



Friends of
the Earth
Melbourne

2020-21 Annual Report



Friends of the Earth
312 Smith St, Collingwood, VICTORIA 3066
03 94198700 | melbournefoe.org.au

Friends of the Earth Melbourne acknowledges First Nations sovereignty and recognises that the land on which we work and meet was stolen during the violent colonisation of so called Australia. Friends of the Earth Melbourne is housed in Yálla-birrang on the Wurundjeri people's land, Woiwurrung language of the Kulin Nation. Our work takes us to other parts of the Kulin Nation - Dja Dja Wurrung, Boonwurrung, Wathaurrung, and Daungwurrung - as well as to Yorta Yorta, Gunditjamara, Gunai/Kurnai land, Dja Dja Wurrung Country, and all around what is now known as Victoria.

Friends of the Earth pay respect to Elders past and present, and acknowledges the pivotal role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the community and the struggle for environmental and social justice.

Friends of the Earth Melbourne is an independent, community-based organisation working towards an ecologically sustainable and socially just future. Friends of the Earth is membership-based, open to all people who share our vision. Friends of The Earth Melbourne is a local member group of Friends of the Earth Australia, which is in turn the national member of Friends of the Earth International, the largest grassroots federation of environmental activists in the world and currently active in more than 70 countries. Friends of the Earth has been active in Melbourne since the early 1970s.

In 2020/21 Friends of the Earth Melbourne continued to campaign for the interests of people and the planet on a range of issues including climate and energy justice, land and water, food and technology, and in support of indigenous land and rights.

WORKING TOWARDS
ENVIRONMENTAL +
SOCIAL JUSTICE

WE ARE PROUD TO
ACKNOWLEDGE THE

Wurundjeri

PEOPLE AS THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS
OF THESE LANDS AND WATERS



© Harold Thomas 1971 Aboriginal Flag

Contact **ANTaR**

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OUR ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH

There are millions of Australians who are working towards a better future in their homes, their workplaces, their communities and through political action. We believe that it will be collective action happening on multiple levels, from the individual to the global, that will create the conditions that will allow our society and economies to shift to a sustainable footing. Friends of the Earth Melbourne believes that social and environmental justice are inextricably linked and we approach our work from a climate and social justice frame: organising in a way that empowers individuals and communities.

Friends of the Earth Melbourne recognises that there is no environmental and climate justice without gender justice and that long lasting system change cannot be achieved without dismantling patriarchy and the mutually reinforcing oppressions of racism, sexism, ageism, class, capitalism and discrimination based on sexuality, gender or disability. We actively support the rights of First Nations people, people of colour, women, minority ethnic groups, the young and the aged, LGBTQIA+ community, people with disabilities, the working class and the unemployed. We are proudly anti-patriarchal, anti-oppression, anti-capitalist and anti-hierarchical. We strive to reflect our values in the way that we work together by operating on an anti-hierarchical collective basis, and utilising the consensus decision-making model.

Friends of the Earth Melbourne has a strong 'movement' focus in its work, seeking to support strategic and effective community action for a sustainable and just future. This is reflected in our style of campaigning, which often occurs within alliances. We are willing to apply significant resources into 'un badged' campaigning.

This means that we have helped build community power rather than just our own organisational power, and our public profile is lower than could be expected. The benefit of this approach is that it helps empower and create space for our local partners to step forward and fully own local campaigns within their own local communities.

This approach has shown it can, and has, delivered powerful results, such as the permanent ban on fracking in Victoria.

We operate through a range of tactics, including involvement in government planning processes, research and policy development, community education and outreach, alliance building, advocacy and education, and peaceful protest.



2020/21 IN REVIEW

*Campaign Coordinator's report
by Cam Walker and Leigh Ewbank*

In 2020, COVID-19 arrived and the global pandemic disrupted business as usual. The pandemic continued in 2020/21, but so did our activism. Friends of the Earth Melbourne's community, staff, and campaign collectives have shown incredible resilience and adaptability in these challenging times.

The fossil fuel and extractive industries and the blockers in government continued to stall action on climate and environmental protection as communities took drastic action to flatten the COVID-19 curve. The preparedness of these forces to use the COVID-19 crisis to push for a "gas-fired" recovery was straight out of the disaster capitalist's playbook.

Meanwhile, the state of Victoria continued to be a place where the environmental movement could push for gains and minimise the damage caused by the Federal government and extractivists.

Friends of the Earth (FoE) played a significant role in forging a different path at the state level. Our climate, energy, and transport collectives combined forces to campaign for Victoria's COVID stimulus package to deliver for communities and our environment. This sustained effort with allies in the movement helped secure the largest ever investment package

