



**THE KNOWLEDGE
NETWORK**

YEAR TWO REPORT

**THE KNOWLEDGE NETWORK IS DESIGNED TO
SUPPORT BHP FOUNDATION ENVIRONMENTAL
RESILIENCE GSP PROJECTS TO SUCCEED.**

BHP | Foundation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The BHP Foundation Environmental Resilience Program Director and CEO of the Pollination Foundation are based in Melbourne, Australia.

We acknowledge the past, present and future generations of Traditional Owners from the Kulin Nations on Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung country. We extend our recognition to the Indigenous peoples across all the lands, waters and oceans in which we live, work and enjoy.

MESSAGES

The Projects that you are working on are looking at systemic change, they are looking at being catalysts for launching intergenerational change, and are actually disrupting systems. We are not doing business as usual because we know that business as usual is not going to get us to the future that we aspire to.

Melinda Macleod, BHP Foundation Environmental Resilience Program Director

All of our work is founded on relationships - we might be focused on environmental resilience and conservation outcomes, but our work is really all about people, how we stay connected, build trust, and learn together while tackling some of the world's most complex challenges!

Ariadne Gorring, CEO Pollination Foundation

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KNOWLEDGE NETWORK AT A GLANCE

WHAT IS THE KNOWLEDGE NETWORK?

The Knowledge Network connects seven Projects supported by the BHP Foundation's Environmental Resilience Global Program that are aiming to change the way conservation at landscape scale is achieved.

WHAT WE DO

The role of the Knowledge Network is to support the Projects to succeed by sharing knowledge, embedding learnings and weaving a connected community of practice.

The 'hypothesis' of this pilot phase of the Network is that these outcomes will be achieved by:

- **Building connection** amongst Project teams and partners.
- **Providing expertise and tools** to shape Project narratives and capture stories of impact.
- **Contributing to Project-specific knowledge** on governance, risk and resilience, markets, community livelihood and enterprise models and sustainable finance.
- **Exchanging strategies** for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks, governance models and other Project tools.

- **Sharing approaches to Indigenous engagement** in a way that strengthens leadership and empowerment.
- Developing joint communication opportunities to **promote the collective impact** of the Projects.

HOW WE DO IT

The Knowledge Network is co-designed by its members and facilitated by the Pollination Foundation. Network activities are organised into three main streams: collecting and sharing knowledge to support real time exchange of ideas; embedding learnings and sharing lessons learned to harness and amplify the collective impact; and weaving a connected community of practice to create a learning community that nurtures best practice outcomes.





YEAR TWO HIGHLIGHTS

The Knowledge Network is an active learning community of 113 members, centred around the Environmental Resilience Project teams. Our membership is growing at a steady pace as new team members join in activities and a growing number of 'friends' are invited to share their insights, connecting us with new resources and external expertise.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

We launched an online Portal in July 2020 to facilitate information flow across Network members. Over the past year member use of the site has increased, with 65% of our members accessing the site at least once per month, and 34% of members more than once per week.

“I love the fact that this space exists and really appreciate the efforts put behind it.”

- 2020 Network Survey respondent

We distributed five editions of the Knowledge Network newsletter this year, introduced a Spanish edition to improve member access, and increased our reach by 27%. Readership data tells us the Newsletter as a valued source of information with our average open rates of 35% at almost double the industry average.

EMBEDDING LEARNINGS

The majority of our learning activities centre on six thematic working groups. The purpose of these groups is to support rapid cross-Project information exchange and sharing of best practices. The working groups are popular with members, with participation ranging from at least three to all seven Projects engaged in each session.

Highlights included:

- The **Carbon & Biodiversity Markets Working Group** discussed new and innovative market opportunities, facilitating conversations with external 'friends' on topics like South Pole's EcoAustralia Credit, TNC's Family Forest Carbon Program, Verra Standards and the Climate Asset Management Carbon Fund, which helped members identify and reflect on models relevant to Project activities.

- The **Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group** considered Project evaluation methods, including sharing supporting documents developed for external evaluations; reflected on how social network visualisation tools can reveal information about the strengths, resilience and vulnerabilities within a network; considered how methodologies such as 'Most Significant Change' could apply to different projects; and exchanged examples of how evaluation data has been synthesised and shared with beneficiary communities.
- The **Community Based Enterprise Working Group** shared approaches to enterprise with Awajun communities in the Alto Mayo forest of Peru and First Nation communities across Canada's Boreal forest. The 10 Deserts Project shared their regional desert tourism strategy and reflected on how the model could be adapted for other contexts.
- The **Team Support & Training Working Group** identified tools to help attract and keep exceptional people, which led to the development of two targeted training courses.
- The **Indigenous Leadership & Empowerment Working Group** identified common threads that traverse the different Projects and developed a matrix of leadership activities. This contributed to the development of a more targeted Indigenous Women's Leadership program for next year.
- The **Hablemos Strategy Working Group** contributed to the development of the BHPF Environmental Resilience Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework.

“The sharing is always important and even if I don't apply the knowledge every day or straight away, the example sits in my memory and makes for better Project delivery and management. It's been such a rich experience.”

