

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Saturday, 21 November 2020

CELEBRATING VICTORIA'S MARINE AND COASTAL CHAMPIONS

The hard work and dedication of those who enhance and protect Victoria's precious coastal and marine environments has been celebrated at the inaugural Victorian Marine and Coastal Awards.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio last night virtually presented eleven awards on behalf of the Victorian Marine and Coastal Council to a diverse range of individuals and groups.

Among the award winners was the Mornington Peninsula's Kent Stannard for his research and education programs on the protected but often misunderstood Great White Shark.

Ken was a recipient of the Outstanding Individual Achievement Award for his work over 18 years as a passionate marine environment advocate and driving force behind the "Tag for Life" shark research program.

Also celebrated was St Kilda based marine biologist Fam Charko who leads several research projects for the Port Phillip EcoCentre, specialising in ecology, nature conservation and marine plastic pollution.

Fam has been recognised for her incredible power to mobilise people into action and build better partnerships between community groups, businesses and agencies to achieve better outcomes for the care of Port Phillip Bay.

Gippsland also featured in the awards with the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network acknowledged for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation through its Corner Inlet Broadleaf Seagrass Restoration Project.

The project successfully addressed the impact of Purple Sea Urchins on broadleaf seagrass meadows which provide crucial food and habitat for fish populations at the Corner Inlet between Wilsons Promontory and Ninety Mile Beach.

The Government has invested more than \$70 million in marine and coastal programs since 2014 and has recently announced a further \$16 million as part of the upcoming Victorian Budget 2020/21.

The Victorian Marine and Coastal Awards build on the legacy of the former Victorian Coastal Awards. For a full list of the award winners visit: marineandcoastalcouncil.vic.gov.au/news-and-events/victorian-marine-and-coastal-awards

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Lily D'Ambrosio

"I want to congratulate all the winners and finalists for their tireless work and dedication to protecting and preserving our precious marine and coastal environment."

"We have a proud history of looking after our coastal and marine assets and these awards recognise how important that work is for not only the health of our environment but the liveability of our communities."

"We're continuing to protect our marine and coastal environments for the communities that rely on them every day and the millions of people who visit them every year."