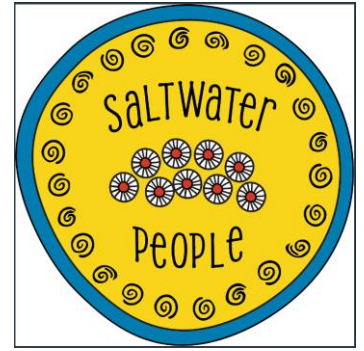


Saltwater People

Partly funded (allowing for 0.5 EFT for 6 months to end of July plus minor outlay for web design and construction) the Saltwater People's Alliance (SPA) is a national initiative formed with the objective of supporting First Nations' People (FNP) in opposing offshore fossil fuel developments. It operates as a national project under auspice of Friends of the Earth Australia. We currently employ one Traditional Custodian on 0.6 EFT on a six month contract and aim to be in a position to employ two people on 0.8 EFT ongoingly.



Why Saltwater People is needed

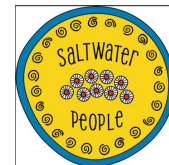
Currently FNP groups in key offshore exploration, production and development areas face an overwhelming cycle of consultations, often presented in jargon and designed to intimidate and silence. They do so in isolation from each other and often the workload to represent the best interests of their communities will fall to one or two people who may not have capacity or the necessary background knowledge to give these projects the attention they require proportionate to their likely impact. This overwhelms individuals in community, can lead to friction within communities and with neighbour groups and foments an environment in which proponent companies can avoid the scrutiny their projects deserve.

Saltwater People aims to:

- Provide a glossary of industry terms for reference by FNPs when engaging in consultations.
- Offer a centralised source of report backs from FNPs who are engaged in consultations to foster information sharing and exchange of tactics.
- Tell the (shareable) stories of Sea Country to a broader "Australian" population.
- Better inform Government and community understanding of the cultural relevance and meaning of sea country, songlines and their importance to community and healthy environments.
- Foster cultural grounding within and between communities through the telling of sea country stories including use of language in describing cultural values.

We do this by:

- Forming relationships with Traditional Whale Custodians and Sea Country story tellers in different First Nations groups nationally, particularly those in areas directly impacted by offshore industrialisation
- Coordinating meetings and lines of communication between these First Nation group participants/members
- Maintaining updated records of offshore titles for fossil fuel exploration, production and storage projects
- Notify relevant First Nations groups when a new offshore project is under consideration in their traditional Sea Country
- Developing a glossary of terms used in consultations and providing plain English versions of consultation process pathways including points of First Nation representatives engagement and intervention
- Building and maintaining a team of legal experts to help advise SPA members where relevant
- Developing a website stating the claim of First Nations People to their traditional Sea Country and making clear their opposition to polluting offshore projects. This website will include a member only area with meeting minutes, and shared work opposing offshore fossil fuel developments.
- Recording stories of songlines and sea country, and sharing those which are appropriate to be shared with the broader community



Our working group

Freja Leonard organisational coordinator

No More Gas campaign coordinator, Friends of the Earth Melbourne. Offering administrative and strategic support. Freja has worked for the past 18 months on coordinating campaigns against seismic blasting in the Southern Ocean, in consultation with representatives from the Gundijmara community.

As the Organisational Coordinator, Freja manages website administration, prepares information on consultations and offshore fossil fuel projects for Original Nation groups directly impacted by fossil fuel projects, Government and relevant agency liaison and prepares campaign strategy. Freja also actively seeks funding to continue and expand the Saltwater People's Alliance and prepares reporting including final acquittal reports for funders.

Freja volunteers 2 days/week in this role and divides her time between Saltwater People's Alliance and working as the No More Gas collective campaign coordinator.

