

# Annual Report

## 2017-2018



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## A note from our Chairperson

On behalf of the Board of Management I'd like to thank all our members and volunteers for supporting another fantastic year of work by the Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA). The past 18 months have been extremely busy, and it's been exciting to see how people respond so positively to AELA's initiatives. Almost 400 people attended the *New Economy Network Australia (NENA) Conference* in Brisbane in September 2017, which AELA hosted. NENA has been auspiced by AELA, to strengthen Earth centred economics in Australia. The 2017-2018 financial year also saw AELA create the *Earth Ethics Network* and the *Australian Centre for the Rights of Nature*. It never ceases to amaze me how AELA volunteers, including our National Convenor, Dr Michelle Maloney, can do so much with so few financial resources. AELA is truly powered by the commitment of its volunteers and members. In the coming 12-24 months a priority for the AELA Board is to increase AELA's resources and ensure that our people and their aspirations are supported.

*Phoebe Bishop, Chairperson, AELA Board of Management*

## A note from our National Convenor

2017-2018 has been one of the busiest years AELA has experienced since our formation in 2012. We continue to educate, experiment and build projects aimed at creating Earth centred governance with our members, networks and colleagues around Australia and around the world, and we continue to be excited and optimistic about the global movement building Earth centred laws. Highlights during the past 12 months include our New Economy and Earth Ethics Conferences and our 'model' laws recognising the Legal Rights of the Great Barrier Reef. The future is looking very positive for Earth centred governance.

*Dr Michelle Maloney, AELA National Convenor*

## Our Vision

Earth centred human societies that support the wellbeing of the living world and thrive within ecological limits.

## Our Mission

Increase the understanding and practical implementation of Earth centred governance in Australia, with a focus on law, economics, education, ethics and the arts.

## Our History

AELA was created in March 2012 by a group of environmental lawyers concerned about the role that law and governance was playing in facilitating the destruction of the living world.

AELA is inspired by the Earth centred legal and governance systems of First Nations Peoples, and by the work of Thomas Berry. Berry's book "The Great Work: Our Way into the Future", has been an important catalyst for the creation of AELA, and a guide for AELA's programs.

AELA has evolved organically from a small group of lawyers focussing on transforming the legal system, to a multi-disciplinary community of members, volunteers and professional advisors, engaged in research, education, publications, community capacity building and creating exciting new governance models. Our team now includes First Nations Peoples, community leaders, lawyers, economists, scientists, deep ecologists, ethicists, communicators, artists, environmental activists and community development practitioners.

## Our Team 2017-2018

### Board members

Dr Michelle Maloney	Company Secretary
Phoebe Bishop	Chairperson
Leeanne Leserve	Treasurer
Lyn Ellison	Director
Jules Livingstone	Director
Ross Williams	Director
Skye Bowie	Director

### Professional Volunteers (part-time)

Dr Michelle Maloney	National Convenor
James Lee	Programs and Operations
Mahesh Kandasamy	Strategy Development
Julia Grieves	Earth Ethics Program
Jenny Brown	Earth Arts Curator
Maggie Shambrook	New Economy Network Australia
Phoebe Bishop	Law and Governance
Lyb Makin	Law and Governance
Annabelle Nilsson	Challenging Consumption
Bugs Tobin	Communications
Edward Morgan	Science Advisor and GreenPrints
Tamasin Chugg	Education
Patricia Sauer	Book keeping

### Student Interns (part-time)

Law: Jay Gillieatt, Jordan Prestidge, Isaac Beales, Cassie Heaslip  
Scott Wallace, Maggie Turnbull, Phoebe Mactaggart

Anthropology: Sibylla Scott, Damien Bright

### Specialists Advisory Group

Adjunct Associate Professor Mary Graham, Professor Will Steffen, Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe, Professor Brendan Mackey, Professor Rob Fowler, Professor Bronwen Morgan

*Photo - AELA Strategic Planning Day, Brisbane, November 2017*



*From left to right - Back row: Ed Morgan, Tamasin Chugg, Phoebe Bishop, Jay Gillieatt, Michelle Maloney, Phoebe Mactaggart; Middle row – Isaac Beales, Patricia Sauer, Jules Livingstone, Lyb Makin, Jordan Prestidge; Front row: Lyn Ellison, Mahesh Kandasamy, Cassie Heaslip*

## AELA'S STRATEGIC PLAN – SUMMARY 2017-2020

<b>Vision</b>	Earth centred human societies that support the wellbeing of the living world and thrive within their ecological limits			
<b>Mission</b>	Increase the understanding and practical implementation of Earth centred governance in Australian society, with a focus on law, economics, education, ethics and the arts.			
<b>Strategic Goals</b>	1. Increase understanding of, and cultural change supporting, Earth centred governance in Australia	2. Create and demonstrate alternative models of Earth centred governance for Australian society	3. Enable civil society groups to create Earth centred governance in their communities	4. Work with civil society and government stakeholders, to advocate for Earth centred governance at all scales of human endeavour