2020 Network Survey respondent

WEAVING A CONNECTED COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

This year we initiated a new program called 'Inspiring Stories' which included four webinars curated to inspire and seed new ways of understanding the world, as well as to provide an opportunity to strengthen community connections.

We also tested two five-week training courses tailored specifically to meet our members' needs, with:

- 23 participants attending the Story-Powered Data course, which upskilled participants in the power of combining data with story to influence decision makers.
- 22 participants attending the conservation financing course, which covered the foundations, introduced different tools and approaches used to financially sustain project outcomes, and provided Project members with an opportunity to discuss five case studies with expert 'friends' from the field.

"I love hearing about what people are doing and finding out who is doing such amazing work. The connection piece for me is one of the most important."

2020 Network Survey respondent

Responses to our member survey in December 2020 revealed:

- 92% believe the Network activities help to connect members with their peers
- 76% believe that Network communications support their Projects
- 69% believe the Network activities helps members reflect on and adapt learnings for their own context.



CHANGING THE FACE OF CONSERVATION

The BHP Foundation Environmental Resilience Program invests in a portfolio of seven landscape scale Projects that are aiming to change the way conservation is achieved. The Projects are bold in their ambition and complex in their nature. All are testing innovative approaches that aim to set new standards, engage multiple stakeholders through complex networks and deliver new ways of achieving durable conservation outcomes.

The Projects use three strategic levers:

- **Place-based outcomes** that embed resilience planning in local communities and empower Indigenous peoples to lead conservation as one of multiple land uses.
- **Carbon and other new market opportunities** to stimulate enterprise models and connect global investment to local solutions – allowing Projects to access multiple income streams from sustainable land use practices.

- **New policies and legislation** to create simple but effective mechanisms for assigning high value areas for conservation in perpetuity.

The Projects are delivered by a diverse array of partners spanning from global conservation groups to local Indigenous organisations. Each partner is unique and brings different capabilities, strengths, and knowledge to Project implementation.



PROJECT TEAMS



INDIGENOUS DESERT ALLIANCE

10 Deserts Project is sustaining the largest Indigenous-led connected conservation network on Earth that aims to keep Australia's arid lands healthy for the benefit of the entire world.



© 10 Deserts Project



© Nature United



NATURE UNITED

Forest Conservation in the Boreal is working with First Nations in the Canadian boreal to help build a socially, economically and environmentally resilient future for Indigenous communities and for nature.



CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Alto Mayo Project is supporting Awajun indigenous communities and migrant farmers become effective stewards of the landscape's natural resources.



© Conservation International



GREAT BARRIER REEF FOUNDATION

Resilient Reefs Initiative is piloting work with five World Heritage sites around the world, to build the resilience of coral reefs and the communities that depend on them.



© Lauren Ryan



© Nature United



FUNDACIÓN TIERRA AUSTRAL

Chile Conservation Corridor is demonstrating a new model for conservation in Chile by using Chile's new private lands protection tool, the Derecho Real de Conservación that will help achieve conservation goals within a corridor of Chile-Mediterranean habitat.



RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

LandScale is a global framework to generate trusted landscape-level insights that can align and incentivize local and global action to deliver sustainability at scale.



© LandScale



THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Valdivian Coastal Reserve is protecting one of the largest areas of temperate rainforest in Chile and is managed as a model for private conservation in Chile.



