

The image shows a dramatic coastal scene. In the foreground, a gnarled tree with sparse green leaves leans over a steep, reddish-brown rock face. The rock surface is textured and shows signs of weathering. Below the cliff, the ocean is a vibrant blue, with white foam from waves crashing against the base of the rocks. In the background, more rugged rock formations in shades of red and grey rise from the sea under a clear sky. The overall atmosphere is one of natural beauty and ruggedness.

annual report 2023 - 2024  
australian earth laws alliance

The Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of the lands on which AELA operates and practices.

AELA acknowledges that the sovereignty of the First Nations Peoples of the continent now known as Australia was never ceded by treaty nor in any other way. AELA acknowledges and respects First Nations Peoples' laws and ecologically sustainable custodianship of Australia over tens of thousands of years through land and sea management practices that continue today.

Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land.





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## A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

**Ross Williams**

Another year has passed quickly and on behalf of the AELA Board of Directors, we'd like to thank our staff and volunteers for all their dedicated, unwavering commitment and enduring hard work this year. Further, we'd like to thank everyone in the AELA community for their dedication, positive support and participation in our programs and events.

As a very proud Bindal person, I personally remain committed and proud to continue as a member of the AELA Board of Management, and to supporting AELA's work.

The staff and volunteers of AELA are passionate about creating Earth-centred governance and Caring for Country for a sustainable and liveable future. This can only truly be achieved by continuing to understand, sharing and respect the experiences and knowledge of First Peoples of this continent. I continue to be inspired by our teams, and our network of communities, who are committed to decolonising our knowledge and governance systems and making life-centred systems change..



*Male Eastern Water Dragon  
David Cavagna*

## A NOTE FROM OUR NATIONAL CONVENOR

**Dr Michelle Maloney,  
AELA National Convenor**



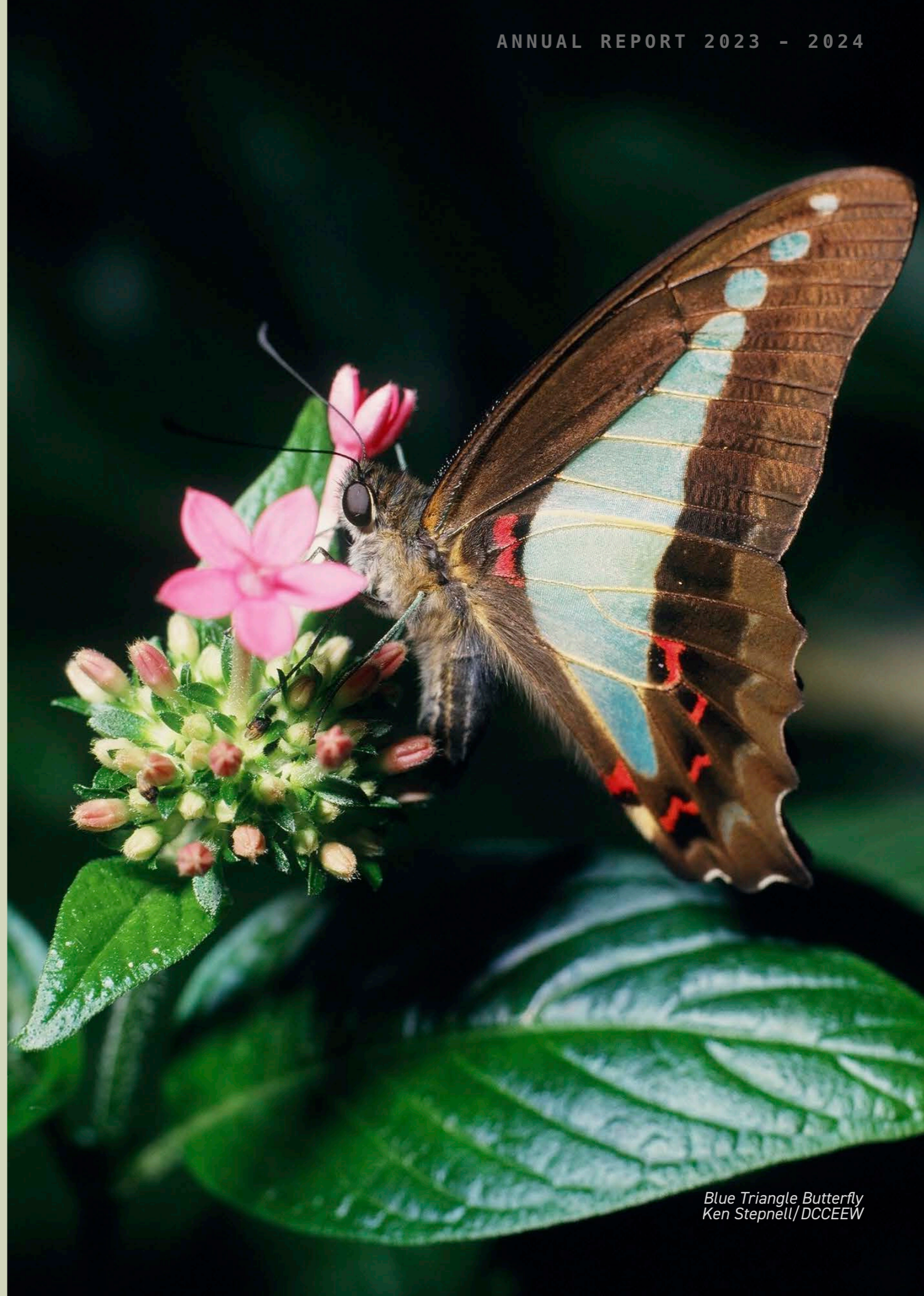
On behalf of the AELA staff and volunteers, I'm pleased to share our annual report with our networks and friends.

It's been a challenging year, as we watch indicators around the world point towards accelerating climate breakdown and biodiversity loss. But we are always heartened by the amazing work and efforts of the communities, researchers, businesses and policy makers we work with.

Through our four key programs – education and culture change, community capacity building, systems change and building critical networks – we continue to provide innovative thought leadership and practical guidance and support for change makers.

Towards the end of the reporting period, I was deeply honoured and humbled to receive a National Peace Women Award from the remarkable people within the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). This felt like a powerful validation of the amazing work that all of us in the AELA network are carrying out.

Enjoy reading the overview of our work – and as always, please reach out and connect with us anytime!



*Blue Triangle Butterfly  
Ken Stepnell/DCCEEW*

## AELA's Mission

To increase the understanding and practical implementation of Earth-centred governance in Australia.

## Our Vision

Thriving ecocentric societies, living within their ecological limits and nurturing the living world.

## Our Role

We are a unique think-tank and capacity building organization, providing creative leadership and support to others, to build Earth-centred governance.

## AELA's History and Theory of Change

AELA was created in 2012, by a group of environmental lawyers who were inspired by the theory of Earth jurisprudence. Today, AELA is a multi-disciplinary network working to address the root causes of the ecological crises and continues to be inspired by Earth jurisprudence and the Earth-centred governance of Indigenous Peoples in Australia and around the world.

