

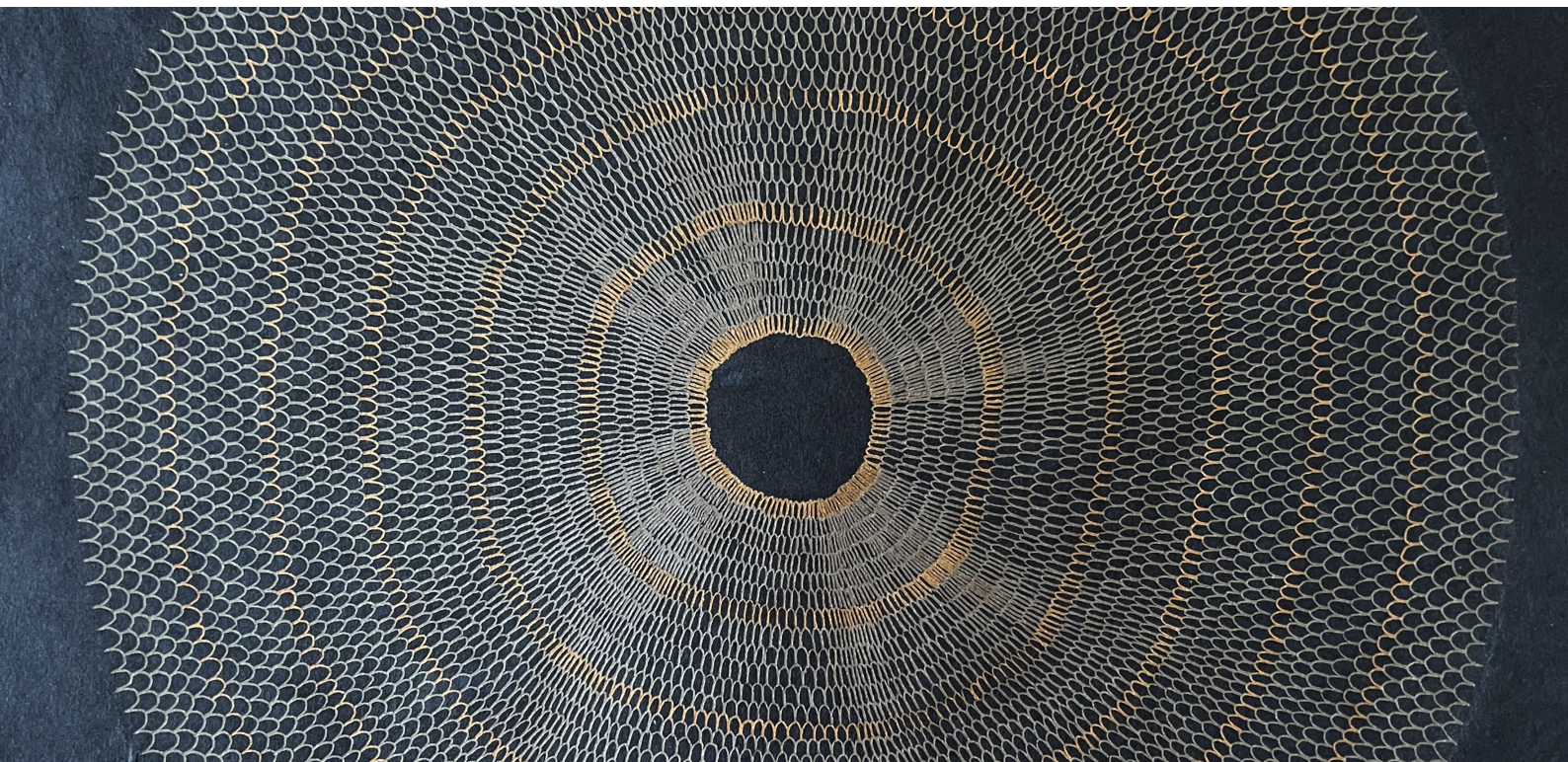


women's
CLIMATE CONGRESS

Annual Report 2021–22

Women leading united action on climate change

...weaving new ways of being together, of governance, of responding to climate change, of building peace and security, human and planetary wellbeing



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Cover artwork: Sally Blake, *Sacred Thought* (detail), 2022. Pen on paper. Sally Blake is a Canberra artist and convenor of the 'Reintegrating the arts' circle of the Women's Climate Congress.

Note on the artwork: Sally describes her series of *Sacred Thought* works as being about the interconnected whole. We chose this one because it combines our principles of interconnection and collaboration, our organisational circles and the theme of weaving threaded through this report.

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WCC vision, values and commitment

Our vision

We share a vision to create climate security by 2030. In this future, women's leadership has helped turn the tide of political culture from polarised discord to collaboration and cooperation. Nurture of life and care for the Earth are at the centre of every government decision.

Our values and commitment

We, a web of women, seek and support wisdom for the common good.

We acknowledge the ancestral wisdom of First Peoples and accept our responsibility as custodians of a precious world that must be nurtured as it nurtures us.

Sharing a great desire to look after the young, we raise our voices, confident in the potential of women to promote positive change for all future life.

As beneficiaries of the industrial age, we acknowledge our responsibility for the present climate and environmental situations with grateful hearts and with lament.

Weary of conflict and polarisation, we resist judgment and blame, embrace uncertainty and encourage mediation and collaboration for a safe passage from climate chaos to climate security.

Listening deeply to the science, we recognise the interconnectedness of all Earth's systems and human influences within those systems. With this in mind, we bring our collective imagination to uncover innovative, equitable and sustainable ways forward. Artistic vision and creativity are at the heart of imagining the necessary transformations.

Connecting head, heart and hands, we will collaborate across all genders to restore nurture of life and care for the Earth to the centre of every decision made at every level, local to national and international.

Qualities of the heart (including compassion, love, empathy, forgiveness) are the basis for true strength and must be reactivated for our survival.

Following in the footsteps of our foremothers, we seize this moment, charged with a realisation of our responsibility to respond to Earth's call and our shared aspirations.



About us

Founded in 2020 in the wake of the Black Summer bushfires, the Women's Climate Congress (WCC) is a network of women across all political views – women who cannot stay silent while the unfolding climate emergency threatens the future of our children and all life on Earth. Based largely in Australia, the WCC is also developing international links with like-minded organisations. With over 600 signed up members covering almost all federal in Australia we are linked to thousands more women through social media and our alliances with other organisations both national and international.

We work with open minds to inspire mediation and collaboration across political parties and across nations to co-create a pathway to a just and sustainable future.

We accept the scientific consensus expressed in the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports and incorporated into the Paris Accord. As beneficiaries of the industrial age, we suspend judgment on the leadership decisions that have brought us here. Our mission is future-focused, and we aim to be a catalyst for restoring climate security and a renewed commitment to care for life on Earth.

We believe that cultural change is needed to rebalance our systems towards compassion, inclusion and collaboration so that nurture of life and custodianship of the Earth are prioritised in all policy decisions.

We welcome women in all their diversity to our organisation and aim to provide a safe space for women to explore together their own priorities and agendas in relation to the big issues of our times, including climate change, so that their voice can be heard.

We believe it is time for women to lead and we give voice to women through local groups, workshops, and national congress. In these gatherings and in our advocacy with elected representatives and influential stakeholders, we aim to express and model the principles and practices needed for the cultural shifts we seek. We promote these principles across all genders and parties to build trust that collaborative processes can serve the common good.

We invite you to explore our second Annual Report and to follow our progress via our website womensclimatecongress.com. Please note that we have used hyperlinks in this document for ease of reading as we are assuming most people will read this report online. All Womens Climate Congress (WCC) information indicated by the links is available on our website at the above address.



Women and gum trees by Honey Nelson from our Climate Earth Art Circle

From WCC founder, Janet Salisbury

After the fire After all the death ... Weaving women singing up renewal.



These words are from a song by Glenda Cloughley, one of the founders of A Chorus of Women — the Canberra group that inspired me to found the Women's Climate Congress in January 2020 during the Black Summer fires.

The Women's Climate Congress (WCC) has come a long way since then. The past 2 years have seen us build our movement, develop our advocacy with parliamentarians and others, roll out our ambitious National Congress of Women initiative, and develop the WCC Charter for Change. Throughout this time, a theme that has most resonated across our work has been one of weaving — women weaving new ways of being together, of governance, of responding to climate change, of building peace and security, human and planetary wellbeing. This theme is reflected in our cover image for this 2022 Annual Report.