### AELA's STRATEGIC PATHWAYS

1.1 Increase awareness and understanding about Earth centred governance in Australia's education systems	2.1 Demonstrate how Earth centred law, governance and economics can work in Australia	3.1. Implement Earth centred governance in communities	4.1 Demonstrate proactive leadership in earth centred governance in Australia	5.1 Consolidate and strengthen internal organisational capacities and capabilities to deliver value
1.1.1 Introduce educational courses and workshops to Universities, High Schools, Primary Schools and Adult Education organisations, focussing on: Earth laws, Earth ethics, Earth Arts and cross-cultural understandings of Earth centred governance	2.1.1 Create and promote new initiatives that support Earth centred governance, including: New Economy Network Australia; Australian Centre for Rights of Nature; Rights of Nature Laws, and Earth Arts	3.1.1 Support and channel the energy and commitment of change makers – individuals and community organisations - towards earth centred governance.	4.1.1 Generate and disseminate earth centred ideas drawing on the knowledge and resources of local and global partners; develop and communicate a clear and consistent message of earth centred governance to key stakeholders	5.1.1 Achieve financial sustainability through multiple revenues streams; Actively build trusted relationships with sponsors, donors and philanthropists who are keen to support the AELA vision.
1.2 Increase awareness and understanding about Earth centred governance through public events, including: public lectures, conferences and other communication strategies	2.1.2 Create and deliver innovative exemplars – such as the Rights of Nature Tribunals - that show how Earth centred laws can work	3.1.2 Introduce AELA's Green Prints methodology within communities, to support their efforts to build earth centred governance	4.1.2 Influence decision makers within the government and corporate sectors to implement earth centred governance within institutions, systems and structures (2019-)	5.1.2 Establish a core team of paid staff members to ensure reliability of service delivery; Build a strong network of skilled and motivated volunteers; Develop values driven systems, policies, procedures and processes.
1.3 Support cultural change by collaborating with arts communities, to inspire earth centred discourse, art exhibitions and art works		3.2 Assist selected community organisations with their governance structures, to strengthen their ability to achieve their own Earth-centred objectives	4.2 Demonstrate proactive leadership and collaboration in Earth centred governance in the international sphere	5.1.3 Nurture and grow AELA's extensive Partnership and Collaboration Networks, to continue to maximise impact and connectivity to Australian academic, think-tank, community and activist networks

## AELA's Activities in 2017-2018

### 1. Increase understanding of, and cultural change supporting, Earth centred governance in Australia

#### 1.1 Increase awareness and understanding about Earth centred governance in Australia's education systems.

AELA's Education Program continued to grow in 2017-2018. In addition to running our second University level Earth laws course at Griffith University Law School, we were excited to host our first High School Earth Laws workshops for students and teachers in Brisbane and Townsville. We also continued to run a wide variety of community workshops, host public lectures, and participate in public seminars.



Photo: AELA's National Convenor, Dr Michelle Maloney, delivered AELA's first High School level workshop in Brisbane in April. More than 80 students from 8 high schools attended the event and there are plans for many more.

*"Dr Michelle Maloney from AELA gave an engaging, thought-provoking and truly inspiring presentation at a recent sustainability symposium for high school students. Our students commented afterwards how they were*

*amazed at the vast angles of consideration that caring for our Earth entailed and they were excited by the prospect of being able to make a difference to urgent issues. Thankyou AELA for presenting such a vast breadth of material and for encouraging our students to confidently think outside the box."* Kathy Jarrett, Ignatius Park College, April 2018

#### 1.2 Increase awareness and understanding about Earth centred governance through **public events**, including: public lectures, conferences and other communication strategies.

AELA continued to speak at conferences, public lectures, community workshops and other gatherings throughout 2017-2018.

##### *Conference presentations:*

- 'Building an Earth centred legal system: Rights of Nature and Bioregional Governance', 23 June 2018 Queensland Ornithological Conference, Brisbane
- 'Responding to the Reports of the Australian Panel of Experts on Environmental Law (APEEL): Rights of Nature and Bioregional Environmental Governance', at the *APEEL Conference, "Better laws for a better planet: a symposium on the future of Australia's environmental laws"*, University House, ANU, 28 March 2018
- 'When objects become subjects: the global Rights of Nature movement, and what it means for Australia', *Frontiers Environmental Law Conference*, Hobart, February 5-6 February 2018
- 'The failing of environmental law and why we need Rights of Nature laws', *Rights of Nature Symposium*, 27 October 2017, Tulane University, New Orleans, USA
- 'GreenPrints: an approach for implementing ecological governance,' *Canadian Society for Ecological Economics Conference*, October 2017, Montreal
- 'The Rights of Nature and AELA's "Exploring the Legal Status of Nature Project"', *Legal Status of Rivers Symposium*, AELA and CREEL/Melbourne Law School, July 2017



### Public lectures:

- "Using law and regulation to challenge consumption and planned obsolescence", Zero Waste Forum, Winter Solstice Festival, Northey Street, 23 June 2018
- "The work of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance", Earth Trusteeship Conference, The Hague, 22 June (via internet)
- "A pathway to Earth centred, bio-regional governance: the GreenPrints approach", RenewFest, May 2018
- "Sustainability and Earth Centred Governance", Presentation to staff, St. Ignatius High School, Edmund Rice Network, Townsville 16 June 2018
- "Food systems and the 2018 Rights of Nature Tribunal", Transition Film Festival, Brisbane 23 March 2018
- 'How can we change the world?' Evening Seminar/Panel Discussion hosted by QUT Business School, also featuring Professor Will Steffen and Dr Richard Denniss at QUT Gardens Point, 31 August 2017
- 'Careers in Sustainability', University of Queensland, July 2017