Earth jurisprudence suggests that we need to recognise that humans are only one part of nature ('one member of the Earth community'), that we are interdependent with the living world, and we need to govern ourselves and our societies, so that we nurture rather than destroy the living world.

### THE PROBLEMS AELA IS WORKING TO ADDRESS

From an Earth jurisprudence perspective, industrialised societies have created the current ecological crisis – a climate changing world, with declining biodiversity and ecological health – due to our human-centred, extractivist world view and actions. These attitudes and actions have led to the creation of systems of governance (including law, economics, education and politics) that see humans as separate from nature, and that treat nature as just human property for endless use and consumption.

### THE NEED FOR NEW GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS

The need for new governance systems has never been greater. To care for our shared home, we need to transition from human-centred to Earth-centred systems of governance, so we can nurture the living world upon which we depend. Despite the indisputable scientific evidence about climate change and environmental decline – and more than four decades of 'sustainable development' efforts – Australia's governance systems have not adapted sufficiently (or at all) to address the root causes of the ecological problems we face, and therefore are unable to make the changes necessary to respond to the current ecological crises.

### AELA'S STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

AELA is committed to building long term systems change, so that human societies can shift from human-centred to Earth-centred governance. We focus on building systems change that will impact on our legal, economic, educational and democratic systems.

## OUTCOMES

Our strategies and programs aim to work across and connect core governance issues in Australia in order to: increase education and awareness about how current governance systems work; create and demonstrate how Earth-centred alternatives can work; and build communities of people inspired by and able to implement Earth-centred governance.

### What is governance?

AELA's work focuses on how we can shift from governance systems that are human-centred and support endless growth on a finite planet, to governance systems that are Earth-centred, regenerative and nurture all life.

There are many different definitions of 'governance'.

Within AELA, we use a simple definition: 'the rules we make to live, work and play together in human society'.

# AELA's Key Programs

AELA has 4 key programs to help us achieve our mission:

1

## Education and culture change

We create Earth-centred cultural change by providing education opportunities - including courses, workshops, webinars, cross-cultural learning and creative programs.

2

## Community Capacity Building

We provide community capacity building support to people, communities and organisations advocating for Indigenous First Laws, Rights of Nature and Earth-centred governance in their local area.

3

## Systems Change Projects

We build systems change by empowering people, groups, and organisations to understand and implement systems change in practice – including through our Greenprints framework.

4

## Critical Networks

AELA prioritises building partnerships and supporting social change networks, in order to work with other amazing people and groups, and strengthen the impact of everyone's work.

5

## Strengthen AELA's Resources & Governance

# AELA's Activities in 2023 - 2024

## 1. EDUCATION AND CULTURE CHANGE

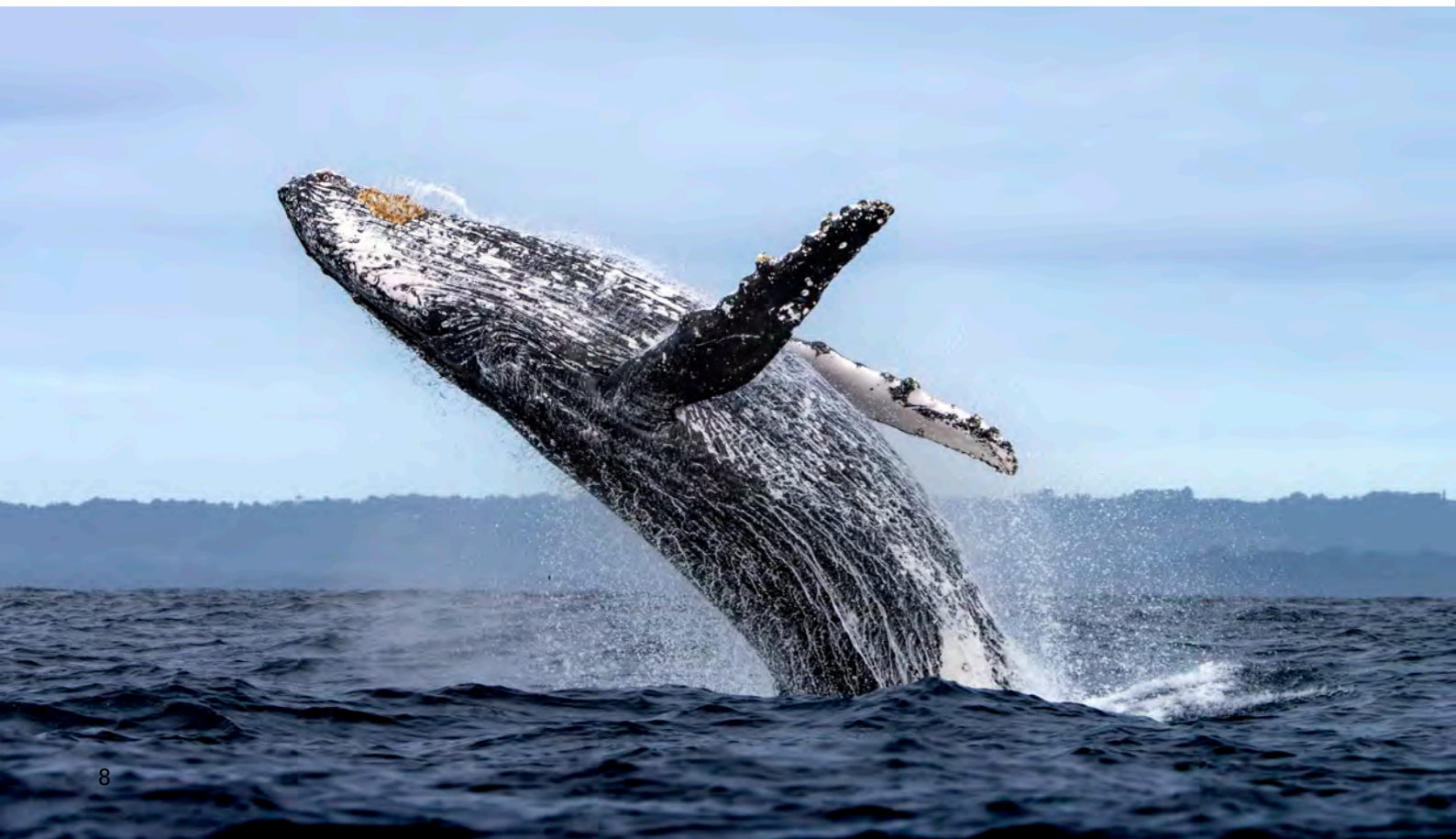
### 1.1 Providing education and information about ecocentric governance

AELA continues to be Australia's leading organization providing education and raising awareness about the holistic, Earth-centred systems change needed to build a successful and just society into the future. Every year, AELA hosts dozens of events – online and in person – to bring Earth-centred ideas and practices to a variety of audiences.

AELA hosted and co-hosted more than 180 public and private events and meetings during the financial year. This included: public lectures, panel discussions, conferences, community workshops and other public gatherings, to provide information and education about ecocentric governance.

