

MEDIA RELEASE



Victorian
Coastal
Council



communities caring for our coast

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An Australian-first project which plans to return greater involvement in managing the Lorne to SA border coastline to indigenous communities last night won a 2006 Victorian Coastal Award for Excellence from chair of the Victorian Coastal Council, Diane James.

Ms James presented 11 coastal awards for projects ranging from the Bass Valley Primary School which planted 150 mangroves in the mud flats of Grantville to prevent erosion to a commercial partnership to map the habitats of Victoria's marine coastal parks.

The Kooyang Sea Country Plan won the cultural achievement category for the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust's Kooyang Sea Country Plan. 'Sea Country' is the Aboriginal English expression referring to all the cultural and natural values of coastal land and the sea for which an Aboriginal group has traditional rights and responsibilities.

Ms James said an added benefit of the Kooyang Sea Plan was that indigenous communities in other parts of Australia have started to develop their own plans.

"These awards acknowledge the time and effort that many groups and individuals devote to ensuring that our coast is looked after properly," Ms James said.

"They encourage a message of sustainability and reinforce that Victoria's beautiful coastline is a great asset but also a limited resource.

"Victoria's coast is managed by a wide range of people and groups representing an equally wide range of interests from Government and non-government agencies, committees of management and local government through to businesses and volunteers.

"The Government and other coastal managers are dedicated to the Victorian Coastal Strategy and to ensuring that use and development that does occur in coastal areas is appropriate and sustainable."

Ms James acknowledged the efforts of the thousands of volunteers who give up their time to help look after the coast.

"By taking things like the health of the environment into local hands, communities develop a real sense of ownership and pride in their surrounds.

"The award finalists have made outstanding contributions to Victoria's unique and diverse marine and coastal environments," she said.

The Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence were established by the Victorian Coastal Council in conjunction with the Coast Action / Coastcare program. This is the seventh year of awards.

Over 160 people attended the awards presentation, with representatives from voluntary groups, ports authorities, tourism, local government, community, environment, conservation bodies and government agencies.

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AWARD RECIPIENTS VICTORIAN COASTAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE 2005

Location	Category	Person/Organisation Nominated	Project Description
Sandy Point, South Gippsland	Building & Design	MGS Architects	The Sandy Point House is respectful to its coastal location and far away from the 'look at me' generation of beach houses. The house maintains a small footprint, taking advantage of natural light and ventilation and featuring stormwater harvesting, waste water management, heat exchange and a solar boosted electric hot water supply.
Port Fairy	Coastal Conservation & Management by a Land Manager	Moyne Shire	Biodiversity protection of Griffiths Island, Port Fairy: Griffiths Island supports around 30,000 shearwaters, the only petrel whose breeding ground lies solely in Australia. The Moyne Shire's project balances the protection of these habitats with the need to access the island. The project includes boardwalks and directional bollards to reduce trampling of the shearwater colony.
Corinella, Westernport	Coastal Conservation and Protection by a Community Group	Bass Valley Primary School	Mangrove rehabilitation: Bass Valley Primary School has addressed the problem of erosion – caused by silt from eroding cliffs smothering the seagrass communities – by planting 150 mangroves in the mud flats of Grantville.
Port Fairy/Portland	Cultural Achievement	Framlingham Aboriginal Trust	The Kooyang Sea Country Plan aims at returning greater responsibility for the management of coastal land from Lorne to the SA border to local indigenous communities. It is the first of its kind in Australia, and has sparked similar projects across Australia.
East Gippsland	Education	East Gippsland Waterwatch	Gippsland Lakes Relay 2005 involved 2,500 students from over 75 schools from Warragul to Lakes Entrance. The relay raised awareness about the impact of farming and stormwater on the Gippsland Lakes.
Point Addis/Statewide St Kilda	Innovation Lifetime Achievement	Parks Victoria-Coastal Zone CRC Partnership Zoe Hogg	Mapping the Deep is an exciting partnership to map Victoria's six largest outer-coast marine National parks, and has already revealed previously unknown habitats in Point Addis Marine National Park. Zoe Hogg is a founding member of Earthcare and represents the organisation on the St Kilda Breakwater Cooperative Management Advisory Committee. She is best known for her coordination of the St Kilda Little Penguin study.
Statewide	Media	Marine and Coastal Community Network	Waves is the newsletter of the Marine and Coastal Community Network which draws upon experts from all sectors associated with marine and coastal environments.
Werribee	Water Quality	Melbourne Water Corporation	The Western Treatment Plant upgrade, on the Port Phillip Bay, Werribee, has resulted in a reduction of nutrient loads to the Bay by more than MWC's annual target of 500 tonnes.
Statewide	Outstanding Individual Achievement	Dr Mark Norman	A scientist with an infectious enthusiasm for the marine environment, Mark has discovered more than 150 new species of octopus. He has presented through a range of media outlets, including ABC's Deep South Documentary.
Coronet Bay, Westernport	Species Protection	Dr Tim Ealey	Coronet Bay's 'Dr Mangrove', Tim Ealey has spent the last 15 years attempting to improve the Westernport ecosystem through mangrove and seagrass regeneration, working with the community.

For interview opportunities with award recipients or more detail, contact Felicia Williams (9637 8911) or Julia Davies (9637 8569)