© The nature Conservancy

WHERE WE ARE



1 10 Deserts Project

2 Canada's Boreal Forest

3 Alto Mayo Landscape, Peru

4 Chile Conservation Corridor

5 Valdivia Coastal Reserve

Resilient Reefs Project

6 Great Barrier Reef - Australia

7 Ningaloo Coast - Australia

8 Lagoons of New Caledonia: Reef Diversity and Associated Ecosystems - France

9 Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System - Belize

10 Rock Islands Southern Lagoon - Palau

LandScale

11 LandScale Mexico

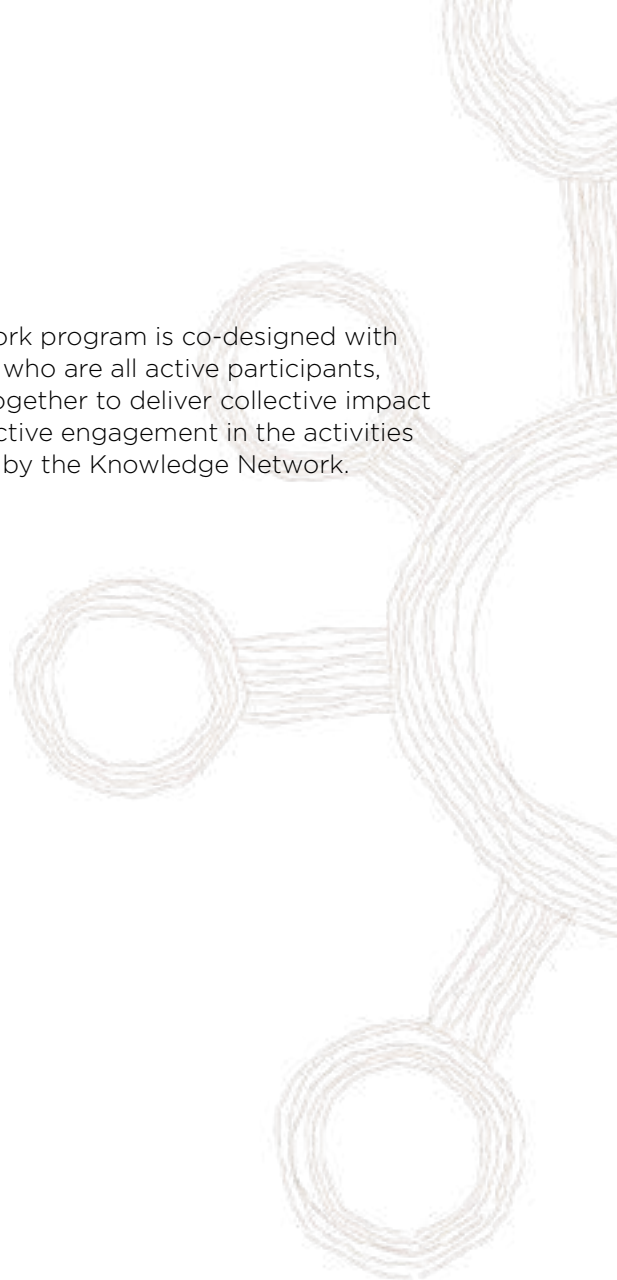
12 LandScale Peru

OUR PURPOSE

To support the Environmental Resilience Projects to be successful, the BHP Foundation invested in a pilot of the Environmental Resilience Knowledge Network in June 2019. The purpose of the pilot was to test the readiness of Project teams to engage in joint activities, and ascertain the value generated for Network members.

In June 2020 the Board agreed to a 12-month extension of the Knowledge Network pilot to June 2021 (due to impacts from COVID-19 on delivery of planned key in-person activities). This Year Two Report marks the end of the pilot phase.

The Network program is co-designed with members, who are all active participants, working together to deliver collective impact through active engagement in the activities facilitated by the Knowledge Network.



OUR IMPACT

The Network is growing at a steady pace; at the end of pilot year two our community comprised a membership of 113 people including:

- Members of the seven Project teams;
- Key people from within partner organisations;
- Supporting organisations – EcoAdvisors and Pollination;
- The BHP Foundation team;
- BHP Corporate Sustainability, and
- A growing number of external ‘friends’.

During an Inspiring Story activity led by Shawn Callahan on crafting powerful narratives, participants co-created a story about their experience of the Knowledge Network.

“Before the Knowledge Network was established, there were lots of separate Projects working directly with BHP Foundation. Then we joined the Knowledge Network. We started to hear about the other Projects and understand the ambition of the Environmental Resilience Program, we hadn’t realised the bold vision to create a new model for conservation, globally.

Now we’re more than just dots on a map. We are all linked together, we can see each team grappling with similar challenges and our interaction with the BHP Foundation is more fluent. Over the past couple of years the connection between us all has strengthened, we’ve created the intimacy to share the challenges and celebrate success together.

In the future, we see the Network offering resources and colleagues to turn to for advice and expertise. As we learn more about the common threads and find better ways to identify what works across all Projects, this will make us more effective.”

Excerpt from the Story of the Network
as crafted by its members, 2020

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Fit for Purpose Design

A core element of our approach is aligning network activities with the dynamic needs of stretched Project teams. Each activity hosted by the Network is opt-in, so our members “vote with their feet” (make that “vote with a Zoom login” these days) with the highest attendance at the activities typically revealing which are most relevant and useful to the broader community.

To make sure the activities meet member needs we focus on program co-design. Some of the ways we do this include:

- Asking for feedback via annual (and if needed targeted) member surveys
- Facilitating discussion on priority topics during working group sessions
- Participation in BHP Foundation meetings with Project teams
- Alternating timing of sessions to accommodate multiple time zones, and recording some key content for access any time via the Knowledge Portal
- Review and prioritisation of the Network activity program at the Annual Partners Workshop
- Ensuring activity content is based on lived experience sourced through member connections and includes many ‘live’ case studies.

Participation - ‘the knowledge is in the network’

Members are actively engaged in sharing their expertise directly through the Network. The activities that facilitate rapid exchange of expertise are the most popular because they provide stories of lived experience.

In addition to participation in various Working Groups and Training activities, tangible examples of cross Project sharing included:

- Alto Mayo discussed the Amazon Development Entrepreneurial & Learning Alliance (ADELA) platform and shared their experience of refocusing the Project strategy based on the team ‘reflection time’ created by coronavirus.
- 10 Deserts shared the tender documents they developed for their external evaluation as an exemplar for others.

- Resilient Reefs shared Resilient Reef’s framework for collecting Most Significant Change stories with the M&E Working Group.
- As the Chile Conservation Corridor entered their mid-term evaluation, Resilient Reefs shared insights from their Project mid-term evaluation via the M&E Working Group
- Boreal, Alto Mayo and Resilient Reefs shared examples of how Monitoring & Evaluation data has been synthesised and shared with beneficiary communities.
- Nature United presented the Boreal Conservation evaluation model, highlighting their partnership with Reciprocal Consulting, a First Nation-owned company specialising in evaluation and research
- Resilient Reefs shared Water Quality Innovation and Systems Change work delivered through the Great Barrier Reef Foundation Reef Trust Partnership with the Conservation Financing Strategies Group
- Several members from different Project teams participated in the 10 Deserts Southern Desert Ranger Forum.

