

A LIVING STRATEGIC PLAN 2007 – 2011

Introduction/Background

The Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve was nominated by the community and declared by UNESCO under its Man and Biosphere Program in 2002. Declaration as a biosphere reserve was sought because the area contains and supports exceptional ecological values on the fringe of a vibrant and expanding city.

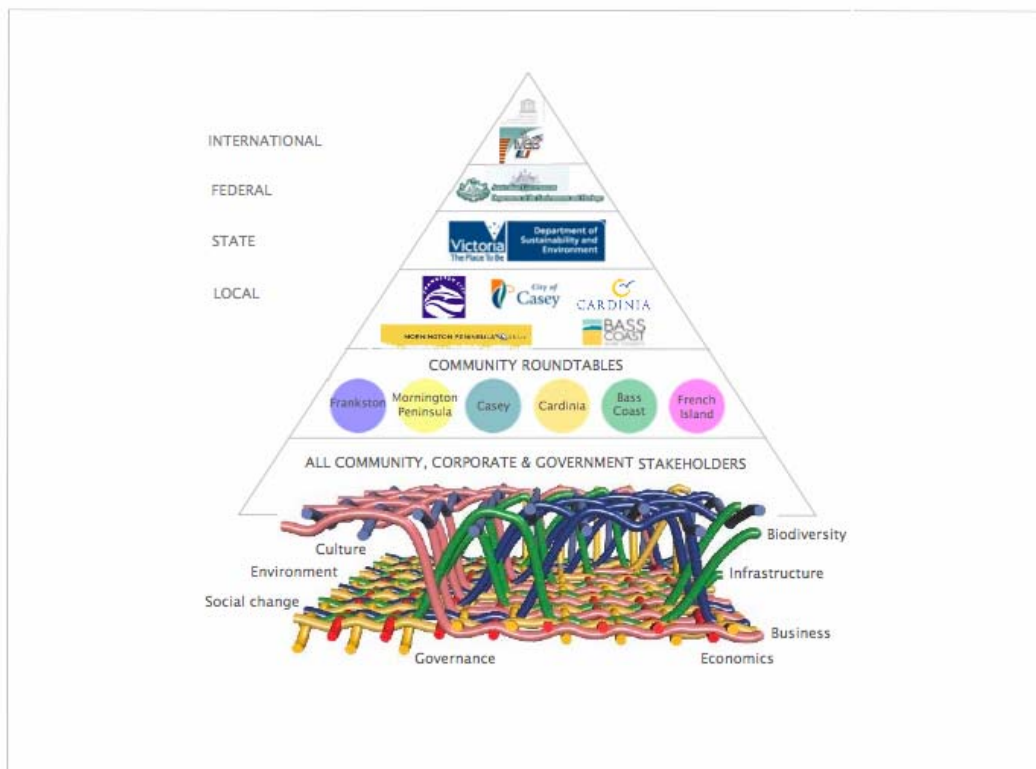
The MPWP Biosphere Reserve Foundation was inaugurated in December 2003. It is a company limited by guarantee and in effect a partnership of the Victorian Government, the five local government authorities across which the Biosphere Reserve is located and six community Roundtables – one in each of these five municipalities and one on French Island.

Biosphere reserves exist to achieve three fundamental objectives: biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and logistical support through research, monitoring and evaluation of progress towards greater sustainability. Our Biosphere is well-placed to showcase these objectives, both to our own community and to our city neighbours. This document provides a concise description of the Biosphere Foundation's strategy to achieve MaB objectives in this Biosphere Reserve.

The Living Strategy

The Biosphere Foundation has adopted a *Living Strategy* approach to strategic planning. Developing a *Living Strategy* is regarded as the most useful and flexible approach, given the multiplicity of organizations, agencies and individuals operating within the Biosphere Reserve and sharing wholly or in part the objectives of the Biosphere Foundation.

Achieving sustainability in this diverse environment is like creating a multi-layered tapestry, weaving together the spectra of players, perceptions, scales of activities, levels of sophistication and multitude of issues.



