



Newsletter June 2013

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Let's hope that 'You don't know what you've got till it's gone' are not prophetic words that come to be a Eurobodalla mantra for the anthropocene.

Biodiversity in the Eurobodalla continues to be under threat, for example development of land on the western side of Broulee village containing remnant 'Bangalay Sand Forest', an endangered ecological community, shows us that despite the local community's desire for this forest to be protected the chainsaws are getting louder. But in the current political environment where on an almost a daily basis many hard fought conservation gains are lost or are under threat this appears symptomatic of the times. Major legislative and regulatory changes are creating significant risks and challenges for common sense planning and environment protection. We need more than ever our members and their friends to tell governments at all levels what you think about many of the changes and developments that are going on now.

In this issue we provide updates on some of the documents out for comment such as the Rural Lands Strategy Issues Paper and the state government's planning White Paper. It is important that members write submissions, make comments on these documents or, at the very least, sign the petitions on our website.

Changes are also happening for Coastwatchers with our hard working and long serving volunteers on the executive team, Jenny Edwards and Reina Hill, stepping back from their respective roles. Both Jenny and Reina have given extraordinary service and commitment to conservation and planning advocacy and I'm sure you would agree with me that the Eurobodalla community is the richer for their efforts, and I want to extend a very big thank you for their work, support and dedication. This will bring opportunities for others to come forward and join the team, think about this and give me a call.

On other fronts the state government is drafting a revised set of conditions for the 'Integrated Forestry Operations Approval', these are the rules for conducting forestry operations. Also [Draft Water Sharing Plans for the Clyde, Deua and Tuross Rivers are currently out on public exhibition](#) and the call for submissions closing on the 16 June.

Coastwatchers now has a revamped website with many new features, if you have not visited yet I encourage you to check it out, just go to www.coastwatchers.org.au .

In closing sharpen those pencils, fill up the ink wells or get those fingers dancing over the keyboard and enjoy your submission writing.

DON'T MISS THIS

**Saturday 22 June, 2pm at
Tomakin Community Hall**

GUEST SPEAKER - Allan Fox – pioneer in the establishment of nature reserves in NSW

With our whole conservation reserve system under threat, here is your chance to hear how and why places like Nadgee, Broulee Island and Illawong were declared nature reserves, and why we now need them even more.

Dedicating Nadgee Nature Reserve was one of the most inspired decisions in nature conservation in NSW. It ranks with the dedication of Royal National Park in 1879, and contributes to the claim that NSW has a brilliant history of dedicating natural areas for nature conservation, for their beauty, and for future generations to see values that we have not yet articulated.*

Will we still be able to credit NSW with a "brilliant history" in years to come?

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

* A contribution to the ecological history of Nadgee Nature Reserve, on the south coast of New South Wales - D Lunney, A Fox, P Catling H Recher and H Lunney

Chris Kowal

PLANNING LAWS – speak now before it is too late – **SUBMISSIONS CLOSE ON 28th JUNE**

Even a short letter is worth writing and some talking points are available on the [Coastwatchers web site](#). Your comments can be sent via [this website](#) or posted to: "New Planning System", GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001. Comments by email will not be accepted.



From the NSW Nature Conservation Council (NCC) and Better Planning Network

Sweeping changes to NSW planning laws threaten our environment and communities. The proposed changes represent the most significant backward step in environmental protection and community participation in more than a generation.

Under the new planning system:

- 80% of all development in NSW will be approved as complying or code assessment, with no community consultation.
- The principles of ecologically sustainable development have been removed from the planning system.
- Important environment protection zones will be removed (E3 and E4 zones will be rolled into overarching rural and residential zones).
- Third party appeal rights will be weakened.

NCC has prepared a [package of materials](#) to help you stand up against the most significant changes to planning and environment laws in a generation including:

- A Briefing Note
- A Submission Guide
- Brochures

This is an essential time to speak up for a planning system that protects the environment and our communities:

- 1. Make a submission** in response to the White Paper and draft Planning Bill before **28 June, 2013**.
- 2. Send a copy of your submission, together with a cover letter, to your local MP.**
- 3. Spread the word**

ADOPT A BEACH

Litter along the coastline is an ongoing problem. One recent beach clean-up collected two bags of mostly washed up litter in a very short period of time. There is certainly merit in giving consideration to adopting a local beach to keep clean. We like our local environment to look tidy, but it is also helpful to wildlife such as intertidal shorebirds if we can minimise these type of hazards including entanglements for these birds.

