ZONTA INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 23
EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

ZONTA SAYS NOW

To gender equality and climate action

Zonta Says NOW News - AUGUST 2022



Keeping your cool when the heat is on

We live in very turbulent times with many 'hot' issues consuming our news feeds. These include the extreme heat in Europe, energy challenges triggered by the war in Ukraine, rising inflation, the pandemic, and security. However, don't get consumed by the bad news as there is a plus side! Lots of 'cool' things are happening – including the USA passing its Climate Bill and Australia's Climate Bill passing through the lower house.

Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary-General, said recently at a meeting of 40 countries to discuss the climate crisis, " *We have a choice. Collective action or collective suicide. It is in our hands*."

It looks like collective action will be the way to go as I don't relish the alternative!

This edition looks at the two climate bills, reflects on the Zonta International Convention in Hamburg, reviews Natalie Isaacs' timely new book *Right Here Right Now*, reports on how women lead the way in Ballarat, and shares first-hand experiences from the UK, and much more!

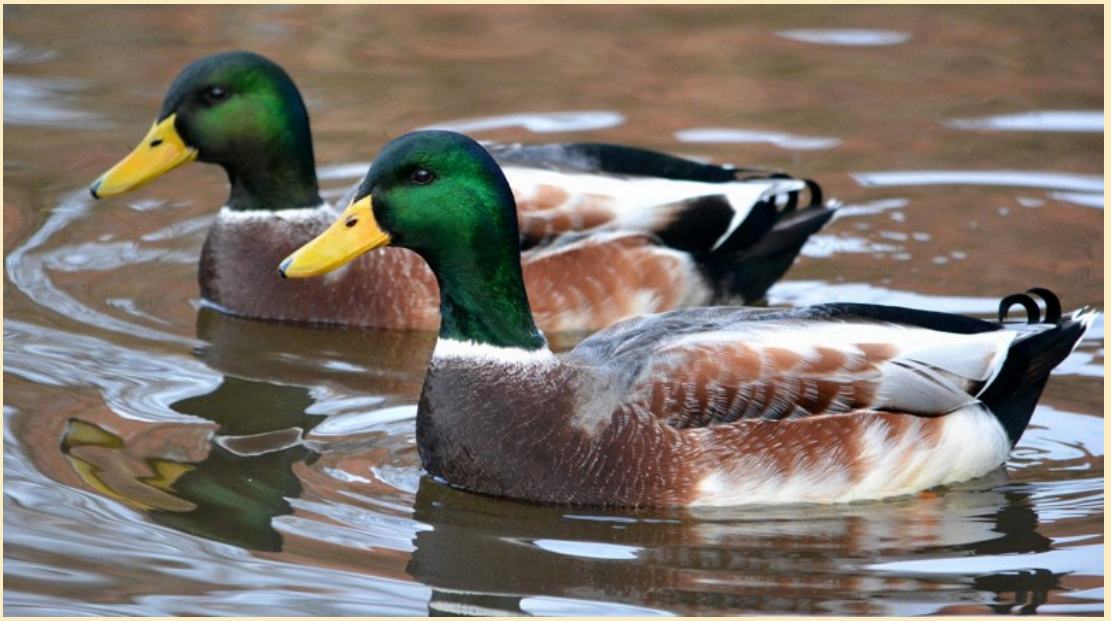
The Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra's *Women Taking Climate Action* Award closes on 26 August 2022, so please advertise this through your networks. Applicants must identify as a woman and live in District 23, i.e. Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, or Western Australia.

The world may be in turmoil, but there is lots of good in the mix. Together, we've got this – so keep smiling!

Kind regards

Carole
Carole Theobald

D23 Coordinator Zonta Says NOW
Chair, Zonta International Zonta Says NOW Working Group.



The Two Bills

With climate bills progressing in the USA and Australia, will their emission reduction targets be enough to keep these two ducks (who also have bills!) swimming? Only time will tell.

