

MEMBERS' FORUM HARVEST

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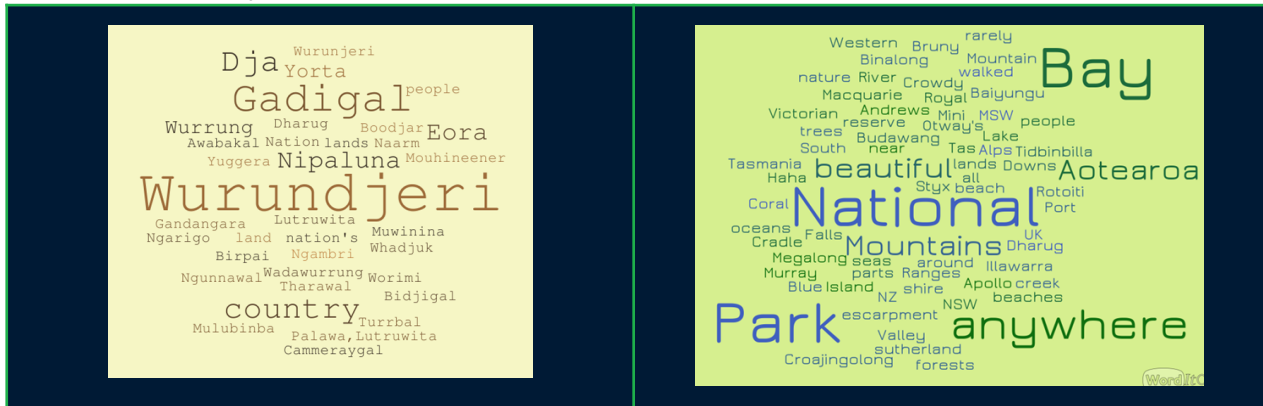
Thursday, 15 October, 2020 | 7pm AEDT

The 33 Members attended the Forum

Attendees' Country

and

Favorite Place in Nature



Process from Members' Forum:

Members were actively engaged in the Forum and most provided positive feedback to the outline of The Wilderness Society's Organisational Campaign Plan. The Harvest from Members' conversations was gathered and sifted for themes, unanswered questions and things to consider - firstly reviewed by the Campaign Pod, who took the feedback into consideration in finalising the Organisational Campaign Plan and provided responses for the Board to consider in responding to Members. The Board responses are below.

Questions and Considerations raised by Members

Questions

1. What does it mean that the Wilderness Society will only focus on specific Campaigns?

Response

Our Organisational Campaign Plan is a different way of thinking about our traditional campaigns and how we have run them. An example of this is we were working on at least five separate forest protection/deforestation campaigns in Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, Western Australia and New South Wales, different forest habitats across the country, we are now aligning the work done here to ensure that we can be more powerfully and collectively advocate for Australia's native forests.

2. What the Wilderness Society will actually 'do'- would like to hear more about wins and losses?

Response

It is an overarching framework which has three themes - protecting globally significant iconic places and values; reducing our opponents power, and building our community power - which help us to work on specific campaign projects like protecting Australia's native forests. Which, in turn, allows The Wilderness Society campaigners to work better together across the continent to achieve our collective campaign goals.

The Board notes it is important to report both wins and losses to the Members who support our campaigns.

3. How do we weave in iconic species into our campaigns?

Response

Iconic species plants and animals, will continue to be at the forefront of our campaigns communications. Species like the critically endangered leadbeater's possum, help to tell the story

about why we need to end old growth native forest logging in Victoria's forests.

Considerations

1. Not sure about the effectiveness of different campaign strategies, struggle a bit at the value of things, petitions, submissions, sometimes it seems that no matter how many signatures, things still go ahead.

Response

The reflection that no matter how many submissions we gather, projects still go ahead is unfortunately true. The Wilderness Society uses submissions and petitions to engage the community to have their voices heard, and show our power to corporations and governments in terms of how many people care about the issues we are advocating for. Yet the undue influence of vested interests from corporations often has greater influence on decisions. We acknowledge that we need to shift the power dynamic, and thus we are developing innovative strategies, which are focussed on changing markets and systems that drive ecosystem destruction, as well as individual proposals and projects, like keeping oil out of the Great Australian Bight.

2. Iconising places and values and protecting areas
 - a. It is not only iconic places that are important, but also iconic species.
 - b. We need to think about the outcome that these tactics are leading to - and include that.
 - c. Is Iconicise the goal? or is it to protect? Is iconicise a tactic to protect the place?
 - d. In Continental approach the meaning of the words “Continental” and “sectorial” wasn’t clear and didn’t paint an emotive picture for me, yet!

Response

By iconising places and values - like endangered species and First Nations cultural values - which are under threat, we raise greater awareness of the value of the places we are trying to protect and help us to ultimately protect areas, through both removing key threats and creating protected areas, across our continent.

3. Increasing our power, ie making it possible
 - a. Agree there is power in joining with other organisations to stand in force - Places we Love Alliance; local alliances also important and active for the M4L.
 - b. 'Increasing our power' is reducing / diminishing power of others with a different emphasis, it appears a bit navel gazing. If this is a strategy - is it talking to tactics more than strategy.

Response

Taken as a fair comment.

Members feeling on checking out the forum?

