

2026

# Impact Report



ENVIRONMENTAL  
JUSTICE  
AUSTRALIA

We acknowledge the Bunurong, Gadigal, Larrakia, Muwinina, Ngambri, Ngunnawal, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples, the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters where our team lives and works. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and recognise the enduring connections of First Nations peoples to Country, culture and community.

We recognise that sovereignty was never ceded. This always was and always will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land.

Australia's legal system has played a central role in dispossession, exclusion and the ongoing injustices experienced by First Nations peoples. It has also been used as a tool of resistance – to assert rights, challenge injustice and advance self-determination.

At Environmental Justice Australia (EJA), we know environmental justice is inseparable from First Nations justice. And that protecting nature and caring for Country depends on recognising and respecting First Nations rights, knowledge and leadership. We are committed to working alongside First Nations communities to use and reshape the law in ways that uphold self-determination and support justice for people and Country.

Content warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this report may contain images or names of people who have died.

**“The stakes couldn’t be higher.** That’s why we represent frontline communities challenging destruction. Defending our climate. And driving environmental justice”

— **Nicola Rivers**, EJA Co-CEO





**We're using the law for a radically better future** — a safe and healthy planet, thriving communities and justice at the heart of our laws.

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-CEOS

This financial year began with a question we return to often at Environmental Justice Australia (EJA): where can the law make the biggest difference?

The need is enormous. Australia is still expanding coal mines and gas wells as the climate crisis accelerates. Forests, rivers and wildlife remain under extraordinary pressure. Too many communities are still locked out of decisions about the places they live, love and care for.

We cannot work on every environmental problem. Nor should we try. We are most effective when we identify where EJA's particular combination of legal expertise, investigation, advocacy and public engagement can shift the system – not simply treat the symptoms.

One of the clearest examples this year was the reform of Australia's national environment laws. After years of delay and decline, the political window for major reform finally opened in 2025. EJA's role was to get into the detail and ask a simple question: will these laws actually work?

Our lawyers worked alongside environmental organisations, communities and experts to test the proposals against what happens in the real world. By the end of the year, Parliament had passed the biggest overhaul of Australia's national environment laws in a generation, with important gains as well as gaps we will keep working to close.

For us, the law can be a circuit breaker: a way to cut through political gridlock, corporate spin and empty promises when it is made stronger, tested and enforced.

That approach has become even more important as the environment in which our clients operate gets tougher. Across Australia, environmental lawyers, scientists, advocates and community members are facing legal, political and media attacks. Powerful interests can generate enormous legal costs, prolong proceedings and subject individuals to public attacks. These tactics can have a chilling effect long before anyone walks into a courtroom. Access to justice means very little if only those with deep pockets can afford to use it.

We have made a deliberate choice not to respond to that pressure by becoming quieter or safer. Big, systemic problems require bold, systemic responses.

Sometimes that means litigation. Sometimes strong legal advice can help a community obtain information, influence a decision or expose where the law is failing. Being strategic means choosing the right legal tool, and understanding how it can contribute to wider change.

We are also looking beyond Australia. In July 2025, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) handed down its historic

advisory opinion on climate change, strengthening the international legal understanding of what governments are required to do in the face of a rapidly warming world. Developments like this are opening new possibilities for climate justice, including in our Hard Truths case and work on intergenerational justice, legal challenges scrutinising some of Australia's biggest polluting projects into the future, including North West Shelf Extension, Browse development, the Narrabri Gas Pipeline and development in the Beetaloo Basin.

Later in the year, Nicola joined thousands of conservation leaders from around the world at the IUCN World Conservation Congress. What stayed with her was the sheer breadth of people confronting the same interconnected crises: Indigenous leaders, scientists, lawyers, young people, community advocates and decision-makers.

We see those connections in our own work. Climate change cannot be separated neatly from biodiversity loss. Biodiversity loss cannot be separated from the rights of people whose lives and cultures depend on Country. And none of these challenges can be separated from questions of who has power, whose knowledge counts and who gets heard.

It is also where we find hope.

Hope, for us, is not optimism that everything will somehow work out. It looks like citizen scientists heading into forests at night with cameras to document threatened wildlife. Traditional Owners spending years insisting that decisions about Country and Sea Country cannot be made without them. Young people learning the language of international human rights law because they refuse to accept that climate harm is simply their generation's inheritance.

And lawyers sitting behind the scenes, reading legislation line by line, finding the pressure point where the law might shift something that previously seemed immovable.

Looking back over the past 12 months, we are proud of what EJA has achieved. But more than any individual outcome, we are proud of the way this organisation is sharpening its focus about where our legal expertise is most needed, more deliberate about the systems we are trying to change, and determined to stand alongside clients and communities willing to take on difficult fights.

The challenges ahead are immense. Just a little better will not be enough. But we head into the year ahead with purpose, confidence and a strong sense that we are part of something much bigger than ourselves.

**Elizabeth McKinnon & Nicola Rivers**  
EJA Co-CEOs



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

This year's annual report tells a story of an organisation taking on difficult work at a moment when that work is increasingly needed.

From my perspective as Chair, one of the things I value most about Environmental Justice Australia is its independence. Our lawyers are able to ask difficult questions of governments and corporations, challenge decisions in court and advocate for stronger laws because the organisation can make those decisions according to where its expertise can have the greatest public interest impact.

That independence cannot be taken for granted. Across Australia, we are seeing environmental lawyers, scientists, advocates and community members face increasingly costly and intimidating responses when they challenge powerful interests. Against that backdrop, the Board's responsibility is to make sure EJA is strong enough not only for the next case or campaign, but for the years ahead.

That means maintaining strong governance and sound financial management, while protecting the independence and courage that make EJA effective. It also means making sure we have the right people on the team, which we do, led by our very capable and inspiring Co-CEOs Nicola and Elizabeth. We need our people to have the support they need to do demanding, complex public interest work well.

What gives me confidence is the community around this organisation. EJA works with extraordinary clients and community organisations, but its reach is also extended by barristers and law firms contributing their expertise pro bono, volunteers and interns giving their time, experts sharing knowledge and evidence, and donors and philanthropic partners providing the resources that make ambitious legal

work possible. EJA has long recognised that the strength of strategic public interest law lies in these partnerships.

We have also been very conscious this year of the cost-of-living pressures facing many Australians. Choosing to donate, renew a membership, volunteer expertise or otherwise support EJA is a meaningful decision. On behalf of the Board, I want to say how deeply we value that trust.

As Chair, I am proud of an organisation that is ambitious about impact while remaining thoughtful about how that impact is achieved. The role of the Board is to help ensure EJA can keep doing that work with integrity, independence and confidence.

There will always be more work than one organisation can take on. Our responsibility is to ensure EJA remains strong, focused and sustainable enough to make its contribution where it matters most.

Thank you to Nicola and Elizabeth, to the EJA team and Board, and to every client, partner, volunteer, member, donor and supporter who has been part of the organisation this year.

**Tony Kelly**  
EJA Board Chair



Photo overleaf: Alice Hardinge from the Wilderness Society Tasmania with EJA lawyer Isabella Farrell-Hallegraeff in logging coupe in Tasmania's Huon Valley. Photographer: Anna Brozek.



# Who we are

**Environmental Justice Australia is a national public interest legal organisation working to protect nature, tackle climate harm and advance environmental justice.**

We use the law to take on some of Australia's most significant environmental justice challenges. Working alongside clients and communities, we challenge harmful decisions, hold governments and corporations to account and push for stronger laws and protections.

Our lawyers and specialists combine strategic litigation, legal advocacy and public engagement to create change that reaches beyond any single case.

Our work is made possible by our courageous clients and communities, First Nations partners, experts, pro bono lawyers, volunteers, members, donors and supporters who contribute their knowledge, courage, expertise and resources.



# The change we're working towards

Our vision is a safe and healthy planet and thriving communities, served by a legal system with justice at its heart.

Across EJA, we're working towards a future where:

- **Australia is rapidly moving away from fossil fuels**, with the full climate consequences of coal and gas reflected in the decisions governments and corporations make.
- **Nature and Country have strong, lasting legal protection**, and the industries driving destruction are held accountable.
- **First Nations rights, knowledge and stewardship of Country** are recognised and respected in law and decision-making.
- **Communities can access justice and participate meaningfully** in decisions that affect them, regardless of their resources or power.

## WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

Environmental harm is not experienced equally. The people and communities most affected by pollution, climate change and environmental destruction often have the least power over the decisions that cause it.

The law can reinforce that imbalance. Too often, those with the deepest pockets have the greatest ability to shape decisions, while communities most affected struggle to have their voices heard.