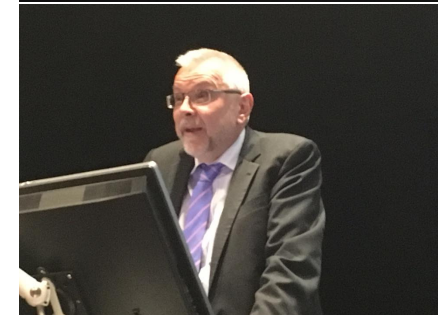
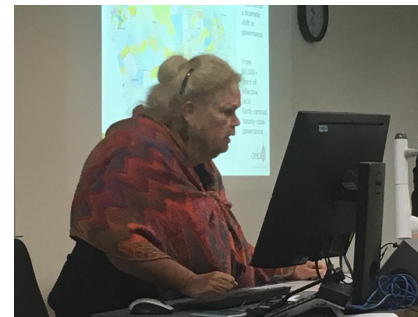
### Media Interviews:

- ABC Online '[Calls to give legal rights to nature flow to WA's Southwest](#)', by Jacqueline Lynch, 23 March 2018
- The Guardian Online '[It's only natural: the push to give rivers, mountains and forests legal rights](#)', Jane Gleeson White, 1 April 2018
- ABC Radio South West, Breakfast Show, "Rights of Nature & the Margaret River", 23 March 2018
- ABC Radio South West, News "Rights of Nature and the Margaret River", 22 March 2018
- ZZZ Radio Brisbane - 'NENA and the New Economy Conference', August 2017
- Rescope Project - Interview with Anthony James about AELA and the New Economy, June 2017

### Exploring the Legal Status of Nature – AELA Seminar Series

In 2017-2018 AELA ran a seminar series titled "Exploring the Legal Status of Nature" (ELSN). Workshops were held in Brisbane, Sydney, Perth and Melbourne, and brought together academics, legal practitioners, First Nations Peoples and environmental and animal protection activists, to explore innovative laws from around the world and existing legal approaches in Australia. Many researchers and experts from the seminar series are now connected to AELA's *Australian Centre for the Rights of Nature* (discussed below).

*Photos clockwise from top left: Mary Graham, Adjunct Associate Professor and Kombu-merri First Nations person; ELSN workshop in Melbourne co-hosted by Melbourne Law School and CREEL; Michelle Maloney at the Gold Coast seminar co-hosted by the Southern Cross University; the Hon. Brian Preston, Chief Justice of the NSW Land and Environment Court, speaking at the Sydney workshop.*



### 1.3 Support cultural change by collaborating with arts communities, to inspire earth centred discourse, art exhibitions and art works

In 2017-2018, AELA continued to lead the AELA Earth Arts Collective, and a new website was created for the Earth Arts program: [www.eartharts.org.au](http://www.eartharts.org.au). In November 2017, plans began for AELA's major Earth Arts Program – "RONA18" - the Rights of Nature Australia National Art Exhibition scheduled for October 2018.

In May 2018, AELA hosted its first Earth Arts Creatives Retreat, at Chenrezig Buddhist Institute on the Sunshine Coast (Queensland), to enable artists to deepen their understanding of Earth centred governance, and AELA's work. Several collaborative projects emerged from the highly successful four-day retreat.

*Below: Participants at AELA's 'Earth Arts' Creatives Retreat*



*Photos below: Artists and creatives at AELA's Earth Arts Creatives Retreat  
Chenrezig Buddhist Institute, Sunshine Coast, Queensland*





## 2. Create and demonstrate alternative models of Earth centred governance for Australian society

During the past year, AELA has continued building a range of initiatives aimed at supporting Earth centred governance and we also created innovative approaches to demonstrating how Earth centred law, economics, ethics, and education can work in Australia.

### 2.1. Create and promote new initiatives that *support* Earth centred governance

#### ***New Economy Network Australia (NENA)***



Since October 2016, AELA has been auspicing the creation of the New Economy Network Australia (NENA). NENA has been created and auspiced by AELA, to strengthen Earth centred economics in Australia.

NENA is a network of individuals and organisations working to transform Australia's economic system so that achieving ecological health and social justice are the foundational principles and primary objectives of the economic system. NENA works to facilitate connections, showcase and promote innovative projects, build peer-to-peer learning and use collective strategies to create and advocate for change, so that we can build a strong movement of people demanding, creating and benefiting from a 'new' economy. More than 1,000 people are now signed up to NENA's email list, representing around 400 organisations.

AELA's National Convenor is co-founder and convenor of NENA and in 2017-2018, she worked with the NENA Steering Group to:

- manage the hosting of the 2017 Annual Conference in Brisbane, which saw nearly 400 people come together across four days of conference activities, site visits and social activities;
- manage the co-hosting of the North Queensland NENA Symposium in mid 2018, which saw 120 people from North Queensland come together and resulted in the creation of a NENA North Qld Hub which will continue to build the new economy and Earth centred economic approaches in the region;
- manage the governance consultation process, which created a draft constitution and governance structure for NENA

In 2018-2019 NENA will be incorporated as an independent organisation and AELA's auspice role will be completed. AELA will continue to be represented on the new NENA Board of Directors.

*Photos below: (left) 300 people attended Day 1 of the Conference  
(right) Panel Discussions on the final day of the Conference*





### ***Australian Centre for the Rights of Nature***

In early 2018, AELA created the Australian Centre for the Rights of Nature (ACRN). The ACRN is a hub for Australians to connect with the work of the global Rights of Nature movement, including the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN) and to connect with other communities and researchers in Australia, who are exploring Rights of Nature.

The ACRN is also the umbrella program for AELA's work with community groups in Australia who are interested in exploring how changing the legal status of nature can help people protect the ecosystems most precious to them. The ACRN is formally connected to GARN, CELDF's International Center for the Rights of Nature, the Earth Law Center and many other international initiatives. The ACRN hosts the 'Rights of Nature Network', which so far includes people from six different communities around Australia. The ACRN also produced draft model laws, at the local, State and Federal level, that would recognise the Rights of the Great Barrier Reef. A signature campaign commenced mid year for the model laws and AELA is increasing its advocacy work for the Rights of Nature with groups in North Queensland.

