

Declaration: November 2002

Area:

- 214,200 hectares — 68% terrestrial, 32% marine
- Comprising Mornington Peninsula, the waters of Western Port, French Island, and the southern part of the Western Port water catchment
- Five local government areas — Mornington Peninsula Shire and parts of City of Frankston, City of Casey, Cardinia Shire and Bass Coast Shire

Zones:

- Core 4%, buffer 30%, transition 66%
- Core and buffer areas are publicly owned, managed by state or local government



Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation:

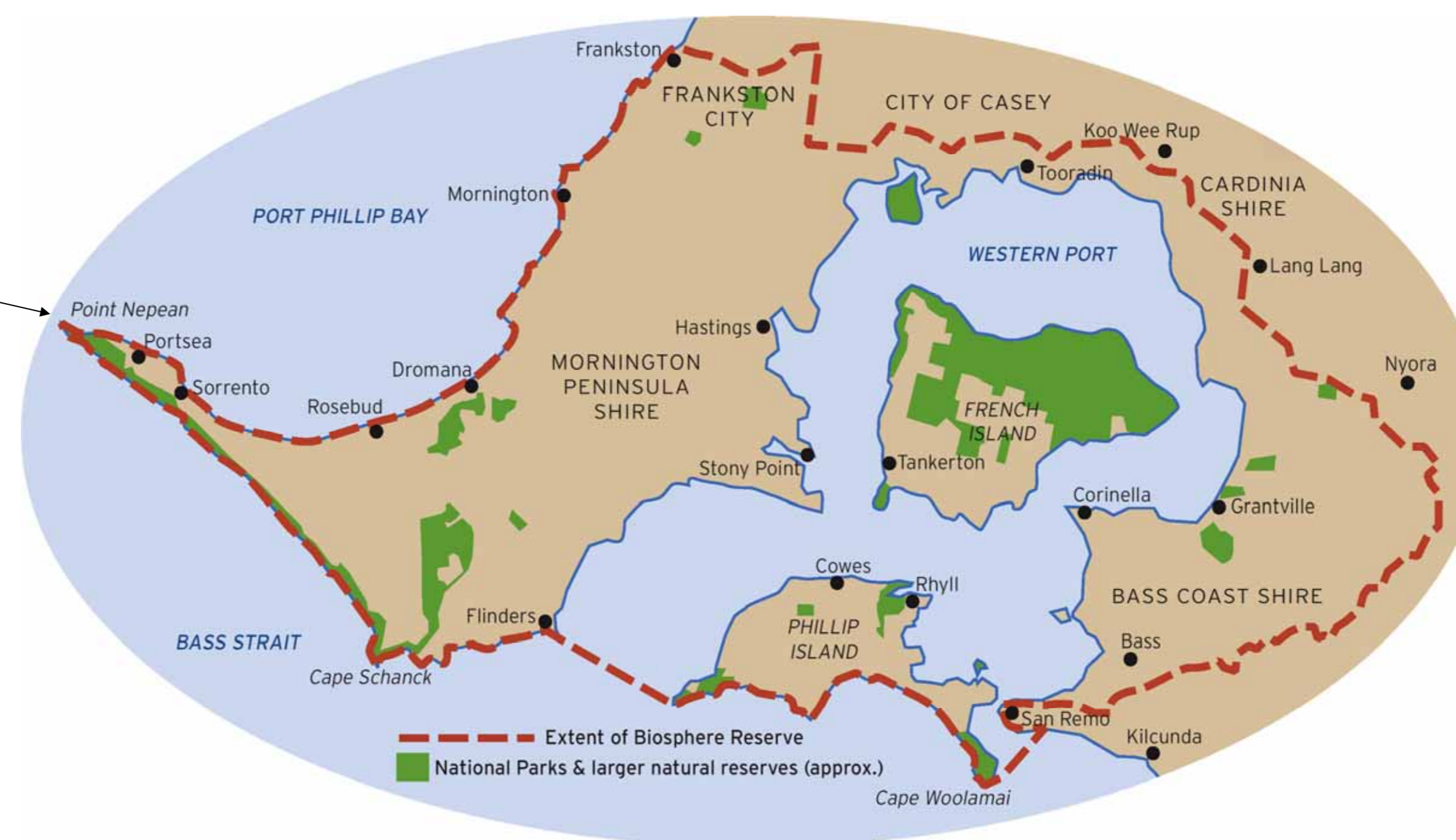
- Non-profit company established to implement the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Program.
- Provides leadership in sustainability, working with business, governments and communities to showcase sustainable practices, broker partnerships and achieve synergies that would not otherwise occur.
- Includes representatives of the Victorian State Government, five local governments, industry and commerce, and up to six community roundtables.
- Members meet through community roundtables. Each determines its own focus, priorities and projects, within the context of the foundation's mission.
- Research committee has strong links to a range of scientific and educational institutions.



Location: Approximately 40 km from Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Population:

- More than 180,000 permanent residents (2002)
- Approximately 250,000 seasonally



Projects

Southern Brown Bandicoot recovery — A three-year, collaborative effort across the region. The conservation of fragmented populations on land managed by many private landholders is a challenge.

Green Corps training program — Ten unemployed young people gained work experience in indigenous horticulture, restoring habitat, wildlife monitoring and community engagement, while completing a certificate in bushland management.



Southern Brown Bandicoot

Watson Creek rehabilitation — A collaborative project with environment agencies, local government, industry and the community to improve the water quality of Watson Creek, which flows into Yaringa Marine National Park, Western Port.

Climate change forum — Organised in partnership with local government and attended by over 300 people. Speakers included Victoria's Commissioner for Sustainability, Dr Ian McPhail, and former CSIRO Climate Director, Dr Graeme Pearman.

School water audits — A community water grant enabled the installation of water-saving equipment in 22 schools across the Mornington Peninsula, saving one million litres of water a year.

Western Port: Feeling the Heat — Organised in partnership with the Victorian State Government, this event allowed participants to look forward to 2025 to examine climate change and other challenges. Almost 150 people attended, identifying population growth, water and biodiversity conservation as priority issues of concern.

Natural and cultural values:

- Western Port — biologically diverse, Ramsar wetland of international importance
- French Island — relatively undisturbed, fox-free habitat, including a national park
- Nationally significant vegetation communities, including rare, threatened and vulnerable species
- Numerous sites of geomorphological significance
- Breeding colonies of the Little Penguin, Koala, Australian Fur Seal, Hooded Plover and Short-tailed Shearwater
- Important region for industry, port operations, fishing, agriculture, tourism and urban growth



Little Penguin



Students for the Biosphere conference

Sustainability indicators — Collaboration with local governments to develop a common set of sustainability indicators that can be measured on a regular basis within the biosphere reserve.

Business and product accreditation — Development of sustainability accreditation schemes for different sectors of the biosphere reserve community.