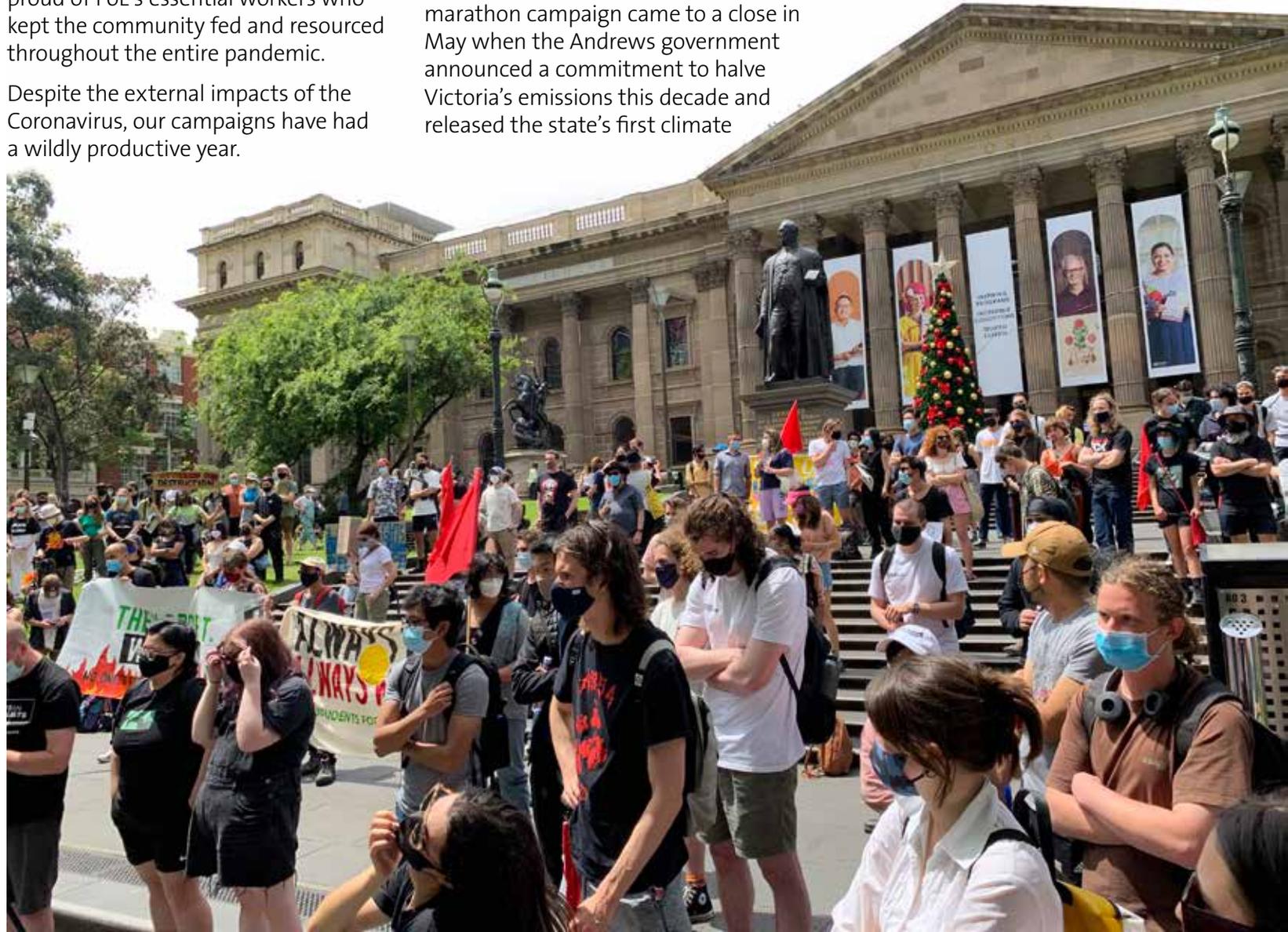
for climate, energy, and sustainable transport in the state's history.

The Friends of the Earth Food Co-op & Cafe kept the doors open despite the lockdowns and other public health measures. The whole network can be proud of FoE's essential workers who kept the community fed and resourced throughout the entire pandemic.

Despite the external impacts of the Coronavirus, our campaigns have had a wildly productive year.

Act on Climate sustained FoE's campaign for science-based Emissions Reduction Targets and a strong Climate Strategy in Victoria. Creative actions engaged the community, influenced decision makers, and kept the state climate policy on the agenda. The marathon campaign came to a close in May when the Andrews government announced a commitment to halve Victoria's emissions this decade and released the state's first climate

strategy. The outcome will continue the state's transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, encourage greater investment in Public Transport, and greater protection of our native forests.



Our Yes2Renewables campaign worked with allies in the union movement and elsewhere to advocate for the establishment of an offshore wind industry—a sector that had the potential to create thousands of jobs while delivering deep emissions reductions. Testament to the impact of this work, the Federal government has committed to legislate national offshore wind laws, and the Victorian government has created an Energy Innovation Fund to kickstart the sector. Yes2Renewables cemented its position as an ally to the Latrobe Valley by employing Wendy Farmer as a regional campaigner and supporting a community campaign for the region's first wind farm.

FoE was a strong voice in opposition to onshore and offshore gas development in Victoria. Our efforts to protect the farmland, water, and country from the polluting gas industry continued through the development of the DrillWatch website—an online resource for the community to be launched in the second half of 2021.

Friends of the Earth continued a successful partnership with the Public Transport Users Association through our Sustainable Cities campaign. Sustainable Cities continued to build its campaign for greater investment in critical Public Transport projects. It promoted the Melbourne Metro 2 project with creative actions, political advocacy, and a budget submission. The collective strengthened FoE's

relationship with the Disability Resources Centre and amplified the organisation's calls for the state government to ensure Public Transport is accessible for people with disabilities.

FoE's longest-standing campaign, the Nuclear-Free Collective, continued to fight the nuclear industry at every point in the cycle. In 2021 the collective supported community resistance to the Federal government's proposed nuclear waste dump in Kimba, South Australia. It continued to work with First Nations people and allied in the union and environmental movements to educate the community about the environmental and social impacts of the nuclear fuel cycle.

The Strzelecki Koala Action Team (SKAT) has elevated the plight of Victoria's only endemic koala and its role in the ongoing survival of the species. SKAT has pioneered citizen science monitoring of Strzelecki Koalas since 2013 and 2021 was no different. The community-driven project undertook an additional XX surveying trips. Increased resourcing in 2020/21 saw SKAT expand its advocacy for state and federal governments to provide greater protection for koalas and their habitat.

FoE stalwart Anthony Amis continued to highlight the impacts of chemicals on waterways and biodiversity, particularly the "forever chemical" PFAS. We have continued to expand information contained on the Australian PFAS map, with particular attention being placed

on water authorities and the extent of PFAS contamination associated with water treatment plants, recycled water and biosolids.

And as always, we provided extensive logistical, campaign, and strategic support to a range of local community run campaigns around the state.

All of this inspiring campaign work was made possible by the Operations Collective. This inspiring group of activists has ensured that Friends of the Earth Melbourne was able to withstand the challenges of campaigning in a global pandemic.





CLIMATE JUSTICE, ENERGY & TRANSPORT

Friends of the Earth Melbourne have four campaign collectives working in this space: Act On Climate, Yes2Renewables, Sustainable Cities, and a nascent working group for resisting the fossil gas industry.

We thank all of the volunteers who were part of these collectives during 2020/21.



Act On Climate

After a marathon grassroots campaign of almost four years, the Andrews Labor government announced the state's first Climate Strategy and interim Emissions Reduction Targets.

Friends of the Earth and allies campaigned to secure science-based climate targets for Victoria since 2017. We were pushing for a world-leading cut of 75 percent by 2030—a target that scientists say is necessary to achieve the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C—and ended up with a commitment to halve Victoria's emissions over the next decade.

While the 2030 target adopted by the Andrews government was not what we were calling for, it is a significant outcome for national climate policy and politics.

Our supporters have been there every step of the way: Participating in creative actions such as the '100 Laps for Climate Leadership', sending in submissions, writing letters to the editor, joining us for iconic human signs, and taking action online while in lockdown. This effort undoubtedly influenced the final result.

Act on Climate will build on the momentum to campaign for an increase to Australia's 2030 Emissions Reduction Target.