Since the last AGM most of our energy was devoted to two major projects:

- designing and delivering the National Congress of Women – a 4 day event with Day 1 in November 2021 and Day 2 in April 2022 — both online — and culminating in a 2 day hybrid face to face and online gathering in Canberra in September 2022.
- drafting our Women's Charter for Change after two years of consultation with women from all over Australia for consideration in draft form at the September event.



At the Albert Hall in Canberra – together at last in September 2022

In other initiatives, we:

- refined our thinking and updated our position papers on climate security, gender-inclusive governance, and building a united national plan for action on climate change
- strengthened our advocacy role with governments and other decision makers, piloted the Neighbourly Conversations project
- advocated for these principles at election time through our nonpartisan social media campaign and wrote to congratulate all women who were elected to Parliament after the May election.
- continued our popular Women's Climate Conversations online series
- ran 'Weaving the Threads Together' online and in-person conversations to gather 'woman thought' ahead of our National Congress events and to inform the development of the Charter.
- increased our membership by almost 100%, undertook more outreach to members and friends across the nation and built stronger international connections
- introduced our private members' platform, Connect.WCC.

These activities are all described in this report.

My personal thanks to all the National Congress hosting team who have met weekly and worked tirelessly for over 18 months, as well as all our volunteers and the many others who have turned an inspiring idea into a reality. We would also like to thank Sally Blake for her generous sharing of her artwork once again this year — particularly our National Congress logo based on Sally's work 'Interconnected' — and Richard Stanford for design support. Huge thanks also to our donors who provide financial support this year. Without you we could not keep doing our most important work.

Looking forward

The result of the federal election in May 2022 brought a welcome increase in the number of women in parliament, including six new community independents — all women. This took the overall gender balance to near parity for the first time, with a higher than equal number of women in the Senate (57%). There was also an increase in diversity overall with more First Nations members and senators and more multicultural representation. This was coupled with a new resolve in government to increase action on climate change and to seek collaboration across parties. These developments were welcomed by the WCC and we are working to build relationships with the new government and other members (particularly women) across all parties.

In the context of these changes in our political environment and the work already done over the past 2 years, 2023 will bring a new phase for the WCC. We will take what we have learnt 'on the road' to create real change. We also have new opportunities for international outreach. To make real headway, we need to increase our capacity at the organisational level – for developing strategy, new activities, comms and, importantly, fundraising.

With the help of all our members and supporters, we are standing ready to take the energy, solidarity and ambition expressed at the National Congress of Women forward in many more ways over the next year.

Women working together

We, a web of women, seek and support wisdom for the common good.

Our structure and our practices are designed to reflect our understanding of how women like to work together. Our organisation chart is a spiral with small circles of women taking on particular tasks and activities related to the organisation and to specific projects. Their work feeds in to and out of a central coordinating Hub, with a Steering Circle acting as a Board for the organisation. Our people are all volunteers – although we hope one day to have the funds to employ staff – and we are grateful to everyone who has supported us in these endeavours.

Organisational circles

Steering Circle: Janet Salisbury, Kirsten Anker, Barbara Baikie, Alison Rose Lyn Stephens with secretariat support by Jessica Ouyang. [Biographies of Steering Circle Members](#) are on our website.

The Hub: Janet Salisbury, Kirsten Anker, Barbara Baikie, Lyn Stephens, Nettie Hulme (Secretariat), Sarah Stitt, Honey Nelson, Michele Smith and Lynne Audsley.

Advocacy and relationships circle: Kirsten Anker and Janet Salisbury (Convenors), Barb O'Dwyer, Toni Hassan with welcome encouragement from Philippa Rowland .

Membership and communications circle: Lyn Stephens (Convenor), Dr Jenny Robinson, Lynne Audsley, Nettie Hulme, Honey Nelson with support from Padmapriya Muralidharan and Iolanthe Mae Phillips for part of the year. This circle takes responsibility for

- **Website re-design and management** Janet Salisbury, Sally Blake and Amelia Meaney
- **e-Update (monthly newsletter)** Lyn Stephens (editor), Janet Salisbury, Nettie Hulme and Lynne Audsley
- **Social media** Nettie Hulme, Padmapriya Muralidharan' Emily Impey and Honey Nelson
- **Connect.WCC** Lyn Stephens, Lynne Audsley and **Dr** Jenny Robinson
- **Book Club** Jenny Robinson.
- **Climate Earth Art Circle** Nettie Hulme and Honey Nelson
- **Coffee and Chat in the ACT** Lynne Audsley and Jenny Robinson
- **Annual Report** Lyn Stephens, Janet Salisbury and Nettie Hulme

Fundraising circle: Kirsten Anker, Sarah Stitt (Co-convenors).

Reintegrating the arts: Sally Blake (Convenor), Glenda Cloughley, Johanna McBride and Meg Rigby

Reaching out to Indigenous wisdom: Honey Nelson (Convenor), Janet Salisbury

Policy and research circle: Janet Salisbury (Convenor), Barbara O'Dwyer and Kirsten Anker

Organisational alliances and networking: Nettie Hulme (Convenor).

Project circles

Women's Climate Conversation series: Janet Salisbury (Curator and host), assisted at different times by co-hosts Kirsten Anker, Barbara Baikie, Nettie Hulme, Lyn Stephens and Jenny Robinson, and supported for publicity and administration by Nettie Hulme, Padmapriya Muralidharan and Emily Impey.

National Congress of Women hosting circle: Janet Salisbury (Convenor), Kirsten Anker, Barbara Baikie, Sally Blake, Barbara O'Dwyer, Catherine Ross (Secretariat, admin and logistics support), Lyn Stephens, Sarah Stitt and Laurann Yen. Many others have assisted with technology and set up for these events (see the National Congress of Women [reports and recordings pages](#) link for details)
Weaving the threads project: Lyn Stephens (Convenor)

Women's Charter for Change writing circle: Janet Salisbury, Honey Nelson, Sally Blake, Barbara O'Dwyer, assisted occasionally by Lyn Stephens.

All of this is to promote the vision and values that the WCC stands for and to provide a space for women to connect together and share what is important to them.

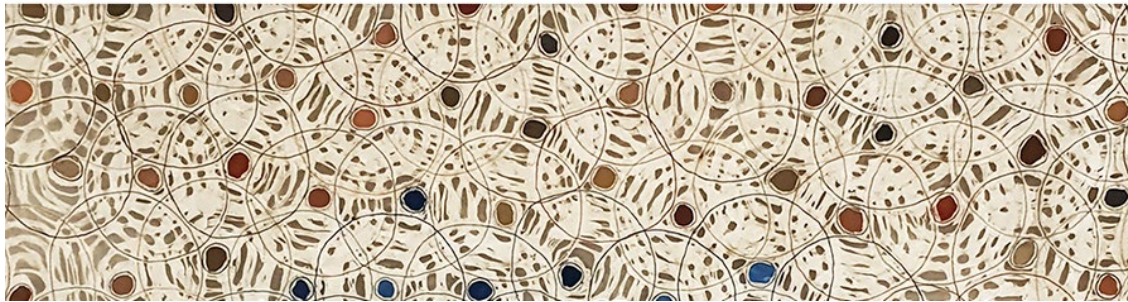


Women connecting at our recent National Congress of Women (photo: Hilary Wardhaugh)

Hosting a National Congress of Women to bring women together for climate action

Following in the footsteps of our foremothers, we seize this moment, charged with a realisation of our responsibility to respond to Earth's call and our shared aspirations.

NATIONAL CONGRESS of women



With thanks to Sally Blake for the use of her artwork *Interconnected* in our National Congress logo.

Overview

The National Congress of Women had a long gestation. It was Inspired by the actions of our foremothers at The Hague in April 1915, 1500 of whom came together from warring and neutral countries to an International Congress of Women, which brought forward far-sighted resolutions to end WW1 and create the conditions for a sustainable peace

We longed to do something similar around climate action. As soon as the Women's Climate Congress was formed in early 2020, we began to plan for an in-person National Congress of Women in 2021 to bring women together to consider ***How can women rising transform our response to climate change?***

COVID -19 intervened and instead we hosted our Congress in three parts over 2021-22

DAY 1 *Women Rising!* *Why Women? Why Now?* – a one day online event in November 2021

DAY 2 *Weaving* – *How can we work together across difference to restore climate balance?* – a one day online event in April 2022

DAYS 3&4 *Renewal* – *How can we save the Earth for ourselves and future generations?* – a 2 day face to face gathering in Canberra in September 2022.