John Perkins



RURAL LANDS STRATEGY

Coastwatchers considers that good management of land is an issue of **stewardship** that must consider the common good; enhance local self-reliance and value ecosystem services according to a modern understanding of best practice land use. It is vital as we move increasingly into an era of disruptive climate change and associated loss of biodiversity that we consider, in contemporary ways, the need to protect local ecosystems even as we seek to produce good quality agricultural outcomes.

Submissions close on 12 June so you still have time to [sign our petition](#) on Coastwatchers' website.

WEBSITE LAUNCH

Have you looked at our new website yet? www.coastwatchers.org.au

It is an interactive site, designed by young local man, Jason Whalan, owner of Bateman's Bay Websites. Our website shares information, links to the koala project, national environmental news and other conservation groups, and invites engagement through facebook, twitter, and other social networking sites. The site also tells people how to become involved in Coastwatchers' current campaigns.

People can also email Coastwatchers at admin@coastwatchers.org.au

We are very grateful to Candace Wirth for all her work liaising with Jason and John Allen and organising the successful 'High Morning Tea' launch of the website in Batemans Bay

YOUNG PEOPLE HELP KOALA PROJECT GLEAN BENDETHERA DATA

As part of its investigation into the capacity of the Shire's forest habitat to offer home ranges and breeding connectivity, the volunteer Eurobodalla Koalas project undertook a survey expedition to Bendethera from 5th to 12th May.

Supported by the Coastwatchers tax deductible Environment Fund and generous locals Rob Richmond of Mogendoura and Tony Usback of Malua Bay who provided an accommodation base and four-wheel drive vehicles, Coastwatchers member Keith Joliffe (now living in Canberra), Dave Bulman of Bermagui and Surfside resident Mike Kachyckyj camped out for the whole eight sunny autumn days and frosty nights.



Bega's Kahli Beissner and Canberra's Lauren Chockman (*pictured fully enjoying her novice scat identification experience – this one was possum*) alternated for half the week. Kahli hopes to begin a university Honours program next year, researching the suitability of the Deua National Park as a koala refuge. Lauren is involved in community outdoor and scientific volunteering as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award Gold Challenge.

In the middle of the week the volunteers were joined by a Canberra Grammar School Year 10 outdoor education group which split into two to spend half a day each surveying and half a day learning about Geographic Information Systems from Dave. The boys accepted survey leadership roles with alacrity and were fascinated by the sophisticated digital software the Eurobodalla Koalas project uses for its analysis.

The number of survey plots completed, some in terrain Park Rangers thought impossible, was boosted from a planned 12 to an actual 15 by the input of 7 Murrumbidgee Rover Crew members (Belconnen, ACT) on the final weekend. Not only were the Rovers fit, young, enthusiastic and well equipped but included in the group were employees of CSIRO (Chris Malam) and Geoscience Australia (Crew Leader Katy Tomkins) experienced in habitat surveys and GIS modeling.

Although no koala scats were found, an enormous amount of other data was collected on the full range of predictive habitat factors including eucalypt type and size, species richness, canopy cover, the presence of other animals, shade, topographic features, geology, soil, weather and disturbance history.



Mark Desborough – one of the Murrumbidgee Rovers

Lauren, Dave and Keith have now begun the long task of analyzing the material. Keith says “a day in the field generates ten days work in the office” and believes it will be late 2013 before the research team can say if the Bendethera site offers a viable home range. Bendethera was chosen for special, intensive attention because it showed up on last year’s pilot study mapping as a large enough patch for a koala resident group to establish a home range, appeared to have “Medium” browse species potential, is mentioned in local folklore as a past koala place and is in a good position to test whether the escarpment might be a facilitator or a blockage to breeding connectivity between the coast and known populations on the nearby tablelands.

