions this year included initiating the separation of Arid Edge Environmental Services (AEES) from ALEC's operations and the AEES business plan. Transitioning from coordinating the Ten Deserts Initiative to being a partner and project manager within the Indigenous-led Ten Deserts Project included an operational shift of responsibility. Financially, the establishment of the Finance and Audit Committee has added another level of rigour to financial reporting and decision-making. Changing auditors to Merit Partners was a necessary change after having Trevor Basso for 14+ years.

Looking forward, we still have a long way to go. We know that we need to significantly increase our income in 2018-19 if we're going to maintain the current staffing loads that have enabled ALEC to be across everything in the environmental and sustainability space in Central Australia. Without a

sustainable funding base, ALEC management and Board will have to make some tough decisions. We're working on numerous fronts to shore up our reserves to ensure continuity and improving our financial systems to reduce bottlenecks and streamline project management processes.

ALEC has been here before and has survived. The challenge before us is the continued engagement of the community whilst we also push hard on policy makers and decision makers to ensure that the systems of government and the economy are taking the threat of climate change seriously.

ALEC's greatest assets are its people. We have a fantastic group of committed staff and volunteers who continue to work tirelessly towards our vision of 'healthy futures for arid lands and people.' With growing membership and donor base I am confident that with your interest and help, we will make a difference.

Every journey begins with a step.... ALEC has been on this journey for 38 years and counting, and I have celebrated my 10th year at the helm of ALEC this year. I never imagined that this is what I would be doing with my life, but in my heart I always hoped for it.

We are all in this together and we're lucky to have an organisation like ALEC to provide the machinery to get this work done. It was never going to be easy, but nothing worth doing ever is.

Be inspired and be a part of the change.

Jimmy Cocking
ALEC CEO

JULY 2017

Workshop: Tofu Making
Event: Bastille Day Fundraiser
IA Event: Repair café
Stall: Alice Springs Show

AUGUST 2017

Workshop: Bush Medicine
Event: desertSMART EcoFair
Consultation: Fracking Inquiry Consultation



SEPTEMBER 2017

Event: The Biggest Buffel Bust Ever
IA Event: Bridgestone Solar Challenge Schools Day
Meeting: Ten Deserts - Glen Helen



OCTOBER 2017

Workshop: Green Beauty
IA Event: Alice Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant Tour
Stall: YamFest
Meeting: Outback Alliance
Training: Policy Advocacy Bootcamp - Darwin



NOVEMBER 2017

Public Meeting: Chandler Salt Mine and Toxic Waste Dump
Workshop: Meal Planning and the Cult of Preservation
IA Event: Somewhere Else's Problem – Electronic Waste in Central Australia
Event: ALEC AGM
Meeting Indigenous Desert Alliance
FOI request: Perdirka Basin Coal Deposit



DECEMBER 2017

Stall: ASTC Christmas Market

JANUARY 2018

Strategic Planning: RePower Alice Springs

FEBRUARY 2018

Event: Stop Adani - A Mighty Force Film Screening
Representation: NAIF Hearing
Community Consultation: Chandler Salt Mine - Titjikala



MARCH 2018

Workshop: Tofu Making
Representation: AGES Conference
Representation: Cattlemen's Conference
Launch: Ten Deserts - Canberra
Meeting: Threatened Species Commissioner
Report: Final Report Hydraulic Fracturing
Inquiry Fracking Released



APRIL 2018

Event: Water is Life Film Screening
Workshop: Beeswax Wraps Making
IA Event: Repair Café
Event: Community Garden Autumn Fete
Announcement: Fracking moratorium lifted
Community Rally: Ban Fracking

MAY 2018

Workshop: Aerobic Composting
Workshop: People Power Training
Event: This is Fracking Serious
Workshop: Beeswax Wraps Making
Special General Meeting - Appointment of Merit Partners as auditors



JUNE 2018

Meeting: Southern Deserts Ranger Forum - Credo Station
Meeting: Ten Deserts Project Partners - Perth
Appointment: ALEC CEO appointed to NT Onshore Shale Gas Business and Community Reference Group
Workshop: Sauerkraut Making
IA Event: Battery Energy Storage System Guided Tour
Event: Better Together – World Environment Day Exhibition
IA Event: Waste audit of the Todd Mall Markets
Presentation: EAC Waste Audit of Todd Mall Markets
Event: Walk To Wigleys
Workshop: Stone Bridge Building (Arid Edge)

REPRESENTATION & PARTNERSHIPS

ALEC's strength lies in the depth of engagement it has with the community and the breadth of representation it has on key projects and working groups.

ALEC CEO

- Deputy Chair Regional Economic Development Committee - February 2015-Feb 2018
- Onshore Shale Gas Community and Business Reference Group - June 2018 - ongoing
- Alice Springs Water Advisory Committee 2008-2018
- 10 Deserts Project Steering Committee
- Coordinator Buffel Free Great Victoria Desert project
- Southern Desert Ranger Forum Coordinating Committee
- Outback Alliance Steering Committee 2017-ongoing
- Independent Director - Desert Knowledge Australia - Board member 2016- ongoing
- Independent Director - Australian Conservation Foundation - NT Councillor and Board Director 2012- ongoing

ALEC Policy Officer

Alice Springs Town Council Environment Advisory Committee 2017 -
Environmental Defenders Office NT - Management Committee 2017 -
Alice Springs Water Advisory Committee 2018-
Western Davenport Water Advisory Committee 2017-
Alice Springs Regional Weeds Reference Group 2017-

Arid Edge Manager

Lhere Mparntwe Management Committee (Todd River) 2017-

AUSPICED PROJECTS

- Repower Alice Springs
- Alice Springs Community Garden
- NT Frack Free Campaign - Alice Springs
- Friends of Ilparpa - 2017
- Australian Nuclear Free Alliance
- Beyond Nuclear Initiative

PARTNERS

Outback Alliance

- Pew Charitable Trusts
- Rangelands Alliance
- Ninti One
- Royal Flying Doctors Service
- Isolated Children's Parents Association
- Desert Knowledge Australia

10 Deserts Project

- Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resource Management Board (AWNRM)
- Central Land Council (CLC)
- Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA)
- Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ)
- The Kimberley Land Council (KLC)
- Nyangumarta Warrarn Aboriginal Corporation (NWAC)
- Pew Charitable Trusts
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Buffel Free Great Victoria Desert - 10 Deserts Project

- APY Lands Management
- Spinifex Lands Management
- Ngaanyatjarra Land and Culture
- Charles Darwin University
- Biosecurity SA
- Dept Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions - Parks and Wildlife WA
- Maralinga Tjurtja/ Oak Valley Community
- Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resource Management Board (AWNRM)
- Rangelands NRM (WA)
- Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust

Environment Centre NT - collaboration on a wide range of NT environmental issues particularly fracking and climate

Lock the Gate - Central Australia Frack Free Coordinator role



Strategic Aim:

'Action on climate change in the arid lands'

PLANET

Flying over the arid interior, claypans in remote WA

A STRONG VOICE FOR CLIMATE ACTION

The Northern Territory is especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change with a predicted increase in extreme heat days, an increase in extreme weather events, and an increase in sea-level rise and extreme sea-level events.

The NT is already being impacted with increased temperatures, the loss of large swathes of mangroves across the Top End, coral reef bleaching, increased weed spread and changing seasons.

NT emissions have risen 28% over the last 10 years. Unfortunately Northern Territory emissions will continue to rise with the INPEX Ichthys project, the opening up of the Territory to unconventional gas production, new land clearing permits, and increased offshore gas processing.

The most marginalised and vulnerable members of our community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, are often the least responsible for ecological risks and threats but are the most affected by their emergence.

ALEC is a strong and credible voice on the urgency for action on climate in the Northern Territory.

ALEC has consistently advocated that the Northern Territory Government develop a Climate Policy that has net zero by 2050 emission reduction targets, and significant adaptation planning processes.

ALEC is working through:

- Media releases and public comment
- Engagement with and representations to the NT Government Chief Minister's Department
- Working with Environment Centre NT to develop the NT Climate Statement
- Being a leading voice on the climate threats from fracking (potentially increase Australia's total greenhouse gas emissions by over 5%.)

ALEC is building community coalitions working towards the decarbonisation of the economy and local climate adaptation measures.

Working together is a critical component of meaningful climate action. ALEC is working with a broad range of organisations and is supporting a number of community groups including:

- Being a member of Climate Action Network Australia, Alice Springs Town Council Environmental Advisory Committee, Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee
- Working with Environment Centre NT, The Climate Council, Australian Conservation Foundation, 350.org, The Australia Institute
- Providing support for Central Australian Frack Free Alliance, RePower Alice Springs, and Alice Springs Community Garden
- Organising desertSMART EcoFair
- Translating the 'Climate Change in Northern Australia' animation into local indigenous languages
- Organising climate film nights and events, and National Days of Action
- Reviewing the desertSMART Roadmap

ALEC is urging governments (local/ Territory/Federal) and businesses to invest in climate solutions.

The NT has an ethical imperative to reduce emissions and match the commitments from other states and territories. The NT currently produces 3% of Australian emissions, with only 1% of the population.

There are opportunities for economic development that sequester carbon including native plant food industries, reforestation, hemp industries, sustainable agriculture and carbon neutral hydrogen production.

Alice Springs residents rally for greater climate action



COMMUNICATING CLIMATE CHANGE

It is essential that Indigenous people have an understanding of the science of climate change and are active participants in adaptation planning.

In many remote communities there is limited understanding of climate change, and limited resources in Aboriginal languages to help community members understand it.

The Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC) has coordinated the translation of the ‘Climate Change in Northern Australia’ animation into the Central Arrernte language with funding from the Desert Science Network (Inspiring Australia Programme).

The original animation “Climate Change – Everyone’s Business” was originally developed for Indigenous Pacific Islanders by the Nakau Program, a company established by the NGO Live and Learn International. The aim of the animation was to raise awareness of climate change causes and impacts in the Pacific region, and to enable Indigenous people to participate in planning and decision-making about climate change. It was translated in Fijian, Vanuatu Bislama, and Solomon Island Pidjin.

The animation was found to be an effective engagement tool, which was verified by an independent audit that found participants were able

to provide ‘informed consent’ in planning a climate change initiative.

Together, NAILSMA (North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance) and Live and Learn adapted the animation to be relevant to northern Australia and recorded the animation in English and Kriol in 2015 (<https://vimeo.com/114197188>) It was used as a tool to help educate Aboriginal ranger groups participating in Savanna Burning projects.

ALEC gained approval from the original project partners Live & Learn and Nailsma to translate the animation into the Central Arrernte language. ALEC has worked with the original animator David Pennay, and has engaged the Aboriginal Interpreters Service for the Central Arrernte translation.

The “Climate Change in Central Australia” adaptation can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URWUnKD7jd0&feature=youtu.be>

ALEC aims to translate this animation into further Aboriginal languages, and will be seeking funding through grants, targeting relevant organisations and potential crowdfunding in 2018-19.