This also included AELA hosting nearly 50 private meetings throughout the year, to provide expert advice about Earth laws to community groups, researchers, political representatives and others.

*Humpback Whale breaches near Byron Bay  
David Cavagna*



## Professional Development Courses

### AELA Courses

**introduction to earth laws**  
 professional development course  
 5-26 march 2024  
 tuesdays 4-6pm AEST  
[www.earthlaws.org.au/education](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/education)  
 an initiative of the  
 australian earth laws alliance

**5 March 2024 – 26 March 2024**  
 Introduction to Earth Laws

**earth centred futures**  
 professional development course  
 7 may to 25 june 2024  
 tuesdays 4-6pm AEST  
[www.earthlaws.org.au/education](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/education)  
 an initiative of the  
 australian earth laws alliance

**7 May 2024 – 25 June 2024**  
 Earth Centred Futures Course

**introduction to decolonisation**  
 professional development course  
 1 to 22 october 2024  
 tuesdays 4-6pm AEST  
[www.earthlaws.org.au/education](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/education)  
 an initiative of the  
 australian earth laws alliance

**1 Oct 2024 – 22 Oct 2024**  
 New course in October 2024 -  
 Introduction to Decolonisation





# AELA's Impact

“Every Australian who cares about our country and the environment would benefit from this course. The true history of Australia is shocking and sometimes unbelievable but necessary for all of us to heal the trauma, to learn and be better stewards, together. Thank you Michelle and the guests for the deep dive.”

– Donalea

Introduction to Earth Laws course 2024

“Thank you so much Michelle for your powerful, lucid, insightful and warm presentation. Thank you also for the wonderful and incredibly important work you do with AELA and Future Dreaming. Everything you do is authentic, rich, deep and unique and I'm very grateful for the workshops you offer to the public. Thank you again!”

– Carmel

'Connecting to Place, Caring for Country' workshop (AELA/Future Dreaming) 2023

“I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to have participated in the Introduction to Earth Laws 2024 course. It has equipped me with valuable insights and tools in my work as a Regenerative Business Mentor. This comprehensive course has a remarkable ability to simplify a complex topic. It is the perfect introduction to fundamental themes of earth laws, accessible to a wide audience. The clarity with which the material was presented enabled me to develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter, which is crucial in advocating for environmental justice and sustainability. By recognising and honouring indigenous first laws, the course not only enriched my knowledge but also fostered a greater appreciation for the interconnectedness between humans, nature, and the law.

– Jannine Barron

Introduction to Earth Laws course 2024

“I enjoyed the breadth and depth of the course; I now have words and terms for concepts and ideas of which I only had a vague notion before taking the course. Michelle is such a knowledgeable and generous teacher, and I also greatly enjoyed the fantastic guest speakers. I have already recommended the course to a couple of people. Thank you!”

– Katja

Introduction to Earth Laws course 2024

# AELA's Impact

“I recently had the opportunity to explore the Earth-Centred Futures 2024 and I must say it was truly fantastic. This comprehensive program delves deep into Earth-centred thinking and governance, covering a wide array of topics such as Earth jurisprudence, interconnectedness, Indigenous philosophies, Earth-centred law, economics, and politics. Dr. Michelle Maloney hosted and gave lectures in the course, together with a lineup of expert guest speakers, who all shared valuable insights that empower participants to apply their learning to real-world scenarios. I strongly recommend the Earth-Centred Futures 2024 course to individuals from all backgrounds who wish to make a positive impact on our global community. This course is perfect for those seeking to deepen their understanding of Earth-centered governance and contribute to a sustainable future.

– Kelly Tudhope

Earth Centred Futures course 2024

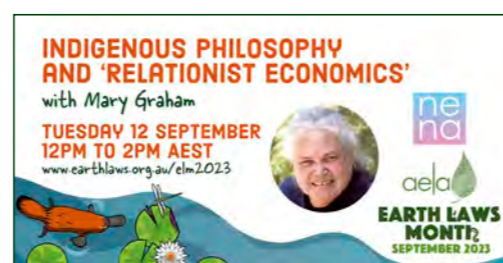
“Sustainability Education and Partnerships at Western Sydney University have had the privilege and pleasure to work with Michelle Maloney and Australian Earth Laws Alliance over the last three years. Michelle's insightful, practical and professional workshops provided us with an introduction to river rights, rights of nature and Earth laws. These workshops were invaluable in setting the foundation and understanding for Hawkesbury Nepean Waterkeeper Alliance a group of educators, NGOs and local instrumentalities for how to work in culturally appropriate and respectful ways with First Nations communities across the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment and have set us on the path of a “slow weave” of working together. I am incredibly grateful to Michelle for her sharing her substantial time, energy and knowledge.

– Jen Dollin

Director, Sustainability Education and Partnerships Office of the PVC Education Quality and Partnerships, Western Sydney University – August 2024

# Public Webinars

- 8 Aug 23 **AELA's Creative Conversations:**  
with Jude Roberts and Helen Hardess
- 1 Sep 23 **Connecting to Place, Caring for Country**
- 1 Sep 23 **The right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment: how to make it operational and effective**  
- with the Honourable Justice Brian Preston
- 6 Sep 23 **Deep listening to nature**  
with Andrew Skeoch
- 7 Sep 23 **Decolonising our thinking, feelings and actions**  
with Mary Graham, Yin Paradies and Michelle Maloney
- 8 Sep 23 **The work that reconnects**  
with John Seed and Patricia Fleming
- 12 Sep 23 **Degrowth in Australia - What's Possible?**  
with Anitra Nelson & Terry Leahy
- 12 Sep 23 **Indigenous philosophy and 'Relationist Economics'**  
with Mary Graham
- 13 Sep 23 **Designing Regenerative Cultures**  
with Daniel Christian Wahl in conversation with Michelle Maloney
- 14 Sep 23 **The Path to a Sustainable Civilisation: technological, socioeconomic and political change**  
with Mark Diesendorf and Rod Taylor



- 14 Sep 23
- 18 Sep 23
- 19 Sep 23
- 21 Sep 23
- 22 Sep 23
- 25 Sep 23
- 26 Sep 23
- 26 Sep 23
- 28 Sep 23
- 29 Sep 23
- 24 Feb 24

- The future of ecological economics,**  
with Robert Costanza
- Climate change update**  
with Brendan Mackey
- Women's Environmental Leadership in Australia**
- Nature Journaling Workshop**  
with Julia Landford
- Sublime Toxics**  
with Christopher Wright
- Nature, Our Medicine: How the natural world sustains us,**  
with Dr Dimity Williams
- The Human Right to a Healthy Environment: Recognising the Right in Australia**
- Making ecocide a crime - international update**  
with Jojo Mehta, Ecocide International
- Rights of Nature Symposium - Updates from around the World**
- Integral ecology - faith and environment**
- Introduction to Deep Ecology**



## 1.2 Hosting educational workshops with Indigenous Partners

AELA is committed to working in solidarity with First Nations partners, to share cross cultural information and education about Caring for Country, First Laws and Earth-centred governance. We are also committed to contributing to the decolonisation of Western knowledge systems, to support diversity and flourishing of knowledge systems in Australia.