Actions:

New opportunities to be investigated include connecting and creating partnerships with aligned external networks, increased translation of key communications into Spanish, and simplified access to the web portal.

Member reflections

- Given the level of competing priorities at a personal and professional level (amplified during the pandemic), all Network activities should remain opt-in.
- Expanding the Network to include more people and Projects may make it more dynamic and provide useful examples of long-term success.
- The lack of opportunities to meet in person means that trusted relationships take longer to establish.
- The insights and learnings from activities are often not actioned immediately, however it is expected that with time the true impact of the Network will become clearer.

Covid-19: Impacts, Insights and Adaptation

All Project teams faced significant challenges this year - delivering activities while navigating a global pandemic at work and at home! Due to travel restrictions, the Network was not able to facilitate face-to-face events. Initially, we offset in-person connection by offering an extended program of online activities, ranging from increased frequency of working group meetings to the introduction of two online training modules.

Reflection and feedback after six months revealed that while increased activity was helpful in the early stages - when everyone was adjusting to the initial disruption of the pandemic - capacity to participate in a high volume of activities reduced as Project teams adapted and transitioned to various modes of virtual delivery. Based on member feedback the frequency of Network activities decreased during the second half of the year.

“I felt very time constrained this year and it was difficult to really dig in during the group sessions. They have provided a lot of opportunity to learn about the other Projects though and this has been great. I wonder if pairing people up with thought partners from other Projects could be a way to dive deep on another Project and offer a genuine way to share lessons and learnings?”

2020 Network Survey respondent

“We realised we were going in so many different directions...We’ve used the time [created by COVID-19 disruptions] to review and bring together these core elements of our Project into one facility.”

2020 Hablemos Meeting participant

NETWORK ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

SHARING KNOWLEDGE STREAM

Knowledge Portal

We launched a Knowledge Portal in July 2020 for members to find and share information using a web-based collaboration platform (see **Appendix 1**). The aim of the Portal is to provide a private online community where members can exchange information, and the knowledge generated from activities can be stored for easy access.



Insights:

- The Portal is being used regularly by most Network members to access information. A snapshot of new content is emailed weekly and 65% of members visit the website at least once per month.
- Much of the information shared through the Portal is posted by the Network team, but members are starting to share news via the live feed and post questions and information on working groups pages.

Actions:

The weekly emails will be tailored (rather than automated) and 'external news' updates posted more frequently to encourage deeper engagement, exchange and posting by members.

Newsletter

The aim of the newsletter is to build connection and knowledge sharing between members, showcase Project stories of impact and communicate Network activities. The newsletter is delivered to members as well as other interested people who have signed up to keep up to date with what's happening across the Network.

Appendix 2 provides more detail on our Newsletter insights and analytics.



Insights:

- We distributed five editions of the newsletter to an average of 114 recipients, which were viewed 202 unique times across seven countries. This represents an increase of 27% in reach compared to pilot year one.
- We recognised our content was limited to English speakers, so we introduced a Spanish edition of the newsletter in September 2020 to increase member access to key information.
- Average open rates for not-for-profit newsletters is about 20%; and during year two the Knowledge Network newsletter achieved a consistent average open rate of 35%, with 20% of readers from Project teams and 15% from external Network 'friends'
- Trapped! We continue to struggle with spam filters blocking some of our email communications, including the newsletter.

Actions:

Looking forward the communications strategy will focus on:

- **The design of a Story Lab to capture and amplify the collective learnings.**
- **Opportunities for Projects to collectively share their achievements and cross Project learnings with external audiences.**
- **Improving email delivery to ensure that members receive communications as expected.**

EMBEDDING LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Working Groups

The aim of the Working Groups is to weave a connected community of practice by facilitating the exchange of knowledge, expertise and strategies, and connecting members on issues of common interest. The current suite of working group topics is driven by member interests and requests. All sessions are opt-in with members indicating value of the discussion through their participation.

Detailed insights on each Working Group can be found at **Appendix 3**.



Insights:

- The most popular working group was Carbon and Biodiversity Markets, averaging 10 participants per session with representation from six of the seven Projects. The sessions included presentations from external 'friends' which inspired conversations on new approaches to achieving Project outcomes.
- The Monitoring and Evaluation Group included representatives from five of the seven Project teams who shared on a breadth of topics ranging from how evaluation data has been synthesised and shared with beneficiary communities, to how social network visualisation tools can reveal information about the strengths, resilience and vulnerabilities within a network.

- The Community Based Enterprise Working Group had a lower participation rate than other groups, which suggests the direction could be refocused to deliver more value to team members. The session on tourism created an intimate opportunity for targeted cross-Project sharing with the Nature United team sharing highlights from a scoping study across Manitoba and the 10 Desert Project sharing their 'Desert Journeys' strategy.

Actions:

We'll review the Working Group themes to ensure the topics continue to address the most pressing collective interests of members, and host targeted cross-Project conversations to dive deep on topics of mutual interest.