Rachel O’Leary
Science Engagement Officer

A screen shot from the Climate Change in Central Australia animation





Strategic Aim:

'Ecosystems are protected, and natural resources used sustainably in Central Australia'

ALEC Chairperson, Jodi Lennox, experiencing the beauty of Central Australia

PLACE

ALEC plays an important role in protecting the environment from inappropriate developments and bad policy. Protecting the environment is not all about protests, nor is it all about policy submissions. ALEC works on a range of fronts and levels to get better outcomes for nature and the people who depend on it.

Working with government and other organisations to protect the environment involves a spirit of collaboration that ALEC has become known for. ALEC's vision of 'healthy futures for arid lands and people' works much better as a shared goal.

ALEC works to scale up conservation across this vast arid region. Working collaboratively and working within and around government frameworks is key to getting the job done. Communities need support and better understanding of the risks of pollution and natural resource drawdown associated with large scale extractive industries; and also understanding the impacts that climate change will have on feral animals, weeds and fire is critical to reducing their impacts.

As Central Australia's only environmental organisation, ALEC has to work locally and regionally but also on a national front to help draw attention to the issues faced in remote Australia.

Shaun Angeles, a local Arrernte man, speaking of the importance of keeping water healthy, April 2018



In 2017-18 ALEC has:

- Transitioned from Coordinating the Ten Deserts Initiative to becoming a partner on the 10 Deserts Project www.tendeserts.org
- Presented on the Buffel Free Great Victoria Desert Project at the Indigenous Desert Alliance in Perth, Southern Desert Ranger Forum at Credo Station near Kalgoorlie and at the 10 Deserts Steering Committee Meeting
- Participated in the development of the Outback Alliance, providing a place based conservation perspective
- Supported and promoted the Friends of Ilparpa Group's buffel busting activities
- Actively participated in the Alice Springs Water Advisory Committee, Alice Springs Town Council's Environment Advisory Committee, Western Davenport Water Advisory Committee, Environmental Defenders Office Management Committee, Alice Springs Regional Weeds Reference group, invited onto the Onshore Shale Gas Community and Business Reference Group
- Participated in the Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Review consultation
- Presented to the NT Policy Scrutiny Committee hearing into reform of the Pastoral Land Act and the Federal Senate Standing Committee into the Governance of the North Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF)
- Attended Territory NRM Southern Regional Forum, AGES Mining Conference and NT Cattleman's Association Conference in Alice Springs
- Organised a community information session in Alice Springs and Titjikala in regards to the proposed salt mine and toxic waste dump
- Supported Titjikala residents to make media comment on the NTEPA approval of the Chandler Salt and Toxic Waste dump
- Media releases associated with a range of resource projects
- Written to the Department of Primary Industries and Resources as well as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to communicate our concerns over the significant environmental risks posed by the Mt Peake and Nolans Bore Mines north of Alice Springs.
- Supported the organisation of the Frack Free rally post-moratorium lifting in April
- FOI request to Department of Primary Industry and Resources in regards to the proposed coal project in the Perdirka Basin

This last financial year marks the first full financial year with committed policy capacity through the Policy Officer position. Additional capacity has strengthened our ability to engage in policy work across multiple issues and scales. Policy advocacy requires a considered balance between reacting to high priority environmental protection matters while also developing proactive approaches to guide the direction of reform.

The policy priorities for the year have been climate change, fracking, mining, environmental governance and law. These issues will continue to be the focus of our work going forward. The Northern Territory is undergoing significant shifts in environmental governance, improving the level of accountability and transparency across Government operations in a range of fields.

The process of reforming the entire environmental law framework is well and truly underway. This shift is reflective of the urgency at which policy and legal instruments must modernise to acknowledge and address the multitude of environmental challenges and threats to the country and people of the NT.

Our policy engagement is done on multiple levels: formal written submissions during consultation processes, representation on reference groups and planning committees, meetings with decision makers and other relevant stakeholders, formal correspondence with Departments, media outreach and educational materials.

Because of additional capacity in the policy space we have been able to develop positions on a broad range of issues ensuring that our concerns and ideas are effectively communicated. The NT is in a state of transition as regulation is strengthened and environmental protection is given greater political and economic weight. Policy advocacy is vital to ensuring this is done appropriately and leads to improved and lasting environmental protection.

Climate Change

Climate change is the number one issue

affecting livelihoods and the environment in the arid zone. Our policy work on climate change has been focused on advocating for pathways to decarbonise the economy and developing educational materials. Advocacy has involved several meetings with the Department of Chief Minister to input into the NT Climate Change Strategy process.

Mining

The Northern Territory Government is pushing ahead with mineral and energy exploration and development. In the arid zone there are currently five mines that are progressing through environmental assessment with several awaiting final mining authorisations. Final investment decisions are imminent.

The track record of environmental stewardship of mining operators in the NT still leaves a lot to be desired. Through our engagement on mining issues we actively advocate for the introduction of laws that hold operators personally accountable for harm, more stringent and enforceable rehabilitation and closure standards, improved accountability and transparency around environmental management and greater compliance and monitoring.

We continue to stay informed about the latest developments for the Mt Peake, Nolans Bore and Chandler projects. These projects all pose very significant risks of environmental harm.

Through official correspondence with the Department of Mines we have highlighted deficiencies in the project environmental management processes, lobbied through the Western Davenport Water Allocation Committee to incorporate the water use of the Mt Peak project and advocated for a national hazardous waste policy to prevent central Australia becoming a dumping ground for the waste of the east coast.

Monitoring the implementation of the recommendations from the final report from the Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing is another key priority. Policy work assists in holding the Government to account for their commitments to all 135 recommendations and ensuring they are implemented in full.

The principles of environmental justice inform our

ALEC SUBMISSIONS

- Jervois Base Metal Mine Terms of Reference: July 2017
- Review of the Western Davenport Water Allocation Plan: July 2017
- Independent Commission Against Corruption: July 2017
- Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund Senate Inquiry: July 2017
- Supplementary Submission to the Northern Territory Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing: August 2017
- EPA Land Use Separation Distances: August 2017
- Deductible Gift Recipient Reform discussion paper: August 2017
- Pastoral Act Amendment Scrutiny Committee: October 2017
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act Discussion Paper: October 2017
- Ammaroo Phosphate Mine Environmental Impact Statement: December 2017
- Planning Reform Review, Reframe, Renew: December 2017
- Tjoritja and Watarrka Joint Management Plans discussion paper: December 2017
- Alice Springs Town Council Strategic Plan: February 2018
- Leigh Creek (SA) In-Situ Gassification Proposal Environmental Impact Report: February 2018
- Planning for a Vibrant Future: February 2018
- National Energy Guarantee Consultation Paper: March 2018
- Australia's Strategy for Nature 2018-2030: March 2018
- Independent Scientific Panel Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in Western Australia: March 2018
- Second Review of the Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement: May 2018
- Tanami Pipeline Land Clearing Development Application: May 2018
- Infrastructure and Logistics Master Plan: June 2018

advocacy and communications around mining in the NT.

Representation

Policy advocacy has involved meetings with the: Department of Parks and Wildlife, Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet through economic and environment policy, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, several mining companies, Department of Planning and Infrastructure and Alice Springs Town Council through the Environment Advisory Committee. Our position on various issues has also been communicated through multiple opinion pieces and feature articles.

Submissions

Over the reporting period a total of 21 formal submissions were made. The submissions covered a broad range of issues ranging from economics, natural resource management, biodiversity, planning and energy. There were very few consultation documents or reform proposals that we were unable to comment on. Through these submissions we advocate to raise the profile of environmental considerations as an equivalent priority to economic imperatives.



Pipeline stored at Tennant Creek for the Northern Gas Pipeline that was finished in 2018.

ALEC will continue to work for stronger environmental protection, mechanisms to transition to sustainable low carbon economies, embed environmental stewardship across all areas of governance and advocate for biodiversity protection.

Alex Read
Policy Officer

ALEC has played a leading role in the fracking campaign in the NT since 2011. ALEC initially held a position based on a moratorium on the practice and the implementation of a stronger regulatory system. However, with the growing evidence of water contamination in the United States as a result of fracking and the growing methane clouds associated with the practice - ALEC adopted a ban position to protect our climate and our water in 2015.

2017-18 was a big year in the Northern Territory in relation to fracking. Upon its election, the Gunner Labor Government enacted a moratorium in August 2016 and initiated a scientific inquiry into hydraulic fracturing. The Inquiry was led by Justice Rachel Pepper from the NSW Land Court who committed to a thorough and transparent process. The Inquiry allowed three key points of engagement with the general public and consulted and researched widely. ALEC made submissions both written and personally presented to the inquiry at every opportunity made available.

See here for ALEC's submissions <https://frackinginquiry.nt.gov.au/submission-library>

The final decision by the Inquiry was that fracking could be undertaken in the NT safely with the implementation of 135 recommendations related to well integrity, water, baseline assessments, cultural considerations, offsetting emissions, regulations, pastoral stations, roads and a number of other areas affected by the industry.

ALEC disagrees that fracking can be safely undertaken in the NT and maintains that a permanent ban on the practice should be implemented.

ALEC's focus on the fracking campaign is focused largely on the climate risk of the industry establishing in the Northern Territory. Exploiting the Territory's unconventional gas reserves could increase Australia's total greenhouse gas emissions by over 5%. ALEC has consistently commented in the media calling on the NT Government to focus on reducing emissions rather than attempting to offset them.

In June 2018, the ALEC CEO Jimmy Cocking was invited onto the Onshore Shale Gas Community and Business Reference group (CBRG) to meet in early July and quarterly until July 2019. The CBRG is to give advice and feedback into the implementation of the 135 recommendations. ALEC takes this role seriously and sees the benefits of the implementation of the regulatory reforms as a necessary evolution of the NT environmental laws. The resumption of fracking is expected to begin again in the Beetaloo basin in early-mid 2019, production by around 2021.

In addition to representation on the CBRG, ALEC is monitoring the implementation of the recommendations by reviewing key legislative reforms and undertaking research on best practice baseline methane monitoring. This research is necessary to hold the Government to account in implementing all 135 recommendations in full.

ALEC will continue the fight for a fairer and frack free world. We will work with local, regional and national partners as part of the Protect Country Alliance to ensure Traditional Owners understand the risks and the impacts of fracking. The focus in coming years will be the Beetaloo basin and ALEC will be working with those on the fracking frontline to protect country and protect public health.

Alice Springs residents rally after the decision to lift the moratorium on fracking in April 2018



WORKING ACROSS DESERT COUNTRY

In Transition

2017-18 was a transition year for ALEC's role in large scale collaborative conservation. For 3 years, ALEC had been the main driver of the Ten Deserts Initiative organising face to face workshops both in Alice Springs and on-country through the Southern Desert Ranger Forum.