Environmental justice means changing that. It means people can participate meaningfully in decisions that affect them; First Nations rights, knowledge and authority are recognised and respected; nature and Country are strongly protected; and people can access justice when harm occurs.



## How we create change

The law shapes what governments and corporations can do, whose voices must be heard, how decisions are made and what happens when the rules are broken.

Used strategically, the law can stop environmental harm, hold powerful institutions to account and change the rules and systems that allow environmental injustice to continue.

EJA combines legal expertise, advocacy, community engagement and communications to identify where the law can make the greatest difference.

### **We work alongside clients and communities**

We work with people directly affected by environmental decisions, bringing legal expertise while respecting their knowledge, priorities and aspirations.

### **We find where the law can make a difference**

We investigate where protections are failing, decisions can be challenged, powerful institutions can be held accountable or legal action could unlock wider change.

### **We use the right legal tools**

Going to court is only one of them. We provide legal advice, scrutinise decisions, help communities access information and participate in decision-making, and advocate for stronger laws and policies.

### **We look beyond the individual case**

Legal action can protect a place, change how a law is interpreted, expose a systemic failure, influence future decisions or build the case for stronger laws.

## Where we focus

Our work spans three interconnected areas of environmental justice.

### CLIMATE

Working on behalf of our clients, we use the law to **make climate harm harder to ignore** and hold governments and corporations accountable for the consequences of continued coal and gas pollution.

### JUSTICE

We work alongside First Nations peoples and communities experiencing environmental injustice to strengthen rights, protect Country and help **ensure people can participate meaningfully** in decisions that affect them.

### NATURE

Working on behalf of our clients, we use the law to **protect forests, rivers, wildlife and ecosystems**, hold industries and governments accountable, and strengthen environmental protections for the long term.

**“We’re supporting frontline communities to take legal action where it matters most—against the biggest polluters, the most destructive industries, and the weakest laws.”**

— Elizabeth McKinnon, EJA Co-CEO

# Our impact this year

Together with our clients, communities and partners, we used the law to protect nature, challenge environmental harm and strengthen access to justice. Here are some of the outcomes and the scale of our work in 2025–26.

**25** **threatened species now have Recovery Plans** in force after our legal action challenged years of government delay.

**30** **million coral colonies** could be lost in every future mass bleaching event due to climate emissions from Woodside's Browse gas project. Our legal intervention put this new climate science before the Environment Minister.

**30** **billion tonnes of climate pollution** – the cumulative emissions linked to coal and gas export projects our clients have challenged through legal action this year, including Woodside's North West Shelf Extension and Browse project and fracking proposals in the Beetaloo Basin.

**2,750** **km<sup>2</sup> of Gunditjmara Nyamat Mirring (Sea Country) protected** from offshore petroleum projects – including an estimated 632.5 billion m<sup>3</sup> of vital ocean habitat for plankton, such as keystone species krill.



**43%** of our individual clients were First Nations people, while 17% of organisational clients were First Nations organisations.

**45** EJA staff (38.4 full time equivalent) working across Australia to advance environmental justice.

**86** Pro bono lawyers, experts, volunteers and interns contributing their expertise and time to EJA's work.

**124** legal matters under way across climate, nature and justice.

**16,000** legal resources and submission toolkits downloaded, helping people understand the law and have their say.

# Climate

## THE CHANGE WE'RE WORKING TOWARDS

A safe climate and equitable future, where governments and corporations are accountable for the climate consequences of coal and gas.

## WHERE WE FOCUS

Australia continues to approve and support fossil fuel development while many of its climate consequences remain poorly accounted for in law and decision-making.

Our clients engage us to use the law to make climate harm harder to ignore and responsibility harder to avoid. Our work and expertise focuses on:

- **Integrity** – ensuring the climate consequences of fossil fuel projects are properly assessed in decisions about whether they should proceed.
- **Accountability** – challenging gaps in how climate pollution is counted, assessed and regulated, including emissions from Australia's exported coal and gas.
- **Responsibility** – developing and testing legal avenues to hold governments and corporations responsible for decisions that contribute to climate harm.

## Climate highlights

01

We lodged the **Hard Truths** case with the UN Human Rights Committee on behalf of ten Australians profoundly impacted by climate harm – to hold Australia accountable for coal and gas exports.

02

We challenged the extension of Australia's largest and longest operating gas project, the **North West Shelf Extension** in the Federal Court on behalf of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

03

We represented Lock the Gate in the first challenge to a fracking project under the expanded federal water trigger, testing protections for groundwater in the **Beetaloo Basin**.

04

We took **Generation Justice's** call for climate justice directly to the UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change, following the ICJ's landmark Advisory Opinion.

## Making climate harm impossible to ignore

This year, our climate work tested what Australian and international law can do as the evidence of climate harm becomes increasingly difficult to ignore.

On behalf of our clients and alongside partners, we challenged decisions that allowed major coal and gas developments to proceed, tested how federal water protections applied to fracking, and challenged some of Australia's biggest fossil fuel projects in light of new developments in climate attribution science.

We also looked beyond Australia's domestic laws. As international courts and human rights bodies increasingly

clarify governments' responsibilities to prevent climate harm, our clients used those developments to hold the Australian government accountable for the damage caused by the coal and gas it continues to approve and support.

From groundwater in the Beetaloo Basin to coral on the Great Barrier Reef, and from young Australians demanding a safer future to 10 people taking their experiences of climate harm to the United Nations, EJA's work this year pursued the fundamental question: when the consequences of fossil fuel development are clear, what does the law require governments and corporations to do about them?





## Hard Truths Case

### 10 Australians take climate harm to the United Nations

In June, 10 Australians experiencing climate harm launched the Hard Truths case, asking the UN Human Rights Committee to hold Australia accountable for failing to protect them from the climate harm caused by Australia's coal and gas.

Represented by Environmental Justice Australia, the Human Rights Law Centre and Earthjustice, the group includes people whose homes, health, livelihoods, culture and Country have been seriously harmed by extreme heat, bushfires, floods and rising seas.

Their case focuses on a major gap in climate accountability. Around 80% of the coal and gas produced in Australia is exported and burned overseas, yet the resulting climate pollution is excluded from Australia's domestic climate policies and targets.

The group argues that by continuing to approve and support fossil fuel expansion without adequately protecting people from the resulting harm, the Australian government is violating Australians' right to life, right to family and home, and First Nations' rights to culture.

These 10 Australians have asked the UN Human Rights Committee to declare it unlawful for Australia to continue approving coal and gas projects for export without a plan to keep Australians safe from dangerous climate change.

At its heart, *Poelina et al v Australia* (the Hard Truths case) seeks to make the Australian government confront the hard truths: the danger of climate pollution is clear, Australia has the power to act, and international human rights law requires it to do so.

[hardtruthscase.org.au](https://hardtruthscase.org.au)

A full-page photograph of Professor Anne Poelina, an elderly Indigenous Australian woman, standing in a field of tall, dry grass. She is wearing a traditional orange and red dress with a matching shawl, a beaded necklace, and large circular earrings. She has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the side. In the background, there are green trees and a building with a corrugated metal roof under a cloudy sky.

“Despite decades of scientific warnings, governments continue approving coal and gas projects. **We must stop normalising destruction.**”

— Professor Anne Poelina, Nyikina Warrwa and Warlungurru woman and Hard Truths claimant

Photo: Professor Anne Poelina, Nyikina Warrwa and Warlungurru woman and Hard Truths claimant on Mardoowarra Country, post-flooding, in the Kimberley.

# North West Shelf Extension

## Bringing climate science to Australia's biggest gas decisions

Represented by EJA, the Australian Conservation Foundation challenged the Australian government's approval of the North West Shelf extension, which would allow Australia's largest, most polluting and longest operating gas project to continue until 2070.

If it proceeds, the extension could fuel around 4 billion tonnes of climate pollution over its lifetime – roughly 10 times Australia's current annual emissions.

The case is a significant legal test of how climate damage must be considered under national environment law, with potential consequences for how future coal and gas projects are assessed.

ACF argued the Environment Minister failed to properly assess the project's contribution to climate change and wrongly relied on claimed economic benefits from the separate, unapproved Browse gas project when deciding to approve North West Shelf.

In February, ACF also asked the Minister to reconsider an earlier environmental decision about the nearby Browse gas project using advances in climate attribution science. New research links Browse's emissions to the loss of roughly 30 million coral colonies in every future mass bleaching event on the Great Barrier Reef.

By June, the Minister had accepted the reconsideration request as valid and opened the matter for public consultation, giving this new evidence a pathway to be considered in federal decision-making.

Together, these matters ask how the law should respond when the scale of climate harm and the science tracing it to individual projects, can no longer be ignored. This year, EJA lawyers brought Australia's expanded federal water trigger to court for the first time.