MORNINGTON PENINSULA AND WESTERN PORT BIOSPHERE RESERVE FOUNDATION

In the following pages, the Biosphere Foundation outlines:

- A. The six criteria by which we will measure our success
- B. The five strategic themes we have established
- C. The measurable objectives to be achieved in each of our five strategic themes.

A. Strategic Success Criteria 2007-2011

The Biosphere Foundation's *Living Strategy* has established the following Strategic Success Criteria to provide a compass to guide and benchmarks to assess our progress.

Each year, we will build on previous achievements to add significantly in the Biosphere Reserve to:

1. progress in social, economic and ecological sustainability in the Biosphere
2. the coordinated and on-going measurement of social, economic and ecological sustainability in the Biosphere
3. increasing business and community understanding, perception and engagement with sustainability in the Biosphere
4. 'galvanizing' stakeholders towards greater sustainability, both within and outside the Biosphere
5. building the financial capacity, resource capability and recognition of the Foundation as a soundly governed organisation providing leadership in sustainability in the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve
6. the development and recognition of sustainability achievements of individuals, organisations and businesses in the Biosphere community, through scholarships, awards, accreditation, leadership and volunteer opportunities

B. Strategic Themes (key result areas)

1. **Natural Environment and Biodiversity Conservation**
2. **Sustainable Development on a Regional Scale**
3. **Logistical Support**
including targeted research, monitoring, evaluation of progress in sustainability
4. **The Man and Biosphere Program**
customized to support objectives of this Reserveⁱ
5. **A Strong, Dynamic and Flexible Foundation**
shaped to deliver Biosphere objectives

i. Nomination of the MPWP Biosphere Reserve was prepared under UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MaB) Program, elements of which have changed over the years. The MaB Program (customized for our objectives) is established as a key result area to ensure reporting of outcomes is aligned with the current MaB Program.

STRATEGIC THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

1: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Strategic Objectives

- Contribute to national conservation of ecological systems representative of major bioregions
- Increase the extent and security of biodiversity conservation in the Reserve including protections from disturbance and threatening processes.
- Expand the extent and efficiency of core and buffer zones, as described in the Man and Biosphere Program

CURRENT AND PLANNED PROJECTS

Recovery of the Southern Brown Bandicoot : promoting-collaboration across the Biosphere Reserve amongst the bandicoot work of agencies and community groups, including a project in the Pines Reserve at Frankston.
Watson Creek Project (see details below)

2: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ON A REGIONAL SCALE

Strategic Objectives

- Develop public awareness of the Biosphere Reserve, creating ‘pride of place’ regarding its special values and understanding of its three functions
- Develop multi-faceted education and communication programs to engage all sectors of the Biosphere community in cultural change towards sustainable lifestyles and use of resources
- Stimulate and support continuous improvement in environmental, economic and social sustainability of development in the Biosphere
- Develop partnerships and strategic alliances for sustainable development.
- Showcase the Biosphere Reserve regionally, nationally and internationally as a model for conservation and sustainable development.

Bass Coast Business Sustainability Program, working with local small business to improve sustainability practices.
Implementation of Sustainable Schools Water Audits: Community Water grant enabling installation of water saving and efficiency measures in 20 Mornington Peninsula schools
Watson Creek Project : leading improvement of catchment management and water quality in partnership with community groups, landholders, businesses, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and municipalities of Frankston, Casey and Mornington Peninsula
Eco-footprinting Frankston : surveying Frankston households to determine their current eco-footprint, with funding from Frankston City Council.

3. LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

Strategic Objectives:

- Develop means of measuring and monitoring sustainability within the Biosphere
- Promote sustainability-related research in the Biosphere
- Research innovative incentives to achieve improved sustainability
- Develop a range of accreditation schemes suitable for different sectors of the Biosphere community such as businesses, community groups, households.