To undertake the large task of creating these 3 events the National Congress of Women Hosting Circle met weekly from early 2021 until September 2022. We aimed to create a welcoming, inclusive and safe space for empowering and authentic conversations among women that could shift the dial on the public discourse and policy agenda around two issues –women's leadership and nonpartisan action on climate change. In keeping with our commitment to diversity and building relationships with First Nations people, we invited First Nations women and women from diverse ages and cultural backgrounds as speakers across all the sessions. To reintegrate the arts into public discourse, we wove artistic expression across each program and we thank the Reintegrating the Arts Circle for their thoughtful and creative work to bring in artistic presentations that connected hearts and heads to our themes.

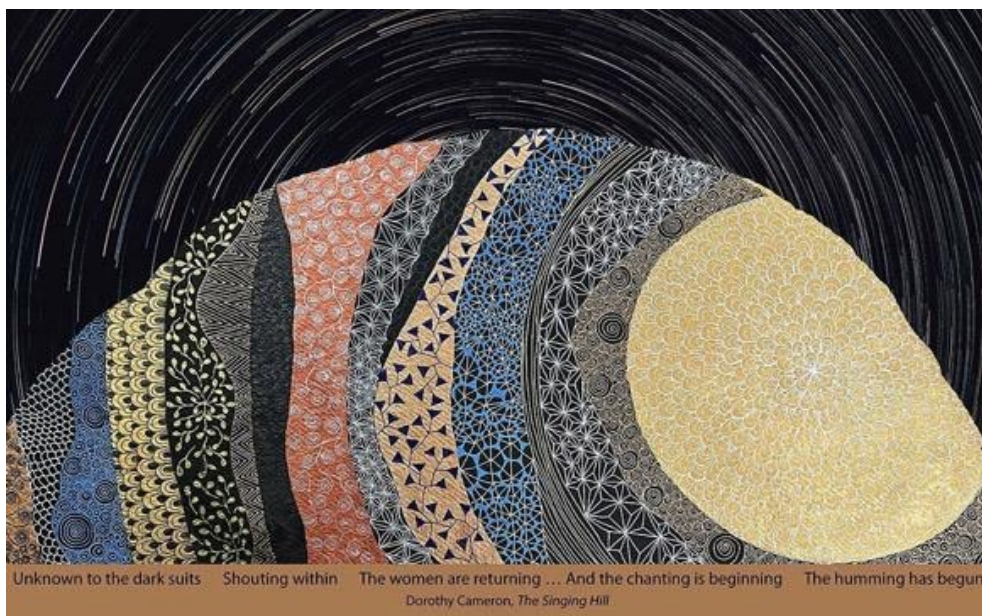
Taken together, the 3 events engaged some 600 women from all over Australia and overseas, and a raft of women leaders from different levels of community and government. The emerging themes from the two online events helped to inform our WCC Charter for Change, a draft of which was considered at the Canberra event in September 2022 (see also our 'Weaving the Threads Together' initiative).

Women Rising! Why women? Why now? November 2021

Wow! My heart and soul have expanded, swirling around the Earth to connect with you all and to all women everywhere! Wow! Absolutely one of the most creative online meeting that I've ever had the privilege of participating in! Inspirational!

From participant feedback

From the Welcome to Country by Ngambri-Ngunnawal elder Dr Matilda House and the powerful opening story of 'The Singing Hill', part of the hidden history of women in the Australian parliament, to the closing of the day with the 1 Million Women 'Anthem', the energy generated by our theme of 'Women Rising!' was palpable — and well captured in the 42 pages of chat generated over the day.



Sally Blake, *The Singing Hill* Fine art print (giclee) of a pen and ink drawing

Referring to the report of the 1915 International Congress of Women, in her opening remarks Janet Salisbury quoted British welfare campaigner and anti-war activist, Emily Hobhouse who wrote:

From the outset of that terrible war [WW1] the International Women's Suffrage Alliance made urgent appeals to leave untried no method of Conciliation and Arbitration to avert the threatened unparalleled disaster. They felt that women had a special note to strike, which they alone could sound.

Linking these ideas to the framing of our Congress, Janet continued:

*Our aim in this National Congress of Women series of events is **to once again find the special note that women alone can sound.** A note that seeks conciliation and arbitration to avert the threatened unparalleled disaster of climate change and that brings a change in the universal attitude – towards peace with the Earth itself and nurture of all life. To open hearts in the service of a safe, sustainable and caring future!"*

Following this opening 3 'Wisdom Conversations' took place with the stimulating group of conversationalists pictured and named below. From these conversations and the interspersed group discussion, the emerging theme was about redefining power – from the current patriarchal 'power over' structures to more feminist approaches of building relationships and collaborating to care for each other and for the Earth.



Wisdom conversation 1 — Why women? Why now? From left to right moderator Dr Janet Salisbury (Founder WCC), Dr Anne Poelina (Traditional Owner and a guardian of the Mardoowarra, Lower Fitzroy River, fellow of Notre Dame and Charles Sturt universities), Dr Helen Haines MP, Cristina Talacko, (President, Coalition for Conservation), Professor Penny Sackett (astrophysicist, former Chief Scientist for Australia), Licia Heath (CEO, Women for Election).

Wisdom conversation 2 — Women are angry about climate change too! From left to right Aoibhinn Crimmins (student activist), moderator Angela Priestly (Co-owner, Women's Agenda), Professor Danielle Celermejer (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sydney, sociology and social policy researcher and author), Janet Lawrence (visual artist).

Wisdom conversation 3 — How can we get there? From left to right Dr Mary Graham (First Nations community leader, academic expert in First Nations history and governance), Natalie Isaacs (Founder, 1 Million Women), moderator Professor Kim Rubenstein (gender and human rights advocate, then Director/Academic 50/50 by 2030 Foundation), Sanaya Khisty (Chief Strategy Officer, Beyond Zero Emissions).

Artistic expression, woven throughout From left to right Dr Sally Blake, Johanna McBride (with A Chorus of Women), Courtney Allen (dancer), Hilary Wardhaugh (photographer, initiator of the #everydayclimatecrisis photographic petition).

Read more about Women Rising! from WCC member Claire Harris who wrote this opinion piece [Launch of a National Congress of Women brings Australian women together for climate action](#) and access a full report and recordings here: [Women Rising. Why women? Why now?](#)

Weaving. How can we work together across difference to restore climate balance? April 2022

Excellent in [its] diversity with a strong focus on different perspectives and avenues of engagement for becoming actively involved in protecting our shared planet. I felt inspired regarding potential avenues for my becoming a more active participant in WCC.

From participant feedback

Our second online event of the National Congress had the theme of ‘Weaving’. Building on the November theme of ‘Women Rising!’, we explored how we can redefine power and work differently, weaving our ideas, concerns and actions together to change the trajectory from climate disaster to climate security. Like weavers, we’re connecting individual, diverse, maybe fragile strings to make fabric that’s useful, beautiful and both flexible and very strong.

Weaving women — opportunities to redefine power: Moderated by Assoc Professor Sarah Motta (Newcastle Business School, Politics and International Relations; Convenor, Women in the New Economy Hub, New Economy Network Australia) the morning began with short presentations exploring worldviews and experiences on working together to redefine and shift power with



Janet Salisbury — WCC Vision and introduction to the Women's Charter for Change

Laurann Yen and Alex Marsden (public policy and governance analysts) — Proposal for a 'Women's Caucus for Climate Change' in the Australian Parliament

Kirsten Anker (founding member, WCC) — 'Neighbourly conversations' — a WCC initiative for conversations across parties

Cristina Talacko (President, Coalition for Conservation) — Climate action: a view from the centre right was programmed but unable to attend at short notice

Karen Cain (former CEO La Trobe Valley Authority) — Transition from fossil fuels - how to make it work

Weaving wisdom across the divide - the role of a transformative process in bringing us together: A keynote presentation by Rhian Williams (independent dispute systems design practitioner) strongly reinforced the emerging themes — the essential preparation, listening deeply and carefully, hearing the wisdom of all the voices, and being brave enough to change systems and processes. If we keep working the same way, we’ll keep getting the same results; we need a new way, and we need to be brave and stand up for the future. This was followed by a conversational response among all speakers and participants online.

Weaving up renewal — caring for future generations and the earth: The afternoon session started with a video presentation by Dr Sally Blake discussing how her visual arts practice explores human's relationship to, and place within, the natural world.