Photo: EJA Special Counsel Inshani Ward with Adam Beeson and Adam Bandt, Australian Conservation Foundation, outside the Federal Court.





**“The climate crisis is moving fast, but so is climate science.** As the evidence evolves, so too must the decisions made under Australia’s environment laws.”

— Hannah White, EJA Senior Lawyer

# Generation Justice

## Putting young people's rights at the centre

Nine young Australians took their campaign for climate justice directly to the United Nations this year, meeting with the UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change and pressing for the Australian government to protect their human rights.

Supported by the EJA team, Generation Justice lodged a complaint with the UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change in 2025, arguing that Australia's inadequate climate action, continued fossil fuel expansion and support for coal and gas are putting young people's human rights at risk.

In May 2026, the group met directly with the Special Rapporteur during her visit to Australia. They shared, in their own words, how climate change is already affecting their health, culture, communities and expectations for the future – and why they believe stronger action from the Australian government is a human rights imperative.

Their advocacy comes at a pivotal moment for climate rights. This year, the International Court of Justice delivered a landmark advisory opinion clarifying states' legal obligations to protect people and our planet from climate change, and profoundly shifting the international legal landscape.

Generation Justice is helping make sure young Australians are part of that growing legal shift, not only as people who will inherit the consequences of decisions made today, but as rights-holders demanding a say in the future being shaped for them.

“Young people are over it. We're over climate inaction.

We're over new fossil fuel projects being approved, and **we're over being ignored.**”

— Generation Justice



Photo: Maya Farner and Connor Wright, Generation Justice, with EJA senior lawyers Hannah White and Michaela Vaughan. Photographer: Chris Hopkins.



Photo: Georgina Woods and Stephanie Brooker from Lock the Gate with EJA lawyers Sam Moorhead, Retta Berryman and Cecile Bester outside the Federal Court.

## Beetaloo Basin fracking

### Testing Australia's new water protections from fracking

This year, EJA lawyers brought Australia's expanded federal water trigger to court for the first time.

We represented Lock the Gate in the Federal Court arguing that Tamboran B2's Shenandoah South fracking project in the Beetaloo Basin should not proceed without federal assessment of the risks it poses to groundwater.

To reach the shale gas, Tamboran plans to drill through the Cambrian Limestone Aquifer – a vital groundwater system that supports pastoral stations, rivers and creeks, including the Roper River and Mataranka Springs.

Lock the Gate argued Tamboran's proposal was likely to have a significant impact on those water resources and should therefore face federal scrutiny.

Over five days in the Federal Court, detailed independent evidence about the risks of Beetaloo fracking was tested

in an open forum for the first time – including how unconventional gas wells are drilled, global rates of well failure and the challenges posed by the Beetaloo's complex geology.

In June, the Court dismissed the case, finding the federal water trigger did not apply to this project. While it was not the outcome our client sought, the decision exposed a serious gap in Australia's national water protections: this project can proceed without site-specific federal assessment of risks to groundwater.

Public interest litigation doesn't always deliver the outcome our clients seek. But test cases can put independent evidence on the public record, clarify how our laws work, and expose where environmental protections fall short – building the case for stronger laws.

“This is a deeply disappointing outcome for water in the Northern Territory. We brought this case because **communities deserve confidence that risks to vital groundwater are properly examined before projects like this can proceed.**”

— Georgina Woods, Lock the Gate Alliance

# Justice

## THE CHANGE WE'RE WORKING TOWARDS

First Nations peoples and communities experiencing environmental injustice can exercise their rights, care for Country and have a meaningful say in decisions affecting their lives, culture and environment.

## WHERE WE FOCUS

The law can protect rights and provide pathways to justice, but legal systems have also dispossessed First Nations peoples, excluded communities from decisions and created barriers to justice.

Working alongside First Nations communities, this year we have used the law to:

- **Support First Nations people caring for Country** – providing legal support in line with community priorities and aspirations for Country, culture and self-determination.
- **Develop new legal pathways** – using and testing legal avenues that strengthen First Nations rights, authority and participation in decisions about Country.
- **Secure access to justice** – helping communities experiencing environmental harm or discrimination use legal processes to assert their rights and seek remedies.
- **Strengthen rights and protections** – working to reform laws and systems that create barriers to justice and meaningful participation in environmental decision-making.

## Justice highlights

01

We supported **Tati Tati Traditional Owners** as they achieved formal recognition in **Victoria's Treaty process**, strengthening pathways for self-determination and decision-making about Country.

02

Our client, Tibby Quall, a senior Larrakia Danggalaba Elder, continued his fight to **protect cultural heritage at Binybara/Lee Point** after successfully challenging a flawed NT Heritage Council process.

## Supporting communities to exercise their rights

First Nations and frontline communities are already leading work to protect Country, culture, health and future generations. At EJA this year, we have supported that leadership with legal tools, advice and representation where it can help.

We have worked alongside Traditional Owners using the law to strengthen participation in decisions about Country and Sea Country, protect cultural heritage, challenge pollution and pursue greater recognition of their rights and authority.

That work took many forms. Tati Tati Traditional Owners progressed through Victoria's Treaty process. Gunditjmara

Traditional Owners continued years of engagement with offshore petroleum proposals affecting Sea Country. Senior Larrakia Danggalaba Elder Tibby Quall pursued recognition of cultural heritage at Binybara. And in Lutruwita/Tasmania, Ruth Langford/Tipruthanna brought questions of First Law, cultural obligation and Country before the Magistrates Court.

Much of this work happens outside the courtroom and behind the scenes. Across it, EJA's role is consistent: providing legal advice and helping communities navigate complex legal systems, so they can hold decision-makers to account and pursue outcomes on their own terms.

### 03

Defending peaceful actions to protect native forests, **Ruth Langford/Tipruthanna** brought First Law into the Hobart Magistrates Court and, in a Tasmanian first, gave evidence from Country by video link, with support from EJA.

### 04

We helped **Gunditjmara Traditional Owners** protect Nyamat Mirring (Sea Country) from offshore petroleum projects in the Otway Basin off Victoria's south-west coast.

## Gunditjmara

### Protecting “Nyamat Mirring” Sea Country from offshore petroleum

Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC) has spent years working to protect Gunditjmara Nyamat Mirring from offshore petroleum projects in the Otway Basin off Victoria’s south-west coast.

Supported by EJA lawyers, GMTOAC has engaged with successive proposals, scrutinising environmental impact plans and raising concerns about consultation with Gunditjmara, cultural heritage and marine life, including whale migratory paths.

This year, that sustained work contributed to a significant outcome: federal offshore petroleum regulator NOPSEMA refused to accept CGG Services’s Regia Marine Seismic Survey environment plan, preventing the proposed seismic survey from proceeding. It was the regulator’s first refusal of an environment plan since 2018.

The outcome reflects years of work by Gunditjmara to ensure their rights, knowledge and concerns are properly recognised in decisions about offshore petroleum activities that could impact on their Nyamat Mirring.

**“Gunditjmara Traditional Owners know their Sea Country and have been clear about what is at stake. This outcome reflects years of work to make sure their knowledge, rights and concerns could not be overlooked.”**