CONNECTED COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

Visual Exchange

We all wanted to experience and be immersed in Project sites, but this year travel restrictions kept us at home. Members joined our meetings from their lounge rooms, kitchen benches, even connecting in from the top of a bunk bed!

To celebrate our collective resilience and lift our stymied wanderlust, we created a virtual travel opportunity by opening windows onto the amazing diversity of landscapes and Project locations within the Network. Each Project window provided local character and a 'window into another world' for Project teams who were physically unable to leave their homes. These videos proved the most popular media we shared during the year.

Inspiring Stories

Stories shape us: they help us to understand, see through the eyes of others and make sense of complexity. Inspiring Stories was a new program initiated in August 2020, curated to inspire and seed new ways of understanding the world, as well as create a way to stay socially connected even while the global pandemic forces us to stay physically distanced. We hosted four speakers between August 2020 and April 2021 on a wide range of topics, including bringing to life 'Indigital' an Indigenous augmented reality business, leadership in cultural safety, and ways to tell stories and craft powerful narratives.

For more detail on the suite of inspiring stories see **Appendix 4**.



Insights:

- This program contributed unexpected value in that it provided a point of connection for members who had previously not actively participated in the network. However, monthly sessions created an overcrowded schedule of activities.

Actions:

We will continue to find high-calibre speakers to present on inspiring topics of relevance to members. We'll space out the inspiring stories series to quarterly sessions.

"I've only participated in the Inspiring Stories webinars. The ones I specifically remember, I think were the most valuable, and helped improve my contributions to my Project were the webinars about storytelling, and the Aboriginal Australian woman who talked about her personal experience."

2020 Network Survey respondent

Targeted Training

Based on the findings of the Team Support and Training Working Group, two training courses 'Conservation Financing Strategies' and 'Story-Powered Data' were offered. The sessions were designed to bring in new knowledge via case studies and create a dedicated space for participants to learn from expert 'friends' from these fields, and each other.



Insights:

- We had positive feedback on the targeted training activities.
- There was a lot of interest in continuing the learning. The idea of a bespoke convenor role on the topic of conservation financing facilitated by the Knowledge Network emerged.
- At the end of the Story-Powered Data course 100% of survey participants said based on their learnings the way they present data and share Project stories in the future will change.

Actions:

We will continue to identify cross Project learning opportunities on topics of common interest and facilitate skills transfer through training workshops, particularly while travel is restricted.

“Such a nice concept to connect people working across different programs, but with many common threads and relevant learnings to share.”

2021 Participant Feedback

“The Knowledge Network has a powerful role in providing technical support... There seems to be a more bespoke, technical advisor and connector role that’s needed”.

“The speaking sessions with guests have been really motivational and inspiring... I am really looking forward to the next course on Story-Powered Data!”

Annual Partners Workshop

The Environmental Resilience Annual Partners Workshop in May connected more than 40 people from Projects who shared perspectives on how a people-centred approach is shifting the needle and demonstrating sustained conservation and positive contributions to people’s lives.

Our theme for this year’s discussions centred on ‘strengthening connections’ between Partners and Projects. Each Project shared their priorities and challenges and we explored cross-Project collaboration opportunities. Key topics of common interest included:

- **Economics for ecosystem services beyond carbon**, particularly biodiversity and water markets;
- **Strategies to scale-up Projects and outcomes**, including diversifying funding and stakeholder engagement;
- **Indigenous community engagement** and capacity building, with a focus on pathways to independence; and
- Scenario mapping pathways to **long-term financial sustainability**.

Reflecting the pilot phase of the Knowledge Network, ideas for future network activities were identified:

- A **Story Lab** to collate and share learnings, practice pitches and craft powerful messages for partners.
- A **Financing Innovation Platform**, as all Projects have the challenge of designing sustainable financing strategies.
- **Extending the Knowledge Network reach** to leverage the expertise of related learning networks and research institutes.
- An **Indigenous Women’s Leadership Activity** to strengthen and add international context to cultural activities supported by Projects.
- How the Environmental Resilience **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework** can measure aspects of social change, like confidence, empowerment, trust and building a movement.

For more information, download the insights report [here](#)

“There is enormous power in reconnecting, seeing and talking to one another in these workshops.”

CONCLUSION

WHAT WE SET OUT TO DO

In April 2019 the BHP Foundation approved a one-year pilot for a learning network with the aim of supporting the Environmental Resilience Projects to be successful. The Knowledge Network pilot commenced in June 2019 with a focus on sharing knowledge, embedding learnings and developing a connected community of practice.

In June 2020 the Foundation agreed to a 12-month no cost extension of the Knowledge Network pilot to June 2021 (the savings were mainly due to the impact of Covid-19). The extension allowed more time for the team to harvest learnings and for members to consider the design of a longer-term learning network to enhance Project and Program outcomes, impact and sustainability.