Later, Dr Caresse Cranwell and Deborah Collins from Wicked Elephants Co-op facilitated a workshop exploring how care for the Earth and future generations is inspiring women to step up and engage. While encouraging participants to reflect on their own histories they also showcased journeys to various forms of activism through interviews with Dr Michelle Maloney (Co-founder Australian Earth Laws Alliance, and New Economy Network of Australia), Emma-Kate Rose (Operations Director, The Next Economy; co-founder, Food Connect), Flora Vano (leads ActionAid Vanuatu and the Women I Tok Tok Tugetha initiative which has mobilised 5000 women in the response to climate change).



Taking action — Women's Charter for Change: During this event the strength of 'Weaving' as an image for our work took on a new dimension as example after example was revealed day of women's initiatives and projects that built on this theme. Janet Salisbury continued this by introducing the work to date of the WCC Charter for Change Writing Circle and set out the consultation process for weaving together the thoughts and ideas of with members and others for further development of the Charter.

Access a full report and recordings here: [Weaving. How can we work together across difference to restore climate balance?](#)

Renewal. How can we save the Earth for ourselves and future generations? September 2022

Imagine walking into a room filled with strangers and feeling immediately welcome. The people who are here are keen to share their experiences, learn from each other, connect and grow. The conversations held in this space touch a chord and allow us to create a shared vision.

These words of attendee Padmapriya Muralidharan, were strongly reflected in comments from the other 100 or so women who attended in person and the 50-60 who attended online. If you would like to read more from Padmapriya click on this link for [Reflections on the National Congress of Women](#).

Sunday 11 September— Planting the seeds of renewal

After a Welcome from Dr Matilda House, the program started once more with the prophetic 'Singing Hill' story which so moved women at our first National Congress online event. Glenda Cloughley introduced the video about the women's gatherings at Parliament House in the 1990s. We were thrilled that former senator Jo Vallentine, who had a leading role in the original Singing Hill story travelled from WA to join us at the Congress. The day continued with four panel conversation sessions:

Wisdom of the Elders – A conversation with a First Nations elder and other senior women with lifelong experience in women's leadership in public service and politics, moderated by Dr Janet Salisbury, with:

- Dr Valerie Cooms (Chair, Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation)
- Hon Margaret Reynolds (National President, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; former senator and minister for the Office for Women)
- Jo Vallentine (former senator, peace activist)
- Hon Dr Sharman Stone (Director, Australian Institute of Family Studies; former federal MP, minister and ambassador for women and girls)

Seeds of Renewal 1 — Transforming power through political leadership: A conversation with women in parliament from across the political spectrum to explore the current political culture and the potential for multiparty collaboration on issues that affect women, including climate change. Moderated by Cheryl Durrant, Moderator (climate emergency strategist; Councillor with the Climate Council) with clockwise:

- Karen Grogan (Senator for SA)
- Janet Rice (Senator for Victoria)
- Zali Steggall OAM MP (Federal member for Warringah)
- Bridget Archer MP (Federal member for Bass, Tasmania)



Seeds of renewal 2 — Transforming power through creative vision: Creative vision is essential for transformative changes to occur at individual, community and political levels. Indigenous cultures understand arts and storytelling as central to the transmission of law and culture. This conversation moderated by Dr Sally Blake explored how the voices from science, art and Indigenous wisdom can bring harmony in the face of existential threats from multiple climate crises with:

- Dr Valerie Cooms (Chair, Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation) who grew up with the poetry, storytelling and activism of her aunty, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)
- Dr Janet Salisbury (science communicator, Founder of the Women's Climate Congress)
- Miriam Pickard (performer, theatre director, mythopoetic storyteller)
- Alison Plevy (Founder and Director, Australian Dance Party).



From left to right: Dr Sally Blake, Miriam Pickard, Dr Valerie Cooms, Alison Plevy and Dr Janet Salisbury share a light-hearted moment during the *Transforming power through creative vision* conversation (photo: Hilary Wardhaugh)

Seeds of renewal 3 — Transforming power through community and business leadership: This conversation moderated by Dr Kate Auty (Senior Research Fellow, Melbourne Climate Futures, University of Melbourne), explored the insights of community and business leaders responding to climate change, including the interface between immediate actions to secure a safe climate and the more profound transformation of governance needed to ensure long-term wellbeing with:

- Sam Mostyn AO (President, Chief Executive Women; non-executive director and sustainability adviser, with a long history of governance roles across business and community sectors)
- Charlie Wood (Campaigner, organiser, and policy advisor across the environmental movement. Former Campaigns Director for 350.org Australia, and Australian Youth Climate Coalition)
- Sophia Hamblin Wang (Chief Operating Officer, Mineral Carbonation International, MCI)
- Emma Garlett (First Nations legal academic; Industry Fellow, Sustainable Minerals Institute, University of Queensland),

Following this our programmed speaker, Senator the Hon Jenny McAllister, Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy was unable to join us because parliament was shut down after the death of the Queen. However, we welcomed Elise Buckle, Co-founder, SHE Changes Climate (SCC) online from

Switzerland who told how SCC promotes equal representation of women at all levels of governance for action on climate change, including at COP. WCC is collaborating with SCC to take this message to COP27. We also appreciated an engaging presentation from Rania Makarios of the Egyptian Embassy who spoke about that country's preparation for COP 27.

The formal program of the day concluded with 'Songs for Renewal' – 'Hymn to Gaia' and 'The Promise' introduced by the composer Glenda Cloughley and sung by A Chorus of Women.



Some of the inspiring conversationalists from our 2 day National Congress of Women event.

At the evening reception: WCC member Sophia Fletcher, a singer/songwriter/musician from northern NSW, sang her new song *Extinction is forever* to open the reception.



Then we were thrilled to welcome His Excellency Mr Armando Vargas Araya, the Costa Rican Ambassador, and his wife, Ms Maria C Gusman. Click on the link to hear his *inspiring speech* – including an invitation to the WCC to visit Costa Rica to learn from their legislated 50-50 approach to gender equality in policy making and their plan to achieve a decarbonized economy with net-zero emissions by 2050.

Ms Maria C Gusman, Janet Salisbury and HE Mr Armando Vargas Araya, the Costa Rican Ambassador (photo: Hilary Wardhaugh).

During the evening Natalie Isaacs (Founder, 1 Million Women) launched her new book *Right Here, Right Now — How women can lead the way in the climate emergency*, and we enjoyed a song from Bronwyn Kelly — a songwriter, lyricist, composer, and Founder, Australian Community Futures Planning, who presented on this on the second day of the National Congress.

Monday 12 September: New Growth

The opening short but exquisite song, 'She Spins' – written by Meg Rigby, sung by A Chorus of Women with visuals by Sally Blake – captured the essence of women 'healing, holding, making, moulding' and 'breaking, binding, weaving, winding' ... 'catching scattered dreams' for transformation to a better future.

Pefi Kingi (Pacific Australian Women's Association) followed with an inspirational address – 'letter to my granddaughter' – which moved some of us to tears. And then we turned our attention to the changes we want to see.

New shoots and the Women's Charter for Change: The day included three short presentations:

- *'Climate Compact'* – *A national plan for action on climate* by Professor Kim Rubenstein (law professor, citizenship expert, human rights advocate; inaugural convenor, ANU Gender Institute; independent ACT senate candidate, 2022)
- *Australia Together* – *Transforming power through long term integrated planning* by Dr Bronwyn Kelly (Founder, Australian Community Futures Planning)
- *The public good: a renewed 'why' for our times* by Dr Millie Rooney (National Coordinator, Australia reMADE)

These presentations set the scene for eight small group conversations on each of the actions in the WCC draft Charter for Change. Participants were invited to consider these questions:



What comes alive in you in response to this call to action?

How could the WCC bring this aspect of the Charter to life - as a call to action at the national level?

What other ideas do you have for action at a local, community and personal level?

Responses were recorded for further consideration and to finalise the Charter after the Congress .

Working together on the Charter (photo: Jenny Robinson)

At the end of the day: The final session of the formal program was a circle conversation among all participants about learnings from the 2 days and actions we could all take to make the WCC vision and the Charter real.



Ending the Congress in circle together (photo by Jenny Robinson)

We enjoyed this spirited and inspiring gathering exploring the theme of *Renewal* and it was thrilling to welcome so many women in person and online to share this time together. Padmapriya's concluding reflections summarised perfectly how many of us felt:

The full circle of ... the NCW with its inspiring selection of speakers brought home many important lessons for me. The importance of diversity. Of creating support. Of showing up. Speaking up. Of bringing up the ones that come behind you. I learned from every session. But I also learned in the sidelines of the session. During the tea breaks and lunch breaks when I spoke with women with a wide range of interests and careers who all care about climate action. We all have different life experiences. And here we were at the Congress, listening to each other, cheering each other on, coming together for a shared vision for the future.