Yaaran Bundle-Couzens cultural coordinator

Gunditjmarra singer/story keeper/activist and keeper of the Koontapool (Southern Right Whale) dreaming stories. Yaraan is a founder of the Southern Ocean Protection Embassy Collective (SOPEC) and author of the Citizens' Protection Declaration opposing oil and gas projects in and near Gunditjmarra Traditional Waters. Yaraan liaises with Traditional Custodians nationally to build the strength of the network and ensure that Saltwater People is kept up to date with relevant projects in different First Nations around the country. **Yaraan is employed in a 0.6 EFT position in her role.**

Vicki Couzens cultural advisor

Gunditjmarra woman with 40 years' experience in Aboriginal community affairs and the reclamation and regeneration of cultural knowledge and practice including ceremony, community arts, public art, visual and performing arts, and writing. She is a Senior Knowledge Custodian for Possum Skin Cloak Story and Language Reclamation and Revival in her Keeray Woorroong Mother Tongue. Vicki is employed at RMIT as a Vice Chancellors Indigenous Research Fellow

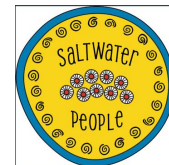
Robert Bundle international ambassador

Robert Bundle is a singer-songwriter and musician who has been writing and performing music for more than 35 years. Robert is the CEO of Songlines, Victoria's peak Aboriginal music body.

Jack Pascoe advisor

Yuin man and Senior Research Fellow in the School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences at the University of Melbourne. His interests are in understanding and managing biocultural landscapes. He currently sits on scientific reference groups for Zoos Victoria and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (formerly DELWP) and was a member of the Expert Panel which recently reviewed the Victorian Wildlife Act 1975. Jack is Chief Councillor of the Biodiversity Council having completed a PhD at the University of Western Sydney where he studied the predators of the Blue Mountains.





Our principles

Anti-hierarchical Everyone has a voice and nobody sits above or below anyone else. This principle acknowledges cultural hierarchies and does not wish to impose upon these, however, everyone participating understands that our group contains a diversity of views, experiences and skills and we all have a unique part to play in the shared work.

Independent We do not take money from extractive industry or governments to maintain our independence and remain free of influence from those businesses and decision makers.

Supporting culture Underpinning every decision we make is the responsibility to support, respect, maintain and celebrate cultural connection. We work respectfully with the laws and lores of First Nations People and their communities.

Transparent All decision making and deliberations within the group are done transparently and openly.

Energising Standing up to big businesses and their supporters can (and is often designed to) be draining and demoralising. It is important that we support ourselves and each other and bring our best joy to our work. If we approach this work with optimism and lift each other up we and those around us feel better. We are also more likely to keep members engaged and this will give us the best chance of winning against the huge fossil fuel goliaths.

Respectful All communication must be respectful of ourselves, each other and the planet as a whole. If something is said that you don't agree with address the idea, don't attack the person.

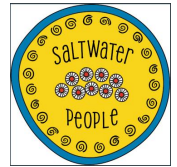
Since our inception we have

- Engaged a web developer and graphic designer to develop our logo and style guide and look forward to launching our website in early July.
- Submitted to several Federal Government and industry consultations.
- Strengthened our networks to include Saltwater representatives in several key locations nationally and our numbers continue to grow.
- Held one online and one hybrid meeting of Saltwater Traditional Custodians and Whale Dreaming Custodians from several First Nations Groups nationally.
- Engaged a team of students from RMIT to undertake a research project of First Nations groups internationally that have been impacted by seismic blasting operations and other invasive fossil fuel projects. This report is in its final stages and will be publicly available in the coming months.

Budget & Funding

| Item | Costing |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Wages 1.5 EFT 1 year | \$156,814 |
| Website domain & maintenance | \$3,186 |
| Travel & accommodation | \$10,000 |
| Admin charges | \$30,000 |
| Total | \$200,000 |

For the 2024 calendar year we have sourced \$80,000 funding and are applying for an additional \$50,000 (\$40,000 core funding and \$10,000 project funding)



Stretch goal:

After consolidating in so-called Australia, we hope to extend the work of SPA with other First Nations People resisting fossil fuel developments in their traditional waters, to create an international solidarity movement place FNP voices centre stage in saving oceans and climate from destructive imbalance.

We aim to secure ongoing funding of \$200,000/year to employ two part time staff members and have additional for administrative, travel and accommodation costs.

Want to know more?

Please address any queries or requests to our organisational coordinator Freja Leonard

Freja.leonard@foe.org.au

0400 611 896



<http://saltwaterpeople.org.au>