*Below: the ACRN's new website promotes model laws recognising the legal rights of the Great Barrier Reef*



### **2.2 Create and implement innovative initiatives that *demonstrate* how Earth centred governance can work**

#### ***Challenging Consumption***

One of the greatest causes of the destruction of the Earth community is the unsustainable consumption of 'natural resources' by human societies. It is estimated that today, humanity uses the equivalent of 1.6 planets to provide the resources we use and absorb our waste. If everyone on the planet had the same lifestyle as Australians, we'd actually need 4.8 planets ([The Global Footprint Network](#)). And of course, we only have one precious Earth. If we are to transform our relationship with the Earth community and create a healthy future for all life on Earth, we must learn to live within our ecological limits.

AELA has two main program areas that focus on sustainable consumption and ecological limits: GreenPrints (discussed below) and 'Challenging Consumption'.

In 2017-2018 AELA built on the success of the seminar series "Let's Talk About Consumption" that was hosted the previous year, by creating two initiatives (i) building a network of experts, practitioners and community groups concerned about unsustainable consumption and (ii) preparing a comprehensive submission to the Review of the Commonwealth's *Product Stewardship Act 2011*.

AELA's Annabelle Nilsson prepared a detailed submission demonstrating how innovative legal approaches could be used to reduce consumption, and worked with AELA Communications Volunteer, Bugs Tobin, to launch a petition for people to show their support for AELA's submission. More than 3,000 people signed the petition supporting AELA's comprehensive recommendations.

### ***Australian Peoples Tribunal for the Community and Nature's Rights***

In 2017-2018 AELA began extensive preparations for the Citizen's Inquiry into the Impacts of Industrial Scale Agriculture on Community and Nature's Rights, which is scheduled for 27 October 2018.

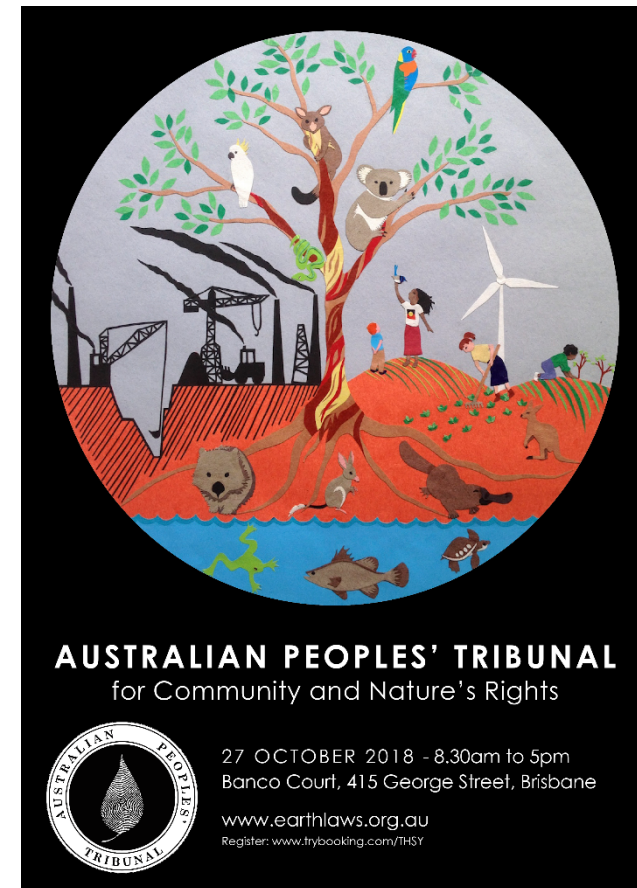
The Citizen's Inquiry will be held at Banco Court, in the Supreme Court Complex in Brisbane. The Inquiry will offer a platform for people to share their concerns about the impacts of large-scale vegetation clearing, deforestation, biodiversity loss, soil degradation and water consumption due to industrial scale agriculture. The Inquiry aims to be non-adversarial and solutions focussed.

The Citizen's Inquiry is being heard by the Australian Peoples' Tribunal (APT) for Community and Nature's Rights. The APT is a unique forum for ecological and social justice in Australia. Created by AELA in 2016, as the "Rights of Nature" Tribunal, it was rebadged in 2018 as the Australian Peoples Tribunal, and has been created as a permanent civil society institution to enable people to share their concerns about the destruction of the environment, articulate their vision for ecological justice and law reform, and work collectively to develop their ideas for building a socially just, Earth centred society. The APT aims to respond to situations where the current Australian legal system is perceived as failing to support community and nature's rights.

The APT holds Public Inquiries and hears Ecological Justice Cases, brought on behalf of flora, fauna, ecosystems, bioregions and local communities around Australia. As a 'citizen's tribunal' the APT is not a government endorsed activity nor do any of its activities, decisions or recommendations have the force of government-sanctioned law. The APT provides an educative and culturally transformative forum in which to present a positive, alternative process to address environmental justice and Caring for Country.

The APT Panel is made up of First Nations Peoples, lawyers, community representatives and eminent scientists, hears Inquiries and Cases, and makes recommendations for restorative justice, innovative law reform and socio-political reforms that will Care for Country and protect the Rights of Nature.

*Image below: AELA's promotional poster for the October 2017 Australian Peoples' Tribunal*



### ***Earth Ethics Program***

In November 2017, AELA hosted a two day “*Inspiring Earth Ethics: Linking Values and Action Conference*”, at Griffith University in Brisbane.