The USA's climate 'bill' is called the Inflation Reduction Act. This contains around A$530 billion of clean energy initiatives designed to cut emissions by around 40 per cent by 2030 relative to a 2005 baseline. This legislation has been decades in the making and was so close that it relied on Vice President Kamala Harris casting the deciding vote.

The Australian Climate Change Bill 2022 commits Australia to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 43 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050. It includes annual statements to Parliament on progress, and the independent Climate Change Authority will provide advice on future targets. The Bill has passed through the House of Representatives and now will go to the Senate. It gives a clear message to investors that Australia is serious about acting on climate change.

The Bill passed 89 votes to 55 with support from Labour, the Greens, independents, and Liberal MP Bridget Archer crossing the floor. The independents describe the target as a 'floor and not a ceiling', the Greens are concerned that the legislation will not stop new oil and gas development, and the Liberals felt the Bill was unnecessary.

It is interesting to note that the United Kingdom passed its Climate Change Act in 2008.

Action: Check out the documents and transcripts of the debates and sign up to track the progress of the Bill here.



Hamburg Convention

At the Zonta International Convention in Hamburg in June, the seriousness of the impacts of the climate crisis, particularly on women and girls, was highlighted in most sessions. It was very pleasing to see the *Engaging Girls on Climate Change in Madagascar* project be adopted, and this will be featured in the next newsletter.

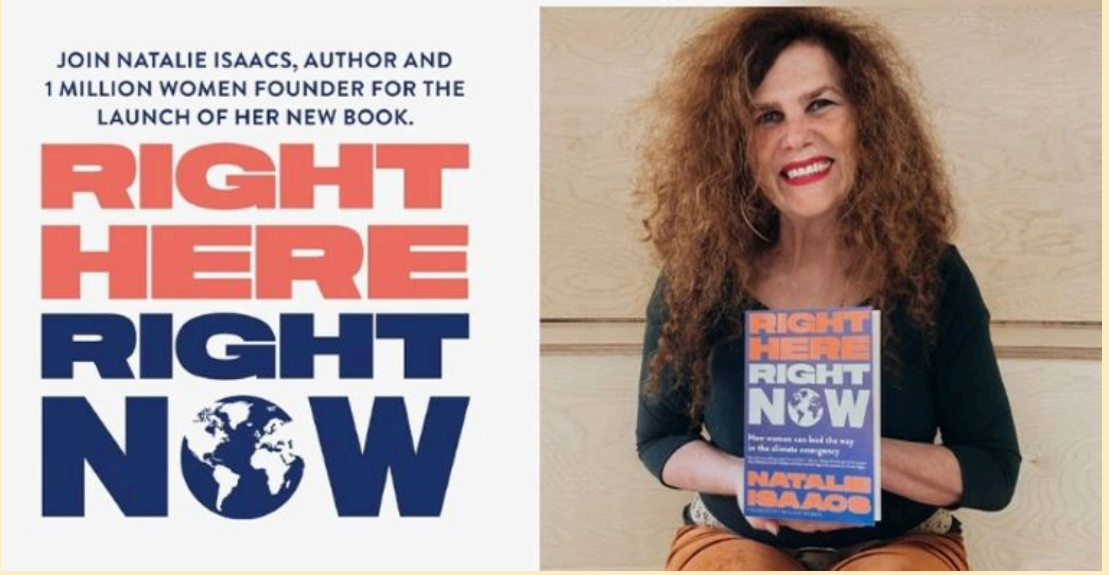
A presentation team from Australia, the USA, and India led two Zonta Says NOW capacity-filled workshops. The team shared their experiences implementing Zonta Says NOW in their clubs and districts and worked with attendees to get them started on their climate journeys.

Attendees were shown how to use the En-ROADS climate simulator to test their climate solutions and encouraged to share it with their family and friends. The simulator showed graphically that it is possible to reduce emissions and keep global warming to less than 1.5 °C. However, we must do everything we can to keep fossil fuels in the ground.

Members gained a clearer understanding of the links between global warming and gender inequality, and enthusiasm is high to get moving to build a better world for women and girls. More districts and clubs have set up climate-related committees, and Zonta Says NOW Think Tanks are popping up around the world for members to share ideas and activities.