Act on Climate: the People's Climate Strategy for Victoria

The *Victorian Climate Change Act 2017* required the Andrews government to prepare the state's first Climate Change Strategy by 31 October 2020. The Strategy's aim to outline how each economic sector and region in Victoria can cut emissions over the next 10 years, and how we will deal with the impacts that are already locked in.

However, in early 2020, Friends of the Earth foresaw that the disruptive nature of the COVID pandemic would delay completion of the government's strategy. With the Andrews government leading the pandemic

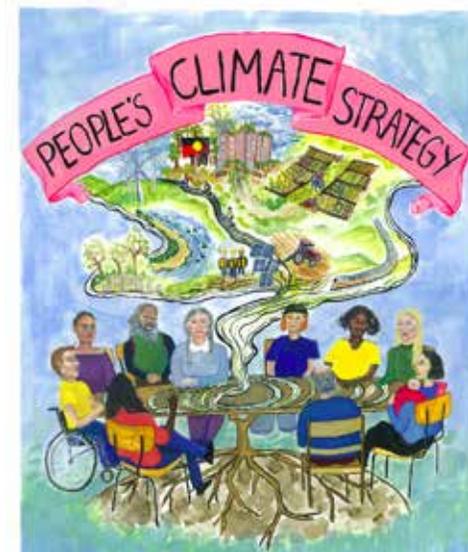
response, FoE saw a need for civil society groups to step up with a clear vision for how the state can tackle the climate crisis by creating jobs, rapidly reining in emissions, and advancing social justice in communities.

That's why, from June 2020 to July 2021, the Act on Climate collective coordinated a project to create a *People's Climate Strategy for Victoria*.

The project was based on gathering local knowledge from communities about the climate impacts people are worried about where they live across the state, and the climate solutions

they want to see funded and rolled out by the state government. We work with the guiding idea that no one knows a community better than the people in it, and that the climate crisis affects each community in different ways. We involved a diversity of Victorian communities to contribute their different perspectives - from the union movement, to the disability community, to First Nations people.

Through surveys, forums, roundtables, social media actions and a dot-democracy voting action, we shaped the Strategy to report on and directly



deal with the climate impacts that people are observing across Victoria's regions. Our Strategy is based on community members' ideas for adaptation to and mitigation of climate change in ways that will create jobs and advance social justice for all. All up, over 1,000 people from around the state contributed to the Strategy.

Despite the project having to be carried out entirely online in the unusual and difficult circumstances of the pandemic, the result was inspiring: a high level of citizen engagement by a very passionate cross-section of people in Victoria.

The completed Strategy was hand-delivered to state and federal members

of parliament across Victoria by the community members whose local knowledge and ideas shaped the Strategy. From the coast, to the city, to the Murray, community members met with over 50 MPs to tell their personal stories of the climate impacts they are already seeing unfold, and the local climate solutions they want to see rolled out and funded.

The project is a shining example of deep participatory democracy driven by passionate citizens. Through the lockdowns, when people were struggling and feeling alienated, we're proud that it was able to bring people together to engage them in positive planning for the state's future.



Yes2Renewables

Our Yes2Renewables collective has continued to champion wind and solar power as an essential part of Australia's responses to the climate crisis. Over the last twelve months, Yes2Renewables has focussed on building a community campaign for offshore wind, supporting local communities in the Latrobe Valley to help secure the region's first wind farm, and encouraging Victoria to establish designated Renewable Energy Zones.

Friends of the Earth has cemented itself as a leading advocate of offshore wind. Yes2Renewables has briefed state and federal decision makers about the steps needed to establish the industry in Australia, and collaborated with unions and key stakeholders in policy processes. Yes2Renewables made a detailed submission to the draft Environmental Impact Assessment guidelines for the Star of the South 'EPBC' application and engaged directly with the proponent regarding the selection of transmission routes for the project.

Over the course of 2020/2021, Friends of the Earth continued its advocacy for the renewable energy industry in the Latrobe Valley. We provided ongoing support for local community group Strzelecki Sustainable Futures who are supporting the Delburn Wind Farm. Friends of the Earth has also engaged with the proponent to inspect potential native vegetation removal for the project.

We have advocated for the proponent to ensure adequate protection of small patches of koala habitat at the project site during construction.

The Andrews government committed \$540m to establish Renewable

Energy Zones in its 'COVID recovery' budget in late November 2020. The announcement came after Friends of the Earth's six-month long community campaign for a Clean Recovery for Victoria. Our sustained advocacy ensured the Latrobe Valley and

regions's offshore wind resource was included in the Gippsland REZ.

Yes2Renewables cemented its position as an ally to the Latrobe Valley by employing Wendy Farmer as a regional campaigner.



Sustainable Cities

Friends of the Earth have continued a successful partnership with the Public Transport Users Association (PTUA) in the work undertaken by our Sustainable Cities collective.

The transport sector is Melbourne's second-largest and fastest-growing emitter of carbon emissions. In order to mitigate the effects of climate change, it is imperative that Melbourne moves away from car travel and towards mass-transit options that are better for our health, wellbeing, environment, and the economy.

Melbourne is a rapidly developing city with our population reaching 5 million. Friends of the Earth is working towards ensuring that Melbourne's public transport can support our growing city. In order to ensure everyone has the ability to access all that Melbourne has to offer, each person should have the option to take public transport.

In 2020/21, the campaign focused on building momentum for the Melbourne Metro 2 (MM2) rail tunnel and helped communities raise their concerns about the North East Link toll road. With the pandemic disrupting our usual approach to campaigning, we shifted our focus to organising online forums to educate the community about the environmental impacts of car-reliance and benefits of Public Transport.

The collective cemented FoE's relationship with the Disability Resources Centre and amplified the organisation's calls for the state government to ensure Public Transport is accessible for people with disabilities.



Gas Drillwatch

In April 2020, the Andrews Government announced plans to allow for exploration for fossil gas in areas previously protected by a state-wide moratorium¹ on onshore conventional gas drilling. The announcement came after a report was tabled by the Victorian Gas Program² which identified 'potentially significant onshore gas' resources, especially in the Otway Basin. A further announcement in July 2020, confirmed an expiration date of the moratorium on drilling scheduled for June 30, 2021.

In response to these successive announcements, DrillWatch emerged as way to re-engage and collaborate with the communities involved in Friends of the Earth Melbourne's Gasfield Free Campaign³ in Gippsland and the Southwest of Victoria. With a view to combine citizen science and community organising, the DrillWatch resource has been designed to show current gas developments and allow communities to log information like proposed gas infrastructure, community consultations, and drill rig sightings, and coordinate their resistance to any planned exploration or drilling.; This accompanies a shift in the community's focus from political lobby efforts, to organised resistance to companies seeking permission to extract gas from agricultural landscapes.