The event was hosted in collaboration with the Interfaith and Cultural Dialogue Centre at Griffith University, EarthWise Education, Earth Link and the Earth Charter Australia initiative.

The conference saw more than 100 people come together to discuss how to build Earth centred ethics in Australia. Speakers came from a wide variety of professions and backgrounds, including First Nations Peoples, scientists, ethicists, psychologists, deep ecologists, artists, people from different faith backgrounds, lawyers, educators and many more.

Conference speakers were invited to contribute to AELA’s first online Journal “*Earth Ethics Australia*” and a follow up conference is planned for November 2019 in Melbourne.

*Photo below: AELA’s amazing volunteers: student interns Cassie and Jordan, together with AELA’s Earth Ethics Program Manager, Julia Grieves*



*Photo above: AELA’s James Lee speaks about the role of the arts in inspiring Earth Ethics*

*Photo below: Brian Adams (ICD), Hugh Breakey (Griffith University) Michelle Maloney (AELA) and Noel Preston (Earth Charter Initiative)*





### 3. Enable civil society groups to create Earth centred governance in their communities

#### ***GreenPrints –AELA’s bioregional “citizen governance” program***

‘GreenPrints’ is a program designed to help civil society groups and interested government authorities understand, and take very practical steps towards creating, Earth centred governance. This approach has been created by AELA to fill 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. Sustainability is critically important, but few communities really know how to be fully sustainable and live within their ecological limits.

GreenPrints offers communities a practical pathway to understand their local bioregion and ecosystems, and pro-actively build their own ‘citizen governance’ projects that can showcase regenerative economics and Earth centred governance. In 2018, AELA hosted several workshops about GreenPrints, which saw more than 120 people engage in discussions about the program, including at the following events:

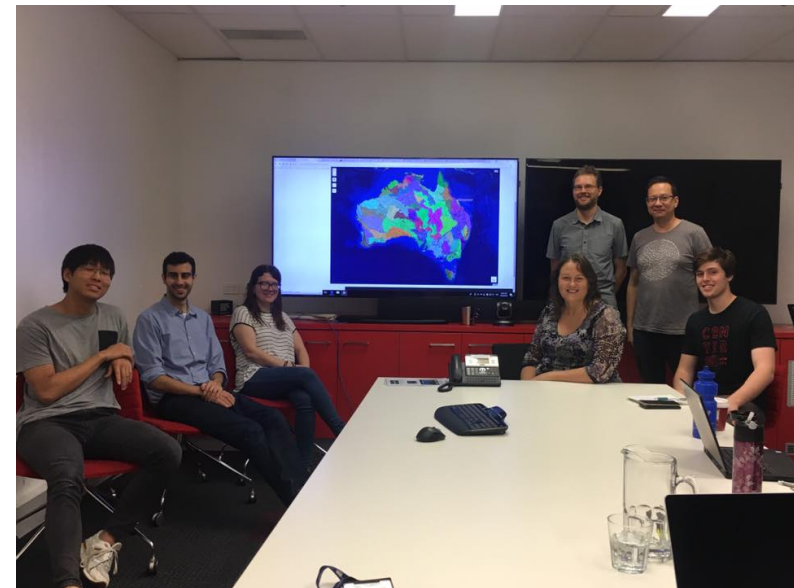
- RenewFest, Mullumbimby, NSW – February
- GreenPrints for East Gippsland, Victoria – May
- Workshop in North Queensland, at the NENA Conference – June

In early 2018, AELA also commenced an exciting project with QUT, where four ‘CHI’ (Computer Human Interface) undergraduate students were assigned to the GreenPrints project, to help AELA create the mapping tool that will underpin some of the GreenPrints approach.

The GreenPrints Mapping Tool will be Australia’s first interactive “citizen governance” mapping system. It is being designed to make it easier for ordinary people to access and understand the vast amount of fragmented information that exists in Australia about environmental governance, including the IBRA7 bioregional mapping system and hundreds of scientific data sets.

In 2017-2018 important foundations were laid for the GreenPrints program, including the commencement of the mapping tool and the identification of several communities who wish to begin developing their own ‘GreenPrint’ for the local bioregion. The first community in Australia to engage with GreenPrints will be East Gippsland, where a range of workshops and events will be hosted in April 2019.

*Photo below: QUT Capstone Project – meeting of QUT Students (Daniel, Yusef, Kate and Will) and the GreenPrints Team (Michelle, Ed and James)*





### ***Governance support for Earth centred projects***

In 2017-2018 AELA engaged in several projects that offered governance information and support to community groups and established organisations, to enable them to progress and achieve their Earth centred objectives.

We assisted five community groups with information about incorporation and ongoing governance issues, and we provided advice and assisted with the facilitation of a series of workshops in rural NSW, as part of a rural landholder collaboration project, funded by the UNSW/Sydney University.

*Photo Below: AELA's Law and Governance Professional Volunteer, Lyb, writing up workshop notes in Cowra, NSW. Lyb and Michelle visited several communities in rural NSW to assist with governance projects*



### ***4. Work with civil society and government stakeholders, to advocate for Earth centred governance at all scales of human endeavour***

AELA collaborates with a wide range of academic, not-for-profit, First Nations and community/grass roots organisations, to advocate for Earth centred governance for all scales of Australian society.

AELA's National Convenor, Dr Michelle Maloney, participates in conferences, workshops, public talks, reference groups and advisory groups, on a weekly and monthly basis, in order to advocate for Earth centred law, economics, ethics, and the arts.