— Mera Sivanesan, EJA Senior Lawyer

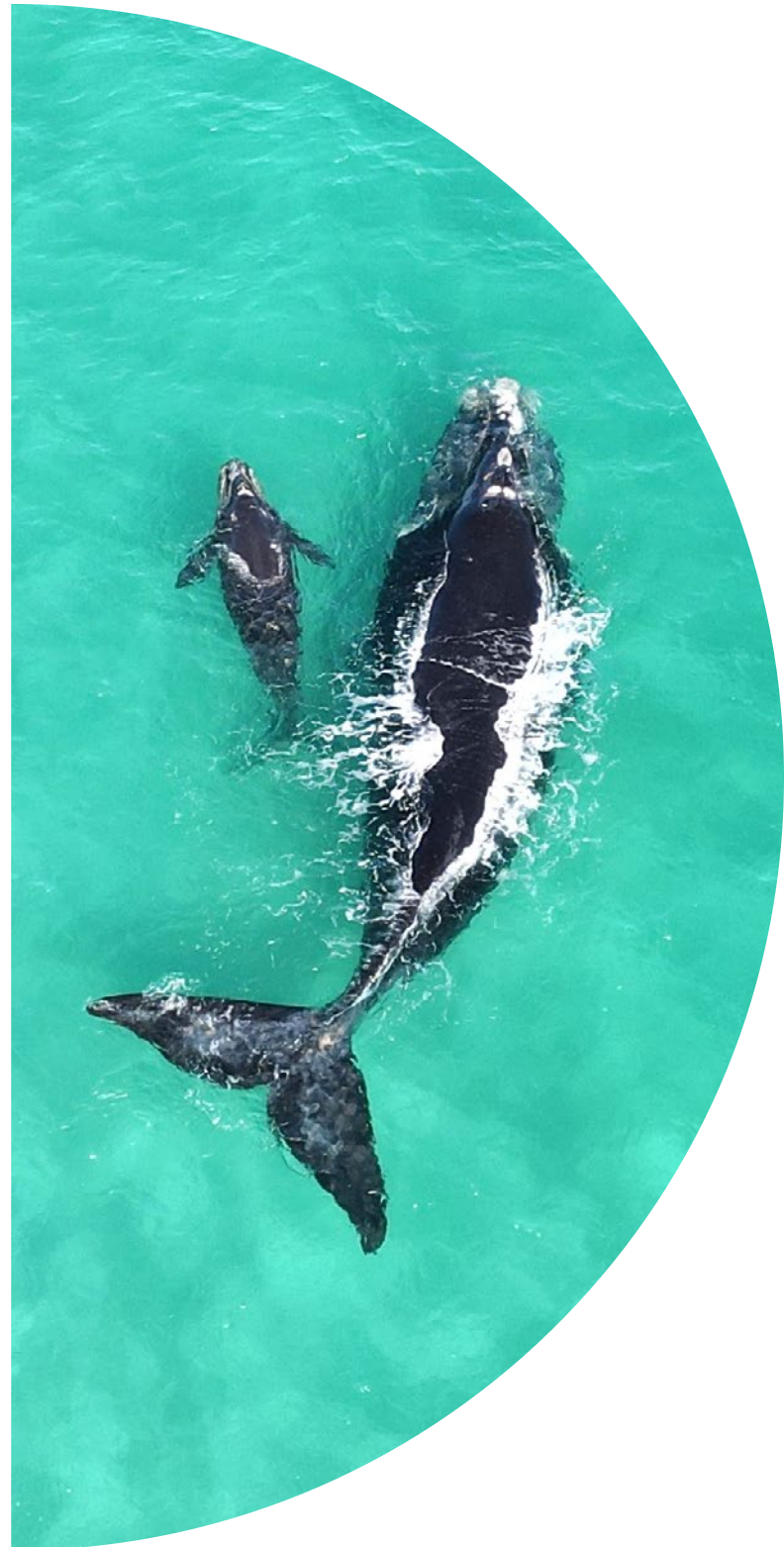




Photo: Brendan Kennedy, Tati Tati and Wadi Wadi man on Country. Photographer: Doug Gimesy.

## Strengthening Tati Tati self-determination through Treaty

This year marked an important step in Tati Tati Traditional Owners' long pursuit of recognition, self-determination and authority over Country.

Supported by EJA, Tati Tati Traditional Owners progressed through Victoria's Treaty process and were entered onto the Treaty Negotiations Register.

The milestone carries particular significance because Tati Tati people had not previously received formal recognition from the Victorian government through existing recognition pathways.

Treaty creates a new opportunity for Traditional Owners to negotiate directly with the state about rights, decision-making and the future of Country. EJA's role has been to provide legal support as Tati Tati Traditional Owners navigate that process and pursue outcomes determined by their own priorities.

“This is a big step. It’s about our connection to Miluwi Ruwi (the Murray River), our ancestors and future — **our Treaty is about making sure our connection to our Country is respected and our voices are heard.**”

— Brendan Kennedy, Tati Tati and Wadi Wadi man and leader with Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations (MLDRIN)

## Binybara

### Making sure cultural authority is heard

At Binybara, also known as Lee Point, our client, senior Larrakia Danggalaba Elder Tibby Quall, continued his legal fight to protect cultural heritage from the impacts of a proposed Defence Housing Australia development.

The previous year, the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal found serious flaws in the NT Heritage Council's decision-making process, including its failure to properly consult our client before authorising the removal of 10 Larrakia cultural objects.

This year, that finding continued to have practical consequences. The Heritage Council agreed to reconsider

its decision, creating another opportunity for our client's cultural knowledge and concerns to be properly heard.

The case goes to something fundamental: consultation cannot be a box-ticking exercise. Traditional Owners are rights-holders with cultural authority, and decisions affecting their heritage and Country should reflect that.

For our client, the proceedings are part of a much longer effort to protect Binybara, its cultural heritage and its significance for future generations.

**Photo:** Tibby Quall, a senior Larrakia Elder of the Danggalaba Kulumbirigin clan, and Lorraine Williams, also a Larrakia Elder of the Danggalaba Kulumbirigin clan, with EJA Special Counsel Kip Frawley. Photographer: Rebecca Parker.





“An acknowledgment like this from the Tribunal is really strong. Our culture and this case will remain, for our children in the future, their children, they will have something. . . **It’s a big thing for Larrakia people to win a case about land, especially around our sacred areas.**”

— Tibby Quall, senior Larrakia Elder of the Danggalaba Kulumbirigin clan



## Ruth Langford/Tipruthanna Bringing First Law and cultural obligations into court

Ruth Langford/Tipruthanna is a Lutruwita/Tasmanian-born Yorta Yorta/Dja Dja Wurrung woman, deeply connected to the Palawa Aboriginal community. She has been self-representing in proceedings arising from peaceful actions to protect native forests.

Ruth has pleaded not guilty and says she was fulfilling her cultural obligations under First Law, with permission from Senior Palawa Law Keeper Uncle Jim Puralia Meenamatta Everett, to protect Country.

In what was understood to be a first for the Tasmanian justice system, Ruth invited the Hobart Magistrates Court to hear

evidence on Country at Aboriginal-owned Piyura Kitina/Risdon Cove. Supported by EJA, she argued that hearing evidence on Country would help the Court properly understand the First Law obligations at the heart of her case.

While the Court did not sit on Country, Ruth was able to give her evidence from Country by video link.

The ongoing matter is testing how courts engage with First Nations law, cultural obligations and evidence grounded in Country. It also reflects the overlap between EJA's Nature and Justice work, where protecting forests and First Nations responsibilities to Country are deeply connected.

“I am asking the court to recognise that First Nations people have our own law, grounded in Country. **Our cultural obligations guide how we live, how we connect to the land, water and skies, and how we care for it.** Hearing evidence on Country would allow the court to properly understand those obligations, especially when that connection is central to the case...”

— Ruth Langford/Tipruthanna, Yorta Yorta/  
Dja Dja Wurrung woman

# Nature

## THE CHANGE WE'RE WORKING TOWARDS

Australia's forests, rivers, wildlife and ecosystems have strong, lasting legal protection, and governments and industries are accountable for the decisions that put nature at risk.

## WHERE WE FOCUS

Australia has laws intended to protect nature, but weak protections, loopholes, poor enforcement and damaging decisions continue to allow the destruction of habitat and ecosystems.

Working on behalf of our clients, this year we have used the law to:

- **Hold industries accountable** – challenging activities and decisions that cause significant environmental harm, particularly large-scale land clearing and native forest logging.
- **Make governments uphold environmental protections** – challenging decisions and failures that put nature at risk, and ensuring environmental laws are properly applied and enforced.
- **Strengthen protections for the long term** – securing stronger laws, closing loopholes and ensuring existing protections are not weakened or ignored.

## NATURE HIGHLIGHTS

01

We helped shape major reforms to **Australia's national environment laws**, providing legal expertise, parliamentary evidence and technical advice during critical negotiations.

02

We exposed gaps in transparency and accountability in Victoria's \$1.5 billion forest transition in our **Following the Money investigation** and helped secure national scrutiny through ABC's Four Corners.

03

We helped Environment Centre NT secure rigorous assessment of a major irrigation project and challenge **large-scale clearing across northern Australia**.

## Making the law work for nature

This year brought the biggest rewrite of Australia's national environment laws in decades – and critical tests of whether environmental protections are working on the ground.

Over many years, EJA has worked alongside partners and clients to shape once-in-a-generation reforms to Australia's national environment laws, while challenging the decisions, loopholes and weak oversight that put forests, rivers, savannas and threatened species at risk.