The Ten Deserts Initiative supported collaboration across WA, SA and NT with NRM groups, conservation groups, government agencies and Indigenous land management organisations coming together to strategise and build collaboration. This work happened concurrently with the establishment and development of the Indigenous Desert Alliance in 2014.

Together, and building on other collaborations previously, an application for \$20M to the BHP Billiton Foundation for an Indigenous led conservation project to build environmental resilience was made in late 2016 and after 1 year of project definition through fortnightly meetings and redrafting, the project, led by Desert Support Services in Perth was successful.



The Ten Deserts Project Launch in Canberra

Buffel Free GVD

This financial year has largely seen ALEC transitioning from a coordination role to a partner in the 10 Deserts Project and project manager role for the Buffel Free Great Victoria Desert as part of it. The Buffel Free GVD is focused on supporting cross-border collaboration in the management of buffel grass in Australia's largest desert. The Buffel Free GVD Working Group has been active since 2015 and sharing information and developing a long term strategy to eradicate buffel from the bioregion. This has been pushed

by local rangers and land managers who believe with coordination, buffel can be beaten in the GVD. ALEC's CEO is the Coordinator and in 2018-19, the development of a strategic plan for the BFGVD will be completed, along with on-ground works coordinated to achieve maximum effectiveness. ALEC's project management role in the BFGVD is contracted until 2022-23.

Partnership in action

In 2017-18 ALEC participated in countless phone meetings as part of the project definition stage and partner working group post- project launch. ALEC's willingness to support the collaboration through transferring the Ten Deserts name and web domain www.tendeserts.org to the project was an act of good faith. ALEC participated in a meeting in Glen Helen with project partners and the funders in September 2017 as one of the final face to face workshops to develop the 140 page Project Report. ALEC actively participated in this process that was driven by Desert Support Services, now 10 Deserts Manager, Peter See. ALEC participated in the Indigenous Desert Alliance in Perth in November 2017 and presented the films from the 2017 Southern Desert Ranger Forum in Ilkurlka and an update on the Buffel Free GVD.

ALEC participated in the launch event of the 10 Deserts Project in Old Parliament House in Canberra in late March 2018. This auspicious event provided a strong basis for the project and saw members of Parliament from across party lines present and welcome the project.

In early June 2018, ALEC CEO presented at the Southern Deserts Ranger Forum at Credo Station near Kalgoorlie. This was attended by more than 60 Indigenous rangers from Wiluna (WA) to Oak Valley (SA). It was a great mix of learning and sharing experience, skills, knowledge and culture. At the end of June, ALEC CEO attended the first partner meeting in Perth. It was a privilege to be in the room at this early stage of the most exciting conservation project in Australia. ALEC is proud to be a part of the 10 Deserts Project and will continue to play an active role through the implementation of the Buffel Free GVD project but also as a member of the Expert Reference Group.

Jimmy Cocking
Buffel Free GVD Coordinator

CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN FRACK FREE ALLIANCE

The Central Australian Frack Free Alliance (CAFFA) has had both an active and disappointing year with the lifting of the NT fracking moratorium in April. Activities and strategy occurred in three distinct ways:

Engaging in the Scientific Inquiry

The Inquiry released its final report in March 2018. As such, this was the biggest focus over the year. Whilst the Inquiry was underway CAFFA had a strategic approach to engage in the Inquiry as deeply as possible to ensure that there would be positive results. This translated into:

- building relationships with important stakeholder groups to engage with the Inquiry
- maintaining/building good relationships with government in order to communicate openly about concerns with the Inquiry process,
- capacity building for CAFFA members to be able to confidently present to the Inquiry and provide accurate and reliable information that was specific to Central Australian concerns.

At the final Inquiry hearings CAFFA had individuals presenting in over 90% of the available speaking slots. Each presenter was able to speak to a specific concern with all presenters prioritising the point that exploration should not be carried out prior to a SREBA being conducted. Due to the

Political pressure on fracking decision

Chief Minister Gunner announced that the moratorium on shale gas fracking would be lifted on April 17th. CAFFA was one of many community and civil society groups against this decision. In the month leading up to this decision CAFFA:

- publicly protested at government functions
- had a strong community presence
- had an increased presence speaking at local events, and leading actions that focussed on contacting Chief Minister Gunner/ Minister Wakefield

Despite this the moratorium was lifted. This decision was very difficult for CAFFA as many members had been fighting against this for years.

CAFFA worked with ALEC to hold a rally against the decision to lift the fracking moratorium that saw 300 people come together to express frustration and their concerns to the Gunner government.

Rebuilding locally to protect the Alice Springs Water Control District

Following the decision to lift the moratorium it was evident that CAFFA members needed some time to process and grieve. When CAFFA came back together, 4 meetings over the space of a month were dedicated to a process of strategizing and mapping a way forward that was strategic and winnable. This was a powerful process for CAFFA to go through and the group involvement in planning was energising and refocussing.

An outcome of this planning was for CAFFA to focus on ensuring that the Alice Springs Water Control Districts is legislated/marked off as a no go zone for shale gas fracking. CAFFA continues to work toward this with positive momentum, growth of our core group, and increased ownership of the campaign from local CAFFA members.

CAFFA would like to acknowledge the invaluable support of ALEC in supporting the group.



Jesse Hancock
Frack Free Coordinator

<https://www.facebook.com/CentralAusFrackFree/>



CAFFA members meet Chief Minister Gunner at a function in Alice Springs

relationship building work that CAFFA had done there were also pastoral and remote community representatives presenting to the Inquiry. Ongoing lobby meetings with Dale Wakefield were re-stating the arguments that were being put to the Inquiry and registering concern at the often late and poor notice that was given for Inquiry hearings.

BEYOND NUCLEAR INITIATIVE

Beyond Nuclear Initiative (BNI) has been hosted by the Arid Lands Environment Centre since 2006. BNI was established to monitor nuclear projects across the Northern Territory, amplify community voices of resistance and engage with nuclear free campaigns across the country.

Project convener Natalie Wasley is based in Sydney and speaks regularly about nuclear issues at community meetings, public events and rallies. BNI is a joint project of the Australian Conservation Foundation and Friends of the Earth Australia.

Radioactive Waste Management

Since the successful campaign to stop the Muckaty nuclear waste dump (won in 2014), there has been little progress made by the Federal government in its efforts to secure a national dump site. Rather than responding to the broad civil society call for a

national inquiry into radioactive waste production, transport and management, the government has continued to lurch from one contested site to the next. Staunch and well-organised community resistance has stopped numerous sites going ahead, though three in SA are still under active consideration.

A significant development over the last year has been the proposal for properties in Leonora (WA) and Brewarrina (NSW) to also be nominated and assessed for the national nuclear dump. The Brewarrina region is renowned for an elaborate network of fish traps dated at over 40 000 years old, which are possibly the oldest human-made structure on earth.

BNI has actively supported the Brewarrina community to launch the “No nuclear Bunda Bunda

Wakagetti dancers at the “Keep Brewarrina Nuclear Free” rally in Sydney.



(poison) on Ngemba land” campaign. This has included provision of background information, drafting and editing of campaign materials, and media releases and support for a series of protest events in the local community.

A well-attended community march and silent protest at the Council meeting were held in response to Council engaging a pro-nuclear advocate to advise on the radioactive waste nomination process without first consulting with the local community.

Networks developed through the NT waste dump campaign have been crucial for rapidly building a national profile for the Brewarrina community campaign. Medical professionals, lawyers, students and union representatives have all provided information, support and solidarity to the community, greatly boosting morale on the ground.

BNI assisted with funding Ngemba representatives to travel to Sydney, organised a rally and march of hundreds of people to NSW Parliament House and secured a spot for Ngemba woman Trish Frail to speak at the massive #Time2Choose rally.

BNI also arranged for meetings with the Nature Conservation Council NSW, Unions NSW Indigenous Committee, ALP and Greens politicians and a range of media interviews while the delegation was in town.

Australian Nuclear Free Alliance

Beyond Nuclear Initiative has held a committee position on the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance since 2008. Both BNI and ALEC have supported the ANFA network for many years through book keeping, administrative support and organisation/ hosting of the annual national gathering.

A major project for BNI during the last financial year was compilation of a book celebrating 20 years of the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance (ANFA).

The book “20 years of Radioactive Resistance” includes written materials and transcribed audio records dating back to the first ANFA meeting, held in 1997 in Alice Springs under the banner “Alliance Against Uranium”.

The book has been distributed to communities and stakeholders across the country and is also available for purchase via Friends of the Earth in Melbourne: <http://shop.foe.org.au/20-years-of-radioactive-resistance/>

National Campaign Coordination

BNI assists with organising key national initiatives for the nuclear free movement, including regular phone link ups and an annual national nuclear free strategy meeting.



The BNI website and social media are a central point for information on all national nuclear free campaigns to be collated and promoted.

BNI into the future.

Due to a depletion of funding, in the last few years BNI has reoriented towards short-term project work, including resource production and support for interstate campaigns. The project is currently in hiatus as funding is sought for future projects, including compiling an accessible archive of the NT radioactive waste dump campaign.

The BNI steering committee would like to thank ALEC members, board and staff for the support over the last 12 years and we look forward to continuing the relationship into the future.



**Natalie Wasley
BNI Campaigner**

<http://beyondnuclearinitiative.com>
<https://www.facebook.com/beyond.nuclearinitiative.1/>



Strategic Aim:

'Sustainable and resilient communities in central Australia'

PEOPLE

Carmel and Kate from Food For Alice with Costa Georgiadis from Gardening Australia

Resilient Communities

ALEC is working towards building community resilience in Alice Springs and surrounding desert communities.

This is a long-term commitment to developing sustainable food systems, reduce dependence on fossil fuels and strengthening the local community.

ALEC is driving innovative programs that encourage sustainable living and active community engagement. ALEC is working under the guidance of three strategic objectives and their associated activities.

Developing ecologically sustainable education opportunities and skilled Central Australian communities

- desertSMART Ecofair
- EFSCAN and Eco-Science Schools Day
- Inspiring Australia Science Engagement program
- Waste advocacy/Single Use Plastics Campaign
- Desert Science Network Climate Film Translation
- Repair Café
- Thorny News/Devils Advocate/Website/Social Media
- Alice Springs Community Garden

Sharing knowledge and innovation in living sustainably in the arid lands

- desertSMART RoadMap
- desertSMART Ecofair
- Inspiring Australia Science Engagement program
- Sustainability Workshops

Sauerkraut making workshop



Tour of the Alice Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Waste advocacy
- Representation on committees/steering groups/boards etc Desert Knowledge Board etc

Building social cohesion through bringing people together at community spaces and events.

- desertSMART Ecofair
- Biodiversity Matters
- Alice Springs Community Garden
- Food for Alice
- ALEC Film nights & events
- Alice Springs Community Garden
- ALEC Workshops
- ALEC stalls



Water Is Life Film Screening

ALEC strongly believes in communities taking action for themselves, and provides support for a number of community groups including Repower Alice Springs and Central Australian Frack Free Alliance. ALEC auspices a number of groups, and often provides assistance through lending equipment, printing, and advice.

