



# Port Phillip Baykeeper

## PROGRAM FRAMEWORK 2021-2026





A healthy Bay  
keeps our city cool  
and livable, and  
supports our economy.





## Why we need a Port Phillip Baykeeper

76% of Victorians live and work around Port Phillip Bay, depending on and impacting its health.

As climate change, pollution and population growth put pressure on the Bay, the Baykeeper links community networks with local knowledge and passion to agencies and institutions with technical skill, resources and management responsibilities.

Our Bay is home to endemic Burrunan dolphins, Little penguins and a multitude of unique wildlife. People love to swim, dive, snorkel, boat and fish, kite surf and stand up paddleboard, sunbake and celebrate world class beaches and marine parks.

A healthy Bay keeps our city cool and liveable, and supports our economy.

VICTORIAN MARINE & COASTAL AWARDS 2020



**Winner** Education & Engagement (2020)

**Winner** Individual Achievement (2020)



**Finalist  
Premier's  
Sustainability  
Awards 2020**

## Approach

Port Phillip Baykeeper connects everyday Bay users, community groups and organisations to learn about and protect the Bay and its catchments for today and future generations.

We combine citizen science and practical action to inform decision makers, educate our communities and improve coasts, the Bay and its catchments in measurable ways.

The Port Phillip Baykeeper is an independent, non-government advocate, recognised by the local community, government and media.

We acknowledge the First Peoples of the Bays, and engage with the culturally diverse Bay users of today.

Your Baykeeper:

- helps set strong policies and upholds environmental laws
- responds to citizen concerns
- identifies issues affecting marine ecology and biodiversity
- builds alliances to deliver evidence-based solutions.

Our work is hands on: spot us on your local beach. We are storytellers: find us on your screens, stages and in classrooms.

And we are collaborators: please get in touch!