We brought legal expertise to parliamentary inquiries and critical decisions about how Australia's new environment laws should work. At the same time, we supported community-led campaigns, legal advocacy, strategic litigation

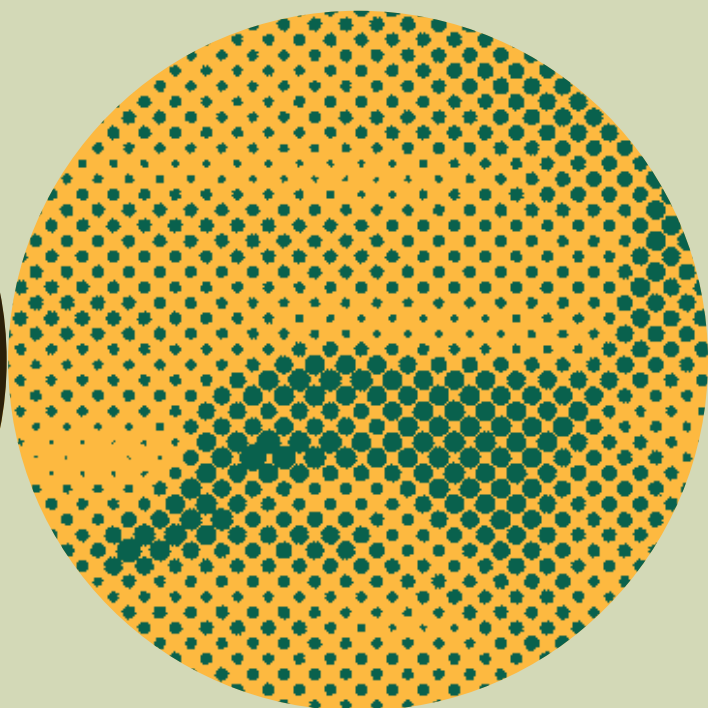
and investigations that pushed for stronger environmental assessment, greater accountability and protections that deliver for nature.

Our work stretched from large-scale land clearing in Australia's great northern savanna to Murray River floodplains, and from threatened wildlife recovery to the unfinished transition from native forest logging.

Across these different fronts, the aim was the same: to make sure environmental protections work not just on paper, but for the forests, rivers, wildlife and communities they are meant to protect.

### 04

We went to court for the Wilderness Society and helped break years of government delay on legally required **recovery plans** – with 25 missing plans for threatened species now in force.



## Nature law reform

# Helping shape the biggest rewrite of Australia's nature laws in a generation

After years of delay and debate, Australia's national environment laws underwent their biggest rewrite in decades.

Working with the Places You Love Alliance and drawing on expertise across EJA, our lawyers scrutinised successive reform proposals, gave evidence to Senate inquiries and provided vital legal advice to environmental organisations, clients and parliamentarians.

As negotiations moved quickly, EJA's role was to get rigorous legal analysis into the hands of partners and decision-makers when it mattered.

The final package was in part improved after sustained advocacy from environmental lawyers and across the environment

movement, including stronger protections for native forests and limits on pathways that could have weakened federal oversight of fossil fuel projects and their impacts on water. But significant weaknesses remain – including the failure to put climate change at the heart of national environment law.

Passing the legislation was only the first step. How well the laws work in practice now depends on National Environmental Standards and the fine print of rules and regulations.

EJA continues scrutinising the detail, providing legal analysis on proposed standards and regulations covering environmental approvals, offsets, First Nations engagement, climate pollution and other critical areas.

**“The real test will be how the government implements these laws – if they hold firm for nature or are hollowed out in practice.”**

— Nicola Silbert, EJA Senior Lawyer





“Our investigation raises serious questions about the scale of public subsidies, the opaque funding arrangements and, **most importantly, why these forests still lack permanent protection.**”

— Nicola Rivers, EJA Co-CEO

## Following the money

### Investigating what happened after Victoria “ended” native forest logging

In 2024, the Victorian government announced the end of native forest logging on public land. This year, EJA investigated what happened next.

Our Following the Money report examined the Victorian government’s claim that \$1.5 billion had been committed to the forestry transition, where that public money went and whether companies receiving support had moved away from native forest logging.

The investigation found significant gaps in transparency and accountability. Native forest timber continued to enter Victorian processing facilities through interstate supply chains

and other loopholes, while forests at risk of logging were still waiting for permanent protection.

Months of investigation and media briefing also helped bring the unfinished transition to a national audience through ABC Four Corners’ Timber Turmoil program in June. The program prompted further scrutiny from state and federal politicians.

EJA’s work showed that formally ending logging on public land is only part of the transition. Lasting change also requires transparency about public funding, the end of regulatory loopholes, and permanent legal protection for native forests.

# Sweetwater and Claravale Station

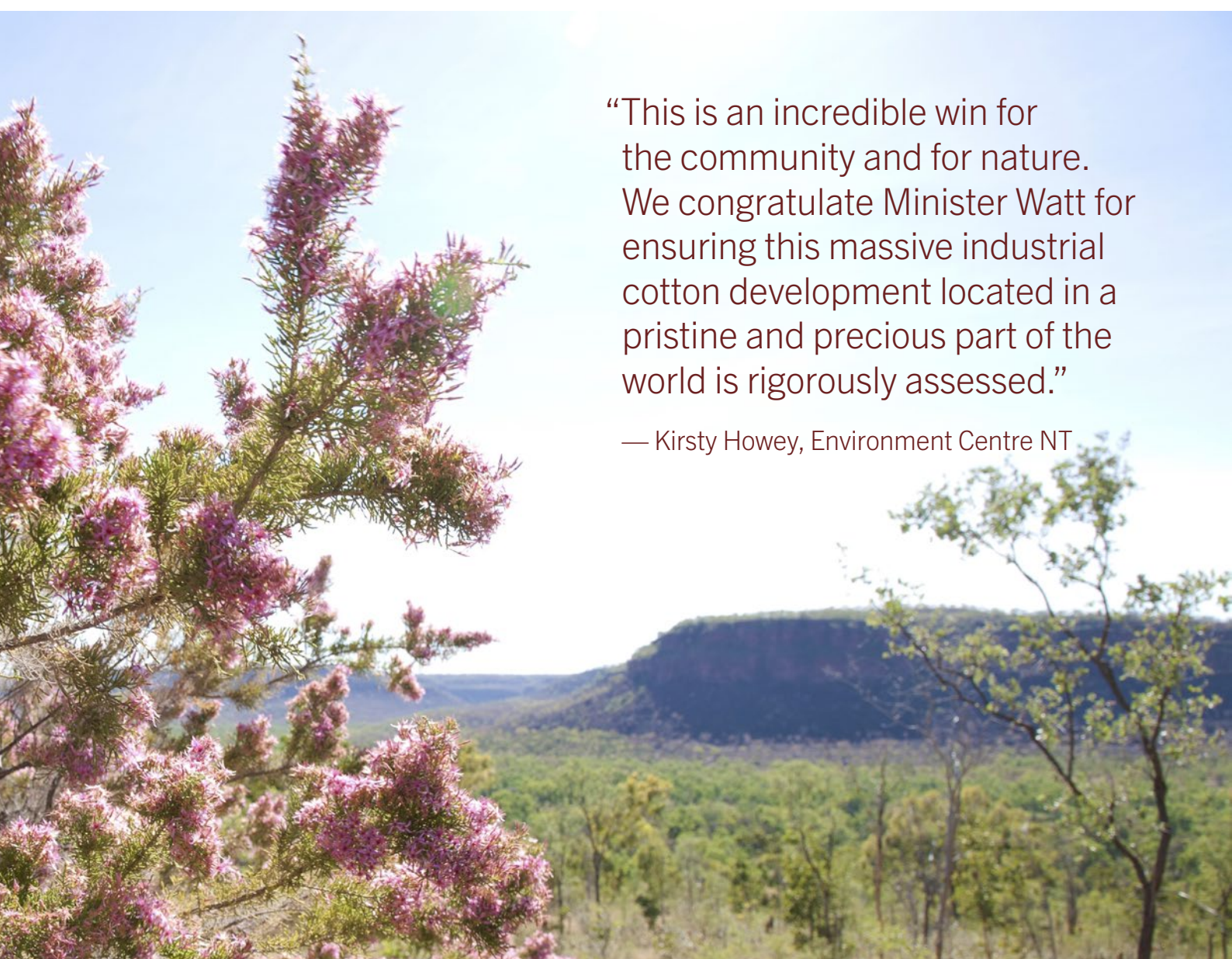
## Securing stronger scrutiny of large-scale land clearing

Across northern Australia, vast areas of savanna are vulnerable to clearing for agriculture and cotton. This year, EJA lawyers supported our client Environment Centre NT to push governments to scrutinise that destruction before it happens.

At the **Sweetwater Agricultural Development**, formerly known as Ord 3, sustained legal action and advocacy helped secure assessment under both Northern Territory and federal environment laws. In April, the federal government determined the project must undergo a full Environmental Impact Statement, one of the most rigorous forms of federal assessment.

At **Claravale Station**, EJA supported ECNT to help prompt the referral of a large-scale clearing proposal for federal scrutiny. A permit to clear around 3,200 hectares of native vegetation was also temporarily suspended following representations about its environmental impacts.

A later legal attempt to set aside a federal decision to approve clearing at Claravale was unsuccessful. But together, these matters demonstrate the importance of using a range of different legal avenues to bring greater scrutiny to large-scale land clearing across northern Australia.