To do this work, AELA works closely with our sister organisation, Future Dreaming Australia. Together, we host public workshops, private mentoring, organisational training and development and other activities for our AELA networks.

This year, AELA and Future Dreaming provided cross-cultural training, delivered in a series of tailor made workshops, for two organisations – Bushtekniq in Brisbane, and the Bushfire Survivors for Climate Change, a national organization

Some of our workshops are featured below.

### AELA's work partnering with Future Dreaming Australia

**CONNECTING TO PLACE, CARING FOR COUNTRY**  
 Friday 1 September  
 12noon - 2pm AEST  
 online - via Zoom  
 events.humanitix.com/fd-1sept  
 Presented in conjunction with REEL's Earth Laws Month 2023  
**EARTH LAWS MONTH**  
 SEPTEMBER 2023  
**Future Dreaming Australia**  
 events.humanitix.com/fd-1sept

**ONLINE BOOK LAUNCH**  
**'Declaration of Peace for Indigenous Australians and Nature'**  
 Tuesday 21 May 2024  
 12noon AEST  
 ONLINE via Zoom  
 BOOK HERE: <https://events.humanitix.com/rsa-21may>  
 Speakers:  
 Anne Poelina  
 Mary Graham  
 Tyson Yunkaporta  
 Ross Williams  
 Chels Marshall  
 Michelle Maloney  
 Michael Davis  
**REGENERATIVE SONGLINES AUSTRALIA**  
 Declaration of Peace for Indigenous Australians and Nature  
 Louise Peacock, Kenneth S. Coort, Michael Davis

### Connecting to Place, Caring for Country – workshops co-hosted with Future Dreaming Australia

AELA co-hosted online workshops with our sister organisation, Future Dreaming. Titled 'Connecting to Place, Caring for Country', these workshops featured Indigenous leaders Adjunct Associate Professor Mary Graham (University of Queensland and Kombu-merri and Waka Waka person), Ross Williams, Future Dreaming and Bindal/Juru man, and AELA's National Convenor, Dr Michelle Maloney.

### Declaration of Peace for Indigenous Australians and Nature

On 21 May, AELA co-hosted a very special online book launch, featuring Mary Graham, Anne Poelina, Tyson Yunkaporta, Ross Williams, Michelle Maloney and Michael Davidson.



White-spotted Eagle Ray at Nguthungulli Julian Rocks Nature Reserve  
 David Cavagna

## 2. BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY

AELA works with individuals, groups and community-based organisations to provide support for Earth-centred community capacity building in Australia. This work includes supporting people who wish to advocate for Indigenous First Laws, Rights of Nature, Legal Personhood for Nature, Local Ecological Custodianship, Community Eco-Governance (Greenprints) and other Earth-centred governance initiatives in their jurisdiction or local community.

### 2.1 Support community groups and organisations to take action

Much of AELA's community capacity building work is carried out within our "Earth Laws Centre" (AELC), which provides a focus for education, information sharing and mentoring around governance transformation.

The AELC provides educational opportunities and capacity building support to communities, researchers and others, to help them understand current law and governance, and take action to make systems change. We also provide private mentoring, community workshop facilitation support, cross-cultural communication advice and training and other support activities, to empower local community groups and organisations to carry out their own Earth laws advocacy and community building work.

AELA's National Convenor, Dr Michelle Maloney, participates in conferences, workshops, public talks, reference groups and advisory groups, in order to advocate for Earth centred law and governance.

#### In 2023-2024, our community capacity building work included:

- ◇ Continuing to work with Regen Songlines Australia ([regenerative-songlines.net.au](http://regenerative-songlines.net.au)) and Future Dreaming ([futuresdreaming.org.au](http://futuresdreaming.org.au)), to co-host Indigenous-led knowledge events and projects, aimed at educating Australians about Indigenous First Laws.
- ◇ Supporting the Hawkesbury-Nepean Water Keepers management group as they develop strategies for working with local First Nations Peoples, and to develop shared Earth Laws and Rights of Nature projects
- ◇ Supporting a community group in South East Queensland called 'Care4Esk', to enable them to carry out koala and wildlife monitoring and community education, and to engage with their Local Council about Earth-centred care;
- ◇ Supporting Councillor Debra Mar, to introduce Rights of Nature and Ecocentric governance innovations to the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council;
- ◇ .Supporting people on the Clarence River and Macleay River in New South Wales, to begin conversations in their communities about Earth laws, Rights of Rivers and Indigenous First Laws.

*Image: Boat Harbour Tomaree National Park  
Adam Hollingworth/DCCEEW*



### 3. SYSTEMS CHANGE PROJECTS

To support Earth-centred systems change in Australia, AELA focuses on two streams of work:

- ◇ showcasing alternatives to current ‘business as usual’ human-centred governance models;
- ◇ supporting communities and organisations who wish to use AELA’s ‘Greenprints framework’ to explore pathways to Earth-centred governance in their own bioregion.

Through our education programs and public events, we enable people to learn about new governance models, how to create systems change and how to connect personal and professional aspirations and activities, to broader systems change work.

A list of our webinars can be seen on p.12-13 of this report

Through our Greenprints program, we have developed a comprehensive pathway for people to learn about – and begin implementing – significant systems change in their own communities.