Over the course of the project, Friends of the Earth has collaborated with communities in Gippsland and the South West of the state to develop resources, identify threats, and produce useful information for communities at risk, launched the DrillWatch website, and maintained a consistent public dialogue on the increasing threats of gas on three fronts; the opening of exploration of onshore gas drilling in regional Victoria, planned expansion of existing offshore gas drilling in Victorian state coastal waters, and planned expansion of existing offshore gas drilling in Commonwealth waters between Victoria and Tasmania.

Friends of the Earth organisers have conducted radio interviews with frontline communities on our Dirt Radio program on 3CR Community Radio, produced blogs, featured in local and national media, engaged in critical government processes with submissions and kept a growing list of grassroots supporters up to date with regular email blasts and campaign updates, all of which are outlined in more detail below.

While originally only imagined to capture threats onshore in Victoria, the project has expanded to include identification and background information about

potential offshore drilling in both state and federal waters along the Victorian Coastline and in the Bass Strait. The growth of the project has enabled increased collaboration with community groups who hold concerns about the risks of gas drilling in marine and coastal areas, including Otway Climate Emergency Action Network (OCEAN), Surfers for Climate and community groups in King Island, Tasmania.

Friends of The Earth would like to thank the Tucker Foundation for their support for this important project.

1. The moratorium on onshore 'conventional' gas drilling was in place across Victoria from 2014.
2. The Victorian Gas Program (VGP) was a state government initiative that ran for 3 years and delivered 5 reports into onshore and offshore gas resources. It was tasked with assessing the risks, benefits and impacts of onshore gas.
3. Between 2011 and 2016, a total of 75 regional communities declared themselves coal and/or Gasfield free.



Nuclear Free

Friends of the Earth's Nuclear-Free collective, have been working for over 35 years supporting Traditional Owner voices and community resistance to the spread of the nuclear industry in Australia. The ACE Nuclear Free Collective at Friends of the Earth continues to fight the nuclear industry at every point in the cycle.

In 2021, despite the challenges that the ongoing pandemic posed, we campaigned against the federal government's plan to impose a national nuclear waste dump at Kimba in SA despite the unanimous opposition of the Barngarla Traditional Owners and wider community opposition.

We also continued to challenge the push from ultra-conservative politicians for nuclear power through our work to influence parliamentary inquiries and through media work and community education. And we've actively debunked the endless misinformation about so-called 'small modular reactors'. As part of this, we contributed to the Don't Nuke the Climate initiative to protect federal environment legislation from efforts to remove the ban against nuclear power and from efforts to weaken governance of uranium mining. We supported trade unions in their work to maintain legal bans against nuclear power (check out the Electrical

Trade Union's NoFuture4Nuclear website), and supported important work challenging the planned expansion of the Olympic Dam uranium mine in SA. Important, successful work the planned mine expansion was cancelled in 2020!

Part of our work consisted of strengthening our relationships across Australia and the world, participating in national strategy discussions, taking part in the Australia Nuclear Free Alliance (ANFA) annual meeting and being represented on the ANFA national committee.

We thank our members and supporters for being a part of a nuclear-free future.



ANTI-NUCLEAR



Victorian Forests

Back during the lead up to the November 2018 state election, Friends of the Earth ran it's largest ever grassroots mobilisation. After the election, our key campaign staff - Ed Hill, Sarah Day and Maggie Riddington – finished working with the campaign, so our efforts were greatly reduced during 2019 and into 2020.. In early 2021 we decided it was time to re-establish the forests campaign.

Our feeling was that there was a need for Melbourne groups to provide stronger support to the many great regional groups who are campaigning

to protect their local forests. We were delighted by the enthusiasm shown by our members and supporters and the forests campaign is now up and running again, with three key areas of work:

- Support for regional forest groups
- Working with traditional owner groups to support their aspirations for the forests of the Central Highlands and Central Gippsland
- Developing a transition plan that would allow the government to speed up the promised phaseout of native forest logging by 2030.

In terms of areas of specific activity, we also saw a gap in campaign focus in forest issues in the Victorian High Country and so FoE worked to identify risks to these forests, including Alpine Ash and Snow Gums and develop proposals to ensure the viability of these vegetation communities, which are threatened by fire seasons which are being super charged by climate change..

We continue to develop policy on sustainable management of native forests and fire policy.

Kimberley Croxton has taken on co-ordinating the forests campaign and collective.



LAND & WATER

In 2020/21, Friends of the Earth had two active campaign collectives working on land and water issues in Victoria--the Strzelecki Koala Action Team (SKAT) and Anthony Amis' ongoing work on pesticides.

We thank all of our volunteers who worked so hard on land and water issues in 2020/21.



River Country

Friends of the Earth's River Country Collective continued to campaign for healthy rivers through 2020/21. We were active in campaigning for the rivers of the Murray Darling to receive the water flows they need to remain healthy. Our mission is to see a flourishing Murray-Darling Basin where Traditional Owners enjoy sovereign rights to country.

And our campaign goals are

- To protect public water so that rivers can run from source to sea
- To oppose ecologically damaging floodplain developments in local Red Gum forests, lakes and wetlands
- To stand in solidarity with Traditional Owners in their fight for sovereignty and co-management of their land and water.

During 2020/21, we remained active in the Lifeblood Alliance. We planned actions in support of wetlands, were involved in government processes around floodplain diversion projects in northern Victoria and floodplain harvesting in NSW. The rivers in the north of the Basin that feed the Darling are being sucked dry by irrigators, and the water recovery target for the Murray-Darling Basin Plan has not been met despite the Plan coming into effect on 1 July 2019. Most of that shortfall is in the Northern Basin. FoE ran a campaign to ensure the federal government met the water recovery

target. The quickest, most efficient and economically responsible way to meet the target is to purchase water from willing sellers via an open and transparent tender process, focusing on the Northern Basin first.

The River Country campaign coordinator, Megan Williams, moved to western NSW during the year and without a co-ordinator, the campaign has moved into a period of inactivity. We thank Megan for their efforts and leadership in the River Country campaign.

We would like to thank the Tucker Foundation for their financial support and all the people that have gotten involved through River Country actions.



Chemicals and Pesticides

Friends of the Earth continued to work on pesticide and chemical issues over 2020-2021. Our key areas of concern were PFAS chemicals, drinking water and pesticides.