“This is an incredible win for the community and for nature. We congratulate Minister Watt for ensuring this massive industrial cotton development located in a pristine and precious part of the world is rigorously assessed.”

— Kirsty Howey, Environment Centre NT



Photo: EJA lawyers Ellen Maybery, Nicola Silbert and Isabella Farrell-Hallegraeff with Sam Szoke-Burke and Amelia Young from the Wilderness Society. Photographer: James Thomas.

## Threatened wildlife

### From court action to Recovery Plans

Last financial year, on behalf of the Wilderness Society, EJA lawyers took the Environment Minister to court over years of delay in making legally required Recovery Plans for threatened species.

Recovery Plans guide conservation and must be considered in key decisions under national environment law, making them an important safeguard for threatened wildlife and their habitat.

Before the case began, EJA identified 32 threatened species and ecological communities with overdue recovery plans.

In September, the Minister conceded that plans were overdue for four species and agreed to make them.

The case's impact has reached well beyond the four species at the centre of the settlement. Of the 32 threatened species and ecological communities EJA identified as having overdue plans, 25 now have Recovery Plans in force.

**“Our client is thrilled. This win forces the government to act** — for the first time, threatened wildlife like greater gliders and ghost bats will finally get the recovery roadmaps they need to survive.”

— Ellen Maybery, EJA Senior Specialist Lawyer

# Our Reconciliation Action Plan

First Nations justice is a significant part of EJA's work. This year, our legal work for First Nations clients and organisations spanned cultural heritage, land and water justice, Sea Country, climate justice, Treaty and First Nations rights.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) sits alongside this work. It holds us accountable for how we build relationships, strengthen cultural safety and capability within EJA, create opportunities for First Nations people, and stand in solidarity with First Nations communities and organisations.

In March, we launched our second **Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)** (2026–2028)

[www.envirojustice.org.au/reconciliation-action-plan](http://www.envirojustice.org.au/reconciliation-action-plan)



## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

We continued to provide legal advice and representation to First Nations clients and organisations across Australia, alongside longer-term relationship-building and solidarity work. This year, **43% of our individual clients and 17% of our organisational clients were First Nations people and organisations.**

We publicly pledged EJA's support for Treaty in Victoria through the First Peoples' Assembly and continued to amplify the work and leadership of First Nations clients and partners.

During National Reconciliation Week, all EJA staff came together to learn about and discuss the work of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, and EJA joined the National Walk for Truth.



## RESPECT

We updated HR policies and procedures to support staff participation in NAIDOC Week, and continue to Acknowledge Country at meetings and arrange Welcome to Country protocols at relevant events.

We continued to strengthen our First Nations engagement framework, informed by what we are learning from First Nations clients and partners.

We strengthened our approach to cultural capability, supporting staff to use EJA's cultural competency learning framework and embedding reflection and learning into regular manager check-ins and performance reviews.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND GOVERNANCE

Amy Rust, Managing Director of Jindawayni Consulting, joined the EJA Board and our RAP Working Group, strengthening First Nations representation and advice within EJA's governance.

We now have **three staff members who identify as First Nations**, and we advertised an identified lawyer position as part of our work to increase First Nations representation within EJA.

We also welcomed four First Nations interns this year. Many thanks to Aimee, Gwen, Lily, and Liliana for their contribution to EJA.

After three years with the RAP Working Group, Clint Lingard finished his term this year. We thank Clint for his contribution. Brooke Scobie and Amy Rust continue to provide guidance as First Nations advisers.

Our RAP is one part of a much broader commitment: to build trusted, long-term relationships with First Nations people and organisations, support First Nations leadership and self-determination, and keep strengthening how EJA works as an organisation and an ally.

# Our people

## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board and Board Observers bring deep experience, care and commitment to environmental justice, guiding EJA and strengthening our work



**Tony Kelly**  
Chair



**Kate Allsopp**  
Deputy Chair  
(to September 2025)



**Juliet Le Feuvre**  
Deputy Chair



**Ann-Maree Smith**  
Treasurer



**Irina McCreadie**  
Secretary



**Peter Fridell**  
Non-executive  
Director



**Vic Marles AM**  
Non-executive  
Director



**Sally Romanes**  
Non-executive  
Director



**Amy Rust**  
Non-executive  
Director



**Amalia Wilson**  
Non-executive  
Director

## OUR BOARD COMMITTEES AND OBSERVERS



**Clint Lingard**  
First Nations  
Board Observer &  
Reconciliation Action  
Plan working group



**Brooke Scobie**  
Reconciliation Action  
Plan working group



**Richard Hilton**  
Governance & Risk  
Committee



“A single legal intervention can protect a place, change a decision or expose a gap in the law. **We look for the opportunities that can make a difference well beyond one case.**”

## OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our leadership team supports our people, shapes EJA's direction and helps create the conditions for our teams to do their best work.



**Elizabeth McKinnon**  
Co-Chief Executive  
Officer



**Nicola Rivers**  
Co-Chief Executive  
Officer



**Thea Lange**  
Chief Operating  
Officer



**Alina Leikin**  
Principal Lawyer



**Retta Berryman**  
Climate Co-Lead  
(until October)



**Charley Brumby-Rendell**  
Climate Co-Lead  
(until October)



**Tessa Fluence**  
Head of Public  
Engagement



**Kip Frawley**  
Special Counsel



**Danya Jacobs**  
Special Counsel  
(until August)



**Bruce Lindsay**  
Nature Lead & Senior  
Specialist Lawyer



**Ellen Maybery**  
Nature Co-Lead & Senior  
Specialist Lawyer



**Ally McAlpine**  
Justice Lead & Senior  
Specialist Lawyer



**Jane Quinlan**  
Nature Co-Lead & Senior  
Specialist Lawyer



**Jordina Rust**  
Climate Lead & Senior  
Specialist Lawyer  
(from March)



**Inshani Ward**  
Special Counsel



**Emma Wills**  
Head of Fundraising

## OUR STAFF

We're a team of 45 people (38.4 full-time equivalent) working across Australia, united by a commitment to environmental justice.

We are lawyers, policy experts, strategists and specialists in communications, engagement, fundraising, operations and organisational leadership.

We combine deep legal expertise with the skills needed to investigate complex environmental problems, work alongside clients and communities, build public understanding and turn legal action into a radically better world.

It is demanding work. Many of the matters in this report have unfolded over years, involve complex law and evidence, and

are taken on alongside communities confronting powerful interests. Our people bring expertise, care, courage and persistence to that work.

We are committed to making EJA a supportive, inclusive place where people can do their best work, keep learning and contribute different perspectives and expertise. Flexible working, professional development, cultural capability and staff wellbeing are important ways we support our team.

We thank every member of the EJA team this year:

**Azalea Azarae**  
Regular Giving Coordinator

**Retta Berryman**  
Climate Co-Lead

**Cecile Bester**  
Senior Lawyer

**Charley Brumby-Rendell**  
Climate Co-Lead

**Ash Bulgarelli**  
Philanthropy Lead

**Peta Bulling**  
Communication Campaigner

**Joanne Carub**  
Finance Specialist

**Luke Chamberlain**  
Senior Policy Officer

**Zoe DeJesus**  
Office Assistant

**Narissa Diwan**  
People & Culture Advisor

**Laura Dreyfus**  
Senior Lawyer

**Isabella Farrell-Hallegraef**  
Lawyer

**Tessa Fluence**  
Head of Public Engagement

**Kip Frawley**  
Special Counsel

**Aaron Goldberg**  
IT Projects Officer

**Kathryn Hannan**  
Paralegal

**Natalie Hogan**  
Senior Lawyer

**Danya Jacobs**  
Special Counsel

**Mandy Johnson**  
Operations Specialist

**Dakota Lacco**  
Paralegal

**Thea Lange**  
Chief Operating Officer

**Jessa Latona**  
Senior Media & Communications Specialist

**Alina Leikin**  
Principal Lawyer

**Bruce Lindsay**  
Nature Lead & Senior Specialist Lawyer

**Ellen Maybery**  
Nature Co-Lead & Senior Specialist Lawyer

**Ally McAlpine**  
Justice Lead & Senior Specialist Lawyer

**Jocelyn McGarity**  
Senior Lawyer

**Shannon McGrellis**  
Philanthropy & Grants Lead

**Clare McKenzie**  
Paralegal

**Elizabeth McKinnon**  
Co-Ceo

**Pia Mitchell**  
Lawyer

**Sam Moorhead**  
Lawyer

**Elle Murrell**  
Senior Engagement & Content Coordinator

**Elke Nicholson**  
Lawyer

**Miki Perkins**  
Media & Communications Coordinator

**Jane Quinlan**  
Nature Co-Lead & Senior Specialist Lawyer

**Rahul Ramesh**  
Lawyer

**Nicola Rivers**  
Co-CEO

**Jordina Rust**  
Climate Lead & Senior Specialist Lawyer

**Nicola Silbert**  
Senior Lawyer

**Mera Sivanesan**  
Lawyer

**Rachael Szumski**  
Digital Fundraising Coordinator

**Ling Toong**  
Office Administrator

**Virginia Trescowthick**  
Senior Lawyer

**Michaela Vaughan**  
Senior Lawyer

**Inshani Ward**  
Special Counsel

**James Ward**  
Key Relationships Manager

**Hannah White**  
Senior Lawyer

**Emma Wills**  
Head of Fundraising

**Connor Wright**  
Science Advisor

**Elena Zola**  
Senior Lawyer

## PRO BONO AND IN-KIND SUPPORT

We are incredibly fortunate to work with barristers, law firms and partners who stood alongside our clients this year, contributing their expertise pro bono or at greatly reduced rates. From preparing complex evidence and appearing in court

to providing specialist advice behind the scenes, your generosity adds enormous strength to our legal work and helps make ambitious public interest cases possible.