Key activities to be 'tested' during the pilot included:

- A suite of Working Groups
- Targeted exchange and training programs
- Annual Partners Workshops
- A Knowledge Portal
- Program Promotion
- Network governance and impact mapping
- Research and design of future activities.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Some of the challenges that we had to overcome during the pilot included travel restrictions imposed by Covid-19 and ensuring an agile fit-for-purpose design in the face of the changing needs of members. Despite the disruptions the Knowledge Network delivered across all aspects of the pilot design. Key highlights include:

- Forty Working Group sessions were hosted, including seven sessions for each of the Carbon and Biodiversity Markets, and Monitoring and Evaluation Working Groups. These sessions enabled rapid cross Project information exchange on new market opportunities and evaluation methods. Importantly, the trust established between members during these sessions has built strong foundations which is critical when working towards systems change outcomes.
- Two targeted training courses highlighted the power of combining data and story to influence decision makers and the need for sustained focus on innovative financing mechanisms.

- A cross Project program promotion presentation (detailed in Year One report) at the 2019 Australian Private Land Conservation Conference seeded a new approach for stimulating demand for biodiversity credits in Australia: The Marketplace for Nature Initiative.
- The Inspiring Story series surfaced a deep appreciation of the critical role of Indigenous leadership in conservation.
- Eleven Newsletters showcased Project achievements and shared key insights on the Network's collective learnings.

During the second year of the pilot, the program was adapted to a suite of online activities (due to travel restrictions imposed by coronavirus). Collaborating online reinforced the need to keep activities simple and authentic. We became acutely aware of how important warm and welcoming spaces are to learning and connection - spaces where people feel safe to share honestly.

Some of the strategies we implemented to ensure network activities met the constraints of online delivery included opt-in sessions, alternating timing of meetings/ working groups to accommodate multiple time zones and recording some key content for inclusive access via the portal.

As the Network expanded, more members with English as a second language began to participate in the activities. To bridge the language barrier and share learnings more broadly through partner organisations the newsletter was translated into Spanish, and we continue to focus on creating inclusive content.

An unplanned outcome was sparked by a timely pivot of the Annual Partners Workshop to an online session. The 2020 Annual Partners Workshop (in March 2020) was planned as an in-person event to be hosted by Conservation International in Peru. Three weeks out we identified the escalating risk of Covid-19 outbreaks and adapted to a virtual meeting. This was an early real-time demonstration of new platforms for online collaboration - partner organizations recently observed that this enabled them to remain connected with their team at a time in the early days of the pandemic when many other organizations were struggling to adapt to an online approach.

WHAT WE'RE DOING NEXT

The next phase is a four-year Learning Network that will continue to weave a community of practice to share lessons learned and strategies used to build scalable solutions so others can take them on with confidence.

The pilot started as a more transactional model, sharing 'knowledge', and it evolved over two years to a more dynamic model that enables multi-directional 'learning'. At the April 2021 Annual Partners Workshop we heard that it's unique for a funding partner to value and invest in peer-to-peer learning, and the focus on facilitated cross-Project learning showcases how partnering for impact can be delivered. Members identified the working groups, targeted training and exchanges as the activities that deliver the most value.

In June 2021, based on the success of the two-year pilot, the BHP Foundation approved a four-year Knowledge Network Initiative. Moving forward, the Network will lean into member feedback about moving from a knowledge exchange support role to a "more bespoke, technical advisor and connector role". A Story Lab will be co-designed with members to harvest and share the collective learnings, a finance innovation platform will connect Project teams with global expertise to explore innovative models, an Indigenous women's leadership activity will be facilitated to strengthen and add international context to the cultural activities supported by Projects. Importantly, an evaluation model aimed at harvesting the most significant learnings will enable the insights to be shared transparently with others facilitating and weaving networks and communities of practice.



APPENDIX 1:
THE KNOWLEDGE
NETWORK PORTAL



Knowledge Portal Features

1. A **Live Feed** is a shared space where members are encouraged to share events & news and post questions or resources to quickly reach the community at large. The page highlights new members, provides quick access to upcoming events, links to social media feeds from each Project, and other useful resources. Currently, most updates are posted by the Network team and the BHP Foundation, but members have gradually started to use this function to share media and resources.
2. A **People Directory** connects Network members and allows searching by Project and expertise. More than 70% of activated members have shared details about their expertise and background through this feature.
3. An **Events Calendar** provides details about upcoming events, allows members to RSVP to meetings and access session documents and/or recordings. This feature continues to pose challenges as the technical limitations of the platform does not automatically convert meeting dates to local time-zones, for this reason we continue to rely on Outlook invitations to ensure meetings are added to member calendars.
4. **Activity** pages, provide detail on the suite of activities and capture insights from sessions.
5. **Resources** pages include tips shared by members on various topics such as running online meetings and creating shared agendas, links to documents and Project videos, and details about the support Eco-Advisors and Pollination provide.
6. The **Working Groups** pages, include meeting reports and a group chat page where members share topical resources.

“The website is a helpful tool for finding people and events.”

2020 Network Survey respondent

Portal Analytics

Site usage patterns were analysed using a combination of InSignal and Google Analytics data, cross referenced with user feedback from the surveys.

- As of June 2021, the portal is accessed by 65% of its members at least once per month, and 34% of members access the portal at least once per week.
- 94% of users access the site from a desktop, 6% from mobile. Although mobile access remains a small proportion of users, it has been climbing steadily from an initial 2% at launch of the portal in July 2020. The site employs responsive design, but the mobile experience is more limited than the desktop features.
- The most popular pages are the events calendar and the live feed, according to Google Analytics.
- Most users visit the site for around 2 minutes, suggesting that they are coming to find specific information and then leaving as soon as it has been found.
- InSignal data revealed that many users do not stay logged in to the site and often forget their passwords, which was amplified by one of the survey responses. A new prominent reset password link was added to the home page in December 2020 and an easier website address was circulated, which doubled the number of regular site visits.

