

**West Australian Sustainable Education Forum  
Sustainability Education with 'Network to Empower'  
Program - Friday 6th December 2024**

Unique opportunity for community, schools, industry, tertiary and government groups to share the work they are engaged with to educate about and support sustainability practices.

**Venue:** CREEC, crn Kent Street & Queens Park Rd, Wilson WA 6107 [Map here](#)

**Registration:** \$66 Non Member; \$44 AAEE member and students/concession (includes refreshments) <https://www.trybooking.com/CVWPR>

**Program:** Available at <https://aaeewa.org.au/west-australian-sustainability-education-forum/>

**9.00 Registrations & cuppa**

**9.20 Acknowledgement of Country & Welcome.  
Presentation of AAEE WA Chapter Environmental Educator for 2024**

**9.30 First Round Tables – Participant choose on the day**

- **The importance of science, community and Country in conservation and education programs. Clodagh Guildea, Sabrina Fossette, Tristan Simpson**

The North West Shelf Flatback Turtle Conservation Program (NWSFTCP) is a 30 – 60-year long conservation program that operates out of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. Although primarily a research and monitoring program, one of the major objectives of the NWSFTCP is to establish education programs to increase the awareness and stewardship of flatback turtles for future generations. The NWSFTCP has embedded school and community engagement opportunities throughout its program over the last seven years; producing dozens of lesson resources, conducting regular education visits to regional and Perth schools, and facilitating annual community turtle monitoring trips to Thevenard and Delambre Islands off the Pilbara coast with local schools and Aboriginal organisations. The Program understands that experiences in nature during childhood, particularly with positive family and community role-models, relates to pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours in adulthood. These opportunities are especially important for Traditional Custodians on Country to improve long-term conservation, education and wellbeing outcomes.

Hear about the experiences of students, community and staff in the field, and the suite of resources and opportunities available to engage with flatback turtle conservation.

- **Two-way Science in Early Years – Niamh Williams & Dr Jennifer Pearson LGSWA**

Little Green Steps WA (LGS WA) is a unique and innovative program that partners with early childhood educators to connect them with our hub of practical resources to achieve a lifetime of sustainable living. This involves engagement on an individual and group basis in training and support measures, together with leading edge research, to embed 'reaching out and treading lightly' through the concepts of the "Social Handprint and Ecological Footprint". The AAEEWA Chapter has created an early years resource for educators working with children from 0 - 8 yrs. to showcase the Noongar Culture of weaving, tracks and glue making. The three videos are accompanied by a Teacher's Guide aligned with Early Years Learning

Framework and WA Curriculum. After viewing the videos and exploring the teachers guide, participants will be encouraged to complete a planning framework about integrating first nations learning experiences into their practice.

- **Networking for Sustainability. Dr Elaine Lewis**

Networking is an important tool and an investment for Sustainability education. Networking can help you solve problems, enhance knowledge, find friends or employment, get advice and support, as well as meet collaborators. This presentation focuses on networking for Sustainability in a state school context in Perth, Western Australia. Networking for all aspects of the Ecological Footprint and Social Handprint will be addressed, as reported at this school. For instance, Biodiversity actions for the Ecological Footprint were supported by collaborative relationships with the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare, Friends of Coolbinia Bushland and CSIRO Professionals in Schools. Considering the Aboriginal component of the Social Handprint for example, building relationships with local Aboriginal people, joining the Two-way Science Program, the local hub Bush Classrooms network and collaborating through the One World Centre were valuable ways to enhance this aspect of Sustainability. This presentation will clearly demonstrate how networking was used as a tool to support Sustainability initiatives at the school, as well as an investment to increase knowledge and solve challenges. Participants will also be invited to share their experiences of networking to extend our skills, knowledge and understandings.

### 10.15 Second Round Tables - Participant choose on the day

- **Nature Connection Series: A Transformative Model for Outdoor Learning in WA Schools. Trudi Bennet, Educated by Nature's**

Over the past three years, Educated by Nature's Nature Connection Series, supported by the WA Parks Foundation and the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA), has reached 20 schools across Perth, inspiring educators and students to engage deeply with local bushland and parkland. This presentation will outline the program's framework and objectives, which include connecting students to nature, highlighting outdoor learning opportunities, and mentoring teachers to establish sustainable Bush School practices. Our Nature Connection Series has provided mentored outdoor excursions that foster core nature connection routines, aiming to inspire a life-long affinity with the environment and support student well-being. Core routines such as wandering, mapping, bird language, and "sit spots" help students develop curiosity and observation skills that deepen their connection within nature. Formal evaluation by Sheridan College has shown a substantial impact on participating schools, highlighting increased student engagement, strengthened teacher confidence in outdoor pedagogy, and improved environmental awareness. Key findings from this evaluation will be discussed, offering valuable insights for schools and educators interested in implementing or expanding outdoor learning initiatives. Attendees will gain insights into how nature connection practices can be integrated into school curricula to foster resilience, curiosity, and ecological literacy among students.

- **Addressing student's climate crisis concerns and the lazy person's guide to saving the world! Lynne Butler – One World Centre**

At this critical time for the planet how do we as educators understand what our students are most concerned about? One way is to ask them. Using the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal SDG (UN SDG) capture wheel we ask students to nominate the three goals they are most concerned about. The results are illuminating! In this session we will talk about the results and how we might, as educators, address those concerns immediately and in the long term at an individual, school, family, community and global level. It is a huge task

but there is an abundance of easily accessible tools and information ready and waiting that we will share with you. The One World Centre (OWC) is a not-for-profit learning and resource Centre focused on global issues and local action. For over 30 years the OWC has specialised in providing transformative learning with the aim of encouraging and supporting an active and engaged citizenship and a just and sustainable future.