When winter is over, the project volunteers would like to do some more surveys at the Deua catchment’s Wamban Creek closer to Moruya, where the koala roars were recorded and fresh scats found last summer. It is still uncertain whether this animal was a dispersing male or part of a resident group. There are several other spots around the Shire that need surveying also, such as Bodalla State Forest which came up on the 2012 map as having “High” habitat potential.

Keith Joliffe has declared his ambition to begin designing a Eurobodalla Koala Recovery Program by the end of 2013. Anyone interested in this intriguing work (whether you’d like to help in the bush or in other more sedentary ways) is invited to contact Keith on 0427 546 156 or via the Eurobodalla Koalas project *facebook* group accessible through the recently upgraded [Coastwatchers website](#).

Keith Joliffe

BIRD BANDING

The NSW NPWS and Birdlife Australia have been placing leg bands with visible identification flags on the critically endangered Hooded Plovers, and they ask the public to please report any sightings.

Hooded Plovers are small, black-headed birds with white bellies, a white stripe across the back of their necks, and pale brown backs and wings. They are seen on beaches between Jervis Bay and the Victorian border and beyond.

John Perkins



Juvenile Hooded Plover

BEING DIRTY GETTING CLEAN

“If you’re worried about dressing ethically, chances are you think about sweatshop conditions in developing countries, unsustainable farming practices, convoluted global supply chains that ring up a huge carbon footprint, and mountains of fast-fashion festering in landfill.

But the first thing you should think about is how often you wash your clothes. It turns out that when you look at the whole life cycle of a piece of clothing, everyday washing, drying and ironing damages our natural environment the most.

A recent study of Chesty Bonds show up to 80% of their energy consumption happens during customer use. With Levi Jeans, nearly 60% of the environmental impacts come from washing.

This is fairly normal according to Kate Fletcher, who in her 2008 book *Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys* looked at the environmental impact of the fashion industry and reported that up to 82% of its energy use, 66% of its solid waste and over half of its emissions to air come from washing and drying clothes.”

*Extracts from The Conversation - **The dirt on clothes: why washing less is more sustainable** by Tullia Jack, PhD student at RMIT*

(The test group of students wore their jeans for 5 days a week for 3 months without washing and said they were not visibly dirty or smelly. You might like to try your own tests.)

LOGGING IN NATIONAL PARKS

Recently a NSW Legislative Council Inquiry concerning public lands recommended logging in national parks. The Victorian and Queensland governments are in the process of doing just this. We wrote objecting strongly to the recommendations and received this reply from the Premier's Office --

"This recommendation does not reflect the Government's views on this issue. The Government does not support commercial logging in national parks and has no plans to allow it.

The NSW Government recognises that our national parks are special and unique places that deserve enduring protection. The Government is committed to their important role in conserving native flora and fauna and cultural heritage, and to improving community wellbeing through increased opportunities for nature-based tourism."

However, prior to the state election, the Premier promised not to allow hunting in national parks so we will have to stay alert and ready to act.

The Inquiry also recommended a moratorium on the creation of new national parks while an independent review is conducted into the management of all public lands.



Will our national parks look like this ?

HUNTING IN NSW NATIONAL PARKS BEING PROMOTED INTERSTATE

At a hunting expo in Victoria at the end of May the NSW Game Council issued free recreational hunting licences to encourage interstate shooters to hunt in NSW national parks. The licences would usually cost \$75 for one year, or \$325 for five years.

[On its website the Game Council website clearly stated:](#)

"We'll be conducting free R-licence accreditations all weekend and providing the most recent updates on the national parks and duck mitigation programs – there's never been a better time to hunt NSW."

There are no checks on the skills or safety records of people applying for licenses to shoot in National Parks. Would-be shooters apply on-line. They may never have used a gun on a firing range, let alone off one. Possession of a gun license, together with an 'R' license - something you can get without ever having fired a gun by simply sitting an open-book exam - is sufficient qualification to shoot in a National Park. Children as young as 12 will be allowed to use firearms in the National Park as long as they have a parent supervising - but how responsible is the average 12 year old? And who checks that the supervising parent is a responsible person?