A formal Zonta International Working Group for Zonta Says NOW is being established to develop an action plan. The Zonta International Statement on Climate Change, the recommendations from CSW 66 and the Sustainable Development Goals will inform the planning process. The action plan will focus on a few key priorities in this biennium so that our collective action makes as significant an impact as possible locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

Action: The presentation from the workshop may be downloaded here.



How women can lead the way in the climate emergency

Right Here Right Now is made for Zonta Says NOW and is the perfect primer for anyone starting their climate journey.

What beautiful storytelling, straight from the heart. This is a rallying call to women everywhere to be part of the solution for the climate crisis, is how Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, described the book.

Natalie Isaacs is the CEO of 1 Million Woman – an ever-expanding global community of over one million women she established in 2009 – all committed to living sustainable lifestyles and taking climate action. The book was launched this week in Sydney by the Australian Minister for the Environment, the Honourable Tanya Plibersek.

Natalie has interviewed many thought leaders, including world-renowned climate activists such as Christiana Figueres and Mary Robinson, climate scientists including Lesley Hughes from the Climate Council and First Nations leaders including Aunty Bea Ballangarry and Dr Anne Poelina from Australia and Hilda Heine from the Marshall Islands. A recurring theme was the emerging global community of women climate leaders collaborating, supporting each other, and sharing a vision for the new world.

Natalie Isaacs strongly supports Zonta Says NOW and was a keynote speaker at our District 23 Conference last year. The references and resources at the back of the book contain links to many climate activists and organisations - including Zonta International, and Zonta Says NOW!

Sign up for an online author talk on 6 September to hear Natalie talk about the book.

Action. Please read the book, take on the ideas and put them into action!



Women taking Climate Action Award

The Zonta Club of Melbourne on Yarra would like to recognise a woman taking climate action; we need your help to find her!

If you, or someone in your networks, knows a woman who is actively working on climate

change mitigation, adaptation, or communication – please tell them about this $1,000 Award.

Last year's award attracted some impressive women, some who had been working on climate action for decades and some who were starting their journeys. We learned so much from them.

Applicants must identify as women and live in District 23, i.e. the Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, or Western Australia.

The Award will be presented at next year's D23 Conference in Bunbury, WA, from 1-3 September 2023.

The online applications close at midnight on Friday, 26 August.

Action: Email the link to your family, friends, and co-workers today!



WORKING TOGEHTER: Ellen Burns, Cathy McCallum and Miree Hancock with the single-use plastic waste from Ms McCallum's two-person household over 12 months. **Picture: Nieve Walton.**

Ballarat Women Taking Climate Action

Many thanks to Val Sarah from the ZC of Ballarat for this snapshot of women creating a sustainable world!

Women and girls in Ballarat and district are actively involved in preserving the environment and encouraging local communities to avoid waste materials going to landfill.

Last year *Eliza Whitburn-Weber* launched *GroundUp*, collecting coffee waste and food scraps from cafes for composting. Now she's recycling soft plastics from hospitality clients, retail outlets and manufacturing industries which are turned into food-grade quality plastic by APR, one of Victoria's leading soft plastics manufacturers.

Three Ballarat women have joined forces to encourage householders to reduce waste and make us a Plastic Free Ballarat. Shown in the photo above are (left to right) *Ellen Burns,* the founder of *We Bar None*, a snack company using compostable packaging; *Miree Hancock*, the owner of Green Earth Kids, curating Australian-made eco-friendly products for children; *Cathy McCallum,* who runs low waste food workshops – the group is seen holding Cathy's total household single-use plastic waste from the past 12 months in just three bags!!

Women are very much at the forefront of action – *Lynette McDonald* alerted the City Council about a dam of rubbish blocking our Yarrowee River. Workers were soon on site, clearing the blockage of fallen trees and debris.

On the outskirts of Ballarat lies the Wombat Forest, where Forestcare convenor *Gayle*

Osborne is advocating legislation to protect threatened species and address the issue of deforestation.