*Waratah in bloom in Dharug Country, Blue Mountains, NSW  
Photo by James Lee.*

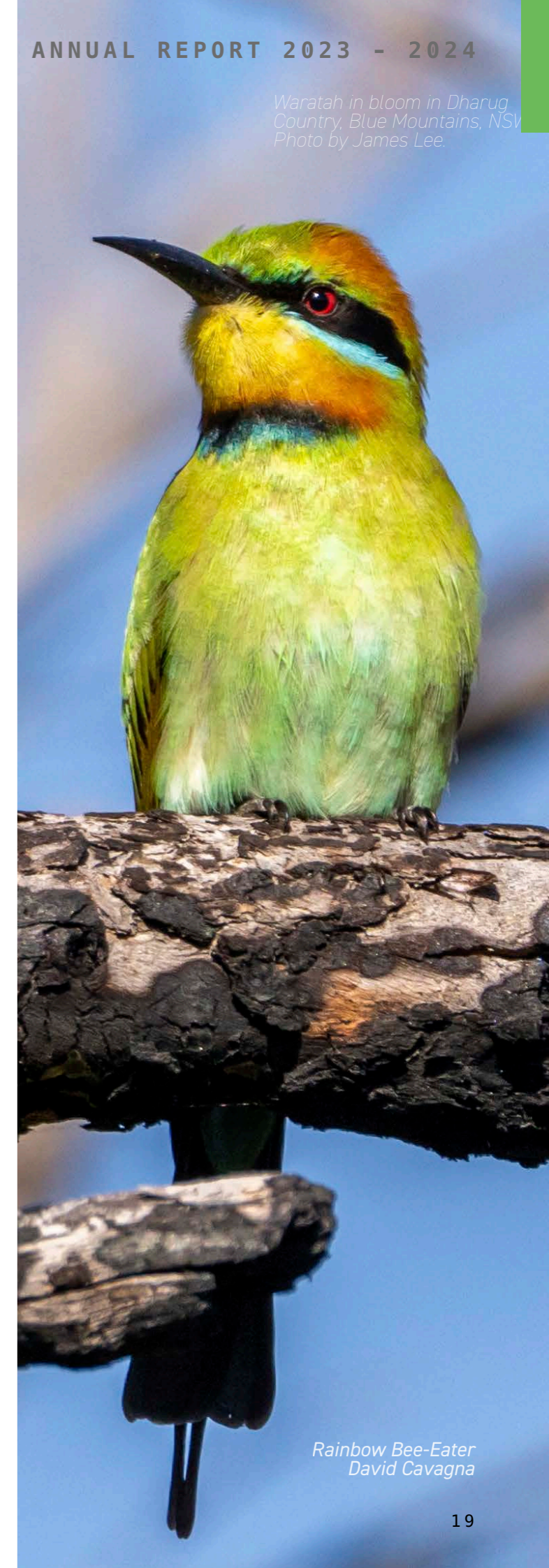
### Working with Greenprints partners

#### LITHGOW TRANSFORMATION HUB IN 2023-2024

In late 2022, AELA was pleased to be engaged by the Lithgow Transformation Hub, to bring the Greenprints program to the Hub’s “Regenerating Lithgow” project. Regenerating Lithgow was an important capacity building project, that assisted with the recovery from the impacts of the bushfires through education, skills building, mentoring and creative activities. The Regenerating Lithgow coordinating team worked with the Greenprints approach to show case how the community resilience projects -could be brought into the biophysical capacity of its bioregion. The Greenprints team created a website with ‘stories’ showing the biocultural features of the region, and this was used in community workshops to catalyse further conversations.

#### GREENPRINTS FOR THE GOLD COAST

AELA has continued discussions with groups and community leaders in the Gold Coast region, to map out how the Greenprints approach might be used by diverse groups in the region. Further work is being done to connect First Nations Peoples, environmental organisations, economic initiatives and more, and in 2024-2025 a small research and pilot project will be commenced.



*Rainbow Bee-Eater  
David Cavagna*

# Greenprints Exchange – Bioregionalism Webinar Series

In 2023-2024, AELA has been working to organise a new Greenprints webinar series: 'Exploring Bioregionalism' which will be held across 2024-2025. Here's a preview of our upcoming webinars -

**EXPLORING BIOREGIONALISM:  
Earthy governance stories from India**  
with Shrishtee Bajpai, Global Tapestry of Alternatives  
& Greenprints Host: Dr Michelle Maloney

FREE WEBINAR – BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL  
25 July 2024 @ 12noon to 1.30pm AEST  
events.humanitix.com/aela-25july

greenprints  
www.greenprints.org.au  
An initiative of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance

**EXPLORING BIOREGIONALISM:  
Can bioregionalism solve our housing crisis?**  
with Elena Pereyra, Anitra Nelson &  
Greenprints Host: Dr Michelle Maloney

FREE WEBINAR – BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL  
29 August 2024 @ 12noon to 1.30pm AEST  
events.humanitix.com/aela-29aug

greenprints  
www.greenprints.org.au  
An initiative of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance

**EXPLORING BIOREGIONALISM:  
Re-inventing bioregionalism & 'bioregioning'  
in the 21st century**  
with Dr Sam Wearne, University of Technology Sydney  
& Greenprints Host: Dr Michelle Maloney

FREE WEBINAR – BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL  
19 September 2024 @ 12noon to 1.30pm AEST  
events.humanitix.com/aela-19sept

greenprints  
www.greenprints.org.au  
An initiative of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance

**EXPLORING BIOREGIONALISM:  
Western science, bioregions & boundaries**  
with Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe, AO  
& Greenprints Host: Dr Michelle Maloney

FREE WEBINAR – BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL  
24 October 2024 @ 12noon to 1.30pm AEST  
events.humanitix.com/aela-24oct

greenprints  
www.greenprints.org.au  
An initiative of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance

**EXPLORING BIOREGIONALISM:  
First Peoples' governance systems  
and the Relationist Ethos**  
Dr Mary Graham, Kombumerri person and Adjunct Associate  
Professor, UQ, in conversation with AELA's Dr Michelle Maloney

FREE WEBINAR – BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL  
5 December 2024 @ 12noon to 1.30pm AEST  
https://events.humanitix.com/aela-5dec

greenprints  
www.greenprints.org.au  
An initiative of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance



## Background to the Greenprints Program

'Greenprints' was created by AELA's National Convenor, Dr Michelle Maloney, to help civil society groups and interested government authorities understand, and take very practical steps towards creating, Earth-centred governance. Greenprints fills an important gap, because while we have 'blueprints' to document the design of building and engineering projects, we don't yet have effective 'greenprints' for helping us construct Earth-centred human societies and economies that can nurture the Earth community and live within our ecological limits.

Greenprints provides a practical, step-by-step approach to help people understand both the big picture and the small details, of how to create systems change, transform our societies, and thrive within our ecological limits. It is place-based, encouraging people to start with their bioregions or catchments, and it demystifies and connects the many existing concepts, models and methods that can be used to create sustainable and regenerative communities and organisations.

For more information about Greenprints, please visit: [www.greenprints.org.au](http://www.greenprints.org.au)



The Greenprints website banner.  
Design by Michelle Maloney, Artwork by Kat Atkinson

## 4. CRITICAL NETWORKS

AELA prioritises building partnerships and supporting social change networks, in order to work with other amazing people and groups, and strengthen the impact of everyone’s work. We believe that only by joining forces, working together and amplifying shared efforts, will we be able create the systems change we need. We support – and where necessary, create - networks at the local, regional, and International levels.

### 4.1 AELA contributes to international networks, to influence international Earth-centred initiatives and bring new ideas to Australia

AELA collaborates with a wide range of civil society, research/academic, not-for-profit, First Nations and community/grass roots organisations, to advocate for Earth centred governance across all levels of Australian society. AELA also works hard to offer leadership, and stay connected with, a wide range of international networks advocating for Earth-centred law and governance. Our goal is to contribute to the global discourse and action around ecological justice and Earth-centred governance, and to bring the best new ideas from around the world, into the Australian context.

AELA coordinates the Australian working group: “**Stop Ecocide Australia**”, and also supports the amazing volunteers who are working to bring the **Stop Ecocide International** campaign to communities, politicians and practitioners in Australia.