AELA is also represented by Dr Michelle Maloney on a growing number of important international organisations and networks, including:

- Executive Committee, [Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature \(GARN\)](#)
- Steering Group, [Ecological Law and Governance Association \(ELGA\)](#)
- Steering Group, [Global Ecocentric Network for Implementing Eco-Democracy \(GENIE\)](#)
- International Coordinating Team, [Yes to Life - No to Mining](#)
- Board Member, [Jina Gunduy/Palm Island Sustainability Hub](#)
- Members Working Group, [Wellbeing Economy Alliance \(We-All\)](#)
- Member, [IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law](#)
- Member, [UN Harmony with Nature Knowledge Network](#)
- Advisory Group - [2 Way Learning](#)
- Advisory Group - [Ngara Institute](#)

## 5. Consolidate and strengthen internal organisational capacities and capabilities to deliver value

2017-2018 saw AELA attract a range of new, highly skilled professional volunteers, and develop a range of new systems, that will enable us to strengthen our ongoing capacities and to build a sustainable financial base for our work.

### ***New professional volunteers***

In 2018 AELA has been able to attract a CPA (Certified Practising Accountant) for the role of AELA Treasurer, a governance expert for the AELA Board of Management, an expert communications volunteer and an increasing number of qualified lawyers volunteering to support AELA's work.

### ***Building a financial base for AELA***

AELA was created in 2012 by a group of concerned environmental lawyers and since that time, AELA's work has been implemented by committed, part-time volunteers.

The power of volunteers have brought AELA to where it is today, but we have reached a point where there is so much demand for our work, we need to secure fee for service income, and where possible, long term grant funding, so we can build the capacity of the many up and coming professionals who wish to work for AELA.

Since late 2016, AELA's Co-Founder and National Convenor, Dr Michelle Maloney worked part time from 2012 to late 2016 for AELA, and since late 2016 has been working full time for AELA, in an unpaid role, supplementing her income with extra paid work. A key priority for AELA is to obtain funding for Michelle's work.

## Treasurer's Report

I'm pleased to present AELA's Financial Reports for 2017-2018. I joined the AELA Board in June 2018 and was astonished at the quality and quantity of AELA's work, given it is an unfunded organisation, run entirely by volunteers.

In 2017-2018 AELA ran several large events, which brought in a higher than usual cash flow, and associated expenses. The organisation concluded the financial year with a small deficit, which will be rectified in 2018-2019.

The focus for the 2018-2019 financial year is to build financial sustainability through multiple income streams. This will include: fee for service work such as hosting workshops; grant funding; government or industry sponsorship of conferences; exploring the matched-giving scheme offered by companies for their employees; increasing AELA's paid education work into high schools and universities and having a dedicated volunteer to assist with fundraising.

*Leeanne Leserve, AELA Treasurer*



## The coming year: 2018-2019

AELA will be working hard in 2018-2019 to progress its extensive range of programs and activities. As already noted, seeking a funding base for AELA's work will be an important priority for the coming financial year. Highlights for the coming year will include AELA's biannual Rights of Nature Week, 23-28 October 2018, including a major arts event, Australian Peoples Tribunal and International Symposium.



**Rights of Nature Australia 2018**

**RONA18 PROGRAM OF EVENTS**  
23 - 28 October 2018, Brisbane  
[www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18)

**Free Public Lecture:**  
When Rivers and Forests Have Legal Rights  
// Museum of Brisbane  
Tue 23 October

**Community Earth Rights Workshop:**  
// Griffith Ecocentre, Griffith University, Nathan Campus, Brisbane  
Wed 24 October

**Evening event:**  
Australian Launch of ELGA, the International Ecological Law and Governance Association  
// Spring Hill Reservoir, Brisbane

**2 Day International Symposium:**  
"Exploring our legal relationship with the living world: Caring for Country, Rights of Nature and Legal Personhood for Nature"  
// Griffith Ecocentre, Griffith University, Nathan Campus, Brisbane  
Thurs & Fri 25 & 26 October

**Australian Peoples' Tribunal for Community and Nature's Rights**  
// Banco Court, QBI Courts of Law, 415 George Street, Brisbane  
Sat 27 October

**RONA18 National Arts Exhibition**  
// Spring Hill Reservoir, Brisbane  
Tue to Sun 23 to 28 October

In October 2018, the Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA) is hosting Rights of Nature Australia 2018 (RONA18), a series of connected events that explore and promote the rights of nature to exist, thrive and evolve.

For details about the week of events in Brisbane, and connected Regional Arts Events, visit:  
[www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18)

**aela**  
australian earth laws alliance

For RONA18 event times and bookings, see:  
[www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18](http://www.earthlaws.org.au/rona18)  
[convenor@earthlaws.org.au](mailto:convenor@earthlaws.org.au)



## How you can support AELA

### 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

As an unfunded organisation, 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-to-aela/>

### 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: [convenor@earthlaws.org.au](mailto:convenor@earthlaws.org.au)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AustralianEarthLaws/>
- Visit our website: [www.earthlaws.org.au](http://www.earthlaws.org.au)

# AUSTRALIAN EARTH LAWS ALLIANCE LIMITED

ABN 54 156 139 221

FINANCIAL REPORT – 30 JUNE 2018

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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 2018, and the Independent Audit Report.

