

CASEY CLIMATE ACTION LIVING LAB

OUTCOMES REPORT





MAYOR'S FOREWORD

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing communities today. It affects our environment, our health, our economy and the way we live.

The City of Casey is committed to taking local climate action that creates real benefits for our community. Through the Climate Action Living Lab, we partnered with researchers, schools, businesses, community organisations and residents to test innovative solutions in real-world settings.

Over twelve months, six pilot projects explored a range of opportunities, from protecting threatened wildlife and supporting biodiversity, to empowering young people, reducing emissions and trialling new technologies.

What makes the Living Lab approach unique is that solutions are designed and tested with the community, not just for the community. By bringing together local knowledge, research expertise and practical experience, we can learn what works and build evidence for future action.

The results in this report demonstrate that local climate action can deliver environmental, social and economic benefits at the same time. Most importantly, these projects have helped build stronger partnerships, new knowledge and greater community participation in creating a more sustainable future.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Climate Action Living Lab. Your ideas, enthusiasm and collaboration are helping shape a more resilient, innovative and climate-ready Casey.

Mayor, Cr Stefan Koomen
City of Casey



Many Journeys, One Community - Merindah Gunya Art.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY:

The City of Casey proudly acknowledges the traditional owners, Casey's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past, present and future.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we work and live.

RECONCILIATION STATEMENT:

The City of Casey is committed to reconciliation and to strengthening respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Building on the foundations established through this work to date, we are embedding reconciliation across our systems, leadership and service delivery. Guided by the Casey Aboriginal Gathering Place, we will continue to support cultural connection, build community capacity and work in partnership to achieve lasting, positive outcomes.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT:

The City of Casey is a welcoming and inclusive community, home to people with many different stories and experiences. We believe a strong community is built on respect, belonging and shared responsibility for each other. We are committed to ensuring everyone in Casey feels valued, supported, and able to fully participate in community life.

LIVING LABS AND INNOVATION

The City of Casey uses Living Labs to bring people together to solve complex challenges through collaboration, experimentation and learning.

A Living Lab is a program where Council, community members, researchers, businesses and industry partners work together to test new ideas in a real-world environment. Instead of assuming what will work, Living Labs allow solutions to be trialled, measured and improved before being scaled up.

This approach helps Council:

- Test innovative ideas in a low-risk way
- Learn from real-world experience
- Build strong partnerships
- Create solutions that reflect community needs
- Generate evidence to support future investment and decision-making

WHAT IS A LIVING LAB?

A Living Lab is a place-based approach to innovation that brings together community, Council and partners to co-design, test and improve solutions to local challenges.



CLIMATE ACTION LIVING LAB

CLIMATE ACTION LIVING LAB

The Climate Action Living Lab ran from February 2025 to February 2026 and supported six pilot projects delivered by universities, community organisations and industry partners. Together, these projects explored practical ways to respond to climate change while creating benefits for the Casey community.

The projects focused on:

- Climate education and youth empowerment
- Biodiversity conservation
- Citizen science
- Wildlife monitoring
- New environmental technologies
- Renewable energy solutions

WHY CLIMATE ACTION?

Climate change affects everyone. As Casey continues to grow, we face challenges such as biodiversity loss, extreme weather, increasing emissions and pressure on natural environments.

FOCUS AREAS

The Climate Action Living Lab addressed three priority areas identified by the community:

- **Sustainability and Biodiversity:**
How might we protect and increase native vegetation and wildlife habitat?
- **Climate Resilience:**
How might we improve community wellbeing and safety during and after extreme weather events?
- **Renewable Energy:**
How might we increase the use of renewable energy in our community?



CALL PARTNER PROJECTS

The Climate Action Living Lab demonstrated that climate action is most effective when solutions are tested in real places, with real people, and supported by strong partnerships.

1. Empowering Youth for Climate Action Partner: Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub Description: Worked with students, teachers and climate experts to co-design climate education resources that build climate literacy, confidence and problem-solving skills. Outcomes: Students increased their understanding of climate change, felt more confident discussing climate issues, and gained practical skills to take climate action.	2. Raising Rarity Partner: Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Description: Supported primary school students to grow and monitor a critically threatened local plant species while participating in hands-on conservation activities. Outcomes: The project helped protect a threatened species, increased biodiversity knowledge, and inspired students to become future environmental leaders.	3. UV-C Weed Control Trial Partner: Federation University Australia Description: Tested an innovative technology that uses UV-C light to control environmental weeds without chemical herbicides. Outcomes: The trial showed strong potential to reduce chemical use while protecting native plants and supporting healthier natural environments.
4. Bandicoot Buddies Partner: Western Port Catchment Landcare Network Description: Engaged schools, landholders and community groups in monitoring and protecting the threatened Southern Brown Bandicoot. Outcomes: Community members contributed valuable wildlife data, increased biodiversity awareness and helped support the conservation of local species.	5. Koala Wildlife Corridor Partner: Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation Description: Collected new data on local koala populations and mapped wildlife corridors to better understand habitat connectivity across southern Casey. Outcomes: The project identified opportunities to improve habitat connections and provided important information to guide future conservation planning.	6. Clean Mobile Power Partner: Equoia Description: Trialled battery-powered alternatives to petrol generators at community events across Casey. Outcomes: The project reduced emissions, fuel use and noise while demonstrating a cleaner and more enjoyable way to power community events.