AELA is represented by Dr Michelle Maloney in a number of important international networks. Some of Michelle’s affiliations that connect AELA to important initiatives around the world include:

- ◇ Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN) - Advisory Council
- ◇ Earth Trusteeship Initiative - Steering Group
- ◇ International Ecological Law and Governance Association (ELGA) - Steering Group
- ◇ Center for Democratic and Environmental Rights (CDER) - Associate
- ◇ Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) - Members Working Group
- ◇ IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law - Member
- ◇ UN Harmony with Nature Knowledge Network - Member

### 4.2 AELA is a member of Earth-centred networks across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region

AELA continues to connect with and support Earth-centred initiatives across our region, including:

- ◇ Ocean Rights and Kinship Alliance (ORKA), co-facilitated by AELA to host educational webinars and meetings with members and experts around the Asia Pacific;
- ◇ Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature’s ‘Asia Pacific Hub’;
- ◇ Blue Mountains Planetary Health Initiative; and
- ◇ AELA is also currently developing new networks to connect Earth laws researchers, Earth Ethics specialists and deep ecology/human-nature connections in Australia.



Manning River Turtle  
Cooplacurripa River, Cooplacurripa  
Darren Fielder/DCCEEWS



*Inshore Bottlenose Dolphin, Brunswick Heads break wall  
David Cavagna*





## 5. AELA Governance

### Our Team 2023-2024

#### BOARD OF MANAGEMENT (VOLUNTARY)

Ross Williams	Chairperson
Megan Vu	Treasurer
Dr Michelle Maloney	Company Secretary
James Lee	Director
Dr Edward Morgan	Director
Eva Godnjavec	Director

#### PAID STAFF, PART-TIME (FROM 1 JULY 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2024)

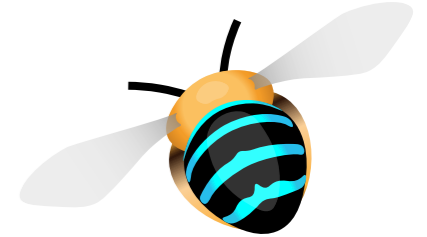
Michelle Maloney	National Convenor
James Lee	Operations Manager and Greenprints program
Sarah Bashforth	Administration Manager

# How you can connect with AELA's work

## Become a member

Visit the membership page on our website:

➔ <https://www.earthlaws.org.au/membership/>



## Volunteer your time

Consider volunteering your skills and time to AELA projects. You can volunteer at any time. Just visit our Professional and Student Volunteer webpage on our website for the information:

➔ <https://www.earthlaws.org.au/volunteer-with-aela/>

## Make a donation

AELA relies on donations and income from events, to run our programs. You can make a one-off donation or become a monthly donor, here:

➔ <https://www.earthlaws.org.au/donate>

## Leave a bequest

If you would like to add AELA as a beneficiary to your will, please contact us anytime and we can assist with suitable wording for your documents.

## CONTACT US

➔ Email: [aela@earthlaws.org.au](mailto:aela@earthlaws.org.au)

➔ Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AustralianEarthLaws/>

➔ Visit our website: [www.earthlaws.org.au](http://www.earthlaws.org.au)

# Treasurer's Report

**Treasurer's Report**  
**Megan Vu**  
**AELA Treasurer**

This past year has been a period of significant transition for the Australian Earth Laws Alliance. While our work and impact continues to grow, we may be facing a reduced operational budget in the coming financial year, due to a decline in grant funding, and we have been making plans accordingly.

We've seen growth in some important areas of income. Our membership income has increased from \$12,426 in the 2022-2023 FY to \$20,280 in the current FY, demonstrating continued confidence from our members in our work. We've also diversified our income streams and increased the number of paid professional development courses we offer. More than 150 people paid to participate in our courses, bringing financial and knowledge sharing benefits.

Other items to note: In the 2022-2023 financial year, we received (and have been auspicing since then) a large Federal Government grant for the 'Care for Esk' community group (\$110,000). This is why it appears that AELA's donation income has dropped from \$221,794 in the 2022-2023 FY, to \$102,920, this year. We have in fact been supporting expenditure of the Federal Grant for Care for Esk.

AELA continues to produce a remarkable output for its small budget, and continued efforts will be made to secure grant funding beyond the 2024-2025 financial year



# AELA's Financial Reports 2023-2024

## AUSTRALIAN EARTH LAWS ALLIANCE LIMITED

ABN 54 156 139 221

FINANCIAL REPORT – 30 JUNE 2024

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**Directors' Report**

The Directors of Australian Earth Laws Alliance Limited (AELA) present their Report together with the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024, and the Independent Audit Report.

**Director details**

The following persons were Directors of AELA during or since the end of the financial year:

<p><b>Dr Michelle Maloney Director and National Convenor</b></p> <p>Michelle Maloney is Co-Founder and was appointed National Convenor and Director in March 2012.</p> <p>Michelle is on the Board of Management of Future Dreaming Australia (a not-for-profit company); and on the Management Committee of the New Economy Network Australia Cooperative (NENA).</p> <p>She has over 30 years' experience designing and managing climate change, sustainability and environmental justice projects in Australia, the United Kingdom, Indonesia and the USA. This includes ten years working with indigenous communities in Central Queensland.</p> <p>Michelle holds a Bachelor of Arts/Law (Honours) from the Australian National University and a PhD in Law from Griffith University.</p>	<p><b>Ross Williams - Director</b></p> <p>Ross Williams joined the AELA Board in November 2017.</p> <p>Ross is of the Bindal and Juru peoples, from the areas now known as Townsville to Bowen, and Erub and Mer in the Torres Straits. He has worked with many groups and organisations in natural and cultural resource management for over 35 years. He is passionate about supporting and assisting in the Caring for Country Principles, with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders throughout Queensland, Australia and internationally. Ross is on the Board of Management of Future Dreaming Australia and is involved in a range of mentoring and community support projects in South East Queensland.</p> <p>Ross is dedicated and passionate about assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth to be the best they can be through building self-confidence, social and cultural resilience.</p>
<p><b>Dr Edward Morgan - Director</b></p> <p>Edward Morgan was appointed to the Board on 23 November 2019.</p> <p>He is a Research Fellow at Griffith University and supports a range of AELA's projects that require expertise bridging the natural and social sciences. Edward's research interests include the interaction between science and society for sustainability; governance and planning for water sensitive cities; and environmental justice.</p> <p>Edward holds a PhD (Natural Resource Management) (GU), MSc (Environmental Science) and MSci (Chemistry).</p>	<p><b>James Lee - Director</b></p> <p>James Lee was appointed to the Board on 23 November 2019.</p> <p>He has a strong interest in interdisciplinary approaches to addressing ecological challenges and exploring the role that cultural practices can play in informing and supporting Earth-centred governance.</p> <p>James has a background in art, music (BMus) and film studies (GradDip Film &amp; TV) and holds a Master of Environmental Management from the University of New South Wales.</p>