### Director details

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

<b>Dr Michelle Maloney</b> <b>Director and National Convenor</b>	<b>Phoebe Bishop</b> <b>Director and Chairperson</b>
<p>Michelle Maloney is Co-Founder and was appointed National Convenor and Director in March 2012.</p> <p>Michelle is on the Board of Jina Gunduy, and on the Management/Steering Groups of four other unincorporated networks, and was previously Chairperson of the Environmental Defenders Office (QLD) (2013-2017)</p> <p>She has over 25 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>Phoebe Bishop joined the Board in June 2017.</p> <p>She has over four years' experience in private legal practice, giving advice relating to environmental law, town planning, infrastructure, and government law.</p> <p>Phoebe holds a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Science (Geography) from the University of Queensland.</p>
<b>Ross Williams</b> <b>Director</b>	<b>Jules Livingstone</b> <b>Director</b>
<p>Ross Williams joined the Board in November 2017.</p> <p>Ross is of the Bindal and Juru peoples, now known as Townsville to Bowen, 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 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>Jules Livingstone joined the Board in October 2014.</p> <p>He has broad experience as strategic consultant specialising in climate change adaptation and education for sustainability projects in Australia and overseas.</p> <p>Jules holds a Bachelor of Laws from the University of NSW and Research Masters of Environment from the Australian National University. He is currently completing a Masters of Education (Social Ecology) at University of Western Sydney.</p>

<b>Lyn Ellison</b> <b>Director</b>	<b>Leeanne Leserve</b> <b>Director</b>
<p>Lyn Ellison joined the Board in September 2017.</p> <p>Lyn has broad international experience in not-for-profit management, specifically organisational development and planning, program review, and transition-out activities.</p> <p>Lyn holds a BA (Hons) in Social Policy and Administration from Leeds Metropolitan University, an MA in Women's Studies from the University of York and a Bachelor of Laws from Southern Cross University.</p>	<p>Leeanne Leserve was appointed to the Board on 1 June 2018.</p> <p>She has more than 17 years' experience in policy analysis, regulations and compliance, sustainability and financial reporting in the energy industry.</p> <p>Leeanne holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Newcastle, Master of Environmental Law from the University of Sydney and is CPA qualified.</p>
<b>Skye Bowie</b> <b>Director</b>	
<p>Skye Bowie was appointed to the Board on 5 June 2018.</p> <p>She has more than 14 years' experience in legal practice, financial services and governance and has provided regulatory and corporate advice within Australia and Europe.</p> <p>Skye holds a Bachelor of Laws/Arts (Economics) from the University of Queensland, Graduate Diploma in Applied Corporate Governance and a Diploma of Financial Planning.</p>	

## Principal Activities

During the year, the principal activities included:

- Building AELA's education offerings, including running the second annual summer school at Griffith University Law School on Earth jurisprudence and hosting our first high school workshops in Brisbane and North Queensland.
- Working with QUT University's "Capstone Project" to oversee four students developing the foundation of the online mapping system for AELA's GreenPrints project.
- Hosting and participating in a broad range of conferences. Such activities included supporting: the development of the New Economy Network Australia (NENA); and the work of four international networks called, the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN), the Ecological Law and Governance Association (ELGA), the Yes to Life, No to Mining (YLNLM) Network and the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WE-ALL).
- Creating the Australian Centre for the Rights of Nature (ACRN) as a focal point for AELA's Rights of Nature work, including work to support five community groups who are interested in building Rights of Nature campaigns for local laws and their local communities.

## Objectives

AELA's short-term objective is to promote the understanding and practical implementation of earth jurisprudence in Australia.

The long-term objective is to see reform of Australian laws and governance systems which reflect an earth centred worldview and ethic.

## Strategy for achieving objectives

AELA aims to achieve its objectives through conducting outreach and information activities (workshops, public lectures, conferences); creating working groups between members, and conducting and sharing research (including the publication of books, edited collections, journal publications and electronic articles); and supporting lobbying and advocacy efforts by members and partners.

## Directors' meetings

The number of Director's meetings and the number of meetings attended by each Director during the year are shown in the table below:

	Board Meetings	
	Eligible to Attend	Attended
Dr Michelle Maloney	9	9
Phoebe Bishop	9	9
Ross Williams	5	2
Jules Livingstone	9	6
Lyn Ellison	7	5
Leeanne Leserve	1	1
Skye Bowie	1	1

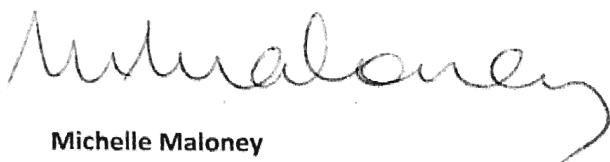
## Contribution in winding up

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 2018, the total amount that members of the Company are liable to contribute if the Company wound up is \$1,230 (2017: \$1,410).

## 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. Foster Raffan were appointed auditors on a pro bono basis during the year.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors.



**Michelle Maloney**

Director and National Convenor

7 November 2018

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

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North Sydney NSW 2060  
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## Auditor's Independence Declaration

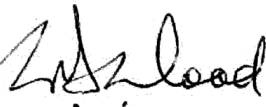
### TO THE DIRECTORS OF AUSTRALIAN EARTH LAWS ALLIANCE LIMITED

In accordance with the requirements of section 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001*, I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- a. No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001* in relation to the audit; and
- b. No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



