

Annual Report 2005

Australian Marine Conservation Society

The Australian Marine Conservation Society is Australia's voice for our coasts and oceans. We are a national, non-profit charity that has been operating for over 40 years. We are Australia's only environmental organisation that is solely dedicated to protecting the health of our coasts and oceans.

Our core work focuses on:

- Advocating the establishment of marine national parks
- Protecting Australia's marine wildlife and their habitats
- Ensuring that society's use of marine natural resources is sustainable
- Promoting the reduction of pollution and marine debris
- Educating and working with local communities
- Using the best possible science to advocate for best practice
- Providing Australians with the Sustainable Seafood Guide which enables them to choose their seafood responsibly
- Addressing unsustainable and inappropriate coastal development



Although our conservation mandate is wide, the Society works strategically with its thousands of supporters, governments, scientists and industry partners to deliver on our core campaigns. These currently being Marine Protected Areas, Sustainable Fisheries, Threatened Species, Coasts and Climate Change.

AMCS formed in the 1960s to legally contest and defeat an application to mine coral on the great Barrier Reef. This victory led AMCS on to organize Australia's largest sea-based campaign which culminated in the formation of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park World Heritage Area – an international tourist destination and one of the natural wonders of the world.

President's Highlights

The Australian Marine Conservation Society reached a milestone this year. In 2005 the Society celebrated 40 years of protecting our coasts and oceans. We celebrated our milestone with founding members and friends by Brisbane's beautiful Moreton Bay.

In 2005, we held the first of our sustainable seafood charity dinners, as part of our *Sustainable Seafood* program. Award-winning chef, Russel Armstrong, and his talented staff cooked up a delectable array of sustainable seafood - caught or farmed from methods that don't damage our ocean habitats.

In northern Australia and western Australia we continued our work to control targeted shark fisheries and address illegal fishing. Ningaloo Reef Marine Park, the Great Barrier Reef of the west, has also remained a strong focus as we strive for the Ningaloo Coast to be managed holistically and sustainably.

Our Moreton Bay Marine Park seminar series drew in numerous south east Queensland locals to discuss the future of this internationally significant bay, and our Moreton Bay Seagrass Watch activities whale watching trip helped involved locals on-ground with the marine park and our partner Tangalooma Wild Dolphin Resort.

In the temperate south, community participation in our Reef Watch project in Victoria, where divers take a dive that counts and monitor their patch of reef or seagrass, grew steadily. Our annual Great Victorian Fish Count was held in December, and was also a great success.

To conclude the year, the Society held its annual National Workshop where staff and supporters from around the country met in Brisbane to celebrate our wins in 2005 and to plan for a great year of marine conservation in 2006.

Paul Saunders



AMCS President



AMCS Director Kate Davey with Eddie Hegerl AO and Dianne Tarte, former Directors and Life Members of AMCS.

Campaign Highlights

Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide

Public demand for *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide* has remained high since it was launched at Easter in 2004. Over 5000 *Sustainable Seafood Guides* and over 100,000 *3 Step Pocket Guides*,, have been distributed nationwide. Partnerships were struck with PADI Project Aware, Avant Card and Melbourne Aquarium which increased the guide's distribution significantly.

Due to overwhelming public demand, *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide* will be re-launched in 2006 as an expanded edition. We will double the number of species and include useful information about seafood and our health, marine parks and a range of related issues. Our Sustainable Fisheries campaign is strengthened by the guide, which engages the public in our vision to make Australia's fisheries ecologically and economically sustainable.

Sustainable Seafood Dinner – Oct 2005

In October 2005 we held the first of many Sustainable Seafood Charity Dinners in Brisbane. Truly a night of sustainable memories, the dinner was used to highlight the sustainable seafood component of our Sustainable Fisheries campaign, and raise funds to support the campaign's further development. The dinner also provided a perfect opportunity for the Society's supporters to sit back and celebrate over fine food, wine and conversation.

Brisbane's award-winning chef Russell Armstrong was our gracious host at his widely-acclaimed *SEASALT at Armstrong's Restaurant* in the beautiful Inchcolm Hotel in Brisbane.



AMCS guests at the sustainable seafood Charity Dinner in November 2005 at Seasalt at Armstrong's Restaurant in the Inchcolm Hotel.

Marine Parks

AMCS's work in 2005 built on the historic marine conservation achievements of 2004. The Great Barrier Reef and Ningaloo Marine Parks have set a benchmark for public expectations and government policy on multiple-use marine parks.

Together, Ningaloo and the Great Barrier Reef are home to an array of endangered species such as turtles, dugongs, whales, turtles, and whale sharks. Both of these outstanding areas are now considered the world's best-protected coral reefs.

New South Wales

In 2005, after working with local communities and groups in northern New South Wales, the magnificent waters around Byron Bay are now protected in a Marine Park. The NSW Government further committed to protecting the waters around Foster and Myall Lakes, as well as Bateman's Bay in marine parks.



