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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Western Port Biosphere refreshes for the decade ahead

The Western Port Biosphere has hit refresh on its brand and strategy for the next decade following confirmation of its UNESCO status and a growing presence in shaping the future for the Western Port Biosphere Reserve.

Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation CEO, Mel Barker, said there were many factors that made this the perfect time to present a fresh face to the world and particularly the stakeholders and communities that supported a vision that would ensure the preservation of the Reserve’s environment for future generations.

“We are celebrating the 20th Anniversary of successfully advocating for Western Port’s recognition and acceptance into the international UNESCO Biosphere network. This is the first time since the establishment of the Reserve that we have reviewed and updated its brand,” she said.

“The recent acknowledgement of our progress by UNESCO, substantial funding for blue carbon development from the Victorian Government and growing partnerships with traditional owners, community and with public and private sector organisations enables us to confidently move forward to address the numerous challenges facing Western Port.”

The Foundation's top priorities encompass several key areas:

* Advocating for the creation of a Strategic Framework for Western Port,
* Advocacy relating to commercial development proposals for Western Port proposals for Western Port;;
* Enhancing community awareness and preserving ecologically vital and internationally significant habitats, including Ramsar wetlands, blue carbon ecosystems (mangroves, salt marshes, and seagrass), and Bryozoan reefs;
* Establishing a biolink to connect the nationally significant Western Port Woodlands on the Bass Coast, while ensuring effective communication between neighbouring sand quarries and the community; and
* Securing support to develop critical biolinks to maintain and support the Reserve's biodiversity.

**Western Port Biosphere’s new logo**

The new Western Port Biosphere logo wraps representations of flora and fauna associated with the Reserve with habitat and community, a message that humans live within and are part of nat. It is more distinctive and contemporary , lending itself to easier recognition over time in digital communications channels through which the Foundation has been increasing its reach over recent months.

**For more information:**

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 Foundation

The Western Port Biosphere Reserve is one of 748 places in 134 countries recognised by the United Nations for the uniqueness and importance of its biodiversity. Biosphere reserves promote solutions to enable people to enjoy and live in harmony with the environment. They advocate for the protection of our most important environmental assets and for sustainable development through research and education, which informs discussion and solutions aligned with society’s ability to cope with change. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) now form a centrepiece of the advocacy and programs undertaken for the Western Port Biosphere Reserve. These programs include partnering with industry and government on projects to achieve better environmental outcomes while maintaining or improving their performance.

For more information: [www.biosphere.org.au](http://www.biosphere.org.au)