|                      |                    |                      |                           |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Nicola Alroe         | Timothy Goodwin    | Legal Ready          | Professor Jacqueline Peel |
| Houston Ash          | Louise Hicks       | Kaylia Laycock-Walsh | Kim Pham                  |
| Greg Barnes SC       | Dr Laura Hilly     | Brendan Lim SC       | Alofipo (Fleur) Ramsay    |
| Selena Bateman       | Sarah Holland      | Alice Lloyd          | Daniel Robinson           |
| Patrick Coleridge    | Hive Legal         | Georgina Long        | Dr Laura Schuijers        |
| Matt Colloff         | Tara Hooper        | Maddocks             | Angus Scott KC            |
| Mark Costello KC     | James Hutton SC    | Jack Maxwell         | Joshua Underwood          |
| Benedict Coyne       | Melinda Jackson    | Kasey McAuliffe-Lake | Ella Watt                 |
| Ella Delaney         | Tim Jeffrie        | Dr Adam McBeth       | Dr Kylie Weston-Scheuber  |
| Marcel Delany        | Ben Kelly          | Dan McCredden        | Thomas Wood               |
| Hannah Douglas       | Carla Klease       | Rohan Nanthakumar    | Chris Young KC            |
| Earthjustice         | Phoebe Knowles     | Minh-Quan Nguyen     |                           |
| Tom Ellicott         | Richard Knowles SC | Kateena O’Gorman SC  |                           |
| Catherine Gleeson SC | Lander & Rogers    | Suganya Pathan       |                           |





## SECONDEES & VOLUNTEERS

We're grateful to the secondees, law students, graduates, volunteers and interns who contributed their skills and expertise, time, curiosity and hard work throughout the year.

Whether researching a legal question, helping prepare a case or supporting the day-to-day work of our teams, your contribution is also deeply valued and helps extend what EJA can do for the communities we serve.

### **Secondees from Lander & Rogers:**

Emily Fioramonte  
Keeley Frost

Hannah Gillham

Connie Gerdson

Emily Simard

Daniel de Wit

Grace McLennan

Charlotte Morris

Georgina Marks

Elizabeth Dewing

Amelia Chen

Gwen Rumbel

Aimee Lawson

Thomas Hogan

Risha Hede

Jessica Dugdale-Walker

Elsie Trevey

Ebony Gibbins

Lily McDonald

Jecil Kay Asiedu (Kay)

Tongyu Hui

Jemima Methorst-Moore

Miranda Klimaitis

Téa McKenna

Esten Narum

Liliana Alexiou

Samantha Climie

Kim Fitzgibbon

Angelica Panapoulos

### **Volunteers:**

Charlotte Brownlee  
Millicent McLeish  
Tom Lawson  
Catherine Bourne

# Our Supporters

EJA is proudly powered by a community of people who believe in the role the law can play in creating a safer, fairer and more sustainable future. We are deeply grateful to our members, donors, supporters, volunteers and partners, whose generosity, time and belief in this work make everything we do possible.

That support is also central to our independence. It gives us the confidence to take on difficult public interest work, challenge powerful interests and keep backing communities pursuing justice, even when the work is complex, long-term or politically uncomfortable.

We are funded by the community, for the community, and we never take that trust for granted. Here we acknowledge those who contributed \$10,000 or more this year, alongside the many generous supporters who chose to remain anonymous.

ACME Foundation

Australian Ethical Foundation

Katherine Barraclough

Fairground

Graeme Wood Foundation

Gum Tree Foundation

Isaacson Davis Foundation

Chris Johnston

Koshland Innovation Extension Fund

Geoff Manchester

Rob Michael at The Coalition (Solutions)

Julie Mills – Coniston Charitable Trust (UK)

Gayle Osborne

Pademelon Fund

Perpetual Foundation – Jenny and Michael’s Sharing Hope Endowment

PMF Foundation

Rendere Trust

Victorian Legal Services Board Grants Program

Fred Woollard and Therese Cochrane – Keep Them Honest Pty Ltd





## A gift in your Will for a radically better world

Leaving a gift in your Will is a meaningful way to carry your values forward and help protect the places, wildlife and communities you care about for generations to come.

A gift to EJA can help keep native forests standing, protect rivers and species on the brink of extinction, challenge climate pollution and support communities using the law to defend the places we all love. We are deeply grateful to every supporter who has chosen to include EJA in their Will. Thank you to our supporters who have chosen to leave a lasting legacy with a gift in their Will.

If you would like to include EJA in your Will, you can use the suggested wording below. We recommend seeking independent legal advice to make sure your wishes are recorded and carried out as intended.

‘I give to Environment Justice Australia (ABN: 74 052 124 375) of 60 Leicester Street, Carlton, VIC 3053, for general purposes, [the whole/residue of my estate] or [...% of my estate] or [the sum of \$....] or [specified property....] free of all debts, duties or taxes and declare that the receipt of an authorised officer shall be a sufficient discharge for my executor(s).’

If you have included EJA in your Will, we would love to hear from you. Letting us know helps us plan for the future and gives us the opportunity to thank you.

# Our finances

EJA's work is possible because people and philanthropic organisations choose to fund independent public interest law.

In 2025–26, EJA received **\$5.94 million in income**.

Donations from individuals and supporters grew by 15% to \$2.43 million, representing 41% of our total income, while grants from trusts and foundations contributed a further 46%.

This support gives EJA the independence and capacity to take on complex environmental justice work that can unfold over many years – from investigating emerging legal issues and representing communities, to preparing major litigation, advocating for stronger laws and helping people participate in decisions that affect them.

Flexible funding is particularly important. Environmental cases do not arrive or conclude neatly within grant cycles. Donations and other flexible funding help us respond when communities need legal support, investigate new opportunities for legal action and sustain long-running cases and advocacy.

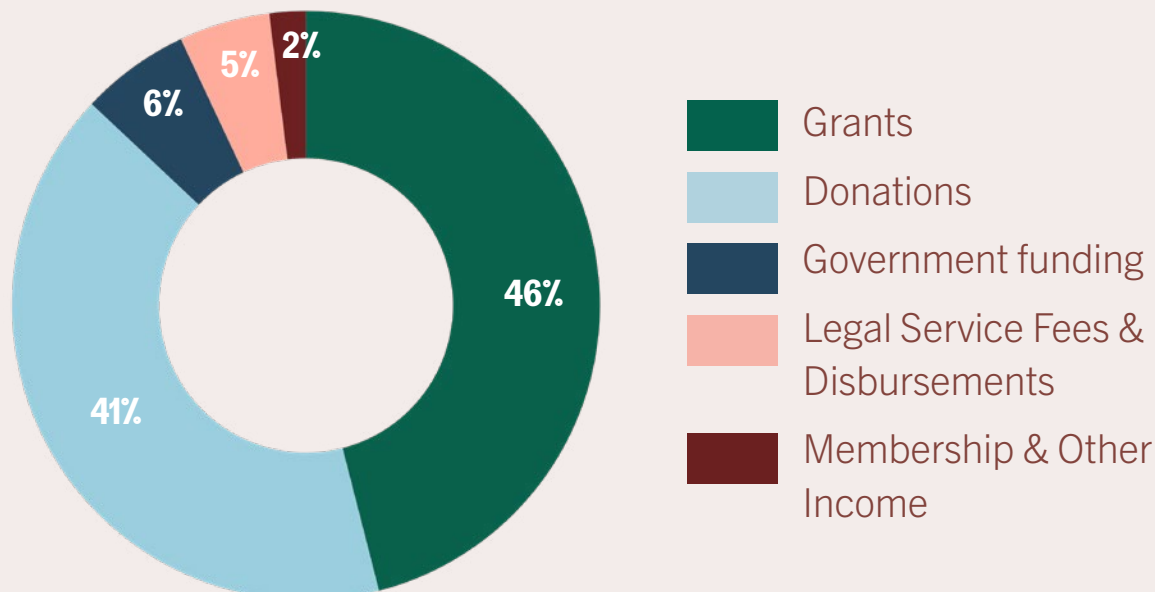
## OUR FINANCIAL POSITION

EJA recorded a deficit of \$365,117 in 2025–26, an improvement on the deficit we had budgeted for. This primarily reflects the timing of multi-year grant funding: some income received in previous years was spent this year on the projects it was provided to support.

