



# Media release

From the Minister for Environment and Climate Change

---

## CELEBRATING A DECADE OF CARING FOR VICTORIA'S BEAUTIFUL COASTLINE

Victoria has celebrated a decade of caring for the state's unique coastline with the announcement of the 10<sup>th</sup> Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence, 2009.

This year's awards were hosted by the Victorian Coastal Council and Coast Action/Coastcare and attracted 38 finalists across 11 different categories.

Victorian Minister for Environment and Climate Change Gavin Jennings presented awards to the winners last night and noted that the mix of entries confirmed a growing community interest in protecting Victoria's coast.

"The Victorian coastline is unique in the world, especially when you consider the magnificent Gippsland Lakes and Ninety Mile Beach complex, our Port Phillip and Westernport Bays, and the spectacularly rugged Shipwreck Coast along our western shores.

"These coastal environments are home to many unique marine species.

"They also offer a range of social, economic and recreational benefits for all Victorians.

"But these same areas are under mounting threat from the predicted effects of future climate change together with the problems posed by uncontrolled population growth along our coastal fringes.

"The Victorian Government, through bodies such as the Victorian Coastal Council and Coast Action/Coastcare, is working hard to prepare us to sensibly manage these future challenges.

"And the annual Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence is one of the best ways I know of to publicise the excellent work that's underway in partnership between the government, its agencies and the Victorian community," Mr Jennings explained.

This year's awards were held at the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron, with the nominated projects submitted by volunteer community groups and government agencies, through to individuals and organisations – all demonstrating a commitment to protecting Victoria's coastline.

"These annual awards recognise and acknowledge outstanding contributions to protecting and enhancing the values of Victoria's coast – be they natural, historical, visual or built.

"For this reason, our winners and runners-up for 2009 include architects, local councils, several community groups, schools and Landcare groups.

"Some of the nominated projects involved excellent coastal foreshore management plans for specific sites, through to programs designed to educate primary and secondary school students about the importance of coastal environmental education," Minister Jennings noted.

"Previous generations saw the management and protection of our coast as a government responsibility, but this important task is now being shared by everyone with an interest in this environment.

"This year's awards honour work of significant and lasting improvements, typically made by schools and community-based groups working on very modest means.

"Their successes will inspire others to get involved, so I congratulate all winners and runners-up for their very worthwhile efforts," Minister Jennings concluded.