**We honour the knowledge of First Nations peoples and the rights of future generations to a flourishing planet.**

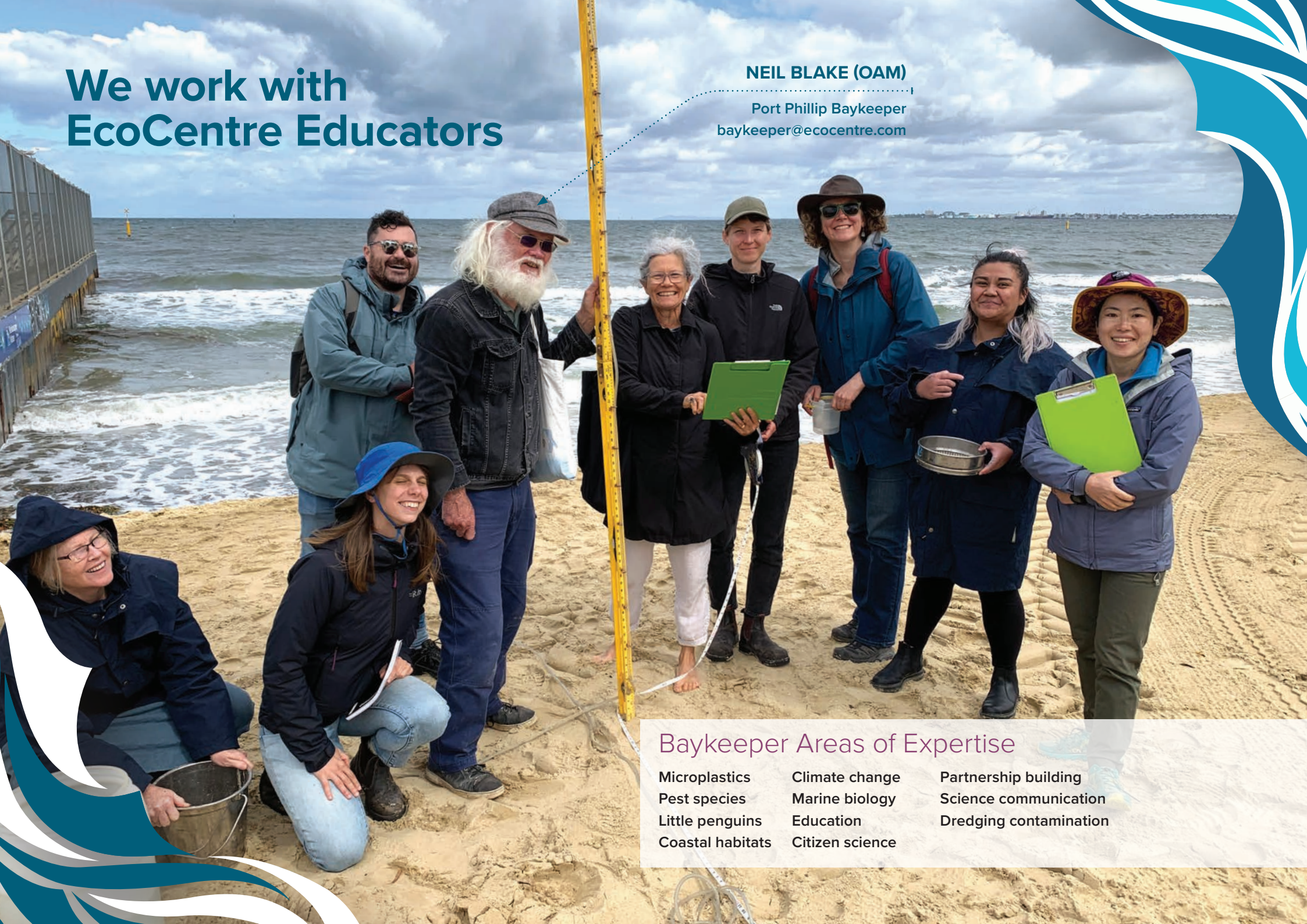




# We work with EcoCentre Educators

NEIL BLAKE (OAM)

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## Baykeeper Areas of Expertise

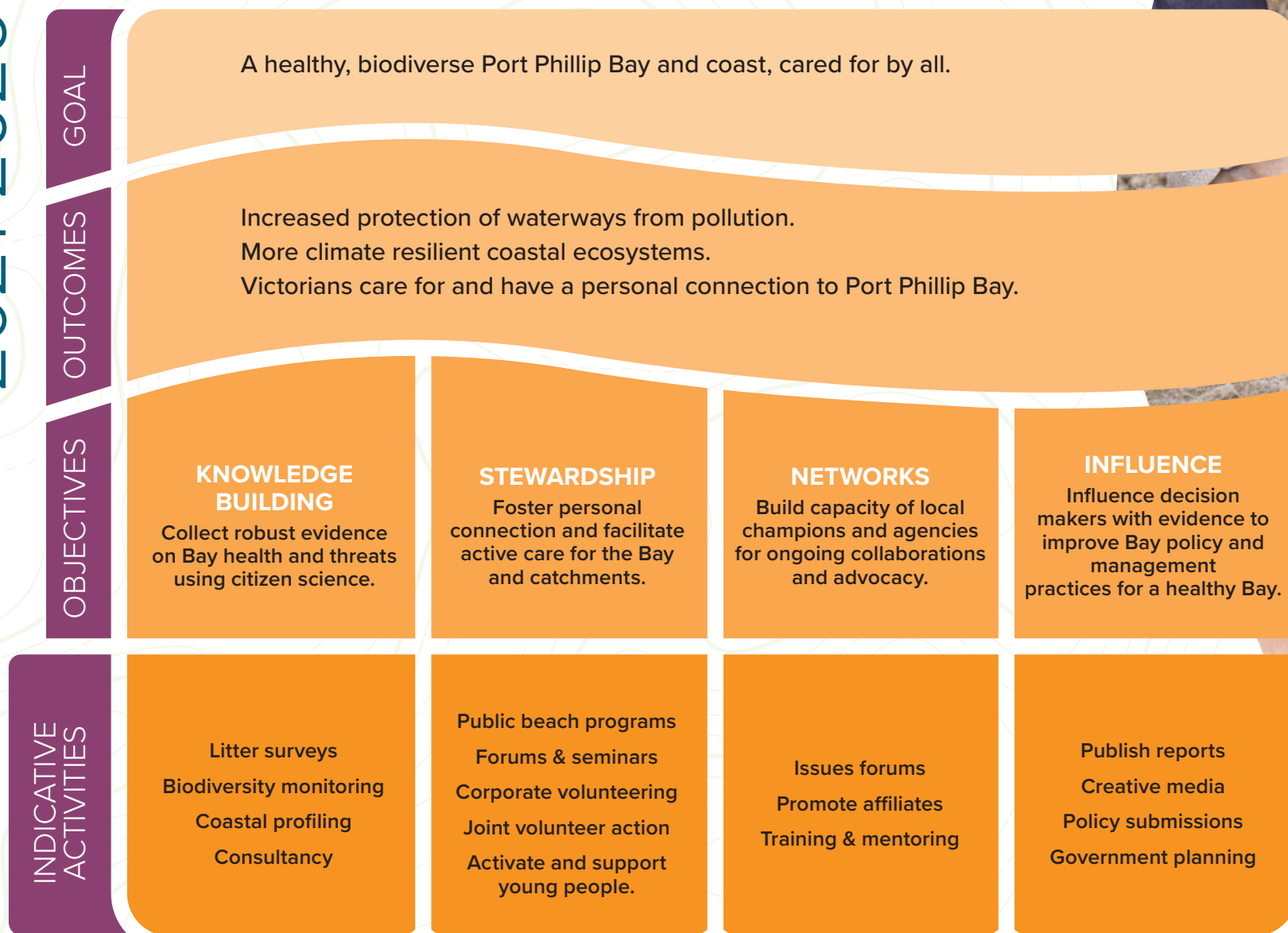
Microplastics  
Pest species  
Little penguins  
Coastal habitats