<p><b>Megan Vu - Director</b></p> <p>Megan was appointed to the Board on 29 November 2023.</p> <p>Megan holds dual degrees in Commerce and Politics, Philosophy, and Economics from the Australian National University and combines her extensive experience in both public and private sectors with a deep commitment to sustainability. Her background in Business Banking has equipped her with expertise in financial management and strategic planning. Passionate about environmental stewardship, Megan integrates sustainable practices into her professional endeavours. As Treasurer, she brings a unique blend of analytical acumen and ethical integrity, ensuring the financial health and sustainability of AELA.</p>	<p><b>Eva Godnjavec - Director</b></p> <p>Eva was appointed to the Board on 29 November 2023.</p> <p>Eva has a background in business management, marketing, communications and corporate social responsibility. She holds a Bachelor of Business from Auckland University of Technology (Graduated 2017) and won Top Graduate in Business Management. She also holds a Master of Environmental Management, University of NSW (completed 2024). She has worked as Assistant Marketing Manager (PETStock), SR Content Strategy Specialist (Air New Zealand) and Sustainability Project Manager (Auckland Transport).</p>
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**Principal Activities**

During the year, the principal activities included:

- Hosting and participating in a broad range of conferences/ workshops/ public lectures/ podcasts and webinars, to educate the legal profession and wider community about Earth centred law and governance.
- Developing the Greenprints Initiative, including working with community groups at the Gold Coast and Lithgow
- Continuing to support the development of the New Economy Network Australia; the Ecological Law and Governance Association, the International Wellbeing Economy Alliance and other international initiatives.
- Progressing the work of the Australian Earth Laws Centre, including hosting educational workshops and information for community groups
- Continuing to auspice the work and events for sister organisation 'Future Dreaming Australia', a partnership initiative managed by First Nations people and non-indigenous people/ to share ecological knowledge and Care for Country.
- Auspicing and supporting /Regenerative Songlines Australia', an important Indigenous initiative supported by AELA and other non-indigenous allies.

**Objectives**

AELA's short-term objective is to promote the understanding and practical implementation of Earth Jurisprudence (Earth centred law and governance) in Australia.

The long-term objective is to see reform of Australian governance systems - including law, economics/ education and ethical frameworks - which reflect an earth centred worldview.

**Strategy for achieving objectives**

AELA works as a 'think and do' organisation. We aim to achieve our objectives by conducting outreach, education and information activities (workshops/ public lectures, conferences, educational courses); conducting and sharing research (including the publication of books, edited collections, journal publications and electronic articles); and partnering with a wide range of other organisations and initiatives/ to build networks of people and organisations promoting and implementing Earth centred governance.

**Directors' meetings**

The number of meetings held during the year and attended by each director:

	Board Meetings	
	Eligible to Attend	Attended
Dr Michelle Maloney	5	5
Ross Williams	5	5
James Lee	5	5
Dr Edward Morgan	5	5
Megan Vu	4	4
Eva Godjnavec	4	4
Leeanne Leserve	1	1

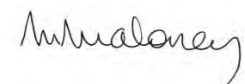
**Contribution in winding up**

AELA is incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* and is a Company Limited by Guarantee. If the Company is wound up, the Constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the entity. At 30 June 2024, the total amount that members of the Company are liable to contribute if the Company wound up is \$1,820 (2023: \$1,820).

**Auditor**

A copy of the Auditor's Independence Declaration as required under s 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001* is on page 5 of this Financial Report and forms part of the Directors' Report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors:



**Dr Michelle Maloney**  
 Director and National Convenor  
 18 November 2024



Principal:  
 Douglas Wood FCA, RCA  
 Associate  
 George Vourantonis RCA  
 Consultants  
 George Raffan RCA  
 Simon Joyce RCA

ABN 70 766 560 849  
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 North Sydney NSW 2059  
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 North Sydney NSW 2060  
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**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 307C OF THE CORPORATIONS ACT 2001 TO THE DIRECTORS OF AUSTRALIAN EARTH LAWS ALLIANCE LIMITED**

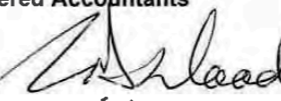
I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the audit of Australian Earth Laws Alliance Limited for the year ended 30 June 2024 there have been:

- i. no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the Corporation Act 2001 in relation to the audit; and
- ii. no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



**FOSTER RAFFAN**

**Chartered Accountants**



**G D Wood, FCA**  
 Principal

RCA # 4479

North Sydney  
 18 November 2024

## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>INCOME</b>			
Conferences and workshops		5,280	3,903
Interest		1,355	110
Donations and appeals fund		106,875	221,794
Memberships		20,192	12,426
Other		540	5,320
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>134,242</b>	<b>243,553</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
ASIC		-	762
Advertising		28,151	-
Catering		-	430
Computer - Mailchimp		4,499	262
Communications – zoom and internet		921	1,613
Conferences and workshops		-	470
Consulting		92,544	72,976
Contractor		70,300	103,571
Event and other refunds		4,706	2,171
Insurance		2,065	2,047
Legal – Trademark registration		-	3,750
Motor vehicle		365	921
NENA		610	90
Other		4,281	1,636
Postage, printing and stationery		782	237
Publication and information management		-	3,312
Professional development		46	209
Rent		1,373	11,076
Travel		-	2,657
Website design and management		4,479	2,900
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>215,122</b>	<b>211,089</b>
<b>(Loss)/Surplus before income tax expense</b>		<b>(80,880)</b>	<b>32,463</b>
<b>Income tax expense</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>(Loss)/Surplus for the year</b>		<b>(80,880)</b>	<b>32,463</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income for the period, net of income tax</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive (Loss) for the year</b>		<b>(80,880)</b>	<b>32,463</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash – Community Access		21,178	37,606
Cash – Card Account		426	961
Cash – AELA Fund		99,574	186,689
Other – PayPal		(208)	2,816
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>120,970</b>	<b>228,072</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Unearned Income – Funding Grant		80,000	95,000
Other Current Liabilities – Auspice Projects		37,506	48,727
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>117,506</b>	<b>143,727</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>3,464</b>	<b>84,345</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated Funds at 1 July 2023		84,344	51,881
(Loss)/Income for the Year		(80,880)	32,463
<b>Total Equity</b>		<b>3,464</b>	<b>84,344</b>

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

### For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	Total equity \$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2022</b>		<b>51,881</b>
Income for the year		32,463
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of income tax		-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2023</b>		<b>84,344</b>
(Loss for the year)		(80,880)
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of income tax		-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2024</b>		<b>3,464</b>

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

### For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Operating services</b>			
Receipts from:			
• auspice projects		80,000	80,626
• conferences and workshops		5,280	3,903
• donations and appeals fund		102,920	216,794
• memberships		20,192	12,426
• interest income		1,355	110
• other income		3,491	5,320
Payment to auspice projects		(95,000)	(31,899)
Payments to suppliers		(225,340)	(211,089)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>		<b>(107,102)</b>	<b>76,191</b>
<b>Investing activities</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		-	-
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Financing activities</b>			
Net change in cash and cash equivalents		(107,102)	76,191
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year		228,072	151,881
<b>Cash and cash equivalents, end of year</b>		<b>120,970</b>	<b>228,072</b>

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### 1. General information and statement of compliance

The general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001, Australian Accounting Standards and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. A statement of compliance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) cannot be made due to the company applying not-for-profit specific requirements contained in the Australian Accounting Standards.