It is no wonder the NSW Government expects the number of visitors, bushwalkers and campers in our national parks will fall. This will be a self-fulfilling prophecy when poorly supervised recreational hunting starts in those areas. NSW will not have the tougher restrictions that are imposed in South Australia, and even there a park visitor was shot.

CULLENDULLA

Members of the Coastwatchers Committee visited Cullendulla Nature Reserve on the northern side of Batemans Bay recently exploring options for a possible future outing for members. It was a spectacular sunny day to walk this area, with



it being an outgoing tide, extensive sand flats were exposed, that were proving popular for intertidal foraging shorebirds such as the Pied Oystercatchers, Sooty Oystercatchers, White-faced Herons, Great Egrets and the migratory shorebird the Bar-tailed Godwit. This area was declared a Nature Reserve as a result of some long and often difficult campaigning back more than 15 years ago by Coastwatchers.

We hope to organise a walk and picnic there in spring.

EUROBODALLA SEA LEVEL RISE POLICY UPDATE

Council is currently preparing two separate Coastal Zone Management Plans for the Eurobodalla Shire: one plan for Batemans Bay and another for the remaining settled coastline. Staff would like to merge them into a single Eurobodalla Coastal Zone Management Plan.

All coastal zone plans are currently in abeyance due to the withdrawal of the NSW Government from offering advice to local councils in respect to planning for sea level rise. Council is currently awaiting direction from the NSW Government in respect to this issue and, coastal planning and coastal hazard management generally, before proceeding.

Meanwhile, in shades of what is likely to happen here, [owners of waterfront land on the Gold Coast are watching their yards disappear into the sea](#) and demanding that the government (ie taxpayers) spend millions to protect their eroding properties.



BROULEE BIODIVERSITY BIOCERTIFICATION STRATEGY

Coastwatchers' submission on this Strategy said the concept had merit as a way of addressing the critical need for biodiversity protection in the face of development pressures. However, it did not look at all of the identified the Banksia-Bangalay Ecological Endangered Community (EEC) within the shire and gave no consideration to adjacent landholders with this EEC.

BioCertification and BioBanking were intended to provide 'like for like' offsets. These offsets were to be secured firstly over private land tenure, ideally within the developers own holding, making possible the achievement of what was euphemistically called a 'no net loss' of native vegetation and "improve or maintain" outcomes in the long term. This Strategy uses council lands as an offset for private development but gives no indication of who will pay for the permanent management of the conservation land, what will happen if it is not managed well, or how the "improve or maintain" criteria is to be achieved.

Read our full submission [here](#).

BOOK KEEPER AND MORE

Many thanks to June Mills who has volunteered to take on the job of book-keeper in the coming financial year. It is great to see new people volunteering and we will need more by the time of the AGM.

Reina Hill, our current Vice President, may not be able to continue on the committee or do nearly as much as she has done for us in the past now that she playing a much bigger role as carer for her sick husband.

Jenny Edwards will be retiring as Secretary and, if re-elected, will remain as a committee member and Public Officer for only one more year.

Keith Joliffe, our Treasurer, would dearly like someone to take over his job and this may become a necessity when Keith gives up his regular commutes to the coast from Canberra.

Contact Chris Kowal to offer your help Email president@coastwatchers.org.au or
Phone/text 0424 286 022

NEWS IN BRIEF



SAGE Growers Market in Moruya

These markets at Riverside Park on **Tuesdays from 3.30pm to 7.00pm** are proving very popular with locals.

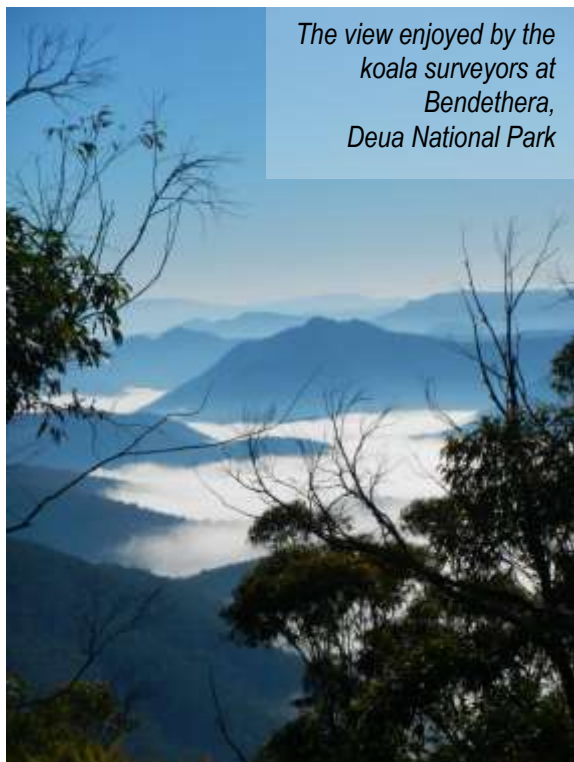
You are invited to send feedback as a consumer or stall holder. Email to markets@sageproject.org.au