Meanwhile, Primary School students are actively helping to improve our environment by planting trees in their community …

… and young writers are contributing their thoughts on melting icebergs, burning forests, plastic pollution and dying wildlife in an initiative of Ballarat Renewable Energy and Zero Emissions annual World Environment Day, in response to the question "what can I do to help the environment?"

The next generation of leaders responded to an Environmental Challenge to create a project based on an aspect of biodiversity. *Nina Dunn* proposed garden boxes out of sustainable materials adding flowers to increase pollinators and balance out damage to ecosystems caused by urbanisation.

…. and finally, *Ballarat Action Climate Co-Op* members will host an indoor plant workshop as part of Victorian Youth Fest in September. Shown below are *Food is Free* founder *Lou Risdale* with *Eloise Amirtharajah*, one of Ballarat's recent Young Women In Public Affairs award recipients at the club, district and international levels. Eloise says that growing indoor plants became popular with young people during the coronavirus pandemic, bringing life indoors and giving young people "something to care for".

Action: Please send what is happening in your area to zontasaysnow@gmail.com



GO GREEN: Food is Free founder and director Lou Ridsdale with Ballarat's Eloise Amirtharajah. **Picture: Lachlan Bence**



How does Australia fare on climate action?

While the women in Ballarat are making a difference locally - nationally, Australia is not faring well on climate action. Australia produces an independent State of the Environment (SoE) report every five years.

The latest edition, released in July, is comprehensive and sobering. Overall, the state and trend of the environment of Australia are poor and deteriorating because of

increasing pressures from climate change, habitat loss, invasive species, pollution, and resource extraction.

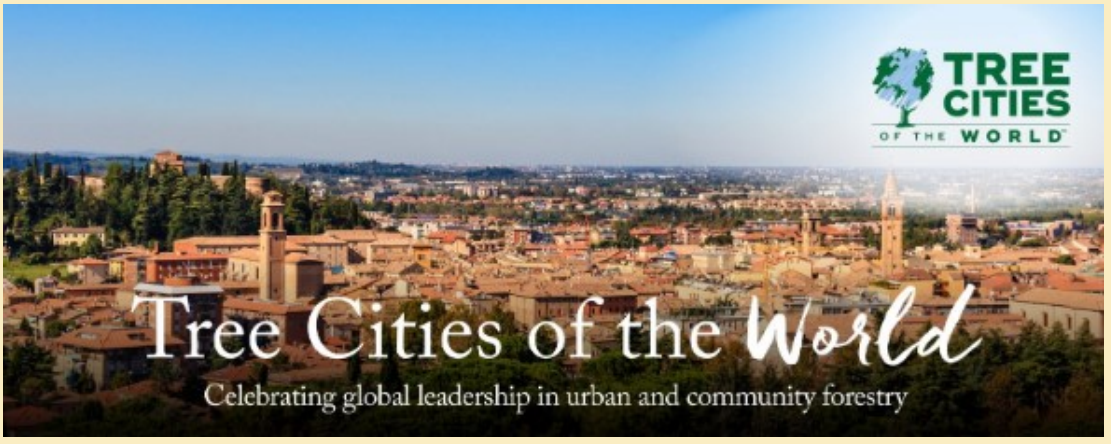
A few facts from the SoE report:

- Australians contribute 1.2% of global emissions (yet are only 0.33 per cent of the world's population);
- between 1 and 3 billion native animals were killed or displaced by the Black Summer bushfires in 2019-20;
- Australia ranks third in the world for soil organic carbon loss;
- Australia has lost more mammal species than any other continent over the last 200 years; and,
- there are more foreign plant species in Australia than there are native.

The report highlights the weaknesses of Australia's main environmental law, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, as it is not fit for current or future environmental challenges. For example, it does not consider climate change.

The Environmental Council of Central Queensland is challenging the omission of climate change through the courts in the hope that the new Minister of the Environment (the Hon Tanya Plibersek) will reconsider the earlier approval of 19 coal and gas projects currently in the pipeline.

