

SustainAbility News May 2026 – Unite for Good.

Hi folks,

It was great to engage with the "Wentworth Group of concerned scientists".

Their policy blueprint for NSW is a great platform which Rotary / ESRAG can launch from and form a partnership from clubs and districts that will amplify care for nature.

Reach out to me if you want more information.

On another note, it has been two years since I took up the role of ESRAG OCEANIA CHAIR and its time to pass the role onto others.

We have Pat Armstrong who will take up the Oceania Chair role next month and I encourage you to support Pat. I am sure you will hear from her as the months roll on.

My Board role on the ESRAG Global executive committee is keeping me grounded and rather than burn out, it is wise to move on from the Oceania chair role which I have enjoyed.

Cheers

Colin Scobie

ccscobie@gmail.com mob: 0418 540 891

At the April meeting we had the pleasure of meeting Isobel Bender and Celine Steinfield from the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists. Isobel spoke about the recent publication "[Blueprint for a healthy Country and thriving regions](#)" This NSW based report focusses on environmental decline and puts in place a whole-of-landscape approach. She also engaged with us about how we could help engage and restore nature landscapes to protect the Australian environment.



The Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists is a distinguished team addressing climate and biodiversity matters at the highest levels of government. Their members include Prof David Karoly, Prof Lesley Hughes, and Prof Tim Flannery.

Resources: [Blueprint for the West Kimberley](#) [Blueprint for the next Murray Darling Basin Plan](#)
[Accounting for Nature](#) Webinar 28 April

MEETING RECORDING WENTWORTH GROUP

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 19 May at 6pm AEDT

ZOOM <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85914293604>

Colin Scobie will share with us his recent experiences in the fiords of southern New Zealand at Milford Sound. He participated into research looking into carbon sink research and climate change.

The ESRAG Oceania executive has also commenced planning for the **South Pacific Zone Institute** to be held in Melbourne 27 October – 1 November at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre
[Zone Conference 2026 | Rotary South Pacific](#) [Bookings are open](#)

With the theme: **People, Planet, Peace** and a focus on Sustainability and climate action, Peace and conflict resolution and long-term thinking in Rotary strategy, this is a priority for ESRAG Oceania.



Last year's presentation at the institute in Queensland, by chair Colin Scobie showed how ESRAG has a leading role to play. Be part of the team, contact Pat or Colin for more.

Colin Scobie, ESRAG Oceania Chair Rotary Redcliffe Sunrise: ccscobie@gmail.com mob: 0418 540 891

Pat Armstrong: pat.arm@bigpond.net.au mob:

The Oceania team:

Chair—Colin Scobie, Redcliffe Sunrise, District 9620
Ian Dempsey, Mitchell South, District 9790
PDG Elaine Mead, Westhaven, District 9910
Barbara Sheehan, Highton, District 9780

Pat Armstrong, District 9810
Pam Dittmer, Melbourne South, District 9800
Lesley McCarthy, Flemington District 9800
Ted Waghorne, Wendouree Breakfast,

ESRAG Annual General Meeting (AGM), will take place on 2 June at 14:00 UTC.

Please save the date in your calendars and register [through this link](#) to join us. During the AGM, we will reflect on the past year in ESRAG, share our strategy moving forward, and celebrate our collective achievements. We would be delighted to have you join us for this journey of reflection and celebration.

Michael J. Terrelonge
Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG)
Board of Directors, Chair (2025-27)



Have you missed a newsletter? [LOOK HERE](#)
Want to catch up on a meeting recording? [LOOK HERE](#)
ESRAG PROJECT SEMINARS & RECORDINGS: [HERE](#)

[WHEENBee Foundation 2025 report](#)



For your calendars:

Thanks to Julie Mulhauser from Balwyn Rotary for this upcoming webinar that should be very worthwhile.
<https://events.humanitix.com/behaviour-change-for-environmental-volunteers-webinar>

Behaviour Works (Monash University) are leaders in research that identifies and supports the most impactful positive environmental behaviours. I always learn something from their webinars. Their presentations at the most recent Victorian Biodiversity Conference at Melbourne University were inspiring. It is a fabulous synergy with Rotary International's partnership project with the UN Environmental Program; the global Community Action for Clean Water project.

www.communityactionforfreshwater.org/#resource-filter-all

Rotary Club of Redcliffe Sunrise Turtle Family Fun Day 9 May 2026.

This is their 3rd event celebrating the Loggerhead turtles hatched at Queens Beach North, Scarborough in February 2010.

Sea turtles are kind of like traveling ecosystems. Their shells play host to all sorts of "aquatic hitchhikers" — barnacles, tiny crustaceans, remoras, algae, and diatoms — that tag along for the ride. Since turtles migrate over long distances, they end up transporting these species across huge stretches of ocean.