**FOSTER RAFFAN**  
Chartered Accountants



**GD Wood FCA**  
Principal  
(FCA 4479)

North Sydney, 7 November 2018



# STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	Notes	2018 \$	2017 \$
<b>INCOME</b>			
Conferences and workshops		61,850	35,096
Donations and appeals		4,759	9,996
Interest		96	132
Memberships		2,930	1,115
Sponsorships		1,000	3,500
Other		544	-
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>71,179</b>	<b>49,839</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Advertising		485	169
Annual strategy meeting		2,130	-
ASIC fees		48	47
Bank fees		156	69
Catering		420	8,271
Computer costs		399	1,761
Conferences and workshops		51,606	19,140
Consulting fees		-	7,000
Donations and appeals		63	99
Membership information management		1,350	-
Motor vehicle		2,502	845
Postage, printing and stationery		707	601
Publication and information management		180	30
Telephone		1,455	1,371
Travel		9,357	8,698
Website design and management		1,370	1,852
Volunteers		435	103
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>72,664</b>	<b>50,055</b>
<b>(Deficit) before income tax expense</b>		<b>(1,485)</b>	<b>(216)</b>
<b>Income tax expense</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>(Deficit) for the year</b>		<b>(1,485)</b>	<b>(216)</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>(1,485)</b>	<b>(216)</b>

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	Notes	2018 \$	2017 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash – Community Access		4,041	3,092
Cash – Card Account		98	833
Other - PayPal		76	1,775
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>4,215</b>	<b>5,700</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors		-	-
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>4,215</b>	<b>5,700</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated Funds at 1 July 2017		5,700	5,916
(Loss) for the year		(1,485)	(216)
<b>Total Equity</b>		<b>4,215</b>	<b>5,700</b>

# STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	Notes	Total equity \$
Balance at 1 July 2016		5,916
Loss for the year		(216)
Other comprehensive income for the period, net of income tax		-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2017</b>		<b>5,700</b>
Balance at 1 July 2017		5,700
Loss for the year		(1,485)
Other comprehensive income for the period, net of income tax		-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2018</b>		<b>4,215</b>

# STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	Notes	2018 \$	2017 \$
<b>Operating services</b>			
Receipts from:			
• conferences and workshops		61,850	35,096
• donations and appeals		4,759	9,996
• memberships		2,930	1,115
• sponsorship		1,000	3,500
• interest income		96	133
• other income		544	-
Payment to suppliers		(72,664)	(50,055)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>		<b>(1,485)</b>	<b>(216)</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		(1,485)	(216)
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year		5,700	5,916
<b>Cash and cash equivalents, end of year</b>		<b>4,215</b>	<b>5,700</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 is EDO Queensland, Unit 8, 205 Montague Road, West End QLD 4101. Its principal place of business is 9 Hazlitt Street, Banyo QLD 4014.

The financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2018 were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on 7 November 2018.

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

AASB 2016-2 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure Initiative: Amendments to AASB 107. This standard makes amendments to AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows and require entities preparing financial statements in accordance with Tier 1 reporting requirements to provide disclosures that enable users of financial statements to evaluate changes in liabilities arising from financing activities, including both changes arising from cash flows and non-cash changes. It is applicable to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2017.

Accounting standards issued but not yet effective and 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.

#### 3.2 Donations and fundraising

Donations and fundraising are collected and recognised when the company gains control, economic benefits are probable and the amount of the donation can be measured reliably. This is limited to amounts banked and recorded in the bank accounts.



### **3.3 Operating expenses**

Operating expenses are recognised in the accounting records at the date of their origin.

### **3.4 Income tax**

There is no provision for income tax as the company is exempt under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

### **3.5 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand and demand deposits, together with other short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible into known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

### **3.6 Economic dependence**

AELA is dependent upon the ongoing receipt of Government grants and community and corporate donations to ensure the ongoing continuance of its programs. At the date of this report, the Directors' have no reason to believe that this financial support will not continue.

### **3.7 Significant management judgement in applying accounting policies**

When preparing the financial statements, management undertakes a number of judgements, estimates and assumptions about the recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses.

### **3.8 Post-reporting date events**

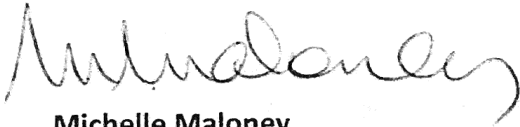
No adjusting or significant non-adjusting events have occurred between the reporting date and the date of authorisation.

# 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 2018 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.



**Michelle Maloney**  
Director and National Convenor

Dated the 7th day of November 2018

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

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North Sydney NSW 2059  
Level 6, 8 West St  
North Sydney NSW 2060  
Tel: (02) 9956 7500  
www.fosterraffan.com.au

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**

### **To the Members of AUSTRALIAN EARTH LAWS ALLIANCE LIMITED**

#### **Opinion**

I have audited the financial report of Australian Earth Laws Alliance Limited (the company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2018, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In my opinion the financial report of Australian Earth Laws Alliance Limited has been prepared in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2018 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

#### **Basis for Opinion**

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. I am independent of the company in accordance with 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 my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

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

The directors of the company are responsible for the other information. The other information is the directors' report accompanying the financial report.

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

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

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

**Responsibilities of the Directors 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 and the *Corporations Act 2001*, and for such internal control as the responsible entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

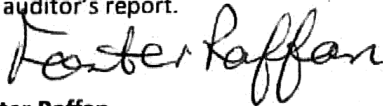
In preparing the financial report, the directors of the company are responsible for assessing the registered company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors of the company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

The directors of the company are responsible for overseeing the company's financial reporting process.

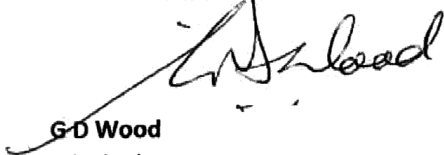
**Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

My 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 my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

A further description of my responsibilities for audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>. This description forms part of my auditor's report.



**Foster Raffan**  
Chartered Accountants



**G.D. Wood**  
Principal  
7 November, 2018  
North Sydney, New South Wales