The Roadmap to a desertSMART Town is a blueprint for making Alice Springs a resilient and vibrant desertSMART town.

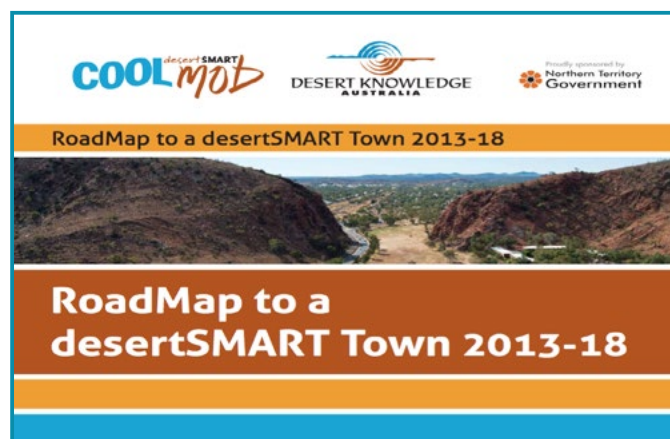
Originally conceived in 2005 by ALEC and the Centre for Sustainable Arid Towns, the Roadmap brought together business, government and the community to develop a shared vision for a desertSMART Alice Springs. The Roadmap to a desertSMART Town 2005, and associated 70 actions to make Alice Springs a desertSMART Town were highly innovative and influential documents at the time, directly contributing to the establishment of the successful Alice Solar City and Alice Water Smart projects in the years following.

With the support from an NT Government Environment grant, desertSMART COOLmob undertook an evaluation of the impact of the original 2005 Roadmap. This evaluation was planned to give a clearer picture of which projects from the 70 Actions to make Alice Springs a desertSMART Town had been implemented, and some indications of water and CO2 emissions savings associated with them. It found that without dedicated resources, Alice Springs had managed to implement 45% of the desertSMART recommendations. It became a key resource for informing the development of the new 2013 Roadmap.

With support of the NT Government's Community Climate Change grant scheme, and in partnership with Desert Knowledge Australia, desertSMART COOLmob led the development of a new Roadmap to a desertSMART Town for 2013-18. This Roadmap sets the agenda until 2018 in 6 key areas:

- Energy
- Water
- Waste
- Planning (previously built environment)
- Food
- Transport

The report can be downloaded here: https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/aridlands/pages/91/attachments/original/1466747620/Roadmap_to_a_desertSMART_Town.pdf?1466747620



The review of the DesertSMART Roadmap 2013-18 (supported by a grant from the NT Department of Environment and Natural Resources) is currently being undertaken by ALEC with recommendations to be presented in early 2019.

Initial findings from the review indicate that the Roadmap, while seen as a visionary document, is considered a highly technical document that has not stimulated community engagement and action on the key focus areas. Whilst it has played a critical role in highlighting opportunities for reform, the next phase of planning will need to incorporate a more holistic approach to societal change.

The review will determine the role of the RoadMap in delivering social innovation, encouraging behavioural change and influencing government policy. This will involve engagement with a range of stakeholders to understand the multiple and complex perspectives on addressing key problems of sustainability in the Alice Springs region. Key to this is highlighting the barriers to achieving the RoadMap actions and mapping out a new path in working towards an agreed vision for the future.

In 2019, ALEC will be developing a partnership with the University of Technology Sydney's School of Design Professor Cameron Tonkinwise to develop a program to support the transition of Alice Springs to a desertSMART Town. This exciting and innovative approach called Transition Design will support building community participation and ownership of the Roadmap through taking a systems approach to amplify the scale of the many small actions that can be undertaken immediately.

Alex Read
Policy Officer

August 2017 saw the ninth year of desertSMART EcoFair, organised by the Arid Lands Environment Centre, as part of National Science Week.

EcoFair aims to educate, inspire and activate the community around science and sustainability issues.

In 2017 special guests included Associate Professor Bernadette McCabe (National Centre for Engineering in Agriculture, University of Southern Queensland), Science Communicator Giles Parkinson (Renew Economy) and EcoFair ambassador Costa Georgiadis (Gardening Australia).

Eco-Science Schools Day The Eco-Science Schools Day 2017 was held in the Olive Pink Botanic Gardens with 300 Alice Springs students participating from nine different schools, including a remote community school. A total of 13 different workshops were facilitated by local and interstate scientists and science educators covering topics such as health, climate change, land management, feral pest management, recycling, engineering, biodiversity, water conservation, mining impacts, and science and sustainability.



Costa Georgiadis with a group of school students

783 ABC Outside Broadcast

The Great Science Quiz was again a popular feature of the 783 ABC Outside broadcast.

Alice Springs Bicycle Film Festival

More than 300 people attended the Alice Springs Bicycle Film Festival, which featured international

and local films about the humble bicycle.

Bush Medicine Workshop

There was high demand for the Bush Medicine workshop facilitated by Purple House, Western Desert Dialysis.



Winners of the Bush Wok Cook-Off

Garden to Plate

The Garden to Plate event saw over 100 people learning about gardening, sustainability and health amidst the vibrancy of the community gardens.

The event featured:

- Green thumbs with Costa Georgiadis
- Science at Sunset with Associate Professor Bernadette McCabe, from the University of Southern Queensland
- Bush Wok Cook-Off with Rayleen Price from Kungas Can Cook and local nutritionist Ray Price.

Sustainable Living Festival

More than 600 people attended the Sustainable Living Festival at Snow Kenna Park and enjoyed panels, feature presentations, workshops and the community eco-market. Panels included Learn to Live desertSMART which suggested practical ways to make a difference to daily living by local experts and Excellent Adventures: Sustaining tourism in Central Australia. The feature presentation was by Giles Parkinson from Renew Economy.



Nicole Pietsch
EcoFair Coordinator

<http://ecofair.org.au>

The aim of the Inspiring Australia Regional Hub is to empower regional communities by increasing science dialogue and literacy through local science events.

As part of the Inspiring Australia Programme a total of seven events have been held during the 2017/18 financial year organised by the Arid Lands Environment Centre. These have included:

September 2017

World Solar Challenge Schools Day Held at the Desert Knowledge Precinct, a total of 65 local school students and 40 community members had the opportunity to view a solar electric car, meet past Bridgestone World Solar Challenge participants and take part in solar and Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) learning activities delivered by Flinders University and Ekistica.

October 2017

Alice Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant Open Day Power and Water organised the Alice Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant Open Day with support from Inspiring Australia and the Arid Lands Environment Centre. The Open Day allowed 20 interested community members to view the facility and to learn more about how sewerage and wastewater is treated and recycled in Alice Springs and how much potable water we consume. There were interested discussions around the need for demand management initiatives and how this could defer the need to move to a new water source.

November 2017

'The (in) visibility of electronic waste in Central Australia To coincide with National Recycling Week, Gideon Singer, a Fulbright Postgraduate Scholar presented on his research around the anthropology of electronic waste in Alice Springs. Hayley Michener from the Alice Springs Town Council also shared information about what can be recycled through Council. A total of 35 people attended this lunchtime event.

July 2017 and April 2018

Repair Cafes 1 & 2 Two Repair Cafes were run in 2017/18, one in July 2017 and the following in April 2018. The Repair Cafés were aimed at engaging the community in the science of repair, in an effort

to keep waste out of landfill. Community members were encouraged to work with the repair expert to help fix the object and learn new skills.

A total of 200 people attended the two events, which resulted in:

- 120 items repaired, including clothing and shoes, ceramic objects, antique furniture, antique books, knives, bicycles and electronic items such as lamps, slide projectors, irons and a convection oven.
- Revenue from repairs raised \$550
- Community members learnt new repair skills, including sewing, bike maintenance, carpentry, electronic repair and knife sharpening skills
- Experts met new colleagues in their field and shared skills between each other
- A community resource was developed outlining all of the 25 local repair businesses in Alice Springs. This was distributed to community members on the day and is available on the ALEC website.
- Local media promoting the event was high and for 2018 included extensive coverage by ABC Radio, a newspaper article in the Centralian Advocate and an online ABC article.
- The number of repair volunteers grew from 16 to 20 volunteer repairers between 2017 and 2018.



The electrical team at the Repair Cafe in April 2018

June 2018

Renewable Energy Tour A tour of the newly installed Battery Energy Storage System was organised by Arid Lands Environment Centre, in conjunction with Territory Generation and Repower

Alice Springs. Held on World Environment Day, the tour was led by Territory Generation engineers, as they guided 40 interested community members through their new battery facility. They explained how the battery works, how it supports the existing solar network, and what role battery energy storage systems will play as we transport towards renewable energy generation.

June 2018

Waste Audit of the Todd Mall Markets As part of the Inspiring Australia project, the Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC), with the support of the Alice Springs Town Council and Charles Darwin University, conducted a waste audit of the Todd Mall Markets with a team of volunteers on Sunday 17th June, 2018.

The primary aim of the audit was to gather waste composition data from the markets, in particular that of single-use plastics. In total approximately 119kg of waste was collected over the five hour period from 8am to 1pm. A total of 51% of waste was compostable (food scraps, wooden cutlery, skewers, chopsticks, and paper and cardboard).

The results were presented to the ASTC Environment Advisory Council and were used to help inform Council's decision to phase out single use plastics at the Todd Mall Markets.

In summary, the Inspiring Australia Alice Springs Regional Hub has been of great asset to the Alice Springs community and has stimulated the interest of the public with local science and engineering projects. It has strengthened relationships between organisations across different disciplines. It has created employment and increased sharing of skills and knowledge.

Finally, it has resulted in tangible policy outcomes, such influencing Alice Springs Town Council's decision to phase out single-use plastics at the Todd Mall Markets. It is hoped that funding continues for the Inspiring Australia Alice Springs Regional Hub into 2019.

Rachel O'Leary
Science Engagement Officer

Science Engagement Officer Rachel O'Leary with the results of the Todd Mall Markets waste audit



ARID EDGE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

2017-18 has been a solid but ultimately a loss making year for Arid Edge Environmental Services. Overall large contracts have been down compared to 2016-17 with no large landscaping job secured, and Larapinta Trail Track Work being half the value of 2016-17.

The Utopia Gardens project has maintained its value and strong results compared to previous years. However, this too will come to an end, with then horticulture side of this project being handed over to My Pathway in 2018-19. These results have been offset by strong consolidation in the areas of landscape design and land management – both areas previously set as targets for growth. As a result, in the future Arid Edge's focus will shift away from dependence on food gardens and towards track work, weed management and landscape design-construct to remain profitable and produce positive results.

Plans continue to establish a more separate working relationship between ALEC and Arid Edge – the current preferred model being Arid Edge as a much more separate business unit of ALEC, eventually moving to being a separate Pty. Ltd. Company owned by ALEC.