They're also helpful to other animals in more active ways. Some fish hang around them for protection, using the turtle as a moving shelter from predators. And when sea turtles come up to the surface to breathe or rest, seabirds will sometimes land on them for a break.

The movie "A Turtle's Tale: Sammy's Adventures" will be screened at the Redcliffe Outdoor Theatre (amphitheatre) later on Saturday evening. [Register here. It's free!](#)

Read about a previous Turtles Family Fun Day on page 4 of the April 2024 edition of the *best of Local* [here](#).

Read about another previous Turtles Family Fun Day on page 13 of the April 2025 edition of the *best of Local* [here](#).



Birrarung RiverFest hosted by the Yarra Riverkeepers Association. Sunday 27 September (World Rivers Day) to Sunday 18 October 2026. World Rivers Day [READ MORE](#)

Keynote speakers include Professor David Karoly, an internationally recognised expert on climate change and climate variability; and Patrick McCafferty, Managing Director, Yarra Valley Water, the first water utility to join the UN Global Compact, an organisation with a strong sustainability focus.

Other presentations include:

Cleaning the rivers of the world; mangrove restoration; Rotarians for Climate website;

Delegates will participate in an action workshop to inform Rotary Environment Action Guides.

Adopt a River (ESRAG and UNEP): Salvador Rico of [Cleaning the Rivers of the World](#)

Stop Plastic Pollution: Lori Cloutier, Co-Chair, ESRAG [Plastics Solutions Task Force](#)



2025 report

District 9800 is looking into a multiclub activity with clubs bordering the Yarra.

Peter Berg {Melbourne} Julie Mulhauser {Balwyn}, John McCaskill {Canterbury}, Pam Dittmer {Port Phillip} and Sue Power {Malvern} have all expressed support.

Now we need a champion to lead the work. Is that you?

Thank you to Julie Mulhauser from Balwyn Rotary for this report:

The aims of the Riverfest to invite *care & action* from the source to the bay align with the 3 small environment projects (Biodiverse Nature Strips, Friends of Belmont Park, Canterbury, and Moreland Rd frontage of RIMERN, East Brunswick) that Balwyn Rotary is involved in and more than likely other clubs and ESRAG Oceania projects as well.

The 3 small Balwyn Rotary projects illustrate how "community-based solutions foster collective action to address ecological challenges". Balwyn Rotary has focused on promoting urban biodiversity - not only through nature positive actions but telling stories that reconnect people to place and networking with multiple stakeholders to build relationships and share information.

As part of this process we held an expert roundtable last year. As a result of this discussion - participants contributed resources for sharing. Please find attached the *Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub - Urban Greening - Monitoring and Evaluation Factsheet*. Balwyn Rotary is using these guidelines to develop surveys of our volunteers (Rotarians and community members) and monitoring and evaluation of our 3 small projects.

Other Rotary clubs and ESRAG Oceania could use these guidelines to monitor and evaluate Urban Greening projects.

Key simple practical actions that we can all do, share with members and incorporate in our projects that relate to cleanwater objectives are

1. Reduce stormwater pollution
2. Prevent litter
3. Re-vegetate locally
4. Manage car washing
5. Reduce chemicals used in the garden & home
6. Report pollution
7. Join a Friends Group
8. Respect cultural heritage

In terms of supporting the Birrarung Riverfest - promoting and financially supporting events - particularly the First Nations cultural connection events to members - would support the Riverfest's aim to reach a wider audience and help Rotary clubs improve their environmental knowledge and partnerships.

[The Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub](#)

The Rotary Club of Warragul District 9815 invites ESRAG Oceania members to join in the May 2nd celebration marking completion of the Indigenous Art Garden their Club has been working on over the past six years.

This garden has been featured in ESRAG Oceania news previously.

The garden is a celebration 100 years of Rotary service in Australia and New Zealand. A painting by Kurnai artist, Dr Aunty Eileen Harrison, inspired a landscape plan that now guides the creation of the garden on the underutilized grassed hillside at Rotary Park, Warragul.



<https://warragulrotary.org.au/5371/Page/ShowSitePage?ClassCode=SitePage&Slug=indigenous-garden-background>

Contact President Lyn Bennett at president@warragulrotary.org.au or Andrea Klindworth at andreak@dcsi.net.au

EarthX in Dallas:

EarthX was founded in 2011 and follows on from Dallas Earth Day.

The 2026 expo is Rotary's largest environmental & sustainability conference in the world in Anatole in Dallas, Texas. This global gathering brought together Rotarians from around the world and showcased environmental and sustainability projects from over 100 countries. Uniting scientists, business innovators, volunteers, and students under one roof to highlight impactful solutions, host hands-on workshops, and build the cross-sector partnerships needed to drive true systemic change.

Thanks to the efforts of Rotarian Steve Bender, the conference featured a special section the [RotaryXperience](#) a 30,000 square foot area where clubs/organizations can showcase their environmental activities and projects. PRIP Barry Rassin, a leading environmental advocate was a keynote speaker.