Common Sustainability Indicators: a collaborative project across the municipalities within the Biosphere, proposed under the Local Environmental Sustainability Accord
Business and Product Accreditation : research project to investigate effective accreditation schemes applicable in the Biosphere

4. THE MAN AND BIOSPHERE PROGRAM (customized to support objectives of this Biosphere Reserve)

Strategic Objectives:

- Regularly review Man and Biosphere Program objectives and strategies and adapt Living Strategy to reflect developments.
- Showcase achievements of other biospheres as potential models for our own

5. A STRONG, DYNAMIC AND FLEXIBLE FOUNDATION (Shaped and resourced to deliver Biosphere objectives)

Strategic Objectives:

- Strengthen the Foundation through building a membership that is diverse in age, culture, skills and interests.
- Pursue diverse, long term sources of income and funding.
- Delegate the delivery of outcomes to stakeholders as far as is practicable, utilising the enormous and diverse range of human resources and skills within the Biosphere community.
- Develop and consolidate a range of appropriate partnerships and alliances.
- Seek good governance, operational improvement and strong community involvement.
- Monitor the performance of the Foundation Board and Roundtables and implement continuous improvement.

Membership Development Working Group established.
Public Fund, tax deductability of donations and a Funding Committee established

Alliances and partnerships with key stakeholders being developed.
Board Governance Protocol established
Organisational Review conducted and recommendations being implemented

Living Strategy Appendix

Institutional Context of

The MP&WP Biosphere Reserve Foundation Ltd

The Foundation conducts all of its business, including strategic planning, in the context of an array of institutional and statutory obligations, expectations and commitments. The Foundation's *Living Strategy* must be read, interpreted and implemented in that context. The Foundation seeks to remain true both to the spirit of the vision that drove nomination of the Biosphere to UNESCO and to the mandatory obligations that underpin the Man and Biosphere Program.

International : UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program

Current obligations applying to member biosphere reserves are detailed on the website (www.unesco.org/mab). In particular, the Seville Strategy and UNESCO's Draft Program 2006-2007 set parameters for appropriate areas of focus and action for biosphere reserves.

These documents, including revised or new MAB policies form an important part of our Foundation's operating context.

National:

The Commonwealth endorsed the MPWP Biosphere Reserve nomination on 30 April 2002.

The Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* Division 3 (sections 337-341) addresses the management of biosphere reserves. Division 3 provides for establishment of Australian biosphere reserve management principles under EPBC Regulations, as well as planning for management of Biosphere reserves and provision of Commonwealth assistance for protecting biosphere reserves. EPBC Regulations 2000 prescribe the Australian Biosphere reserve management principles through Division 4 (Regulation 10.03) and Schedule 7.

Part of the MPWP Biosphere Reserve is listed as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

The Foundation was established as a company under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Commonwealth) and is obliged to conduct its corporate affairs in accordance with the Act and relevant Regulations.

The Foundation must continue to comply with the rulings of the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) with respect to the Foundation's charitable status, to maintain eligibility for the tax deductibility of donations to the Foundation's Public Fund.

State:

The Victorian State Government policy on biosphere reserves, available on the internet at www.dse.vic.gov.au, sets out the parameters for assessing proposals for new biosphere reserves and for evaluating the performance of biosphere reserves.

The Victorian State Government also provided advice about its requirements and expectations in letters of 28 June 2002 conditionally endorsing the nomination (signed by then Environment Minister Sherryl Garbutt), and of 1 December 2003 approving the proposed administrative arrangements for the Foundation (signed by then Minister for the Environment John Thwaites).

Local:

The nomination was endorsed by each of the five local government authorities (LGAs) that are included in part or in full within the MPWP Biosphere Reserve. These are the Cities of Casey and Frankston and the Shires of Bass Coast, Cardinia and Mornington Peninsula).

Foundation:

The **nomination** document of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve contains a number of commitments regarding governance and management.

The Foundation's **Constitution** was adopted at the inaugural meeting in December 2003, and in conjunction with the Corporations Act, sets the statutory governance framework for the Foundation.

There is a procedural pathway prescribed for changing the Constitution, should that prove necessary or desirable. However, the Organisational Review conducted during 2005 concluded that no changes to the Constitution were warranted at that time.

The Foundation's **Charter** was also adopted at the inaugural meeting in December 2003. The Charter reflects both the aspirational objectives of the Foundation and the specific governance expectations of the State Government. It provides the broad vision for implementation of the Biosphere Reserve.