Access a full report and recordings here: [Renewal. How can we save the Earth for ourselves and future generations.](#)

Midwifing the Women's Charter for Change

Connecting head, heart and hands, we will collaborate across all genders to restore nurture of life and care for the Earth to the centre of every decision made at every level, local to national and international.

In addition to the input from our National Congress of Women events we have gathered the 'woman thought' of 1000s of other women via our *Weaving the threads together* project, our Women's Climate Conversations series, Members' Circles and other activities. We have laughed and cried together and heard over and over of the solidarity that women feel – across ages, across cultures and across political parties – and their burning ambition for action on climate, rooted in care for future generations and the Earth.

As much as we possibly could we have poured everything we have learned from these conversations into the '[Women's Charter for Change](#)'. In saying this we also acknowledge and celebrate that 'women' are a diverse group. Intersecting identities within the group and individuals lead to unique experiences and responses to climate change and other issues, which we seek to recognise and address. We have also drawn on values expressed in other national and international frameworks.



A participant at the National Congress of Women reviews the draft Charter (photo: Hilary Wardhaugh).

After numerous redraftings in consultation with WCC members and others, a penultimate draft was presented at the Canberra event for further feedback and input. The final document (see below) is to be presented to parliament in late 2022. Underpinned by more detailed WCC position papers available on our website, the Charter will provide the framework for future WCC advocacy and activities.

The Charter calls for *immediate* action for climate security in three areas:

- Embrace gender-balanced, inclusive governance
- Take responsibility
- Create a unified national plan

It also outlines actions for *long-term* human and planetary wellbeing:

- Listen and learn from First Nations knowledge
- Uphold intergenerational equity and rights of all Earth life
- Elevate compassion and kindness in government
- Support artistic imagination and creative thinking at the centre of society
- Create paths and policies for respect, nonviolence and peace
- Adopt life-sustaining economic models and values
- Encourage citizen participation in governance
- Support education fit for purpose into the future.

The target audience is government, business, nongovernment organisations, communities and individuals. By working together across diverse interests and following scientific advice we are better prepared for the existential challenges we face.



Reintegrating the arts

Listening deeply to the science, we recognise the interconnections of all Earth's systems and human influences within those systems. With this in mind, we bring our collective imagination to uncover innovative, equitable and sustainable ways forward. Artistic vision and creativity are at the heart of imagining the necessary transformations.

The WCC takes seriously the truth that science and hard facts alone do not capture people's feelings and hearts in a way that makes change possible. This is particularly relevant to the fundamental shifts, systemic change and earth-centred thinking needed for real action on climate change. This reimagining is the work of artists.

Four Canberra artists form a Re-integrating the Arts circle seeking to ensure that this role for the arts once again becomes fully part of the ways society operates around the big issues of our time. In Indigenous cultures the arts are integral to all aspects of knowledge-sharing and governance, but this connection has been lost in industrialised cultures.



A key activity this year was working with the National Congress of Women Hosting Circle to integrate the arts into the program of Congress events through art, poetry, music and dance.

A Chorus of Women has been a close associate of the WCC over the past two years and we are grateful for their musical contribution to re-integrating the arts and deepening the impact of our work.

WCC members, Johanna McBride, also Musical Director of A Chorus of Women (foreground) with singers Kirsten Anker and Marilyn Jenkins (background)
(Photo: Sally Blake)

Reaching out to Indigenous wisdom

We acknowledge the ancestral wisdom of First Peoples and accept our responsibility as custodians of a precious world that must be nurtured as it nurtures us.

The WCC has a commitment to building relationships with First Nations women. The face-to-face gatherings initiated in Canberra in 2020-21 sadly did not continue after the various COVID lockdowns. Over our three National Congress of Women events, we have built a relationship with Ngambri-Ngunnawal Elder, Dr Matilda House, who has generously supported our events with a smoking ceremony and welcomes. We have also invited First Nations women as guest conversationalists across most sessions of our National Congress of Women events as well as other events and these contacts have yielded ongoing conversations. [See this paper by Honey Nelson](#) that underpinned discussions for the WCC Charter for Change.

This work will be expanded and developed further in the coming year. Contact circle convenor, Honey Nelson, at womensclimatecongress@gmail.com if you would like to join this activity.

Advocating for women and united action on climate

Weary of conflict and polarisation, we resist judgment and blame, embrace uncertainty and encourage mediation and collaboration for a safe passage from climate chaos to climate security

We make contact with parliamentarians and decision makers at all levels of governance, business and with community leaders to build relationships and advocate for our vision. From time to time we initiate coordinated campaigns around specific issues (such as at election times, COP meetings etc).

Since the formation of WCC in 2020, members of this circle have met with numerous federal and state politicians, advisers and other decision makers, built relationships with women leaders across all parties, and hosted activities to promote nonpartisan collaboration. We wrote to congratulate all women elected to parliament in the 2022 elections and met with several of them to connect around the priorities for women and climate as we see them at the WCC.

Kirsten Anker is the convenor of our Advocacy and Relationships circle, and we welcome new members and ideas. Contact Kirsten at womensclimatecongress@gmail.com

Supporting the global call for 50:50 gender representation at the COPs

Ahead of the COP26 in Glasgow in November we strengthened our advocacy role as set out in this media release [Independent women's organisation wants more Australian women at climate talks and urges stronger emissions pledge](#).

Prior to the COP27 in Egypt the WCC was a collaborating partner in the advocacy work of the UK-based international group [She Changes Climate \(SCC\)](#). Their Co-founder, Elise Buckle. Spoke to us from Geneva at the September NCW and the WCC was a signatory to their [Open Letter to the COP27 Presidency](#).

We also hosted the opening session of the She Changes Climate global initiative 'Women Leaders – Climate Ambition Summit' on 4 November 2022 ahead of COP27. This round-the-world online event passed through each world time zone starting in Australia. Moderated by Janet Salisbury, the panel comprised:

- Delphine O. Ambassador at large for Women (France) Secretary General for the Generation Equality Forum (Beijing+25)
- Kylea Tink MP, Independent member for North Sydney, Australian government
- Sharon Bhagwan Rolls. Regional Representative, Shifting the Power Coalition and Pacific Island Feminist Alliance for Climate Justice.
- Dr Virginia Marshall Australian First Nations academic, lawyer, specialist in Indigenous water rights, member of the Australian Government Climate Change Authority.

Our Policy Dialogue session gained appreciative feedback from participants. Here are some key points that emerged from the session

- Climate justice is interconnected with gender justice and without women's perspectives and full participation (not just 'fitting in') at the policy table, climate responses will not achieve climate security for all.

- COP needs to broaden its base and its capacity to listen to a diverse range of stakeholders – including those who are at the forefront of climate impact such as the Pacific – using proven processes to enable inclusion of differing viewpoints and interests (such as those used at the Generation Equality Forum, Beijing+25)
- Indigenous knowledge, eg Indigenous Australian’s fire technology, needs to be acknowledged, respected and included in policy making and implementation
- Climate change is a global issue and policy responses demand collaboration, must not be siloed and must be proactive as well as reactive, eg climate change impacts peace and security issues so sound policy responses to climate can reduce the risk of war.



The Women's Climate Congress is delighted to be partnering with SHE Changes Climate for this event

Women's Climate Congress is hosting this session:
 Policy Dialogue: Transforming political leadership to meet the climate challenge
 Friday 4 November 8.00 – 8.45 pm (AEDT/Sydney/Canberra)

Contributors
Dr Virginia Marshall
 Australian First Nations academic, lawyer, specialist in Indigenous water rights, member of the Australian Government Climate Change Authority
Kylea Tink MP | Australian Member of Parliament (Independent, North Sydney)
Sharon Bhagwan Rolls
 Regional Representative, Shifting the Power Coalition & Pacific Island Feminist Alliance for Climate Justice
Delphine O
 French Ambassador-at-large for Gender Equality, Secretary General for the Generation Equality Forum (Beijing +25), former member of the French National Assembly






The purpose of this session is to champion the importance of women's equal and visible representation at the decision making table for national and global action on climate change. Women are leading change. It's time for COP to catch up.

Moderated by Dr Janet Salisbury, Founder, Women's Climate Congress

These are complementary to the key ‘asks’ from the open letter that SHE Changes Climate sent to the COP Presidency in September:

- Assure and showcase a 50:50 balanced representation of men and women at the high-level team for COP27: embracing women’s equal participation, supporting gender equality, and ensuring a transparent and accountable COP27 process.
- Active transparency and accountability for climate solutions to demonstrate inclusiveness
- Demonstrate global leadership by ensuring Egypt’s updated Nationally Determined Contribution includes a gender analysis and commitment to tackling gender inequality via action on reducing

emissions and calling on all Parties to do the same in line with the Lima Work Program on Gender established in 2014.