Rotary Club of Melbourne Annual Environment lunch:

We are delighted to invite you to a special Rotary Melbourne event featuring **one of Australia's most influential public policy leaders, Professor Graeme Samuel AC.**

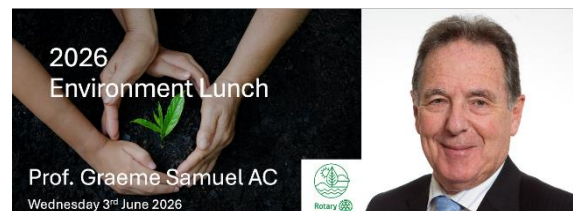
Graeme led the independent review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act—work that ultimately shaped Australia's most significant environmental reforms in a generation.

His report, delivered in October 2020, set in motion a complex five-year journey through consultation, negotiation, and political challenge, culminating in legislation enacted in November 2025.

In a rare and highly engaging **fireside conversation**, Graeme will share the inside story—what it takes to move from policy ambition to legislative reality, and the lessons learned along the way.

Event details: Fitzroy Ballroom, Sofitel on Collins, 35 Collins Street, Melbourne. 12:30pm – 2:00pm

<https://events.humanitix.com/rotary-melb-environment-lunch-2026>



RICON TAIPEI

ESRAG has a booth at RICON and is seeking assistance from members to participate. Please let Carolyn DeWitt know if you can help.

We have eight presentation opportunities available over the course of the event and are seeking speakers whose work aligns with the following key ESRAG themes: biodiversity, circular economy, climate, food systems, pollution, and sustainability.

To be considered, presentations should:

- Demonstrate a clear connection to a Rotary club and/or district initiative
- Be delivered in person in Taipei during RICON
- Fit within a one-hour session, including a 20-minute presentation including a Q&A discussion

We need ESRAG members to help man the booth and presentations for the Environment Hub.

BREAKOUT SESSION

Neeraj Bhatnagar has been granted a breakout session on June 16th from 15.30-17.00 on "The Climate Crisis is not just Environmental – A Mindset and Communication Challenge."

The speakers are from various Rotary Action Groups including:

- Melanie Lewis
- Deb Mccaslin RAG4Girls
- AKS Bricia Elawar
- Michael Hayes RAGFP
- Judith Diment ESRAG

RAGTIME



RAGtime
RICON 2026
Taipei RAGTime

at Courtyard by Marriott Nangang Station, Taipei
Thursday, June 11, 2026 • 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Rotary leaders and 26 Action Groups get-together
Share your experience and look for collaborations as we better serve clubs and districts in their impact, measurable, sustainable projects.

Early Bird By April 15th: \$75.00
2026: \$100.00 After

Hors d'oeuvres • Beverages
Hosted by the RAG Council Advisory Board

Don't miss this important event!

Scan to Register

The Rotary Action Group Council is once again organising RAGTime at the Courtyard by Marriott in downtown Taipei near the Convention Center 19.00-21.00 on Thursday June 11, 2026.

Around Oceania:

The Rotary Club of Canterbury District 9800 has planted 4 Peace Poles in the Victoria Gardens, Kew, near Possum Corner.

On Saturday 11th April 2026, members from both Canterbury and Kew Rotary clubs planted indigenous and native plants in the area surrounding the four peace poles.

The four peace poles, surrounded by the plantings, is a beautiful, natural feature of the Victoria Gardens. It also reminds us of one of the avenues of service within Rotary International; that of programs in which participants learn ways to encourage peaceful interconnections with individuals in all parts of the world. While children and families quietly and happily play near these peace poles, they and their adult carers and family members will be reminded of the message which Rotary International inspires.



Rotary Wendouree Breakfast District 9780 held their Environment & Sustainability Committee's autumn working bee at Rotary Centennial Park.

Despite light rain and windy conditions much was achieved including the installation of seats on the viewing mound overlooking Mullawallah Wetlands, weeding, mulching and the removal of plastic off trees and replacing it with wire cages.

We are very proud to have support from our wonderful friends at [Integra](#), Department of Corrections and the [City of Ballarat](#), with their help the park is growing in leaps and bounds.

Rotary Centennial Park, an ongoing project of the Rotary Club of Wendouree Breakfast, is located on the corner of Remembrance Drive & Ballarat Link Road, Cardigan (opposite Lucas Town Centre).



[READ MORE](#)
[ESRAG Oceania](#)

[#mullawallahwetlands](#)

[#rotarywendoureebreakfast](#)

Hutt City Rotary District 9940 showcased member Linton Adams in the recent issue of the *Summerset Magazine*.

The article focussed on the Hutt River Trail, a 30 year project supported by 8 Rotary Clubs which comprises 54 km of walking and hiking on both sides of the Hutt River,

[Summerset Scene Autumn 2026 by summerset - Issuu](#)