A lot of time has been spent better understanding the extent of PFAS contamination occurring throughout Australia. We have continued to expand information contained on the Australian PFAS map, with particular attention being placed on water authorities and the extent of PFAS contamination associated with water treatment plants, recycled water and biosolids.

A series of Freedom of Information requests have been sent to Victorian water authorities with alarming information coming to light in the Gippsland region, including the contamination of the water supply to the small community of [Seaspray with PFAS chemicals](#).

A report summarising our findings will be released later in 2021. According to Google Analytics the top 3 PFAS issues on the PFAS map were: 1) PFAS contaminated soil to be dumped at Sunbury, 2) contamination of West Lakes in Adelaide through contaminated biosolids and 3) the Coode Island fire in Melbourne in 1991.

Similarly the Australian Drinking Water collates drinking water quality issues across Australia. There was interest in issues regarding [uranium in drinking water](#) during the year. Most of the

voluntary work associated with the site is putting up new content. Big thanks to Glenn Todd for all of his technical help. The pages garnering the most interest during the year were 1) hardness, 2) Victoria, 3) Adelaide, 4) Western Australia, 5) Total Dissolved Solids.

Pesticide work has again been limited to supporting resident concerns regarding use of Glyphosate. A campaign around banning the use of the insecticide Chlorpyrifos in 2020 was initiated, but stalled when Covid hit. The Biden Government has just announced the

banning of Chlorpyrifos in the near future, which is encouraging. Friends of the Earth is still waiting on the results of our work in June 2020 which uncovered thousands of trees impacted by spray drift in [Holey Plains State Park](#) in Victoria. The [Australian Pesticide map](#) has had a bit of a workover and is back firing again. The site has received over 88,000 page views since its inception in late 2017: The legacy contamination of Home Bush Bay with 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T in Sydney continues to receive the most page views.



2020 December: Merrimans Creek, domestic water supply for Seaspray contaminated with PFAS chemicals. Could fracking several years ago be the source? A well had been drilled 500m from the offtake to Seaspray's drinking water supply.



Strzelecki Koala Action Team

The SKAT collective was active in early July 2020 completing 200 koala surveys in South Gippsland. Our 2019/20 surveys were a juggling act, trying to get the sites completed in between extended Covid 19 lockdowns. We made the final number with only a few days to spare before an extended Melbourne lockdown. A report compiling our results was published in August 2020. The surveys were definitely hindered by Covid in that to quicken the survey process a decision was made to move surveying from the more difficult Strzelecki sites, to “easier” sites in Central Gippsland.

Koala surveys started sporadically again in November 2020 thanks to a generous donation from ‘Pool of Dreams’. The main focus for 2020/21 is again the Central Gippsland, including the state forests of Wonwron and Mullungdung. Both forests are showing the presence of low numbers of koalas, with the southern part of Mullungdung being most interesting.

In late 2020, we worked with filmmakers Dane Picken and Ben Strunin to make a short-film which was released in February which serves to highlight the “Importance of the Strzelecki Koala” to help us visually capture the story behind why we are campaigning to protect this unique animal.

In February SKAT was again embroiled in koala issues in South West Victoria. A

badly injured koala had been reported as being dumped in a local park. The animal had been burnt at the nearby Portland Aluminium smelter. A flurry of local media occurred with information coming to FoE that over 100 koalas had entered the smelter since 2016. Animals also appeared to be suffering from fluorosis. FoE then sent up another koala map to try and get more attention on the koala disaster occurring in the South West. FoE is still awaiting the legal consequences of the Portland “koala massacre” that FoE helped push out into the global media in February 2020.

We are very thankful to Ethical Jobs as they helped to match every dollar that SKAT fundraised during September 2020 and through these donations enabled us to recruit Michelle Baxter in March 2021 as an Outreach Coordinator. Through this role we have been increasing communications to enable story-telling and understanding of the importance of the Strzelecki koalas through community awareness, which has involved high-school presentations, email blasts, social media posts along with the launch of a monthly collective meeting amongst our supporter-base.

To show our gratitude to major donors such as Ethical Jobs, we coordinated a bus-trip down to the Strzelecki Ranges in April 2021 to reveal where we conduct the majority of our surveying work within the region, so that we could enrich their understanding





and immerse an include themselves more deeply within our campaign.

Since March 2021 we have also launched several online petitions to bring a local lens to habitat protection in the small town of Fish Creek over concerns of a quarry-extension, whilst also asking for a federal listing of the Strzelecki/ South Gippsland koala through the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. We have also produced a submission regarding the proposed Delburn wind farm and its likely low impact on a small koala population living near the proposed wind farm. This submission was also based on three site visits to the area.

By the end of June 115/200 surveys had been completed , but unfortunately with the volatile nature of lockdowns this has impaired our ability to travel to South Gippsland and the Strzelecki Ranges to complete the final surveys.. We have been uploading all of our koala sightings and skat finds to our Strzelecki Map. We have since formatted the map differently in comparison to the last financial year as we are now only including positive koala sites rather than all total surveyed sites. We have also incorporated community sightings to our map, which are largely fed through via the Friends of the Strzelecki Koala Facebook Group. Over 80 koala sightings have been sent through to us.

Friends of the Earth Melbourne would also like to thank the Tucker Foundation for their support of our important work of the SKAT Collective



Strzelecki Koala Action Team (SKAT)

#HangInThereStrzKoala



The Food Co-operative

The Friends of the Earth Food Co-op is a shining example of the long lasting potential of a not-for-profit enterprise in its continued promotion of a socially equitable and environmentally sustainable future. Despite ongoing restrictions in 2020-2021, we are committed to sourcing products based on their nutritional, ethical, waste free, social and ecological sustainability, and have continued working closely with organic and biodynamic producers and farmers.

The Food Co-op has responded with resilience and worked hard to meet the challenges of operating through a pandemic. As an essential service, we have been able to remain open, and have made it possible to continue offering bulk groceries and takeaway healthy meals by employing necessary health and safety measures. During this time we have also made new connections with small makers, local community groups and local urban farmers such as Farm Raiser to support sustainable projects and mutual aid right here in Melbourne.

We have also remained connected with Co-Health to facilitate the Cafe Meals Program, which we have been running at the co-op for many years. This service provides subsidised meals and groceries to the community, offering members a month's worth of \$10 a day meal cards that can be used daily in participating businesses. We were able to adapt the service to pandemic restrictions, so

that multiple cards could be used in a single day to ensure recipients could stay safe at home. Furthermore, with support from our customers, we were able to make weekly food donations to the BANH Inc. community organisation which operates Neighbourhood Houses on the Collingwood and North Richmond Public Housing Estates.

