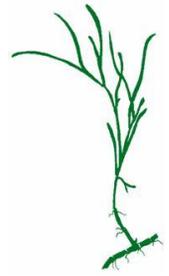


# Western Port Seagrass Partnership Ltd

## Annual Report Highlights

### 2011/2012



#### **Vision:**

The environment of Western Port and its catchment shall be protected and restored to a state that can sustain a healthy, diverse and naturally productive ecosystem for future generations to enjoy.

#### **Key Strategies:**

- Promoting Western Port as a valued place worth protecting.
- Highlighting the challenges to focus improvement efforts.
- Promoting research to improve ecosystem understanding and management effectiveness.
- Putting theory into practice by supporting on ground projects.
- Building partnerships to ensure wide spread, cooperative and effective protection efforts.
- Building community ownership by building awareness and direct involvement.

#### **Liaison:**

The board meets throughout the region and with key stakeholders to exchange briefings, promote awareness, and build good will and cooperation.

#### **Current Strategic Priorities:**

- Advocate a Shapiro Mark II study.
- Slow the Flow of Sediments to WP
- Reduce NE shoreline erosion
- Develop projects for sponsorship
- Extend the schools engagement program
- Promote WP DVD and web site use.

#### **Professor John Swan Resigns:**



Our longest serving chairman and founder of the Western Port Seagrass Partnership resigned from the Board in January 2012 after eleven years of inspiring and energetic leadership.

John is one of Australia's most eminent scientists and science administrators. He is Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, and the Royal Australian Chemical Institute.

His achievements at Monash University alone include Foundation Chair of Organic Chemistry, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Dean of Faculty of Science. Ahead of his time, John also pushed for the established of the Centre of Environmental Studies.

John also chaired the Western Port Study Committee (Shapiro Report) which to this day guides our understanding and management of Western Port. He also founded what is now known as the Trust for Nature and helping establish Conservation Hill on Phillip Island.

The Board is indebted to John for his mighty efforts and is now in the process of filling some very large boots!

## **Progress Implementing Strategic Priorities:**

### **Advocating Science Review:**

The board has been advocating a Shapiro Mark II study for some time to bring our knowledge base up to date and to cover known gaps. We are very pleased to note that Melbourne Water's Science Review and proposed study program has gone a long way toward the achievement of this objective.

### **Slowing the Flow of Sediments:**

We support ongoing Melbourne Water catchment protection works and their mangrove planting program. We are also watching with interest progress with the regional landcare "Land Stewardship Project" led by Moragh Mackay.

### **Mangrove Planting for Coastal Erosion:**

Dr Tim Ealey continues to lead our efforts to establish mangroves along the north-eastern coastline of Western Port to help combat active erosion of the saltmarshes and to reduce sediment inputs to the bay.

Although we have had setbacks our partnership with Mornington Peninsula Youth Services has yielded much improved planting stock. The Bass Valley Landcare work team have reached new levels of efficiency in the planting regime and new securing techniques will hopefully result in higher survival rates along this challenging coastline.

The Board is also indebted to Hugh Kirkman and Professor Paul Boon for conducting a peer review of this program which will improve our efforts.

### **Engaging the Community:**

Dr Tim Ealey continues to expand school mangrove growing and planting projects as part of the Care for Country funded "Mangroves to Mud" project.

This popular program suffered a setback in 2012 when vandals pulled out over 150 mangroves seedlings planted by Koo Wee Rup Secondary College. Replanting is occurring and warning signs have been erected by the foreshore committee.

### **Ramsar & Coastal Protection Strategy:**

The board continues its efforts to forge a partnership between the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments in order to address the serious erosion and loss of saltmarsh habitat along the north-east coast of Western Port. We are calling for a strategic plan for this coastline as a first step toward the establishment of a coastal reserve and management plan in keeping with Ramsar values.

### **Directors:**

Ian Stevenson – Acting Chairman  
Doug Newton – Secretary / Hon Treasurer  
John Barnard  
John Clarke  
Tim Ealey  
Moragh Mackay  
Dick Cox  
Hugh Kirkman

John Swan – Resigned 2012

### **Meetings:**

4/7/11	Lang Lang
5/9/11	Melbourne
3/10/11	Lang Lang
24/10/11	AGM Camberwell
13/2/12	Lang Lang
2/4/12	Lang Lang
4/6/12	Lang Lang

### **Funding:**

Income = \$33,727

Expenditure = \$50,993

The deficit for the year was \$17,266

Key funders for this year were Community Coastcare and WPS Public Fund. However our longest and largest mangrove planting programs continue to be funded from the funding provided through the Magistrate's Court as part of the Environment Protection Act's alternative sentencing provisions. We remain appreciative of the support provided by EPA Victoria.

### **DVD Project Keeps on Giving**

The DVD produced by WPS Board Member John Clarke with financial sponsorship of Esso continues to be popular with our web site visitors and is facilitating a better understanding and appreciation of the values of Western Port

### **Web Site – Important Information Source**

The WPS web site remains a prime source of information about Western Port and its environment. The site is frequently used by students for background information and images. The most popular aspect being the registration for the free DVD "Western Port – Cherished and Challenged".

[www.seagrass.com.au](http://www.seagrass.com.au)