With recommendations collated from across the summit, SHE Changes Climate created a strong message from the women of the world to COP27 and we were proud to be invited to play a lead role in developing a powerful global voice for women. Here's a link to the final [Women Declare Emergency statement](#) which was launched at COP27. It leads with this quote from WCC Founder, Janet Salisbury

We must be bold in what we're really asking for – for change. We need to stand up and ask for it.

Supporting the #everydayclimatecrisis Visual Petition to Parliament



Over 2021-22 we were pleased to publicise and support the #everydayclimatecrisis Visual Petition initiated by Hilary Wardhaugh, photographer and WCC member. Hilary called out to all women and nonbinary people of Australia to create a visual petition comprised of images about Australia's climate crisis, country-wide.

Photo: Alicia Payne MP accepting the petition from Hilary at Parliament House

Hilary received 1248 images documenting the immediate effects of climate change on society, the environment and our psyche. Launched by The Hon Linda Burney MP on 10 Feb 2022 at PhotoAccess in Canberra, accepted by Alicia Payne MP Member of the House of Representatives on 9 June in front of Parliament House and tabled by Alicia in the first sitting week of the new parliament in July 2022, when she also made a special mention of the work of the WCC. Here's the link to [Alicia's speech in Parliament](#). The petition has also been accepted by the National Library of Australia.

Promoting united action on climate change

We continued to advocate for a mediated and inclusive process for planning and implementing decisive action on climate change in Australia, and we updated our [Proposal to government for an inclusive process to address climate risks](#) to reflect the changing political context. Promoting this approach will be a key part of our advocacy work in the coming year.

Promoting the formation of a Women's Caucus in parliament

The WCC has consistently advocated for a multiparty 'Women's Caucus' in parliament to create a space where women can bring their own leadership style, priorities and a women's lens to policy development and debate. In the US a **Congressional Women's Caucus** was formed in 1977 and had provided a place for congresswomen and senators to work together on issues of common concern for women. Many other countries also have a multiparty women's caucus.

According to research, female politicians are more likely to **substantively advance women rights** in areas such as pay equity, violence against women, health care and family policy. Also, research has shown that **women in government tend to work in more collaborative and bipartisan ways** and employ a more democratic leadership style. With the advent of many more women in parliament following the 2022 elections this idea may capture the spirit of the times and we will continue to advocate for it over the coming year.



The spirit of WCC appears over the Pool of Reflection in Parliament House. Image: Sally Blake

Connecting and learning with our members

Sharing a great desire to look after the young, we raise our voices, confident in the potential of women to help positive change for all future life.

Our members are the lifeblood of the organisation. Without the input and support of members the WCC could not exist. We would particularly like to thank everyone who has connected with us over the past year through our Women's Climate Conversations series, the *Weaving the threads together* project, our Members' Circles and via other feedback and contact. Knowing that you are out there supporting what the WCC is aiming to do gives encouragement and energy to all of the core working groups at the WCC. We thank all of the hundreds of women from all over Australia who have attended and enriched our work through their reflections, ideas and energy.

Since our last report, we have almost doubled our signed-up membership to around 600 women, ranging from those in their 20s to their 80s and covering more than two-thirds of all Federal electorates. We have been pleased to also welcome a small number of women from overseas. Beyond that, our contacts and social media followers bring our numbers well into the thousands.

Members' circles

Since our first Women's Climate Conversation in 2020, we have offered over 50 online events for members and others. Around half of these have been simple conversation circles on topics of general interest to WCC members and more directed consultations leading up to the first draft of the Women's Charter for Change and then commenting on draft versions (as part of our 'Weaving the threads together' project).



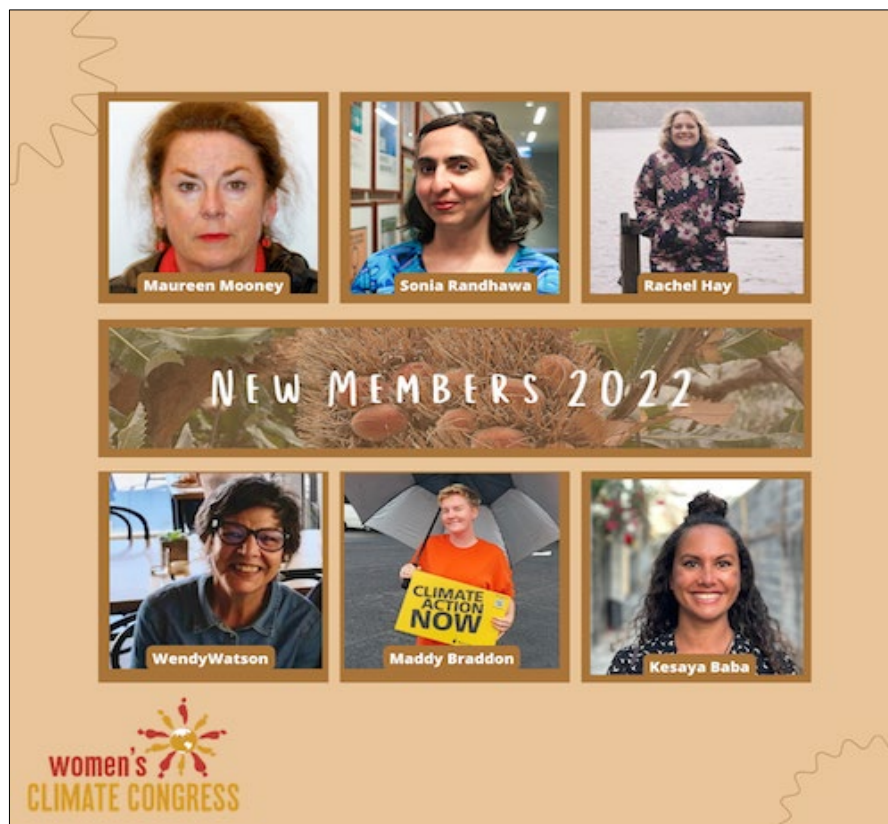
One of our Members' Circles talking about the place of the Arts in our work

A snapshot of six new members

Maureen Mooney: *I have joined the WCC because it inspires me to know women can move forward with compassion and creativity.*

Sonia Randhawa: *As a feminist, a mother and a person terrified by our lived experience of the climate catastrophe, coupled with dread of what is yet to come unless we act, the Women's Climate Congress seemed like a natural place to both amplify the work I'm already doing and also contribute to the climate movement in a new way.*

Rachel Hay: *I believe that climate change is the biggest issue confronting my generation. . I joined the Women's Climate Congress because they encourage women to become leaders for climate action in their community.*



Wendy Watson: *I joined the Women's Climate Congress because I believe women have something different to offer the climate debate. I also don't often hear women's voices in these debates and am keen to get more women's perspective of how to address this crisis.*

Maddy Braddon: *Described as a vibrant local change-maker with a focus on climate justice and building community resilience through creativity, intersectionality and collaboration.*

Kesaya Baba: *As a Fijian/Australian woman I feel passionately about climate change and Australia's role in contributing to and tackling the climate emergency. Women all over the world are disproportionately affected by climate change and are pivotal to addressing it; I feel that the Women's Climate Congress helps bring these important points to the wider discussion here in Australia.*

Weaving the Threads Together

Weaving the Threads Together (WTT) was a women's circle conversation project which formed part of our preparation for hosting the National Congress of Women. It enabled women from all over Australia to join us on the Congress journey by contributing to the themes of this national event and to the drafting of the Women's Charter for Change. Overall, 16 conversation circles were offered across three stages of the project:

- Stage One, held from August to November 2021, explored the theme of the first online event Women Rising. Click on the link to read [Weaving the Threads Together Combined Harvest](#)
- Stage Two, held from February to April 2022, focussed on the theme of the second online event in April Weaving. *How can we work together across difference to restore climate balance?*
- Stage Three of WTT, held over July - August 2022 considered an early draft of the Women's Charter for Change and added considerably to the breadth and depth of this document.

We are deeply grateful for the insights and ideas contributed by all women who participated in this project.