We were excited to welcome back volunteers and school programmes for a short time in the period between lockdowns, and we want to express our appreciation for the hugely valuable role our volunteers play. We are also very grateful to have some new additions to the Food Co-op team, including two amazing cooks, Yuka and Iku, who have been huge inspirations in our kitchen.

Finally, we were so proud to publish our first recipe calendar at the end of 2020 thanks to a grant from Lord Mayor's Youth Philanthropy program via Brighton Grammar. It was a really positive and successful fundraising project, and we're looking forward to creating the next one.

We are extremely thankful to Friends of the Earth members, the local community and Jemila Rushton, who all played such crucial roles in making our first crowdfunder a success. We are especially thankful for all of their ongoing support of Friends of the Earth through these challenging times.





Dirt Radio

Friends of the Earth's Dirt Radio show airs weekly, Tuesdays at 9:30am, on 3CR Community Radio. In 2020/21 it was hosted by Phil Evans, Megan Williams, John Langer, Em Gayfer, and Lucinda Walker, and featured Friends of the Earth campaigners and activists tackling important environmental and social justice issues.

Topics cover all our campaign frontlines from communities resisting fossil gas projects to those fighting for renewable energy, as well as citizen scientists monitoring threatened species to those calling for greater protection of native forests, and more.

The Dirt Radio team continued to broadcast despite the ongoing challenges of doing so during a pandemic. The team has been producing shows remotely from home and finding creative ways to tell stories of FoE campaigns and our allies in community



Governance

Friends of the Earth Melbourne's Committee of Management (called the Policy and Advisory Committee, or PAC), has responsibility for oversight of finances, strategic development, and governance and risk assessment for the organisation.

The members of the PAC in 2020/21:

Beth Cameron
Campbell Walker
David Robertson
Lee Tan
Mara Bonacci
Naomi Pullen
Phil Jackson
Rodney Vlasis
Samantha Castro

On a day-to-day level all campaign collectives manage their own affairs. Once a month all campaigns attend the Strategy Collective meeting, which is where whole-of-organisation decisions are taken.

The Committee of Management (PAC) acts in an oversight role to strategy. A separate Gift Fund Committee is responsible for decisions regarding allocations of donations received via our public fund.

All Friends of the Earth Melbourne members are encouraged to take an active role in the organisation and are eligible to stand for the PAC and Gift Fund Committee, which are appointed each year at the AGM.

There are weekly campaigners' meetings, and working groups are established as needed to deal with state based issues.

Over the course of 2020-2021 PAC worked to support FoEM food co-op essential workers on the frontline and to ensure all campaign and organising staff working from home were supported in remote working needs and access.



Staff

Food Co-operative Coordinators:

Beth Cameron, Genevieve Fry,
Pauline Renkin & Karri Cameron,
Esala Liyanage, Tash Epstein.

Food Co-operative Casuals:

Alyson Shields, Dom O'Dwyer,
Jodie Myers, Vidhya Witte, Yuka Harte.

Operations Coordinator:

Samantha Castro

Campaigns Coordinator:

Cam Walker, Leigh Ewbank

Finance Coordinator:

Tara Stevenson

Communications Coordinator:

Kat Moore

Membership & Fundraising

Coordinator: Jemila Rushton

Development Coordinator:

Phil Evans

Activist & Volunteer Coordinator:

Claud Gallois

Finance System Upgrade Project

Coordinator: Em Gayfer

Finance Worker:

Hilda Rebollo

Act On Climate Coordinator:

Leigh Ewbank

Act on Climate Coordinator:

Anna Langford

Act on Climate Campaigner:

Jarrad Abrahams

Drillwatch Coordinator:

Emma Jukic

Drillwatch Organiser:

Liz Wade

River Country Coordinator:

Megan Williams

SKAT Coordinator:

Anthony Amis

SKAT Outreach Coordinator:

Michelle Baxter

Yes2Renewables Coordinator:

Patrick Simons

Yes2Renewables Gippsland

Community Campaigner:

Wendy Farmer

Sustainable Cities Coordinator:

Laura Sykes, Claud Gallois

Nuclear Free Collective: Coordinator:

Sanne de Swart

Nuclear Free Collective Coordinator:

A.C Hunter



Thank You to our Volunteers

Act on Climate:

Lachlan Mackenzie, Elizabeth Wade, Hamish Macrae, Sasha King, Liz Wilson, Sam Galvin, Ruby Wynn-Williams, Chloe Badcock, Tahlia Shield-Bathagte, Ben Lever, Harry Wood, Vicky Ellmore, Angus Woodward, Will Hargraves, Tim Read, and Elizabeth Keen

Forests:

Jill Koppel, Sanja Van Huet, Heung Ning Lo, Katina Sharpe, Aisling Eysers, Lucy Gilchrist, Margaret Halliday, Meg Nielsen and David Thorn

Nuclear Free:

AC Hunter, Michaeala Stubbs, Frances Evans, Jim Green, Johan Kettle, Jemila Rushton, Noel Wauchope

SKAT:

Alanna Somers, Lisa Fitzgerald, Robin Parker, Amaryll Perlesz, Janette Connard, Ildi (Cindy)Ehsman, Catheryn Thompson, Belinda Eden, Bronwyn Elmore, Helen Winter, Pete Muskens, Susue Zent and Mark Jay

Sustainable Cities:

John Merory, John Young, Maegan Boundey, MaretaSaolotoga, Michael Staindl, Christine Morris, Maelor Himbury, Tim Hoffmann, John Stone and Ben Lever

Yes2Renewables:

Alice Knowles, Jason Ray, David Robertson, Dylan Goldsworthy, Liz Wilson, Andrew Mcarthur and Rowan White

Communications Collective:

Kristine Phillip.

Strategy Collective Co-Convenors:

Sasha King & Jemila Rushton

Dirt Radio:

Phil Evans, Megan Williams, John Langer, Em Gayfer, Lucinda Walker, Mareta Saolotoga

Archiving:

Sam Gibbard and the archiving team.
All the wonderful Food Coop and other collective volunteers!