THE OVERALL IMPACT

The Climate Action Living Lab has demonstrated the value of testing new ideas in real-world settings and working alongside communities to tackle climate challenges.

Over twelve months, the program generated new knowledge, strengthened partnerships and tested solutions that have the potential to create lasting environmental and community benefits.



ENVIRONMENTAL

- 72 rare native plants established through conservation projects.
- Improved biodiversity monitoring and wildlife data collection.
- Reduced chemical use and emissions through renewable energy and clean technology trials.
- New evidence to support future conservation and climate resilience efforts.



SOCIAL

- More than 500 people actively participated in climate action projects across Casey.
- Students, teachers, volunteers and community members increased their climate knowledge.
- Young people reported greater confidence to discuss and take action on climate issues.
- Communities became more involved in protecting local wildlife and natural environments.



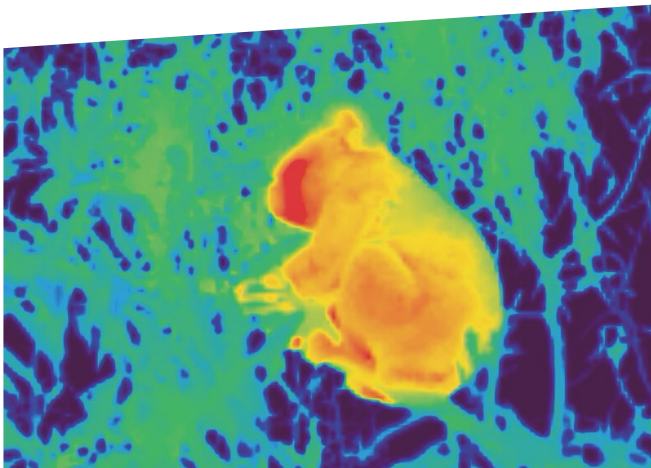
ECONOMIC

- Partner organisations contributed significant expertise and resources.
- Skills and training opportunities were created for students, teachers and volunteers.
- New approaches demonstrated opportunities for future cost savings and efficiency.



INNOVATION

- New technologies were tested and validated.
- Valuable datasets were created to inform future planning.
- The Living Lab model demonstrated new ways to work collaboratively on complex challenges.



NEXT STEPS

The Climate Action Living Lab has shown that meaningful climate action happens when communities, researchers, businesses and local government work together.

By continuing to test ideas, learn from experience and build on what works, Casey can create a more resilient, sustainable and climate-ready future.



SCALE-UP OPPORTUNITIES

Building on the success of the six pilot projects, several opportunities have been identified for future growth and expansion:



Expand climate education for young people:

Increase access to hands-on climate learning opportunities in schools, community settings and youth programs to help build the next generation of climate leaders.



Grow community-led biodiversity programs:

Expand citizen science, wildlife monitoring and conservation projects that empower residents to protect local plants, animals and ecosystems.



Trial new environmental technologies:

Continue testing innovative approaches such as UV-C weed control and clean energy technologies to support more sustainable land management and community infrastructure.



Strengthen habitat connections:

Use the knowledge gained through the wildlife projects to support habitat restoration, biodiversity corridors and long-term conservation planning across Casey.



Share learning across local government:

Support other councils and organisations to learn from the Living Lab model and apply similar approaches to climate action in their communities.



FUTURE CLIMATE ACTION

The City of Casey is committed to continuing to explore innovative ways to respond to climate change while building a more sustainable and resilient community.

Future activities may include:



Continuing to support successful partners to extend or scale promising projects.



Bringing together researchers, businesses, community organisations and residents to co-design climate solutions.



Testing new approaches to climate resilience, biodiversity conservation and renewable energy.



Using evidence and impact measurement from CALL to inform future investment and decision-making.



Sharing lessons, tools and insights developed through CALL with other councils and communities.



Exploring opportunities to apply the Living Lab model to other complex community challenges.

STAY INVOLVED



To learn more about the City of Casey's Living Lab initiatives, and how you can get involved as a local business, entrepreneur, resident, or community member visit:
casey.vic.gov.au/livinglab



THANK YOU

The City of Casey thanks all project partners, schools, volunteers, community organisations, researchers, businesses and residents who contributed to the Climate Action Living Lab.

Together, we are building a more resilient, sustainable and climate-ready Casey.

Contact City of Casey

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