“I find it hard to access the site itself; I don’t remember the URL for the site and it requests a password and log-in which I almost always forget, so sadly I have not made much use of it.”

2020 Network Survey respondent

APPENDIX 2:
DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS



Newsletter and communications data

Key insights from this year included:

- We distributed five editions of the newsletter to an average of 114 recipients, which were viewed 202 unique times across seven countries. This represents an increase of 27% in reach compared to last year.
- We recognised our content was limited to English speakers and we introduced a Spanish edition of the newsletter in September 2020.
- Readership data and analytics identify the Newsletter as a valued source of information. Average open rates for not-for-profit newsletters is about 20%²; and during year two the Knowledge Network newsletter achieved a consistent average of 35% open rate, which included 20% of readers from Project teams and 15% from external Network 'friends'.
- We noticed a drop in open rates in October, an investigation revealed this was due to the newsletters being caught by new spam filter technologies across several organisations. We have been working on overcoming this issue, but it is still impacting delivery.
- Newsletter analytics collected during the year revealed that more content resulted in less newsletter opens and reduced clicks on blog posts.
- The Knowledge Portal has provided a place to post events and network activity updates. Previously, the newsletter had been the main tool to communicate these details, as this content is now accessed via the Portal, we refined the purpose of newsletter to celebrate Project stories and share collective insights.
- Our most popular article this year was the Visual Exchange (Dec 2020), which took the top spot with both Project members and Friends of the Network. The next most popular articles for Project members were the 'What are we learning' Project shares, while Friends of the Network were interested in conference outcomes and reports.

Follow this [link](#) to subscribe to the newsletter if you'd like to receive future editions - past editions are [archived on the Portal](#).

Video

Our video channel is mainly used to provide access to private meeting recordings, which can only be accessed via a link in the Portal. However, we do also make some content publicly visible. This year, we had 115 unique viewers watch 42 videos 287 times.

The visual exchanges were our most watched video content with members most interested in visiting LandScale Peru and Mexico.

Visit our [video channel](#) to see our public video offerings.

Bush Telegraph

We trialled a monthly news digest on the Portal for six months, which included updates on external events, reports on international conferences, links to new resources, and summaries of interesting research articles. The intent was to complement the Newsletter with focussed 'external' news service tailored to member interests.

Limited analytics for this feature made assessing its impact difficult, but informal feedback was positive. Going forward, we aim to test posting news 'as it happens' rather than in a monthly digest format to see if this encourages more active sharing of information from Projects via the Portal's live chat page.

² [Source: Campaign Monitor](#)

APPENDIX 3:
WORKING GROUP DATA



Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Working Group was first convened in October 2019. The focus of the group is a two-way learning space to share approaches to M&E, align reporting and consider ways to track collective impact.

The M&E Working Group includes representatives from five Project teams and held five meetings during the year, with topics including:

- Examples of how Project M&E data has been synthesised and shared with beneficiary communities
- Strategies for storing and retrieving M&E data
- Indicators for measuring conservation effectiveness
- How social network visualisation tools can reveal information about the strengths, resilience and vulnerabilities with a network
- Sharing tender documents for the 10 Desert external evaluation
- Sharing terms of reference and insights from the Resilient Reefs midterm evaluation
- Discussion about the 'Most Significant Change' methodology.

Carbon and Biodiversity Markets

The Carbon and Biodiversity Working Group was established in January 2020. The group includes representatives from six Project teams who meet every six weeks to discuss approaches to carbon project development and stimulating a global market for biodiversity.

The Carbon & Biodiversity Working Group held five meetings, including several presentations from external organisations which inspired conversations on how the work of these initiatives relates to Project activities and plans.

- External presentations included: EcoAustralia Credit (South Pole), the Family Forest Carbon Program (TNC), ST Vista Standard & Project Aggregation models (Verra) and Climate Asset Management Carbon Fund (Pollination and HSBC partnership).
- 10 Deserts shared their carbon feasibility study led by South Pole with the group.

Community Based Enterprise

The Community Based Enterprise Working Group was established in May 2020 to share approaches to community enterprise, place-based economies and livelihood models. It includes representatives from five Project teams. Three meetings were held, during which members presented their Project experiences and learnings:

- A session on tourism included presentations from the Nature United team's regional scoping study for tourism across Manitoba and the 10 Desert Project 'Desert Journeys' regional tourism strategy across the Australian deserts.
- CI presented on community-based enterprise led by Awajun communities who are supported by the Alto Mayo Project in Peru.
- Nature United presented on community-based enterprise approaches facilitated in the Boreal Conservation Project in Manitoba, Canada.

Hablemos Strategy Group

Hablemos was created in May 2020 as a forum for informal catchups between Project leaders navigating the impact of coronavirus on Project delivery. However, after six months most Projects had adapted (as much as possible) and the direction of the group changed to a more strategic focus.