With thanks to our financial supporters:

All our members and donors

Australian Communities Foundation -
in support of Kinglake Friends of Forest
Friends of the Koalas

Australian Communities Foundation

Community Impact Foundation
(Pool of Dreams Fund)

The Albert and Barbara Tucker
Foundation

The Public Transport Users Association

Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation

Goodwill Wine

Ethical Jobs

Euphonic Investments

Patagonia

Crisp Nominees

Westwind Energy

Sunrise Project

Stobart Strauss Foundation

Bank Australia

Madirry Foundation

Lifetime Members

Members of Friends of the Earth can nominate celebrated members of the grassroots community to receive a Lifetime membership of FoE Melbourne. Those nominated should have made a significant contribution to Friends of the Earth network or the wider activist community. In 2020/21 Lifetime Memberships were granted to

Suzie Zent

Uncle Larry Walsh

Uncle Jack Charles

In kind and generous support:

Graphic Design: Tess Sellar

Graphic Design: Somerset Bean

Graphic Design: Genevieve Engelhardt

Graphic Design: Toz Withall

Artist: Clare James

Artist: Daniel Chittick

Artist: Gemma Romiti

Video: Ellen Burbidge

IT Support: ActionSkills

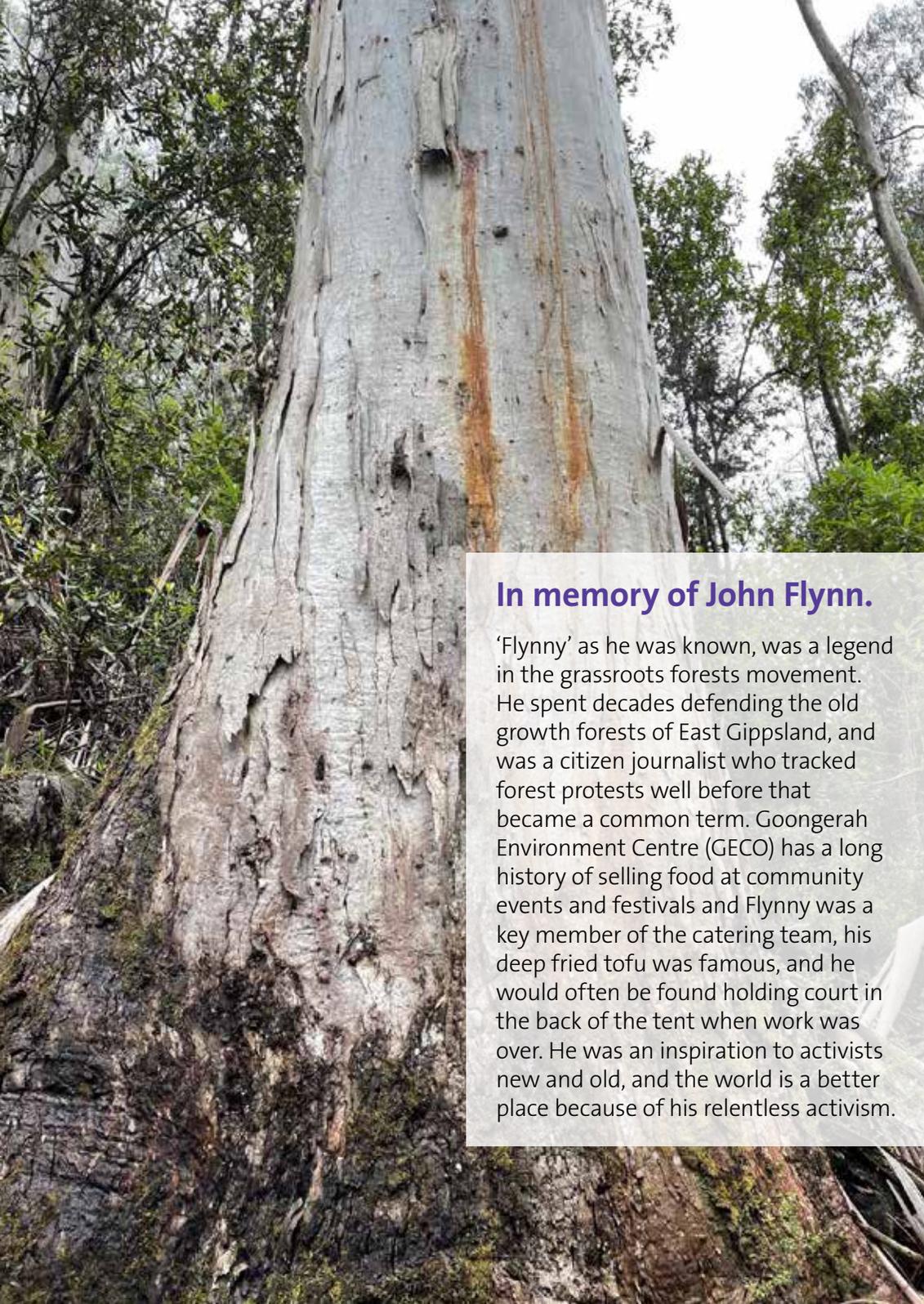
Black Rainbow Printing

Arena Printing

Qualitops

Cooperative Power





In memory of John Flynn.

'Flynn' as he was known, was a legend in the grassroots forests movement. He spent decades defending the old growth forests of East Gippsland, and was a citizen journalist who tracked forest protests well before that became a common term. Goongerah Environment Centre (GECO) has a long history of selling food at community events and festivals and Flynn was a key member of the catering team, his deep fried tofu was famous, and he would often be found holding court in the back of the tent when work was over. He was an inspiration to activists new and old, and the world is a better place because of his relentless activism.





FINANCIAL REPORT 2020-2021

Statement by Members of the Committee of Management

Responsible Persons' Declaration

The financial statements and notes as set out in the financial report, satisfy the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and:

- a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards applicable to the entity; and
- b) give a true and fair view of the financial position of the registered entity as at 30 June 2021 and of its performance for the year ended on that date.

There are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity will be able to pay its debts, as and when they become due and payable.

Samantha Castro
Secretary - Committee of Management (PAC)
Collingwood, Victoria.