Action: Check out the dynamic report's videos, graphics and fact sheets, and advocate updating the EPBC Act, so it is fit for purpose and protects communities.



Tree city champions!

Trees are a vital component of healthy, liveable, and sustainable communities around the globe. In Australian cities, the tree canopies are disappearing as larger houses are replaced by multiple dwellings.

This year, seven cities in Australia have been recognised as Tree Cities of the World. These cities see that their urban forests and trees are maintained, sustainably managed and duly celebrated! Congratulations to Burnside SA, Canberra ACT, Charles Sturt SA, Lake Macquarie City NSW, Mitcham SA, Unley SA and Victoria Park WA.

Action: If you live in these cities, please acknowledge your local government's leadership. If your city is not part of the program, ask your local council about its 'urban greening' policy.



Postcard from the UK

Carole Theobald returned from the UK a few days ago, where they are feeling the heat and not just due to the weather. The climate crisis, pandemic and Ukraine war are taking their toll on the community.

Temperatures have soared to above 40°C in the UK, hose pipe bans are in place, and the ‘green, green grass’ is brown. Motorway signs remind drivers to drink water, and areas have been put on various levels of heat health alert. Much of Europe is experiencing similar conditions.

Wallets are overheating too. The war in Ukraine has impacted fuel supplies throughout Europe, and in the UK, average household annual energy bills will surge above AUS$10,000 as Russia squeezes gas supplies. Carole noted that diesel is over AUS$4 a litre in places. Inflation is expected to be around 13 per cent by the end of the year, which has put the heat on the workforce to take industrial action for higher wages. Rail workers, nurses, and postal service workers are striking. The lack of Ukrainian sunflower oil has also caused many fish and chip shops to close. The poor are struggling, and food banks are at a breaking point.

Meanwhile, pandemic-induced staff shortages have caused pubs, cafes and shops to reduce their opening days and airlines to cancel flights. Unclaimed luggage is piling up at airports...

Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that he will resign, and the search is on to replace him. The two candidates have been lukewarm about action on climate change, scarcely mentioning the topic during debates. Will the UK’s world-leading climate policies and programs stall?

Carole saw hundreds of onshore and offshore wind turbines and even a few solar farms. She is hopeful that the UK may be able to eliminate its dependency on Russian gas without resorting to increasing fossil fuels. Her experience highlights the ‘magnifying’ influences of climate, pandemics and war and shows how important it is to create resilient, sustainable communities.

It is sobering to note that last financial year, Australia imported 91 per cent of its fuel, mainly from Malaysia, Singapore and China and holds about a month’s consumption in reserve. We are vulnerable to fuel price spikes - as shown by the energy prices soaring in the Eastern States of Australia.

Action: Now is the time to advocate for increased energy efficiency (especially for vehicles), more renewable energy, and incentives to reduce our energy consumption. Here are some ideas on how to use less energy to get you started.



United Nations News

Here is some good news!

It has been years in the making, and it has finally happened. With 161 votes in favour and eight abstentions, the UN General Assembly **has declared access to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment a universal human right.**

In addition, the *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022* has been released. There are some fantastic infographics, a range of human impact stories and a five-minute video that brings home the key points. We still have a long way to go if we are to meet the goals by 2030, but every action we take, no matter how small, helps to make a difference.

Action: Share the good news and explore the SDG Report's online resources.



What is your Present for the Future?

Zonta's education and advocacy programs educate girls, support women's participation in decision-making processes and inspire them to take on leadership roles in their communities.

Every dollar you contribute to the Zonta Foundation for Women's Endowment Fund will help us create a more gender-equal, sustainable world.

Action: *You can celebrate a birthday or special event by giving a Present for the Future to support Zonta's Endowment Fund and send a colourful e-card to acknowledge the occasion.*

Zonta Says NOW
www.zontasaysnow.org.au
zontasaysnow@gmail.com

This email was sent to {{ contact.EMAIL }}
You received this email because you are registered with Zonta Says NOW

Unsubscribe here

Sent by sendinblue

© 2022 Zonta Says NOW, Zonta International District 23