Landscaping

Landscaping contracts have down from 2016/17, with no large construction contracts secured for the year. Results have been solid however with the some high profile jobs putting Arid Edge's work more in the public eye (eg: MPH Offices verge plantings on corner of Smith and Brown Streets).



Yami Forrester working on the Larapinta Trail Section 9

Landscape Design

Landscape design work has continued to grow strongly this year with landscape designs for both Braitling School and Acacia Hill school being completed. Both jobs are high profile, and are

already leading to requests for more design work.

Land Management

Land Management has also seen solid growth this year. The partnership with Snapper John Tracks continues, with another year of Larapinta Trail maintenance contracts completed and good prospects of further contracts in the year to come.

In addition, contracts to undertake weed surveys and weed management in the Todd River and the Claypans have also been secured. While not profitable work, this is work that directly contributes to ALEC strategic goals and builds strong working relationships with local indigenous families and workers, making it highly valuable work to continue investing time and resources in.



Workers at Arlparra, Utopia Homelands

Food Gardens

Food Gardens work has been strong this year with horticulture and nutrition contracts continuing in the Utopia Homelands, and a third round of Work for the Dole activities being completed at the Alice Springs Community Garden. Results have been positive with Ben Wall and the team completing some great paths, garden beds, and outdoor kitchen infrastructure at the Community Garden, and a majority of the 14 gardens supported by Hilton, Ra and Jan in Utopia showing increased reliance on the gardens as a food source.

However Food Gardens work will decrease in 2018-19 with both the Work for the Dole and Utopia Horticulture contracts coming to an end this financial year. Nutrition work will continue in Utopia with continued support from PHN NT.



Alex McClean
AEES Manager
<http://aridedge.com.au>

ALICE SPRINGS COMMUNITY GARDEN

Over the past year the Alice Springs Community Garden has continued to grow both as a hub for community learning and events and as an 'amazing', productive garden in the arid zone.

Warm thanks must go to our committee who contribute in so many ways and whose time and energy are absolutely critical to the management of the Garden, all the Garden's plot holders, supporters, its committee and ALEC staff for their earnest and rewarding contributions to another year-long success story.

Just over 7 years ago the Garden began as a newly fenced off patch of mostly bare dirt, couch and buffel grass and it has been rapidly developing ever since pretty much in line with the original Master Plan. The vision was to create a beautiful, healthy Garden and the local knowledge and skills to act as a hub for a Network of Community Gardens that could grow around Alice Springs and beyond to schools and communities in Central Australia. The dream of a Network remains achievable if environmental and community health policies encourage greater interest and commitment to growing local food and reducing our carbon footprint.

In collaboration with ALEC there is room for an exciting collaboration between the Garden and many of our community and research agencies

that foster local and regional innovation, self sufficiency, health and wellbeing and possibly even tourism. Working with local Aboriginal elders to explore and experiment with land management practices for bush foods and medicines would be exciting. Only the sky and climate change seem limits to sustainable growth if energy and ideas flourish.

Over the past two years, Ben Wall and his Work for the Dole teams have added much colour and interest to the Garden's infrastructure and an NT Community Benefit Grant is providing funding for an office/kitchen and an accessible toilet to be completed early in the new financial year. How to make best use of these facilities and fund the arising operational costs is an immediate and longer term challenge ahead for the Garden committee and community as well as ALEC.

The Garden's green inventory now includes 44 individual and 10 community plots and some 40 fruit trees and grape vines. Considerable ongoing effort goes into making and keeping our soils fertile and keeping the irrigation system working effectively. Sunday morning working bees have ensured a rapid turnover of high quality compost and many individuals have taken on small but essential tasks to keep community plots and the Garden as a whole healthy and productive. Special thanks must go to our working bee regulars.

Continued growth has placed additional demands on infrastructure and human resources at the

More than 300 people enjoyed the Garden Autumn Fete



ASCG COMMITTEE

GOVERNANCE POD: Bruce Simmons (Convenor), Kim Mackay (Deputy Convenor), Wendy Mann (Secretary/Treasurer)

PLOT MEMBERSHIP POD REP:

Philippe Freidel

COMMUNICATION/MEDIA POD REP:

Anna Madabushi

FUNDRAISING/EVENTS POD REP:

John Bermingham

MAINTENANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE

POD REP: Allan O'Keefe

HEALTHY GARDEN POD REP: Bruce

Simmons

GENERAL MEMBERS: Jodi Lennox

(ALEC rep), Toby Speare

ASCG FINANCIALS 2017-18

Job Profit & Loss

Income		
Grants rolled over		
PAWA - Audit		\$320.93
Project Contribution	\$783.86	\$0.00
Memberships	\$640.00	\$335.00
Merchandise	\$5,529.16	\$5,278.91
Registration fees	\$9,610.88	\$8,463.64
Rent income	\$250.00	\$250.00
Sundry income	\$54.55	\$0.00
Donations - unreceipted	\$557.95	\$1,040.80
Fundraising - General	\$7,868.72	\$537.27
Total Income	\$25,295.12	\$16,226.55
Expense		
Administration	\$3,124.57	\$1,114.18
Advertising and promotion		\$332.80
ICT	\$9.09	\$936.36
Equipment & furn.- non cap	\$841.89	\$1,702.28
Water	\$11,157.63	\$7,457.32
Hire		\$316.00
Project Contribution		\$4,236.90
Maintenance & Repairs	\$23.59	
Office Consumables	\$10.91	
Photocopying - Internal	\$23.34	\$19.23
Productions	\$17.50	\$5.27
Building-Repairs & maintenance	\$17.22	\$0.00
Subscriptions and memberships	\$45.45	\$0.00
Materials	\$1,044.15	\$2,930.25
Fundraising - General	\$229.95	\$120.98
Total Expense	\$16,545.29	\$19,171.57
Net Profit/(Loss)	\$8,749.83	(\$2,945.02)

The fundrasing amount does include the funds rasied for the external group and then sent to them this finacial year. This was \$3824.83 so true profit for 2018 was \$4,925

Cash at bank as at 1/7/2017 \$3,140.11
Cash at bank as at 30/6/2018 \$11,880.14

Liability of fundrasing to external group \$3824.83

Garden. Our small Garden shed is now too cluttered for comfort and elements of our irrigation system need to be replaced and automated.

The work of the volunteer Garden committee continues to grow in terms of governance, staging events, fundraising, garden health and productivity management, hosting visitors and groups, communications and networking. Additional committee members are always needed and warmly welcomed.



Happy gardeners!

Financial Report

In summary the Garden commenced the year with Cash at Bank of \$3,140.11 and ended it with \$8,055.31, a very pleasing profit of \$4,915.20. The Garden has yet to make an agreed contribution to the new building of \$7,000 so it is anticipated that the Garden's end of year financial position will be around \$1,055 in the bank.

Due primarily to some one-off major water line breakages our annual water bill jumped from \$7,457.32 to \$11,157.63 but costs for garden equipment and garden materials including manure fell from \$2,930 to \$1,886.04. Plot rental income was up to \$9,610.88 from \$8,463.64. Produce from the Garden and Bruce's home garden was sold at the Food for Alice stall, raising \$5,529 in income. Our major fundraising event raised \$3,384.

Thanks to our Treasurer Wendy Mann and to Carmel at ALEC for keeping us on track. Thanks too to Jimmy and Nicole and all the team members at ALEC for continuing their wonderfully enthusiastic commitment to all aspects of the Garden and its development.



Bruce Simmons
ASCG Convenor

<http://www.alicecommunitygarden.org.au>

This year has been a steady year for Food for Alice. We have managed to keep the supply of local fruit and vegetables as steady as possible and proved that we can hold sales to an average of 35 customers per week. Sales and produce purchases remained the same as last financial year.

Food for Alice is a social enterprise of ALEC. Food For Alice runs a weekly farmers produce market on Saturdays 9-11am at the Arid Lands Environment Centre, 90 Gap Road.

This year there has been an evaluation on how we can improve our own systems to make it easier for suppliers to supply fresh produce. With limited time resources being able to pay our staff we still rely on a small amount of volunteer hours. While this is not actually a bad thing, our intention has always been to prove that you can run a small farmers market, supplying fresh local food under a business model.

This does have its challenges. The fact that we only supply local produce means that when we have a grasshopper plague, or when our gardeners are transitioning their gardens from summer to winter our supply levels drop.



Prolific supplier, and gardening guru Bruce Simmons

This also means that we only sell produce that is in season; so for example, we have to deal with a glut of lemons at peak lemon season, and then no lemons for the rest of the year. Since we do not supplement our supply from other locations, this means we have less produce to sell to our customers and we then have to manage the



mismatch of demand vs supply.

So in saying all this, our customers are a pretty resilient group of people that understand the fragile systems of growing food and that sometimes what we want to cook is just not available. A challenge for the future is how we educate more people to eat with the seasons and not place so much reliance on food shipped in from overseas.

Our next step is to increase the supply and customers so that Food For Alice is no longer relying on people volunteering their time. Another main aim is to be able to give back to ALEC a percentage of sales in order to further support the ongoing sustainability of the organisation.

A big thankyou to the FFA team, Carmel, Kate, Karine and Alex for their passion for local food.

	2018	2017
Sales*	\$34,223.93	\$34,026.60
Total Income	\$34,223.93	\$34,026.60
Equipment and depreciation	\$440.41	\$783.31
Other	\$1,030.55	\$618.34
Produce*	\$22,396.75	\$22,488.96
Staff costs	\$8,930.55	\$9,131.56
Total Expenditure	\$32,798.26	\$33,022.17
Profit	\$1,425.67	\$1,004.43

* Includes cash purchases and sales not captured in the financial systems from 1/7/2016 to 31/12/2017



Carmel Vandermolen
FFA Coordinator

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/108715702520033/>

As the technological advances of the modern world continue to disconnect many from nature, ALEC understands the importance of people finding ways to reconnect.

Beyond it being beneficial for general well-being and mental health, a connection to nature enables people to understand the importance of protecting the eco-systems and processes on which we as humans depend on.

The earth has entered what scientists are calling the 6th mass extinction event - or the Anthropocene extinction - where animal populations across the planet have decreased by as much as 80 per cent since 1900. Couple this with a changing climate, and we need urgent action on protecting eco-systems and species.

Biodiversity Matters is both an ALEC program and concept - reconnecting people to nature, often through conservation volunteering. Regular Biodiversity Matters field trips have not happened in 2017-18 due to a lack of resources, however a number of activities still occurred:

Bushcare projects

ALEC's work in directly protecting ecosystems increased with Arid Edge receiving an NT Environment Grant for two Bushcare projects, one for the Lower Todd and Ilparpa Claypans. These projects are focused on protecting big trees from

buffel grass fires through working with Traditional Owner family groups to clear the fire threat and engage the broader public through organised workshops.