Northern Australia

The Northern Territory's seas, islands, beaches and estuaries are internationally recognised for their natural and cultural heritage. Through AMCS's on-ground conservation work in the north, the Northern Territory Government has committed to establishing a network of marine parks.

Queensland

This year AMCS staff, together with our Moreton Bay Working Group, held bi-monthly public workshops on the natural wonders of Moreton Bay. The workshops were aimed at increasing community awareness and engagement in the rezoning of Moreton Bay Marine Park and were very well attended, demonstrating the considerable public interest in the Bay. Moreton Bay is a beautiful tapestry of islands, beaches, reefs, mangroves, and sea grass beds. Its internationally significant wetlands and other habitats provide homes for a myriad of animals and plants including whales, dolphins, dugongs, sea birds, sharks, rays, crabs and fish.

National

In 2005, AMCS held the fifth national marine park workshop for conservationists around the country. The workshops are in partnership with the Department of Conservation and Heritage and aimed at improving the knowledge and capacity of the conservation groups to engage in marine parks development and management.

AMCS will continue to work closely with conservation groups, the community and the federal and state governments to ensure that our oceans get the protection they deserve.

Commercial Whaling

The year 2005 was a sad year for the global campaign to stop commercial whaling. The Japanese Government intensified its efforts at the International Whaling Commission to increase the kill of minke whales and to commence hunting humpback and fin whales in our neighbouring Antarctic waters. In 2005, the Japanese Government aimed to kill 935 Minke whales and 10 fin whales. In 2007-08 the quota will increase to 50 fin whales and 50 humpback whales annually – under their 'scientific research' program.

We are working diligently with our conservation colleagues to dissuade the Japanese Government from this pursuing this barbaric proposal. Domestic and diplomatic measures, together with international legal actions such as banning Japanese fishing vessels from Australian ports are just some of the options we are pursuing.

To raise funds and support for the campaign, our Society partnered with the Tangalooma Wild Dolphin Resort to hold a whale-watching day. It was a great day on the water, with a full house and spectacular views of breaching humpbacks and significant funds were raised for our Whaling Campaign.



Sharks and Rays

Sharks and rays face significant threats across the globe, including Australia. These fragile and incredibly vulnerable creatures are caught in over 50 commercial fisheries and numerous recreational fisheries in Australia alone and their numbers are plummeting. Thanks to our Sharks and Rays Campaign, we have significantly raised the profile of sharks and rays, created a massive public following to support our work and have reduced the kill of sharks in several highly destructive Australian fisheries.



The increase in foreign illegal fishing in northern Australia has been particularly challenging as sharks are a major target.

Our Society has rapidly responded to this issue, releasing our *AMCS 10 Point Plan on Illegal fishing: protecting Australia's northern seas*, to help guide governments, stakeholders and the community work together on resolving this complex issue.

Caring for the Coasts and Sea of Northern Australia

In 2005, through the support of the Myer Foundation, AMCS worked with the northern Australian community to achieve great outcomes for the conservation of Australia's rich northern marine and coastal environments.

Some of the achievements for the north in 2005 include:

- Putting strong marine conservation objectives in the Northern Territory Parks and Conservation Master Plan, particularly regarding Marine Protected Areas. The Master Plan provides future directions for the conservation of the NT's biodiversity and the continued development of marine reserves over the next 15 years;
- Commencement of the NT Marine Parks community education project;
- Launch of the Major report for the Glyde Point campaign: *Rainforest to Reef just 40 km from Darwin: an assessment of the conservation values of the Gunn peninsula/Vernon islands area and the impacts of the proposed Glyde point heavy industry and residential estate.*
- *Reef just* Increased community and government awareness of the ecological impacts of illegal fishing in the north, including the production of the *AMCS 10 Point Plan on illegal Fishing: protecting Australia's northern seas.*
- Increasing community stewardship for our shark species under threat, together with a winding back of Australia's shark fisheries in our northern oceans and seas.



Community Outreach

Seagrass Watch

In 2005, the Society officially adopted a seagrass survey site as part of the QLD Moreton Bay Seagrass Watch Project. We are now the proud stewards of one of our local seagrass meadows. The Moreton Bay Seagrass Watch Group is in association with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. The project allows us to continue with our scientific research legacy and engage community members directly with Moreton Bay Marine Park.

Great Victorian Fish Count

The first Great Victorian Fish Count was held in 2005. More than 300 scuba divers took part in this initiative which takes 'snapshots' of Victoria's marine reef-fish populations. The 11-day survey was held along Victoria's coast to record the presence or absence of 25 of our most interesting temperate fish species including Victoria's remarkable marine emblem, the Weedy Seadragon.

The Count has been organised by our Reef Watch Victoria supporters, based at Museum Victoria, in partnership with the Port Phillip Catchment Management Authority and the Victorian National Parks Association. Reef Watch coordinator Wendy Roberts said "scuba divers glided over kelp forests, sponge gardens and seagrass meadows in key underwater locations along Victoria's coast recording fish numbers and species".