- **Sustainable Pedagogies in Higher Education – Dr. Kimberley Beasley Murdoch Uni**

This presentation will share our journey to developing a new university course in sustainable education developed for teachers and community educators. I will talk about our journey in challenging ourselves to step away PowerPoint slides, lectures and classrooms, to teaching outdoors, connecting our students to nature and working with community environmental organisations to support educators with the confidence to step outside their own classrooms. I will share how we implemented slow pedagogy, nature journaling, play pedagogies and more-than-human pedagogies in our practice.

### 11.00 Morning tea

### 11.30 Third Round Tables - Participant choose on the day

- **Turning your verge into a native garden by Behrooz Eslam**

Would you love to attract birds and other animals into your garden? Teacher and environmentalist Behrooz will show you how easy it is to convert a dead space or lawn area into a thriving ecosystem on your verge or school garden. Be inspired by seeing what's possible in a small area at home or school. Get motivated to rewild your urban spaces which will guarantee increased biodiversity in your neighbourhood. Save money on your water bills, and save time mowing lawn, by growing a healthy ecosystem and create a safe zone in your street. Discover how to grow native trees, shrubs, ground covers and bush tucker. Nature will thank you!

- **Protecting Invertebrates In Urban Bushlands. Dr. Gun Dolva SERCUL**

Invertebrates contribute significantly to biodiversity in urban bushlands. They are involved with many processes in ecosystems. These range from litter decomposition, pollination, seed predation and dispersal as well as predate and being predated upon. In this session you will explore the different types and roles of invertebrates in urban bushlands and how urbanisation may impact on them. Using information provided you will then develop a plan to protect the integrity of these communities in a specific bushland.

- **ESD Caring for Country Project. Geoff Holt, Busselton Senior High School**

Ecoanxiety and climate distress are prevalent in young people who may be aware of climate and ecological breakdown but lack knowledge about its causes, impacts and mitigation strategies. Beyond this, our education systems deny them agency to take direct action which further compounds their concerns and sense of hopelessness. Since 2020 at Busselton SHS, we have introduced Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as an elective subject for all students in Year 7 and 8 providing opportunities for climate and environmental action with a focus on Caring for Country (Wadandi Boodja). The program has also targeted Indigenous students enhancing cultural appreciation and connection to country. The program has seen multiple alliances forged between school staff, students and community conservation groups, enhanced student engagement and served as an alternative to the form and content of traditional education by focussing on global citizenship, teamwork, cooperation, critical thinking and direct action. ESD, as outlined in SDG 4, has the potential to reshape the educational experience of teachers by restoring their autonomy and self-determination whilst being transformative for students by providing real life experiences shaping values and

behaviours. By providing students with multiple opportunities to learn about climate and environmental issues in the classroom before engaging in direct project-based actions on country, we have been able to ensure that all students are climate and environment literate. They also have exposure to cultural appreciation and the ongoing connection of indigenous custodians to the lands on which we live. This presentation will share the praxis of ESD Caring for Country at Busselton SHS and serve as a model of how to offer students transformative educational experiences.

## **12.15 Lunch, Poster Session, Networking**

### **1.00 Network to Empower Presentation - Hannah von Ahlefeld, Co-convenor, Teachers for Climate Australia**

#### **An Urgent Voice for Teachers Advocating for Sustainability and Climate Change Education in Australia.**

In 2022, the recommendations of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Response of Western Australian Schools to Climate Change, embodied in the Making Hope Practical report, held great promise to support “state, national and international goals of net-zero emissions” and the preparedness of our most precious resource: young people. The overwhelming evidence provided to the Inquiry by many esteemed environmental educators, teachers, parents, government departments and organisations highlighted the need for an adequately resourced systemic response to climate change education in schools that was not reliant on individual teacher champions going “above and beyond”. The report stated furthermore that “sustainability [as a cross-curriculum priority in the Australian curriculum] is fragmented, poorly understood and often overlooked as a curriculum concept”. Two years later, frustrated by the lack of progress in the wake of the report’s publication and reflecting a growing concern about the inadequacy of the education system to address the impacts of climate change, a new grassroots teachers group call Teachers for Climate Australia ([www.teachersforclimate.com.au](http://www.teachersforclimate.com.au)) has formed calling for bold and urgent action to address the unfolding climate and ecological emergency. Inspired by Teach the Future UK and Teachers for Climate Netherlands, which are putting pressure on decision makers to better equip education systems to respond to the climate and ecological crisis, Teachers for Climate Australia’s vision is for all. Australians to experience a transformative education that is reliable, impartial, and free from the influence of corporate interests; and for Australian schools to be inspiring models of sustainability that empower young Australians to thrive in a changing climate. In its formative stages, the group is looking to rally teachers’ support for its campaigns for change in Australia.

### **1.50 Afternoon tea refresh**

**2.00 Speed Meeting** – networking session, bring your brochures and cards to share the where, what and how of your work.

### **2.45 Evaluation and wrap-up**

If you have any questions please contact Dr Jennifer Pearson on [jopearson189@gmail.com](mailto:jopearson189@gmail.com)