Community nature walk

In late June, ALEC organised the Walk to Wigleys event. It was organised as part of the launch of the Outback Trek fundraiser. More than 50 people participated in the walk from the Telegraph station to Wigleys Gorge. It was a fantastic event and enjoyed by all who participated. The engagement of people in nature as a community is something we're keen to organise more of in 2018-19.

Friends of the Ilparpa Claypans

The Friends of Ilparpa Claypans group has continued organising working bees to remove buffel grass from key areas around the claypans. ALEC is happy to support this volunteer activity through providing coverage under ALEC's volunteer and public liability insurance. Increasingly areas around the claypans are being transformed with the removal of buffel. In 2017-18, the Friends group decided that it would prefer to be covered under the Landcare umbrella rather than ALEC. ALEC is happy to see this group and its work continuing throughout 2018.

Promoting Conservation Volunteering

ALEC has been maintaining the Biodiversity Matters Facebook Page, and promoting local working bees and educational opportunities.

Participants on the Walk To Wigleys, June 2018



Repower Alice Springs

RePower has developed its vision for a solar powered future for our community.

Our mission is for 100% solar power for the Alice Springs electricity grid from Hermannsburg (Ntaria) to Santa Teresa (Lyentye Apurte) by 2030 through building community capacity; Advocacy; Community power projects and partnerships.

Action at all levels includes:

- Government: Lobbying NT politicians including meetings with Minister for Renewables and Member for Braintree Dale Wakefield, Minister for Housing, Community Development and Community Services Gerry McCarthy, Treasurer Nicole Manison, Member for Araluen Robin Lambley, Member for Namatjira Chansey Paech, and at the Federal level, Member for Lingiari Warren Snowdon.
- Industry: Meetings with key stakeholders including Alice Springs Town Council, Desert Knowledge Australia, Jacana, Territory Generation, PWC, NT Airports. Poster presentation at the 2018 Developing the North Conference in Alice Springs.
- Community solar plant: Territory Generation invited RePower Alice Springs to develop a community solar plant collaboratively with them, in September 2017. Joint planning meetings were held from February 2018, and RePower seeking legal advice on community energy models. As at July 2018, Territory Generation has withdrawn support.
- Community education and engagement: 2017 survey of community priorities, and 2018 survey of interest in community solar

investment. We have shown community eagerness to invest, and frustration at government. The Alice Springs community wants solar energy for environmental and community development benefits.

- Civil society engagement: Presentations to NTCOSS interagency meeting, Rotary Clubs, Alice Springs Rural Residents Association, the Eco Fair and Alice Springs Town Council's Environment Advisory Committee.
- Individual engagement: Alice Springs Show, EcoFair and regular stalls at the Todd all markets. Together with Territory Generation and ALEC we organised a tour of the 5MW BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) at the site of the Ron Goodin generator for World Environment Day.
- Support: Successful applications for \$5,000 grants from Climate Action Network Australia and NT Department of the Environment
- Repower Alice Springs acknowledges and thanks ALEC for auspicings and supporting our group, and all volunteers and supporters.



Participants at the Community Power workshop



<https://www.facebook.com/repoweralicesprings/>

**Harshini Bartlett
RAS Convenor**

Participants on the Battery Energy Storage System tour, June 2018





Strategic Aim:

'ALEC is an effective, influential and sustainable organisation'

ORGANISATION

ALEC staff, Alex Read and Carmel Vandermolen, signing up members

The definition of resilience is the capacity or ability to recover quickly from challenges or difficulties. This year we made a substantial paper loss, of \$101 685.

The breakdown of this loss was:

- \$50 000 from NT Grant reporting due to calendar year rather than financial year
- \$34 229 from Arid Edge Environmental Services operational loss
- \$17 456 from other ALEC activities

This year ALEC contracted a new auditor, Merit and Partners. This has resulted in a change in the chart of accounts for the Annual Report and an aggregation of different income and expenditure lines from last year's report. This has made a big difference for our financial reporting for this year.

The separation of accounts from our main enterprising activities through Arid Edge Environmental Services (AEES) from the rest of ALEC's activities is another step towards a better understanding of ALEC's complex financial and operational systems and in so doing, building ALEC's financial resilience.

In 2018, ALEC showed improvement in some areas and some concerns in others. Based on the income and expenditure statement for 2018, below is a table showing the percentages of each income and expense line. The percentages permit some analysis to improve understanding and assessment of ALEC's performance and identify any trends.

Table X Statement of Profit or Loss with percentages (2017 and 2018)

Income	2018	%	2017	%
NT Gov Grant	50000	4.44%	100000	7.45%
Project grants	91423	8.12%	-48341	-3.60%
Earned income	808400	71.84%	1159638	86.44%
Donations receipted	130620	11.61%	88705	6.61%
Donations unreceipted	3802	0.34%	3583	0.27%
Memberships	9355	0.83%	11748	0.88%
Other revenue	19577	1.74%	19488	1.45%
Fundraising	12166	1.08%	6700	0.50%
TOTAL	1125343	100%	1341521	100.00%
Expenditure				
Cost of service delivery	99283	8.09%	169613	13.15%
Management and Operational	55002	4.48%	72094	5.59%
Campaigns, Events and Promotions	43069	3.51%	33690	2.61%
Fundraising Costs	11895	0.97%	3700	0.29%
Audit Fees	11225	0.91%	7299	0.57%
Depreciation	18402	1.50%	16446	1.28%
Motor Vehicle	31985	2.61%	47649	3.69%
Other	9442	0.77%	4276	0.33%
Staff Costs	946725	77.16%	934848	72.49%
TOTAL	1227028	100.00%	1289615	100.00%
TOTAL LOSS/SURPLUS	-101685		51906	

The Good News

Earning own income.

Five years ago, ALEC was highly dependent on government grants with around 90% of income coming from government grants. ALEC has turned this on its head with increasing its own funds through earned income (72%).

Getting on top of project grants.

In 2018, grant funding increased to \$91 423 (12% of income). Project grant increases for 2018 and the acquittal of numerous grants this financial year were important steps forwards (Thanks Rachel O'Leary).

Increasing donations

Receipted donations increased to \$130 620 (2018) up from \$88 705 (2017) - a 47% increase on last year. This translates into a 5% increase in total income to 11.61% in 2018 as opposed to 6.61% in 2017.

The Concerns

Fundraising.

Fundraising is a continuing challenge for ALEC. The increased costs associated with fundraising in 2018 is due to the upfront expenses for the Inspired Adventures Larapinta Trek in 2019 (\$5175). Despite this, fundraising is not delivering an adequate return on investment – both 2017 and 2018 our ROI for fundraising has been 1.81:1 (adjusted for 2018), and this doesn't include the staff costs for organising events.

We need to re-assess how we're raising funds through events and find better ways to increase our return on investment. The Inspired Adventures Larapinta Trek is a potential risk, however it is important ALEC is trying new ideas to fundraise.

Staff costs

While income decreased by 16.11% this year on last year's figures, staff costs as a proportion of overall costs increased by almost 5%. The need for ALEC to manage our staff load based on available funds and income generation was a lesson learned in 2018. Getting the balance right in 2019 will be critical to restoring ALEC to sound financial footing.

Arid Edge loss

The \$34K loss by Arid Edge this year was unexpected. This is largely due to an overextension of staff and the complicated nature

of the accounts.

Moving Forwards

Philanthropic donors

Meeting with Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network (AEGN) in August 2018 will hopefully open up opportunities to engage with philanthropic people on the east coast with ALEC's compelling vision and scope of work.

Arid Edge Separation

The development of the business plan for Arid Edge and the internal separation of AEES from

ALEC starting at the beginning of FY18-19 will hopefully yield positive results.

Strengthening systems

The ALEC Board and staff held a strategic planning meeting in July, which has led to a stronger and more focused strategic plan. Improving the financial and operational systems within ALEC will also support a more productive and effective workplace and enable management to better track progress towards our vision and strategic objectives.

ALEC BUSINESS

This year has been a challenging year with many different competing priorities. ALEC is a dynamic and complex organisation which requires a lot of financial oversight and resource management.

For my main part as the Business Operations Manager my focus is on making sure ALEC is running its back of house administration, finance and resourcing including human resourcing as effectively and efficiently as possible. This financial year has had a focus on improving financial governance with the support of the ALEC board and staff.

This has meant improvements in procedures and reporting between the ALEC board and management, reporting on external reporting requirements, and more oversight in budget management.

At the same time there is the pressure to find ways to increase our funding diversification and manage day to day activities. On top of this there is the ever increasing pressure to make sure there is enough money in the bank to pay our bills and wages for staff.

Maintaining ALEC requires dedication and commitment from staff, board and volunteers.

The ongoing administration and financial requirements of any organisation that works within our current political and business environment is overall a complex issue. The regulation of not-for-profit and charity organisations means we end up with no less than 4 different regulatory bodies that we report to as well as the individual reporting for

every grant and contract that ALEC oversees.

Every small improvement ALEC makes in its' back of house procedures leads to less resources required for reporting requirements, and an increase in resources in getting on with what we are here for in the first place – protecting the environment.

This next year our focus will be on improving internal systems and procedures with the aim of allowing for more energy to be focused on ALEC's core activities.

Our commitment to the environment is something that we do not take on lightly, and we will continue to keep improving and making sure we are here for the Central Australian community.



Carmel Vandermolen
Business and Operations Manager

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

In a world saturated by media, it is increasingly challenging to be able to 'cut through'. People's inboxes are full of emails, many asking for your attention, time and money. Social media is now dictated by algorithms so that unless you pay your message will get significantly less exposure.

Every day 60 new charities are registered in Australia. This makes it an incredibly competitive funding space to be existing within. As a regional on the ground organisation ALEC does not have the reach of the large national environmental organisations, meaning our funding pool is much more restricted.

Despite these challenges, ALEC is still punching well above its weight and making a significant impact. ALEC's communications are a big part of this success story.

ALEC has had a strong public presence on the implication of fracking in the NT, and in particular the potential impact on our climate. This issue has dominated both organisational and communications activities.

ALEC has also spent a considerable amount of work reaching out to other organisations and communities in other states of Australia to raise the alarm around the climate implications of fracking.

ALEC has continued with the regular Thorny News email updates and the quarterly hardcopy Devils Advocate magazine which remains an excellent outreach tool.

Despite the large amount of organisational time required, regular events continue to be connection points with the community.

Beyond the weekly Food For Alice Produce Markets, Sunday Working Bees at the community garden, and a multitude of campaigning meetings ALEC organised 28 events in the last financial year.

ALEC has developed a strategic focus on community organising to increase membership and donation income, while building people power and momentum around our vision.

During 2017-18 ALEC employed Laurie May who updated volunteer engagement documentation and our fundraising and partnership policies. This work combined with workshops and phone banking has helped to increase ALEC members this year. Laurie finished up with ALEC in March 2018.

Jesse Hancock was employed for 1 day per week from April - end of June to support organising our database, running 2 Building People Power workshops and coordinating phone banking in the lead up to the end of financial year.