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalent	1,570,703	1,018,656
Accounts Receivable and Other Debtors	87,587	296,901
Inventories on hand, at cost	42,679	47,930
Other Current Assets	25,599	21,941
Total current assets	1,726,568	1,385,428
Non-current assets		
Plant and equipment	40,786	39,128
Right-of-use Asset	474,375	547,634
Total non-current assets	515,161	586,762
Total assets	2,241,729	1,972,190
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Other Payables	66,977	123,437
Grants Received in Advance	94,749	107,083
GST Liability	-	13,952
Provisions	192,324	173,022
Lease Liability	74,138	71,481
Total current liabilities	428,188	488,975
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	13,357	86,783
Lease Liability	418,537	486,626
Total non-current liabilities	431,894	573,409
Total liabilities	860,082	1,062,384
Net assets	1,381,647	909,806
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Retained Surplus	1,195,939	746,505
Building Reserve	185,708	163,301
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	1,381,647	909,806

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the Year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue		
Food Co-op Sales	658,183	868,686
Membership Subscription	15,354	13,777
Donations and Funding	480,591	461,593
Grant Income	236,371	184,138
Bank Interest	3,209	7,971
Government Assistance	514,950	224,685
Secretariat Funding - FoE Australia	278,501	250,467
Miscellaneous Income	28,159	44,814
	2,215,318	2,056,131
Expenditure		
Cost of Goods Sold	(374,965)	(417,130)
Employee Benefits and Related Expenses	(1,087,108)	(1,028,243)
Administration Expenses	(136,428)	(108,486)
Fundraising Expenses	(2,342)	(2,856)
Campaigning Cost	(39,160)	(36,037)
Donations	(2,520)	(2,501)
Depreciation & Amortisation	(87,955)	(84,885)
Audit Fees - Audit or Reviewing the Financial Report	(8,000)	(4,680)
Interest Expense	(22,039)	(24,485)
	(1,760,517)	(1,709,303)
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	454,801	346,828
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income attributable to the members	454,801	346,828





CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
AUDIT & ASSURANCE SERVICES

PO BOX 82 BALWYN
VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA 3103
ABN 26 028 714 960

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF
FRIENDS OF THE EARTH (MELBOURNE) INC.
ACN 68 918 945 471**

**Report on the Audit of the Financial Report
Opinion**

We have audited the financial report of the Friends of the Earth (Melbourne) Inc (the registered entity), which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2021, and the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended on that date, notes comprising a Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and other explanatory information and the responsible persons' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the registered entity is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act), including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial positions as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the registered entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of ACNC Act 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.

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

The responsible persons are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the registered entity's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2021, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the registered entity's financial reporting responsibilities under the *ACNC Act*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Responsible Persons for the Financial Report

The responsible persons of the registered entity are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the ACNC Act and for such internal control as the responsible persons determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the responsible persons are responsible for assessing the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible persons either intend to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with 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 this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the 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 reporting entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the responsible persons.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible persons' 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 registered entity'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 registered entity 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.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entity or business activities within the entity to express an opinion on the financial report. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the entity audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

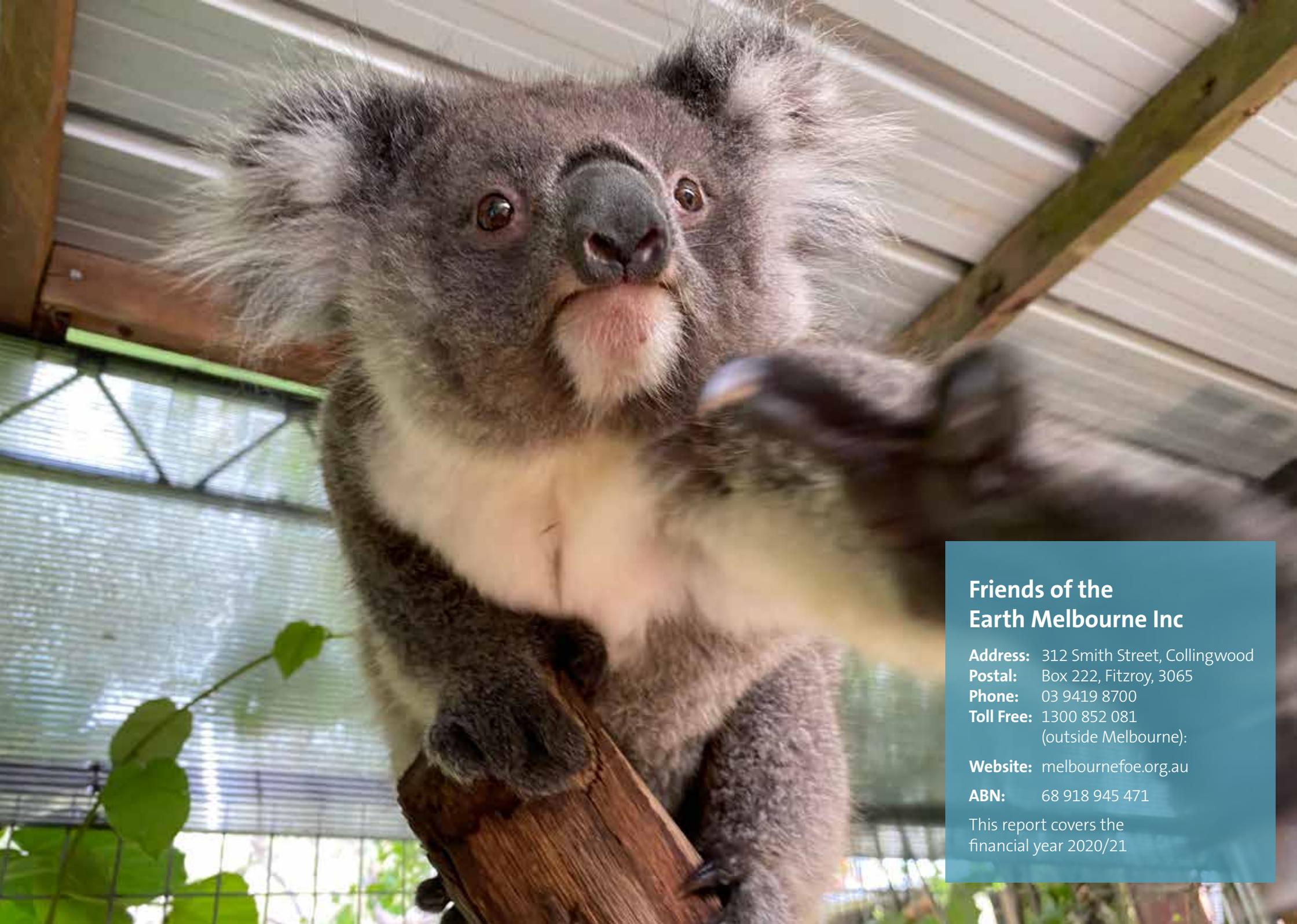
We communicate with the responsible persons regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

McBain McCartin & Co
Chartered Accountants

Simon Aukstin (CA)
Partner

123 Whitehorse Road,
Balwyn VIC 3103

Dated this 16th day of November 2021



Friends of the Earth Melbourne Inc

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Toll Free: 1300 852 081
(outside Melbourne):

Website: melbournefoe.org.au

ABN: 68 918 945 471

This report covers the
financial year 2020/21