Support for Greenhouse Gas Reduction Project

Coastwatchers supported Council's application for a Regional Development Australia funding grant. The application was successful and Council secured \$400,000 from the Australian Government to help complete stage 2 of the solar project. This will install 270kW of solar electricity at the Northern and Southern water treatment plants and the Batemans Bay sewage treatment plant. Coastwatchers was thanked for our help.

Airport in the news once more

Once again Council is discussing a "business plan" for Moruya airport. It is hard to see how ratepayers will not lose money if Council decides to go ahead with a new terminal and extended runway. Unless some private interest with very deep pockets buys Moruya's airport, more or less for personal use, we will be competing with Canberra for passengers and flights. The Canberra Airport has completed a new \$480 million terminal and has positioned itself in for international services in 2013/14.



The view enjoyed by the koala surveyors at Bendethera, Deua National Park

Jackie French on water and wombats

We were very pleased to welcome many new faces to our meeting in March to hear Jackie speak. She thanked Coastwatchers for all our help in obtaining better conditions for the Dargues Reef gold mine. The large sediment pollution event from the site earlier this year had prompted so many complaints, including from Eurobodalla Council, that the conditions had been tightened further still.

Over the years Jackie French has shared her property with hundreds of wombats, each with its own distinct personality. "They are short sighted but have an excellent sense of smell, much better than a dog's, and this seems to be the main way they perceive the world," she said.

"Wombats are definitely not muddle-headed," Ms French declared. "I have seen one put a box on top of another box then climb up on them to get through a window." However, she admitted that they do not seem to have much road sense.

Sometimes wombats drag bracken into their sleeping chamber to make a bed. One wombat has taken to picking Jackie's lavender instead. "I'm not sure if it just likes the smell or if the lavender helps keep insects away," Ms French said.

Tax deductible donations of \$2 or more can be made by --

Cheques or money orders made out to

The Coastwatchers Assoc. Inc Environment Fund and posted to
The Treasurer, PO Box 521, Batemans Bay 2536

Or you can pay by EFT or direct deposit to

Bank : IMB Ltd
BSB: 641 800

A/C Name: The Coastwatchers Association Inc. Environment Fund
A/C No: 200 271 717

Please tell the bank to say the **name of the donor** on their statement. It helps if you email our book-keeper to let her know too b-kidd@bigpond.com

Or you can use Paypal - click on the [Donate button here](#)

COASTWATCHERS COMMITTEE 2012-13

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If undelivered return to;
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COASTWATCHERS CO-OPERATES WITH:

Broulee-Mossy Pt Community Association
Congo Area Association
Conservation Council ACT Region
Climate Action Network Australia
Eurobodalla Landcare / Dunecare
Friends of Durras
Friends of the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens
Long Beach Landcare
Maloneys Residents Association
Malua Bay Residents Association
Nature Coast Marine Group
South East Region Conservation Alliance
Tomakin Community Association
Tuross Lakes Preservation Group

Coastwatchers is a member of -
The NSW Nature Conservation Council and
The Better Planning Network



Coastwatchers

Eurobodalla's environment and climate action group

ABN 66 003 550 939

EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Members can receive the newsletter by email and save our association paper, time and postage. The email contains a link to a choice of full or text-only PDF files that you can download when convenient

COMING EVENTS

Sat 22nd June, 2.00pm
Tomakin Community hall
Allan Fox – our nature reserves
and why we need them