In 2018-19, we hope to be able to keep this momentum going and find ways to resource ALEC to grow our organising capacity. Staff will need to continue to improve their understanding of the Nationbuilder website platform to assist in this endeavour.

ALEC donations have increased and membership numbers remained over 300. ALEC has also had significant reach through our media releases totalling 32 for the year, as well as through the strength of our policy work and submissions.



Nicole Pietsch
Strategy and Communications Manager

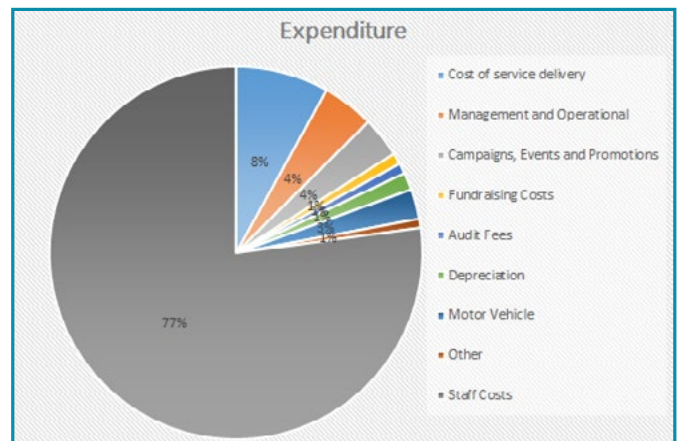
ALEC sustained a loss in 2017/8. The underlying reason is that most of salary of three core staff - Jimmy Cocking, Nicole Pietsch and Carmel Vandermolen - is not funded by grants.

ALEC relies on donations and on profits from its other activities, notably Arid Edge Environmental Services (AEES), to resource the advocacy, communications, campaigning, coordination and management that these staff do and that is critical to ALEC's success.

Donations were up in 2017/8, to what may be a record \$130,620 for receipted donations (i.e. tax deductible for the donor) and \$3,802 unreceipted donations (from passing the bucket around at events etc). Kudos to staff and volunteers for this fundraising effort, as well as to all the donors!

Nearly half of the \$101,685 loss in 2017/18 was an 'on paper loss' that arose because of the need to correct an accounting error made in the previous year's financial statement. The 2017 ALEC financial statement wrongly showed the full amount of ALEC's annual grant of \$100,000 from the NT Government as income in 2016/17 whereas only 6 months of that grant (Jan-June 17, \$50,000) was actually income in 2016/7.

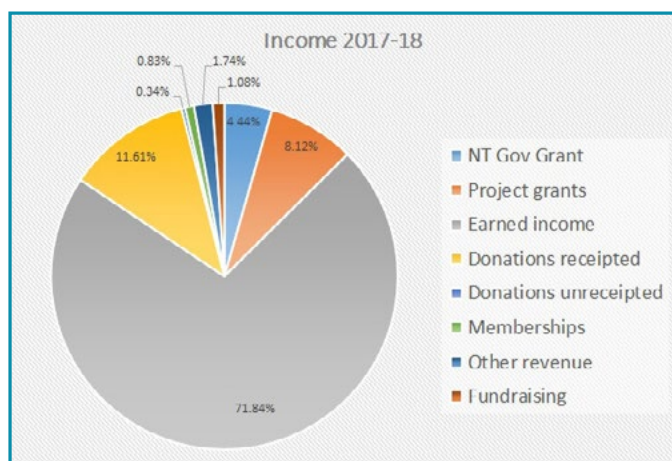
Due to the need to correct this error, only \$50,000 of the \$100,000 NT grant is shown as income in the 2017/8 financial statement. Had this error not been made, ALEC would have shown a smaller profit—\$1,906 rather than \$51,906—in 2016/17, and a loss of only \$51,685, rather than \$101,685, in 2017/18. \$34,229 of this \$51,685 loss derives from AEES and \$17,456 from ALEC's other activities.



During the year, ALEC Board and staff worked on improving ALEC's financial governance. Kudos and many thanks go to Keith Castle and Sunder Maderbushi who volunteered their time and financial management expertise as external members of ALEC committees.

ALEC's 2017/18 initiatives included reappointment of ALEC Fund Committee, as required by tax laws and Department of Environment rules for ALEC's deductible gift recipient status; establishment of a Finance & Audit Committee to enable closer attention to budgeting and audit processes than is possible in full Board meetings; selective tender process for selection of an auditor; separation of AEES accounts from ALEC's other accounts plus software changes to enhance AEES staff's capacity to monitor and manage project budgets.

To further improve ALEC's financial sustainability, ALEC Board asked that an administrative charge be applied to activities that ALEC hosts or auspices in order to recoup costs that ALEC incurs as host/auspicing organisation. Following discussions with affected people, a 15% charge began to be levied from July 2018.



Jocelyn Davies
Treasurer

Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated

Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

Contents

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

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Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated

Board's Report

30 June 2018

BOARD'S REPORT

Your Board members submit the financial report of the Arid Land Environment Centre Incorporated ("the Association") for the financial year ended 30 June 2018.

BOARD MEMBERS

The names of Board members during the year and as at the date of this report are:

Chair:	Jodi Lennox	(Vice Chair from 1 July 17 to 15 Nov 17)
Vice Chair:	Stewart Baillie	(Chair from 1 July 17 to 15 Nov 17)
Secretary:	Barb Molanus	
Treasurer:	Jocelyn Davies	
Ordinary members:	Rosalie Schultz	Tim Brand
	Liz Moore	Brenda Shields (commenced 15 Nov 2017)
	Simon Cheers (resigned 27 June 2018)	Jason Quin (resigned 19 Aug 2017)
	Rodney Angelo (finished 15 Nov 2017)	Isobel Milne (finished 15 Nov 2017)
	Anjali Palmer (resigned 19 July 2017)	

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Association during the financial year has been advocating for the protection of nature and ecologically sustainable development in the arid lands region.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The Net Deficit amounted to \$101,685 (2017: \$51,906 Net Surplus).

In our opinion:

- the accompanying financial report as set out on the attached pages, being a special purpose financial statement, is drawn up so as to present fairly the state of affairs of the Association as at the end of the financial year and the result of the Association for the year then ended;
- the accounts of the Association have been properly prepared and are in accordance with the books of account of the Association; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Board member:  B. MOLANUS

Board member:  JODI LENNOX

Dated this 29 day of Oct. 2018

Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated

Statement of Profit or Loss

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

	Note	2018 * \$	2017 \$
Income			
NT Government Grants		50,000	100,000
Project Grants	2 (a)	91,423	(48,341)
Earned Income	2 (b)	808,400	1,159,638
Donations Receipted		130,620	88,705
Donations Un-receipted		3,802	3,583
Membership		9,355	11,748
Other Revenue	2 (c)	19,577	19,488
Fundraising		12,166	6,700
Total income		1,125,343	1,341,521
Expenditure			
Cost of Service Delivery	3 (a)	99,283	169,613
Management & Operational cost	3 (b)	55,002	72,094
Campaigns, Events & Promotions	3 (c)	43,069	33,690
Fundraising Costs		11,895	3,700
Audit Fees		11,225	7,299
Depreciation		18,402	16,446
Motor Vehicle		31,985	47,649
Other	3 (d)	9,442	4,276
Staff Costs	3 (e)	946,725	934,848
Total Expenditure		1,227,028	1,289,615
Net (Deficit) / Surplus		(101,685)	51,906

*Refer to Schedule 1 for the Split of Operating Results between Arid Edge Environmental Services (AEES) and all other ALEC Activities and for information about NT Government Grant

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

As At 30 June 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	735,427	757,480
Trade and other receivables	5	32,812	95,066
Prepayments and rental deposits		6,378	4,185
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		774,617	856,731
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	6	136,090	76,876
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		136,090	76,876
TOTAL ASSETS		910,707	933,607
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	7	216,147	136,361
Unexpended grants		331,012	330,617
Provisions for employee benefits	8	57,806	62,003
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		604,965	528,981
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provision for employee benefits	8	28,175	25,374
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		28,175	25,374
TOTAL LIABILITIES		633,140	554,355
NET ASSETS		277,567	379,252
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Retained profits		277,567	379,252
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		277,567	379,252

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated

Statement of Changes in Equity

As At 30 June 2018

	Total Equity \$
Balance at 1 July 2017	379,252
Net (Deficit) / Surplus during the year	(101,685)
Balance at 30 June 2018	277,567
Balance at 1 July 2016	327,346
Net Surplus / (Deficit) during the year	51,906
Balance at 30 June 2017	379,252

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from customers		1,174,276	1,294,995
Payments to suppliers and employees		(1,127,401)	(1,129,120)
Interest received		8,688	8,980
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	9	55,563	174,855
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(78,525)	(27,906)
Proceeds from disposals of property, plant and equipment		909	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		(77,616)	(27,906)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Net cash provided by / (used in) financing activities		-	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Increase / (Decrease) in Cash		(22,053)	146,949
Cash at beginning of year		757,480	610,531
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash at end of year	4	735,427	757,480

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounting policies set out below have been applied consistently to all periods presented in the financial report.

(a) Statement of compliance

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Act Northern Territory* and *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The Board has determined that Arid Land Environment Centre Incorporated ("the Association") is not a reporting entity and is a not-for-profit entity because in the Board's opinion there are unlikely to exist users who are unable to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy all of their information needs.

The special purpose financial report has been prepared in accordance with the basis of preparation and accounting policies described below. Australian Accounting Standards Board, (AASBs) adopted by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ("AASB"), and other authoritative pronouncements of the AASB have not been complied with except to the extent stated below.

(b) Basis of preparation

The financial report is presented in Australian dollars and has been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

The preparation of a financial report in conformity with Australian Accounting Standards requires the Association to make judgements, estimates and assumption that affect the application of policies and reported amounts as assets and liabilities, income and expenses. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgements about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results may differ from these estimates. These accounting policies have been consistently applied by the Association.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The special purpose financial report has been prepared on accrual basis.

(c) Income tax

The Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(d) Income

Income is recognised when the amount can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Association and specific criteria relating to the type of income as noted below, has been satisfied.

Income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continue

(e) Grant income

Grant income is recognised when the Association obtains control over the funds, which is generally when the grant is acquired

If conditions are attached to the grant that must be satisfied before the Association is eligible to receive the contribution, recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are met.

(f) Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Association is entitled to it.

(g) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

(h) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Items of property, plant and equipment acquired for nil or nominal consideration have been recorded at the acquisition date fair value.

(i) Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the assets useful life to the Association, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

(j) Employee benefits

Liabilities for employee benefits for wages, salaries, annual leave and long-service leave represent present obligations resulting from employees' services provided to reporting date and are calculated at undiscounted amounts based on remuneration wage and salary rates that the Association expects to pay as at reporting date including related on-costs, such as workers' compensation insurance. Contributions are made by Association to an employee superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred.