Marine and Coastal Community Network

AMCS was again successful in receiving \$500,000 from the Department of Environment and Heritage to oversee the management of the Marine and Coastal Community Network (MCCN). MCCN continues to provide an essential role in providing up-to-date information to marine stakeholders and users across the country. For further information visit the website www.mccn.org.au.



Top: Prue Barnard, MCCN National Assistant and AMCS crew conducting a seagrass survey.
Left: The weedy seadragon

With Special Thanks to ...

The Australian Marine Conservation Society's conservation work has been made possible because of the ongoing support from thousands of individuals across the country who donate their time, money, and expertise to ensure our oceans and the wildlife within are protected.

AMCS greatly appreciates the financial and in-kind support from:



The Myer Foundation
Bruce and Sue Shepherd
Customer Community web design
Tangalooma Wild Dolphin Resort
Alltype Printing and Go Boating Magazine
Australian Ethical Investments
Seasalt Restaurant and Sustainable Seafood Charity Dinner Sponsors
(Fosters Group, Koorinal Oysters, Le Cake, Cardinal Seafoods, Vitale,
Daisy Days.)
Tusa for their merchandise support
Billabong for their merchandise support
Oz-Teck for the space at the Dive Expo
Steve Irwin, John Stainton and the team at Best Picture Show for their
support for the grey nurse shark
Customer Community for your wonderful internet support
Glen Cowans underwater artist
Aengus Moran for his beautiful photographs
Powderfinger for their financial and merchandise support
Project Aware for supporting the sustainable seafood program
Donna Bath for her pro-bono legal advice

And all of our wonderful sea guardians!

Financial Overview

It is with great pleasure that I report on a successful financial year for the Australian Marine Conservation Society.

In 2005 the Society's audit report shows a surplus of \$27,488. It is pleasing to report that this surplus will once again allow us to invest in further conservation work in 2006.

Our National Management Committee, staff, branches and volunteers are once again commended for their ongoing passion and commitment to marine conservation and the work of the Society. After 40 years it is truly inspiring to see us still work alongside the community, scientists and the government to achieve real conservation outcomes for our oceans.

In 2005, the Myer Foundation again made the employment of two additional campaigners possible, one dedicated to the Sustainable Fisheries/Seafood Campaign and the other dedicated to protecting Australia's often forgotten northern marine waters. This is our last instalment from the Myer Foundation and 2006 will prove to be a challenge without their incredible support. The financial contribution of these two campaigns to our conservation work has been truly remarkable and we appreciate their professionalism and dedication to our Society.



The launch of our Sea Guardian (monthly giving) Program is a growing success and we are happy to report that many new Sea Guardians have joined the good ship AMCS.



Kate Davey

Director

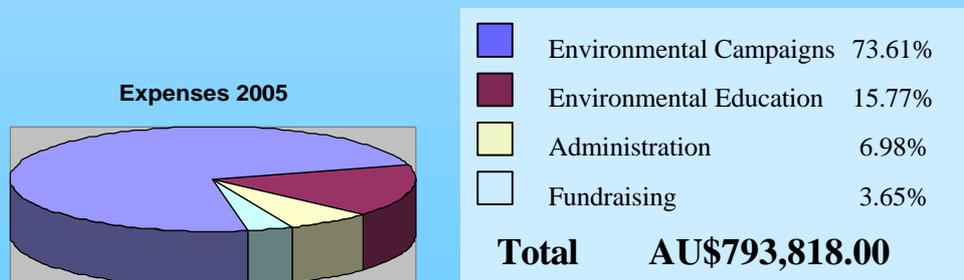


TABLE OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

AUSTRALIAN MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC
 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT*
 FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2005

INCOME	2005	2004
<i>Enviro/Education Campaigns</i>		
Grants – Environment Australia	500,000	500,000
Grants – GNGO	16,500	16,000
Grants – GVEHO	10,000	12,504
Myer Foundation	150,000	150,000
Other Projects	36,297	42,061
Total Enviro/Education Campaigns	712,797	720,565
<i>Fundraising</i>		
Donations	59,079	61,311
Membership	13,968	13,590
Shop Sales	4,590	2,631
Total fundraising	77,637	77,532
<i>Other Income</i>		
Interest received	18,293	21,228
Sundry Income	12,579	0
Total Other	30,872	21,228
Total Income	\$821,306	819,325

EXPENDITURE	2005	2004
<i>Direct Project Expenses</i>		
Coordinators and Project Officers	220,470	113,062
Postage printing and stationary	4,774	12,022
Project Expenses	126,624	195,185
Publications	48,385	107,334
Superannuation Contributions	26,822	24,954
Telephone, Fax and Internet	20,035	22,245
Travel and Conference Expenses	35,350	19,489
Wages	100,969	106,555
Total Direct Project Expense	583,429	600,846
Administration Expenses	210,389	185,948
Net Surplus	\$27,488	\$32,531

*AMCS full audited report is available by calling 1800 066 299

Communications

Turning the Tide (TTT) is AMCS's quarterly magazine. It is sent out to AMCS members and supporters and a range of government and industry bodies. The publications shown reflect our work on sustainable seafood, marine protected areas, shark finning and climate change.