Earth Climate Art Circle

This Circle was set up to provide everyday members whether they can claim to be 'artists' or not with an outlet for sharing feelings about climate change and love of the Earth. The opportunity is there to share through photos, drawings, doodles, shapes, craft work, paintings – of places, skies, waters, Earth life, Womanhood, people, creatures, fancies – or through story, a poem, or music and lyrics, a travel tale, a short video – even limericks or cartoons! Images are shared on WCC.Connect and instagram #earthclimatearts. Here's an example from inaugural WCC member Judy Clingan, who is a musician and visual artist.

Still hoping by Judy Clingan



Here's my self-portrait from mid-2020. In early 2020 I was severely traumatised by the fires, with my ex and quite a few friends needing to be evacuated multiple times, and some losing homes. I contacted my eastern Australian Wayfarers (singers I perform with from all round Australia and overseas) to join me in putting on a huge climate-conscious concert which I called NEW LIFE - NEW HOPE. We ended up with a choir of about 70 and an orchestra of about 20. I and other composers wrote new pieces for it, as well as revisiting some pieces we had previously sung. The concert was on 16th March 2020 - we raised \$4000, which I sent to four wildlife and bush regen places on the south coast - and then Covid struck the next day, and Australia's consciousness of what climate change has been doing to our planet was buried under months - years, in fact - of a totally other preoccupation. And so here I am in about July 2020, I call this artwork STILL HOPING. (Behind

me is the poster for the concert). In my first version of my face I was in fact looking almost despairing; I changed it to reflect maybe some hope." [@judy_clingan](#)

To join this circle or to send in an artwork to share contact the co-convenors Nettie Hulme and Honey Nelson at womensclimatecongress@gmail.com.

Connect.WCC

We set up Connect.WCC during the year, which was quite a mammoth task, but one we hope will bring stronger connection with and among our members. Connect.WCC is a database for members which also acts like a private online community centre – where members can pop in from time to time, to look around, see who’s there, check out the noticeboard, perhaps have a chat, maybe join a group. As with any community centre, it can only be a great place to visit if people come along and feel comfortable to share information and build connection. Members of the Connect.WCC team moderate the site and will focus on promoting more engagement via Connect.WCC in 2023. Please contact Lyn Stephens, Lynne Audsley or Jenny Robinson at info@womensclimatecongress.com for more information.

Book Club

The Book Club Circle meets every six weeks or so online to enjoy each other’s company and share reactions to contemporary books related to the WCC’s core values and actions. The conversations have often explored the impact of societal structures on women and the paradoxical demands on all of us as we handle everyday life in a time of existential threat. Each gathering draws a different mix of participants who share their unique perspective on the book for the benefit of all. This year we have had our understanding expanded through these books:



A report on each book club conversation is available on the [Connect.WCC blog](#). Book club dates are advertised via our newsletter and via social media. All are welcome.

As 2022 draws to a close we would like to acknowledge the contribution of our outgoing Book Club convenor, Dr Jenny Robinson, who initiated this valuable addition to the WCC members repertoire and has hosted this event for the past two years.

Coffee and Chat in the ACT

This year Lynne Audsley and Jenny Robinson set up Coffee and Chat at a local café for members and friends in Canberra and surrounds. So far, we have met three times. It has been fun and a great opportunity to meet informally and to talk with other local women passionate about collaborative action for climate change – and other things – over a cup of coffee. We'd also love it if members in other areas were interested to set up something similar.

Contact Lynne or Jenny. Contact Lynne or Jenny at womensclimatecongress@gmail.com if you would like some advice on how to do it.



Communicating our vision and ideas

As beneficiaries of the industrial age, we acknowledge our responsibility for the present climate and environmental situation with grateful hearts and with lament.

Hosting the ongoing Women's Climate Conversations series

Our popular Women's Climate Conversation online series continued in 2021-22 with conversations from a range of eminent and inspiring women. The program was curated and moderated by Janet Salisbury and enriched by comments and questions from our audiences which comprised over 1000 women in total. We are grateful to all of the women who joined us as lead conversationalists and everyone who joined as audience. Here are some of the topics since our last report:

Women call for a unified plan for action on climate change with Kerry Chikarovski former NSW Liberal Party leader and Cheryl Durrant, Climate Emergency Strategist.

Working together across difference to achieve climate balance with Helen Dalley-Fisher, convenor of the Equality Rights Alliance and Sienna Aguilar, passionate gender equality advocate and researcher.



Our conversationalists and hosts for *Working together across difference to achieve climate balance*.

Changing Climates: Equality Today for a sustainable tomorrow with Victoria McKenzie-McHarg, Strategic Director, Women's Environmental Leadership Australia (WELA) and Dr Zohl dé Ishtar, social justice advocate, author and co-founder (with Elders) of the Kapululangu Aboriginal Women's Law and Culture Centre, Wirrimanu Community.

What really counts? Women speaking out for change with Jane Caro AM, broadcaster and social commentator and Dr Jane Gleeson-White, regular commentator on economics and sustainability

Women Rising! – a new name and a new masthead for our monthly newsletter

This year we continued to publish a monthly e-update for members and other contacts, a circulation of almost 2000. Many thanks to Lyn Stephens, Nettie Hulme –especially for the revamp and renaming of our newsletter – and Lynne Audsley for their ongoing work on maintaining regular communications with our members and the world.



A new look website

The website is the gateway to our work and the repository of our history. This year we updated and simplified this important part of our communications infrastructure and outreach. Huge thanks to Sally Blake for designing the new look and to Sally and Janet Salisbury for reviewing our old website and developing the content for the new one. [Check out our new look here.](#)

Media

We have increased our traditional media exposure over the past year with help from communications consultant Jacqui Ooi and acknowledge that this is an area we need to develop more in the coming year.

Social media

Grateful thanks to Nettie Hulme, Padmapriya Muralidharan and Emily Impey who lifted our profile on the 'socials' with a year's worth of engaging images and lively text on Facebook, twitter and Instagram. We are also increasing our connections with new networks via LinkedIn.

Media releases

28 July 2022: [Women leading the call for collaborative action on climate change.](#) Canberra to host historic women-led event on climate action this September

25 May 2022: [Women welcome the prospect of doing politics better.](#) The Women's Climate Congress has welcomed the longed-for prospect of Australia having more women active across the parliament with increased agency to end the divisive 'climate wars'.

21 September 2021: [Independent women's organisation wants more Australian women at climate talks and urges stronger emissions pledge](#)

22 June 2021: [Sorrow over Great Barrier Reef UNESCO announcement](#)

21 June 2021: [Joyce urged to listen to the National's natural constituency and embrace climate targets](#)

Radio

Yass Radio 100.3FM [Conversation with Kath Kovac for her show 'The Women's Room', 11 August 2022](#)

Podcasts from our Women's Climate Conversations 2021 online series for Canberra Radio 3CR by Congress member Rebecca Horridge.

Published articles

Women's Climate Congress aims to change public discourse, Canberra Weekly, 11 August 2022 *an interview with Abbey Halter, Canberra Weekly*

It's time to shift the course from climate disasters to climate security, Canberra Times, 6 August 2022 *Opinion piece in Canberra Times by Janet Salisbury*

Women's Agenda article, 10 March 2022 *Australia needs a national action plan on climate change with more women at the table by Janet Salisbury*

Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture Engage newsletter, July 2021 *Women Rising*

Connecting with other organisations

Connecting head, heart and hands, we will collaborate across all genders to restore nurture of life and care for the Earth to the centre of every decision made at every level, local to national and international.

We know we are stronger together. At the WCC we want to work closely with organisations who share our goals and aspirations regarding raising women's voices for urgent and united action on climate change. We actively look for opportunities to cross-promote each other's messages and events in newsletters and across all the 'socials'. Wherever possible we attend meetings and conferences of aligned organisations. We also invite members of other organisations to participate in our monthly Women's Climate Conversations, National Congress of Women events and to contribute to the development of the Women's Charter for Change.

We are grateful for the stimulation and extended reach provided by our connections with many other organisations with similar visions particularly:

<p>Womens Environmental Leadership Australia (WELA) She Changes Climate Equality Rights Alliance (ERA) The Gender Institute at ANU Womens Earth and Climate Network International (WECAN) The Shift (an email network concerned with gender equality and inclusion) New Economy Network Australia (NENA) March4Justice</p>	<p>Climate Action Network Australia (CANA) A Chorus of Women Womens Agenda Charter for Compassion Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition Coalition for Conservation Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Pacific Australian Womens Association (PAWA)</p>
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Nettie Hulme is convenor of our Organisational Alliances circle.
Contact her for more information at womensclimatecongresss@gmail.com

Highlights from our connections with other organisations

Equality Rights Alliance Annual Member Meeting.