We continued to carefully manage our cost base, with total expenditure of \$6.31 million, 7% higher than the previous year.

Our Future Fund grew to \$1.91 million. The fund helps strengthen our long-term financial resilience, so we can continue taking on ambitious public interest work through changing funding cycles and unexpected legal opportunities.

## INCOME \$5,944,013



## HOW WE INVESTED OUR FUNDING

**51% Legal Programs:** Legal advice, investigations, case preparation, litigation and law reform across our Climate, Nature and Justice programs.

**28% Operations and management:** The systems, governance, technology, people and organisational infrastructure needed to deliver complex public interest legal work responsibly and effectively.

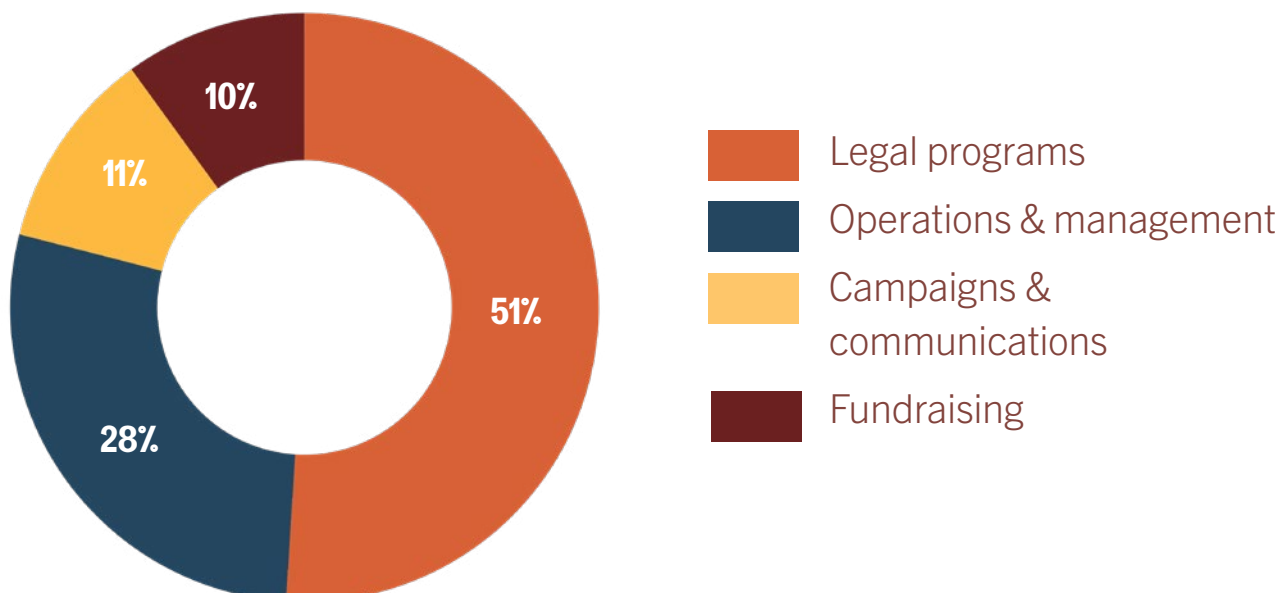
**11% Campaigns and communications:** Helping legal work achieve wider impact through public engagement, communications and opportunities for people to participate.

**10% Fundraising:** Building the philanthropic and community support that sustains EJA's independence and future work.

## EXTENDING THE REACH OF EVERY CONTRIBUTION

Our own team is only part of the expertise behind EJA's work. This year, 53 barristers, law firms, experts and other professionals contributed their expertise pro bono or at significantly reduced rates, helping strengthen our work for clients and extend what EJA can achieve

## EXPENSES \$6,309,130



# EJA Awards

Each year, EJA celebrates people and groups whose courage, persistence and leadership have made a real difference for environmental justice.

Our 2026 award winners are:

## THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AWARD

### Mullaley Gas & Pipeline Accord

The Mullaley Gas & Pipeline Accord Inc (MGPA) was a volunteer community group based in north-western NSW that has spent more than a decade advocating for the environment, agricultural productivity and communities of the Namoi Catchment.

In June 2025, represented by EJA, MGPA launched a Federal Court challenge to the Environment Minister's failure to apply key water protections to the proposed Narrabri Lateral Pipeline. The pipeline would transport gas from Santos' proposed 850 coal seam gas wells through agricultural land and Gomeroi Country.

The case was another chapter in an extraordinary record of brave, determined community advocacy. Taking on both the federal government and one of Australia's largest fossil fuel companies requires persistence, courage and remarkable resolve. MGPA is now in liquidation.

It has been a privilege for EJA to act for MGPA and support its volunteers who have spent years defending the Namoi Catchment and the communities that depend on it.

Photo: Alistair Donaldson, Noni Wells and Paul Anderton from the Mullaley Gas & Pipeline Accord





## THE PRO BONO AWARD

### Phoebe Knowles and Daniel Robinson

Barristers Phoebe Knowles and Daniel Robinson have made an exceptional contribution to Wadi Wadi Traditional Owner Vince Kirby's legal challenges to floodplain engineering projects at both Nyah and Vinifera on the Murray River this year.

Phoebe joined the counsel team first and was dedicated and diligent from the outset, often working extraordinary hours to help turn around urgent work. Daniel stepped in at the end of June 2026, while Phoebe was away, to assist with an urgent interlocutory injunction hearing in Vince's challenge to the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project's Nyah Cultural Heritage Management Plan. He got across a complex file in a single weekend before appearing in court, and has continued to go above and beyond in his assistance since.

Their willingness to stay with the work has meant a great deal to EJA, and to our client, for whom the Nyah and Vinifera sites are part of a connected cultural landscape of land and waterways.

We are enormously grateful for the expertise, generosity and commitment Phoebe and Daniel have brought to this work.

## THE VOLUNTEER AWARD

### Aimee Lawson

Aimee joined EJA through our First Nations internship program and quickly stood out for the quality of her work, thoughtful communication and the depth of experience. She brought valuable community legal experience to the role and approached every task with care, diligence and generosity.

That generosity continued after her placement ended. Aimee offered to be a point of contact for future First Nations interns who might need help navigating the Aurora application process, helping make the pathway a little easier for those coming after her.

Aimee made a lasting impression on our team – not only through the quality of her contribution to EJA's legal work, but through her generosity and commitment to make the path easier for future interns.

We're delighted to recognise her with this year's Volunteer Award.



# Back the legal work shaping Australia's future.

Environmental Justice  
Australia is proudly not-for-  
profit, fiercely independent  
and powered by the generous  
EJA community.

Your support means we can  
run urgent court cases and  
represent communities on the  
frontlines – for a safe climate,  
thriving nature and a fairer  
future.



## **Make a donation or regular gift**

Visit [www.envirojustice.org.au/donate](http://www.envirojustice.org.au/donate) to make a one-off gift, or set up a regular donation – or call our friendly team on (03) 8431 3100 or email us at [hello@envirojustice.org.au](mailto:hello@envirojustice.org.au).

## **Grants and gifts in wills**

For more information on leaving a bequest or funding EJA, email [giftsinwill@envirojustice.org.au](mailto:giftsinwill@envirojustice.org.au) or call us on (03) 8341 3123.



 @enviro\_justice\_australia

 envirojustice

 envirojustice

## CONTACT US

03 8341 3100

[hello@envirojustice.org.au](mailto:hello@envirojustice.org.au)

[www.envirojustice.org.au](http://www.envirojustice.org.au)

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PO Box 12123 A'Beckett Street, VIC, 8006

Environmental Justice Australia  
(ABN 74 052 124 375) is a registered charity  
with **Deductible Gift Recipient status**.

All donations of \$2 or more are  
tax deductible.

“When communities take  
on powerful interests to  
protect climate, nature  
and Country, **they deserve  
powerful legal support  
behind them.**”



Using the law for a  
radically better world