The working group includes representatives from all seven Project teams. In addition to the initial Project updates and sharing of resources the group refocussed primarily on contributing to the development of the BHPF Environmental Resilience Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework.

Indigenous Leadership and Empowerment Group

The Indigenous Leadership and Empowerment Working Group first started meeting in July 2020. This group includes representatives from three of the seven Projects supported by the BHP Foundation – Alto Mayo, Boreal Conservation and 10 Deserts Projects – which are all partnering directly with Indigenous communities. This approach is no coincidence, it's by design, as a core element of the Program strategy is to work with and empower Indigenous communities to lead conservation as one of multiple land uses.

The aim of the working group is to design a value-add activity to support Indigenous leadership and empowerment without duplicating initiatives delivered by Projects and partner organisations.

Despite each Projects different context and connection with Indigenous communities, the group identified some common threads that traverse countries and places, such as:

- Cultural governance and community-led decision making
- Indigenous enterprise models
- Indigenous livelihoods and career pathways
- Traditional knowledge transfer
- Language revitalisation
- Empowering Indigenous women
- Investing in Indigenous youth

The Group also undertook a survey of Indigenous empowerment activities being implemented across the Projects which was shared through the Portal.

A focussed Indigenous Women's Leadership program is being developed following the insights revealed from this working group and continued interest from participants in year one cross Project exchange.

Team Support and Training Working Group

The Team Support and Training Working Group first started meeting in July 2020. Because the nature of environmental work means it can be both challenging and emotionally demanding at times, a key risk identified by many Projects is how to attract and keep exceptional people – this group was formed in response to this need.

- Based on the findings of this group, we developed two training courses that were offered during 2021 – a deep dive into conservation financing, and targeted storytelling skills for using evaluation data to share Project narratives.
- The group suggested that training targeted at project officers to build connection across Project teams could be our next focus.
- The group also identified how important it is to provide training opportunities in Spanish as well as English.
- The group reiterated the importance of learning through tangible case studies and using online tools to keep the content interactive and engaging.



APPENDIX 4:
INSPIRING STORIES
INSIGHTS





Mikaela Jade – When Dreams Become Augmented Reality (20/21 August 2020)

Our first inspiring story was from Mikaela Jade, Founder and CEO of Indigital, who spoke to her experience of bringing a good idea to life. Mikaela’s company Indigital now shares First Peoples’ stories using their own voices and artwork through augmented and mixed reality. She has built a partnership with Microsoft to create Digital Custodians – women who are learning new technology skills that they can use to create new economic opportunities within their own communities.

“I am just a person like everyone else who one-day, back in 2012, had a good idea in the shower and decided to get our [Indigenous] people involved in digital technologies.”

Mikaela Jade, August 2020 Inspiring Speaker

We heard how the first time Mikaela experienced augmented reality it ‘lit a fire’ in her, leading to a lifelong passion to find out how new technology can be used to preserve culture across generations. She shared the risks and challenges of being a female Indigenous entrepreneur working on innovative technologies in a remote community. What made a difference was meeting the right people and building personal connections which helped her to build a technology business that strives to protect, preserve and proliferate Indigenous cultures.



Shawn Callahan – The Storyteller’s Story (1/2 October 2020)

Our second inspiring speaker’s session shared the storytellers’ story. Shawn Callahan is an author and the founder of Anecdote, the world’s largest storytelling enterprise. We invited Shawn to share his wisdom in response to the requests from Knowledge Network members to find compelling ways to craft more powerful narratives.

“I’m going to help you find and tell those ‘small stories’ - the meat and potato stories - that we should be able to tell and have in our back pocket ready to share when we need an example to inspire action.”

Shawn Callahan, September 2020 Inspiring Speaker

Shawn shared some practical tips about how to find and tell stories and ways to hone our storytelling skills. We polled participants at the end of the session and over 80% of people felt they had improved their storytelling skills, with almost 70% interested in continuing to develop these skills further. This led to us later developing the training session on storytelling with data.



Janine Mohamed – Intersectionality, Racism and Women’s Leadership (29/30 October 2020)

Janine Mohamed, CEO of the Lowitja Institute, joined us for our third session. Janine has worked to educate non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners in cultural safety and respect, whilst inspiring Indigenous people to become leaders in the workplace, with her work in cultural safety providing leadership in many fields beyond the health system, such as journalism and the media.

“We can only ever travel at the speed of trust. And trust takes time.”

Janine Mohamed, October 2020 Inspiring Speaker

We asked Janine to share her story about social justice, standing up to and calling out racism, and ways to embed cultural safety and empowerment into systems that support Indigenous leadership and community governance.

IPLC Webinar: Principles for integral Indigenous- and community-led conservation financing models (26/27 April 2021)

Our final story for the year was a conversation with Michael Looker, former Senior Advisor to TNC’s Global IPLC Program, and Eduard Niesten from EcoAdvisors, who were invited to share at a side event for the Annual Partner’s Workshop. Michael and Eddy presented the results of a recent Conservation Financing Report which sought to identify and share learnings from successful and sustainable financing models employed in conservation projects with Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs).





The Knowledge Network is hosted and facilitated by Pollination Foundation and is designed to support the BHP Foundation Environmental Resilience Projects to succeed.