The Association's obligation in respect of long-term employee benefits is the amount of future benefit that employees have earned in return for their service in the current and prior periods plus related on-costs; that benefit is calculated at undiscounted amount. Long service leave is accrued in respect of employees with more than five years employment with the Association.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

1 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continue

(k) Going Concern

The accounts of Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated have been prepared on the basis that it is a going concern and that the Association will continue to operate. The Association's future as a going concern is dependent upon grants and subject to compliance attached to grants received.

On this basis the Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated will generate sufficient cash flow to be able to pay its debts when they fall due. The members of the Association believe that the going concern assumption is appropriate.

(l) Comparatives

Comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year. The class of income and expenses presented in 2016-17 financial report differs from the amount presented in the 2017-18 comparative amounts and are considered immaterial. Overall, the changes in reclassification in the comparative amount has \$nil effect in the Association's statement of profit or loss.

2 (a) PROJECT GRANTS

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Grant income	160,000	-
Unexpended grants	(68,577)	(48,341)
	<u>91,423</u>	<u>(48,341)</u>

2 (b) EARNED INCOME

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Project contribution	704,771	1,053,173
Consultancies	32,572	17,642
Merchandise	56,016	78,295
Registration fees	15,041	10,528
	<u>808,400</u>	<u>1,159,638</u>

2 (c) OTHER REVENUE

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Interest	8,726	8,980
Vehicle contribution	605	543
Sundry and other income	10,246	9,965
	<u>19,577</u>	<u>19,488</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

3 (a) COST OF SERVICE DELIVERY

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Materials	82,863	132,018
Equipment & furn.- non cap	9,755	13,537
Hire	6,665	24,058
	99,283	169,613

The above expenses were incurred mainly with Arid Edge Environmental Services, Food for Alice and Community Gardens works.

3 (b) MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL COSTS

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Electricity & Gas	11,910	9,386
ICT	7,818	7,952
Rent	5,720	11,360
Insurance	5,234	17,813
Bad Debts	5,028	290
Subscriptions and memberships	3,432	2,255
Bank fees	2,735	1,844
Cleaning	2,652	2,238
Maintenance & Repairs	2,228	194
Telephone	1,724	3,826
Office Consumables	1,453	2,012
Fees & Permits	1,366	807
Sundry Expenses	3,702	12,117
	55,002	72,094

3 (c) Campaigns, Events & Promotions

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Advertising and Promotion	16,235	8,313
Catering	6,291	7,260
Multi-Media Production	13,824	13,003
Photocopying	6,155	5,083
Workshops	564	31
	43,069	33,690

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

3 (d) OTHER EXPENSES

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Occupation, health and safety training	2,475	845
Write-off	6,161	-
Other expenses	806	3,431
	9,442	4,276

3 (e) STAFF COSTS

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Salaries and wages	657,656	631,481
Sub-contractor fees	146,270	155,433
Superannuation	63,077	58,572
Staff travel and allowances	60,243	49,264
Other staff benefits	19,479	40,098
	946,725	934,848

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

4 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Cash at Bank – Ops Account	201,836	14,340
Cash at Bank – Gift Account	79,364	57,675
Cash at Bank – Holding Account	56,689	305,837
Cash at Bank – Pay Pal Account	26,553	16,704
ALEC Debit Card	2,020	1,398
AEES Debit Card	929	1,965
Term Deposit	365,555	358,156
Cash on hand	2,481	1,405
	<u>735,427</u>	<u>757,480</u>

5 TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES

Trade & Sundry Debtors	39,840	97,066
Less: Provision for Doubtful Debts	(7,028)	(2,000)
	<u>32,812</u>	<u>95,066</u>

6 PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Leasehold Improvements		
At cost	110,298	38,340
Accumulated amortisation	(15,346)	(9,650)
	<u>94,952</u>	<u>28,690</u>
Furniture, fixtures and fittings		
At cost	26,859	22,574
Accumulated depreciation	(16,337)	(16,508)
	<u>10,522</u>	<u>6,066</u>
Motor vehicles		
At cost	64,115	64,115
Accumulated depreciation	(33,499)	(21,995)
	<u>30,616</u>	<u>42,120</u>
	<u>136,090</u>	<u>76,876</u>

7 TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

Trade payable and other payables	142,873	50,752
Accrued Expenses	22,614	18,144
Payroll Liabilities	31,758	30,587
GST Payable	18,902	36,878
	<u>216,147</u>	<u>136,361</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

8 PROVISION FOR EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current		
Annual leave	28,320	27,540
Long service leave	29,486	34,463
	<u>57,806</u>	<u>62,003</u>
Non-current portion		
Long service leave	<u>28,175</u>	<u>25,374</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities	<u>85,981</u>	<u>87,377</u>

9 RECONCILIATION OF OPERATING SURPLUS TO NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2018 \$	2017 \$
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	(101,685)	51,906
Depreciation	18,402	16,446
Provision for employee entitlements	(1,396)	30,604
Changes in assets & liabilities:		
Trade and other receivables	62,254	(43,336)
Prepayments	(2,193)	7,806
Unexpended Grants	395	49,694
Trade and other payables	<u>79,786</u>	<u>61,735</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities	<u>55,563</u>	<u>174,855</u>

10 EVENTS AFTER THE END OF REPORTING PERIOD

The financial report was authorised for issue on 29 October 2018 by the Board.

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Association, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Association in future financial years.

11 STATUTORY INFORMATION

The registered office and principal place of business of the Association is:

Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated
90 Gap Road
Alice Springs NT 0871

Schedule 1 – Split of Operating Results

For the Year Ended 30 June 2018

	AEES ² \$	Other ALEC ³ Activities \$	Total \$
Income			
NT Government Grants ¹	-	50,000	50,000
Project Grants	1,738	89,685	91,423
Earned Income	586,029	222,371	808,400
Donations Receipted	-	130,620	130,620
Donations Un-receipted	-	3,802	3,802
Membership	-	9,355	9,355
Other Revenue	6,013	13,564	19,577
Fundraising	-	12,166	12,166
Total income	593,780	531,563	1,125,343
Expenditure			
Cost of Service Delivery	70,496	28,787	99,283
Management & Operational cost	7,001	48,001	55,002
Campaigns, Events & Promotions	4,472	38,597	43,069
Fundraising Costs	254	11,641	11,895
Audit Fees	-	11,225	11,225
Depreciation	2,459	15,943	18,402
Motor Vehicle	6,959	25,026	31,985
Other	1,829	7,613	9,442
Staff Costs	534,539	412,186	946,725
Total Expenditure	628,009	599,019	1,227,028
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	(34,229)	(67,456)	(101,685)

¹ The funding from the NT Government is based on a calendar year and therefore only half of the grant should have been recognised in 2017. To correct this, ALEC has recognised less income in the 2018 year to bring the total income recognised to date in line with the grant agreement.

² AEES: Arid Edge Environmental Services

³ Arid Lands Environment Centre

Independent auditor's report to the members of Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated (the "Association"), which comprises the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 30 June 2018, Statement of Profit or Loss, Statement of Changes in Equity, and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the Board's Report.

In our opinion, except for the effects of the matters described in the *Basis of Qualified Opinion* section of our report, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated as of 30 June 2018 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

Basis for Opinion

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable to establish an efficient system of internal control over income, other than grant and earned income, prior to its initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, as the evidence available to us regarding such income was limited, our audit procedures with respect to income, other than grant and earned income, were restricted to the amounts recorded in the financial records. We therefore do not express an opinion on whether the income the Association received is complete, and we cannot determine the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had this limitation not existed.

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

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

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution and Reliance

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated meet the requirements of the *Associations Act* and the Association's constitution. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated and should not be distributed to parties other than Arid Lands Environment Centre Incorporated. Our opinion is not modified in respect of these matters.

Other Matter

The financial report of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2017 was audited by another auditor who expressed a modified opinion on that report on 23 October 2017.

The Responsibility of the Board for the Financial Report

The Association's Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements, and has determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, are

appropriate to meet the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Act NT* and the Association's Constitution and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Board's responsibility also includes such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report for the year ended 30 June 2018 as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

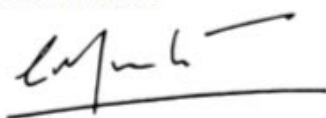
As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

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

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

Merit Partners

Merit Partners



MunLi Chee
Director

DARWIN
30 October 2018

ALEC'S TEAM



Jimmy Cocking
CEO



Carmel Vandermolen
Business Manager



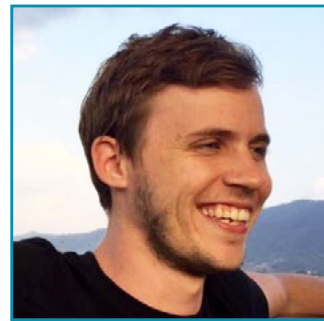
Nicole Pietsch
Strategy and
Communications Manager



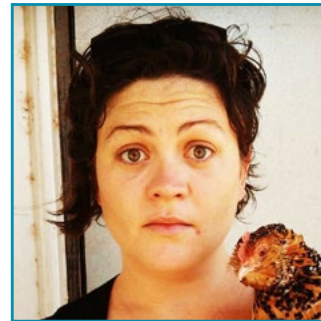
Rachel O'Leary
Science Engagement
Officer



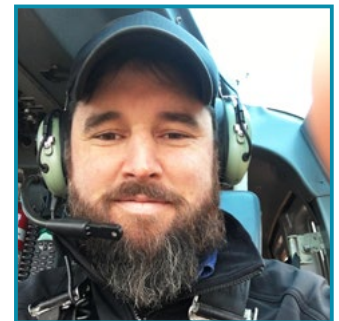
Alex Read
Policy Officer



Jesse Hancock
Frack Free Coordinator



Laurie May
Community Engagement
Officer



Alex McLean
Arid Edge
Manager



Sunil Dhanji
Arid Edge



Hilton Chilvers
Arid Edge



Ra Sim
Arid Edge



Ingrid Phyland
Arid Edge

ALEC BOARD as of June 30th 2018

Chair: **Jodi Lennox**

Deputy Chair: **Stewart Baillie**

Secretary: **Barb Molanus**

Treasurer: **Jocelyn Davies**

Public Officer: **Jason Quin**

General Members: **Rosalie Schultz, Tim Brand, Liz Moore, Brenda Shields**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Arid Lands Environment Centre would like to extend a sincere thankyou to the following organisations for their financial and in-kind support in 2017-18:



desertSMART EcoFair



Ten Deserts



Alice Springs Community Garden



Beyond Nuclear Initiative



Frack Free Alliance



Arid Edge Environmental Services



ALEC would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of our Desert Defenders, donors and community volunteers.



Arid Lands Environment Centre
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PO Box 2796, 0871 NT 08 89522497
www.alec.org.au info@alec.org.au
<https://www.facebook.com/aridlandsec/>
[@AridLandsEC](#)

Arid Edge employees inspecting completed track works near Spencer Gorge, West MacDonnell Ranges