



Coastwatchers

Eurobodalla's Voice for Nature

Vice President's Report 2017-18

The Association through the Management Committee has strived to continue the aims of conservation since the last AGM, holding five face-to-face meetings and one phone link up.

The three key issues determined by the Management Committee for 2018 were forests, marine park support and monitoring Eurobodalla planning and development proposals and coastal management.

Following on from the Forest Forum hosted by Coastwatchers in 2017, the focus was to publicise, and campaign to defeat the RFA -Regional Forest Agreement renewals, with the aim of stopping native forest logging in NSW, and to oppose local logging in Mogo State Forest. Forest campaigning was active with a protest in Batemans Bay, media releases and information bulletins sent to members.

The issue of monitoring ESC planning and development came to the forefront with the Rural Land Strategy (RLS) Planning Proposal, which went on public exhibition on 11 May 2018 for a 4 week period (later extended by 2 weeks). This was a very short timeframe for submission responses to a huge and complex document. This led to the formation of an RLS Working Group, convened by Coastwatchers together with other concerned groups, who met weekly by phone linkup. The RLS Working Group put in an enormous amount of work to analyse the documents and maps, and provide background notes for Coastwatchers and other community groups to write submissions. This was a great collaborative effort and I would like to publicly thank all the other groups who contributed.

The Management Committee canvassed the membership for approval to revamp the letterhead slogan from "*Eurobodalla's Environment Group*" to "*Eurobodalla's Voice for Nature*" and it was adopted.

Coastwatchers submitted or supported submissions regarding : NSW Draft Marine Strategy, Dargues Reef Water Users Register, Save Our Forests, Southern NSW Marine Tourism Strategy, Long Beach Coastal Wattle Management Project, and the ESC amended Investment Policy to reduce investment in fossil fuels.

Contributing to these issues is very dependent on our human resources, as we are all volunteers.

Coastwatchers has continued to improve administrative functions with up to date additions to the website, webmail communication, with more streamlined member renewal processes and simplification of member categories, thanks to our Treasurer, Mark Rote.

Secretary, Joslyn van der Moolen has worked tirelessly on networking and keeping tabs on local forest issues.

Gillianne Tedder made a great contribution to the RLS submission process and our long time member Reina Hill is a dedicated advocate and keeps the Committee informed of the progress of the ESC Coast and Environment Management Advisory Committee.

Coastwatchers continues to be a member of peak Environment groups, the Nature Conservation Council (NCC), the National Parks Association (NPA), and the South East Regional Conservation Alliance (SERCA), and follow their lead in the big statewide campaigns. Three Committee Members attended the NCC regional conference in Queanbeyan in May.

The Coastwatchers Committee decided early in the year to donate \$500 to the NSW Environmental Defenders Office in recognition of the key role it plays in supporting conservation in NSW, and at the time when governments are reducing environmental protection and funding.

The Coastwatchers Environment Fund has not made any funding allocations in recent years despite looking at possible projects to support, particularly involving school students. Unfortunately the projects required more funding than the fund had available.

The Environment Fund Committee is keen to consider and assess local projects with a conservation focus seeking funding assistance.

In closing I would like to sincerely thank all members of the Management Committee for their contribution to the Association, and to our members for their continued support of conservation in Eurobodalla.