The Australian Earth Laws Alliance is a Public Company limited by guarantee incorporated and domiciled in Australia. The address of its registered office and principal place of business is 57 Highlands Drive, Narangba, QLD 4504.

The financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on 18 November 2024.

### 2. New, revised or amending accounting policies

AASB 1058 *Income for Not-for-Profit Entities* and AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. AASB 1058 clarifies and simplifies income recognition, in conjunction with AASB 15. These standards shift the focus from a reciprocal/non-reciprocal basis to a basis of assessment that considers the enforceability of a contract and the specificity of performance obligations.

AASB 1058 applies when a NFP entity enters into transactions where the consideration to acquire an asset is significantly less than fair value of the asset principally to enable the entity to further its objectives; the excess of the asset recognised (at fair value) over any 'related amount' is recognised as income immediately.

Under AASB 15, an entity recognises revenue when (or as) a performance obligation is satisfied. This occurs when 'control' of the goods or services underlying the particular performance obligation is transferred to the customer.

These new standards are not applicable for the reporting entity but are relevant for an annual reporting period beginning on or after 1 July 2019.

Accounting standards issued but not yet effective have not been adopted.

### 3. Summary of accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared using the measurement bases specified by Australian Accounting Standards for each type of asset, liability, income and expense. These measurement bases are more fully described below:

#### 3.1 Revenue

Revenue includes conferences and workshops, fundraising activities, and member contributions. It is recognised when the amount can be measured reliably, collection is probable, the costs incurred or to be incurred can be reliably measured. Revenue is measured by reference to the fair value of consideration received or receivable.

**4. Trade and other payables**

This represents net amounts for the following Auspice Projects:

- (a) Care4Esk
- (b) CD Institute
- (c) Women’s Climate Congress

The amount is presented as a current liability as payment is due within 12 months. They are recognised initially at their fair value.

**Other Payables – Auspice Projects:**

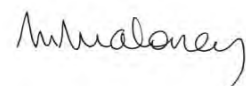
	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Care4Esk	13,868	34,293
CD Institute	22,783	13,136
Women’s Climate Congress	855	1,298
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,506</b>	<b>48,727</b>

## Directors’ Declaration

In the opinion of the Directors of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance Limited:

- a. The financial statements and notes of the company are in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*, including:
  - i. Giving a true and fair view of its financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
  - ii. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*; and
- b. There are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors:



**Dr Michelle Maloney**  
 Director and National Convenor  
 18 November 2024



Principal  
 Douglas Wood FCA, RICA  
 Associate  
 George Vourantinis RICA  
 Consultants  
 George Raffan RICA  
 Simon Joyce RICA

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR’S REPORT  
 TO THE MEMBERS OF AUSTRALIAN EARTH LAWS ALLIANCE LIMITED**

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Australian Earth Laws Alliance Limited as set out on pages 6 to 10 which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024 and the statement of comprehensive income for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies and the directors’ declaration.

**Directors’ Responsibility for the Financial Report**

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Corporations Act 2001*. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

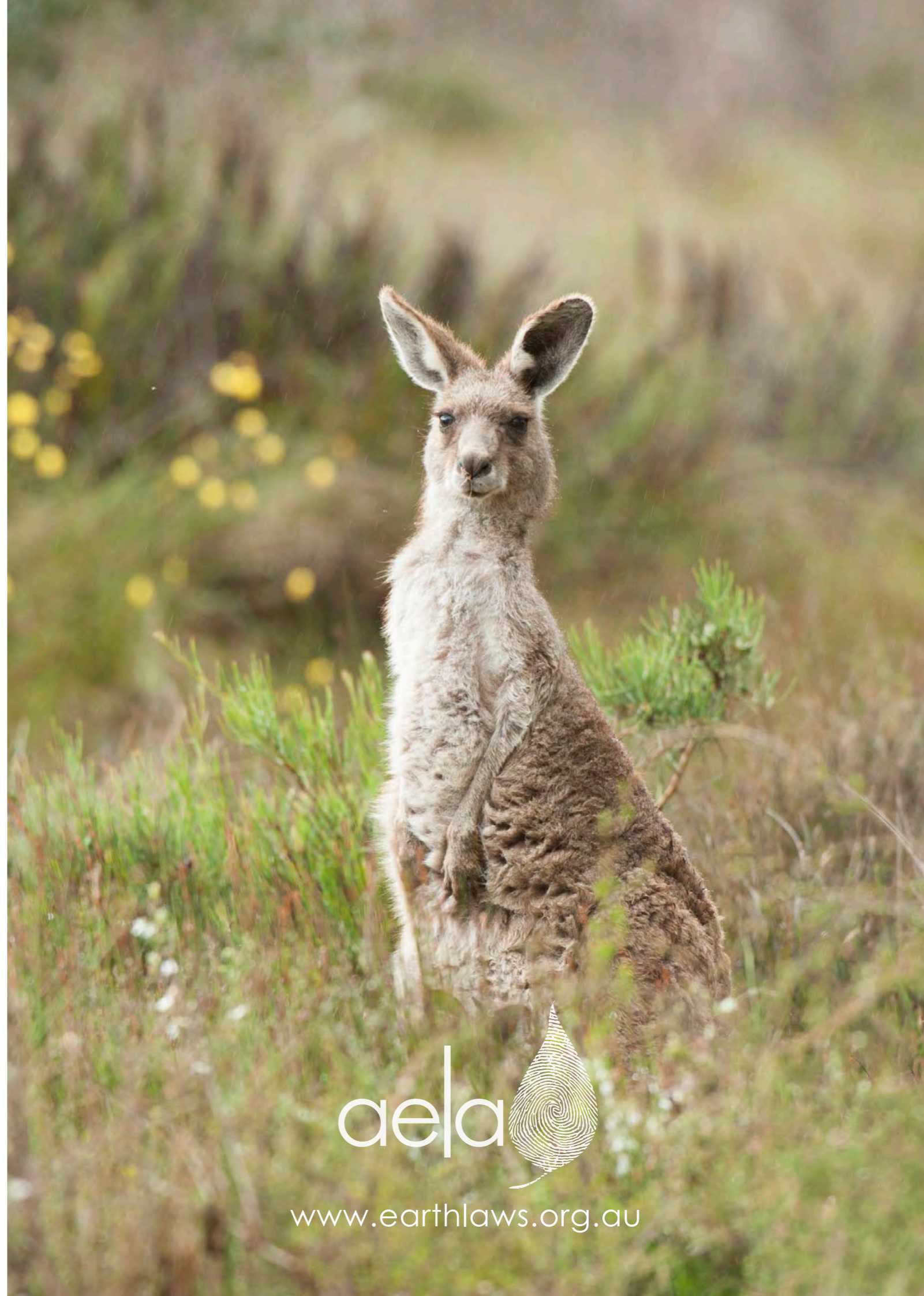
**Auditor’s Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor’s judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity’s preparation and fair presentation of the financial report 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 entity’s internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

Back cover: Eastern Grey Kangaroo, New England National Park  
James Evans/DCCEEW



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