Janet Salisbury represented us in person with Barbara O'Dwyer online at the Annual Member Meeting of the ERA, held in Sydney on 2-3 June. With over 60 member organisations, advocating for women's equality, women's leadership and recognition of women's diversity the ERA is the largest of six National Women's Alliances funded by the Commonwealth Government.

The meeting included a report on ERA's annual activities, short presentations by individual member organisations, a workshop on defining economic security for women and girls, and expert panels on future feminism and intersectionality, and on quotas in parliament and business.



Left to Right: Toni Hassan, ERA Policy Coordinator and WCC member; Janet Salisbury; Helen Dalley-Fisher, ERA Snr Manager

The workshop on economic security covered draft policies on work and childcare, welfare and other social protections, participation in public spaces, community and business, health, housing, education and training, integrity and climate and biodiversity. It also supported a drastic reduction in Australia's emissions by 2030 and phasing out coal and gas with a roadmap for just transition.

[Here's a full report](#) on this important meeting for women everywhere from Barbara O'Dwyer.

Climate Action Network Australia Conference. Kirsten Anker participated in the CANA conference planning committee for part of the preparation for this Conference and attended the meeting mid-year, the first face-to-face meeting for a number of years.) That contact was invigorating, and it was great to speak with other people about the work they were doing and hear the live panelists. WCC has also contributed to the important work CANA is doing mapping climate organisations with a view to making better connections and having more impact as a sector.

#March4Justice. Some WCC members in the ACT joined [A Chorus of Women](#) for a meditative labyrinth walk as a contribution to [March4Justice](#) events held around the country on 27 February.

A Chorus of Women sang 'The chanting is beginning, the humming has begun' harmonies from 'The Singing Hill' story, which was presented in an artistic video by Glenda Cloughley at our National Congress of Women event last November. We were delighted to be joined by Biff Ward - one of the speakers from the Canberra March4Justice event in 2021.



Walking the labyrinth (photo: Hilary Wardhaugh)

New Economy Network Australia National Conference – *Growing a wellbeing economy for Australia.* Janet Salisbury and Rhian Williams (independent dispute systems design practitioner) presented a workshop under the Systems Change section of the program called ***Building a unified national agreement for Australia's climate response***

She Changes Climate – Women Declare Emergency Summit. See report of this under 'Advocating for women and united action on climate'.

Reporting on our finances

We arrived at the end of FY 21/22 with a small excess of income over expenditure. All of our income at this stage is drawn from donations so we feel a particular responsibility to use our funds wisely and transparently.

Expenditure for the year included repayment of half of a generous Director's loan that funded the start of the organisation in 2020. The Venue item refers to the payment to Charles Sturt University for generously providing a venue at reduced cost for our online days of the NCW. During those events, we were delighted to welcome Indigenous women elders to our panel discussions, and the Donations item is amounts paid to indigenous organisations in lieu of speaking fees for them.

With a growing membership, we're always looking for options to improve communication with and amongst members. At the same time, we're building up our website and extending our reach on social media. This has kept our Membership Circle very busy, and we've turned to a number of electronic subscriptions to enable them to work more efficiently. These subscriptions are a significant expenditure but increase our capacity, and we continue to assess their value.

We've also sought services from outside providers for Communications support for building recognition for our organisation and for the NCW, and facilitation services from Wicked Elephants, who, like us, are exploring ways of communicating and understanding our responses to climate change and the need for climate action.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the thousands of hours contributed by our volunteers, which are the heart of the work of WCC. And we cannot thank enough the donors whose generous hearts allow us to continue to work towards our vision of women-led climate action towards a safe and sustainable future.

A challenge for the Steering Circle in the coming year will be to supplement and support this volunteer activity by finding sources of funding which enable us to continue this important work.

Women's Climate Congress Ltd

Audit Review of Financial Reports For the year ended 30 June 2022



bennetts tax & bas service

E: admin@bennettstax.com.au W: www.bennettstax.com.au

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P: 0421 074 952

**INDEPENDENT REVIEW REPORT TO
WOMEN'S CLIMATE CONGRESS LTD
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022**

Scope.

My audit / review has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. The procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken for form an opinion as to whether in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the Incorporated entity's' position and the results of its operations.

A review of a financial report consists of making enquiries, primarily of person responsible for financial and accounting matters, and applying analytical and other review procedures. A review is substantially less in scope that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards and consequently does not enable me to obtain assurance that I would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in an audit. Accordingly, I do not express an audit opinion.

Review Opinion

In my opinion,

- (a) The financial statements of the association are properly drawn up:
 - (i) So as to give a true and fair view of matters required by subsection 72(2) of the Associations Incorporation act 1991 to be dealt with in the financial statements
 - (ii) In accordance with the provision of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991; and
 - (iii) In accordance with proper accounting standards, being Applicable Accounting Standards;

- (b) I have obtained all the information and explanations required;
- (c) Proper accounting records have been kept by the association as required by the ACT; and
- (d) The audit was conducted in accordance with the rules of (insert name here



Diane Bennett, NTAAF

Date: 19/10/2022

Women's Climate Congress Ltd

ABN: 62 643 533 715

Income statement

For the year ended 30 June 2022

	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Sales		
Sales	-	130
Expenses		
Advertising	-	867
Audit review fees	320	-
Consultants & Third parties	4,600	-
Donations	1,700	-
Filing Fees	-	417
Insurance	380	608
Other	179	-
Subscriptions	444	105
Sundry Expenses	137	-
Tool Replacement	-	183
Travelling Expenses	279	-
Venue Hire	1,400	1,100
Website expenses	5,451	87
	14,890	3,366
Other income		
Interest Received	10	2
Non-operating Other Income	20,802	8,668
	20,812	8,670
Net profit	5,922	5,434
Retained earnings (accumulated losses) at the beginning of the financial year	5,434	-
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	11,357	5,434

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report of bennetts tax & bas service.

Women's Climate Congress Ltd

ABN: 62 643 533 715

Balance sheet

For the year ended 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	13,357	9,434
Total current assets		<u>13,357</u>	<u>9,434</u>
Total assets		<u>13,357</u>	<u>9,434</u>
Non-current liabilities			
Loans - Directors		2,000	4,000
Total non-current liabilities		<u>2,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>
Total liabilities		<u>2,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>
Net assets		<u>11,357</u>	<u>5,434</u>
Members' funds			
Retained earnings		11,357	5,434
Total members' funds		<u>11,357</u>	<u>5,434</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report of bennetts tax & bas service.

Women's Climate Congress Ltd

ABN: 62 643 533 715

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2022

The financial statements cover Women's Climate Congress Ltd as an individual entity. Women's Climate Congress Ltd is a not-for-profit association incorporated in Victoria under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 ('the Act').

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

1 Basis of preparation

In the opinion of the committee of management, Women's Climate Congress Ltd is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial statements who are not able to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs. These special purpose financial statements have been prepared to meet the reporting requirements of the Act.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements, AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows, AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors and AASB 1054 Australian Additional Disclosures.

The association is preparing special purpose financial statements since **October 2020**

The financial statements and material accounting policies all comply with the recognition and measurement requirements in the Australian Accounting Standards.

2 Summary of significant accounting policies

Income tax

The association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

Revenue and other income

Revenue is recognised when the amount of the revenue can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Association and specific criteria relating to the type of revenue as noted below, has been satisfied.

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

Women's Climate Congress Ltd

ABN: 62 643 533 715

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2022

Sale of goods

Revenue is recognised on transfer of goods to the customer as this is deemed to be the point in time when risks and rewards are transferred and there is no longer any ownership or effective control over the goods.

Interest revenue

Interest is recognised using the effective interest method.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Impairment of non-financial assets

At the end of each reporting period, the association determines whether there is an evidence of an impairment indicator for non-financial assets.

Where this indicator exists and regardless for goodwill, indefinite life intangible assets and intangible assets not yet available for use, the recoverable amount of the assets is estimated.

Where assets do not operate independently of other assets, the recoverable amount of the relevant cash-generating unit (CGU) is estimated.

The recoverable amount of an asset or CGU is the higher of the fair value less costs of disposal and the value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from an asset or cash-generating unit.

Where the recoverable amount is less than the carrying amount, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss.

Reversal indicators are considered in subsequent periods for all assets which have suffered an impairment loss, except for goodwill.

Women's Climate Congress Ltd

ABN: 62 643 533 715

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
3 Cash and cash equivalents			
Cash on Hand		30	30
Cash at Bank		13,327	9,404
		<u>13,357</u>	<u>9,434</u>

4 Statutory information

The registered office and principal place of business of the association is:

Women's Climate Congress Ltd