Climate change  
Marine biology  
Education  
Citizen science

Partnership building  
Science communication  
Dredging contamination



# Program Framework 2021-2026



# Measures of Success

## Increased protection of waterways from pollution

2.5 billion microplastics enter the bay each year from urban rivers. <sup>(1)</sup>

**Indicator 1:** Number of government and land managers that strengthen source reduction policies, practices and regulations due to EcoCentre evidence and advocacy.

**Baseline:** Policies & regulations at July 2021

**Target:** All governments in the Bay catchments

**Indicator 2:** Stabilisation of plastic pollution from urban rivers to Port Phillip Bay by 2026.

**Baseline:** 2.5 billion (2019)

**Target:** 2.5 billion or less

## More climate resilient coastal ecosystems

31% of bay coastline is classed as highly vulnerable. <sup>(2)</sup>

**Indicator 3:** Hectares of coastal vegetation added to Port Phillip Bay annually through EcoCentre programs.

**Baseline:** 2 hectares in 2019-20

**Target:** 2 hectares per year

**Indicator 4:** Number of collaboratively established living breakwaters.

**Baseline:** 1 breakwater in 5 years

**Target:** 2 breakwaters in 5 years

## Victorians care for and have a personal connection to Port Phillip Bay

Volunteers across Victoria contribute 340,000 hours per year to nature care and citizen science.

**Indicator 5:** Number of volunteer hours in Port Phillip Baykeeper program annually.

**Baseline:** 8000 volunteer hours

**Target:** Increase 5% per annum

**Indicator 6:** Number of schools, tertiary and youth groups engaged in the Port Phillip Baykeeper program annually.

**Baseline:** 12 in 2019-20

**Target:** Increase by 3 per year

**Indicator 7:** Participants report feeling a greater connection to local nature

**Baseline:** 87% in 2018-19

**Target:** greater than 87%

# Baykeeper Impacts Since 2008

Championed cross-sectoral collaborations across all Port Phillip Bay catchments and coasts with:

- Balcombe Estuary Reserves Group, Beach Patrol, Bellarine Catchment Network, Blue Wedges Coalition, Earthcare St Kilda, Jawbone Marine Sanctuary Care Group, Ricketts Point Marine Care, Scouts Victoria, Yarra Riverkeeper Association, Werribee River Association and others
- National Centre for Coasts & Climate, Deakin University, Monash University, RMIT University
- EPA Victoria, Coastcare Victoria, Parks Victoria, Sustainability Victoria, Melbourne Water and others

Helped shape policy and management by contributing to government and community strategies:

- Inclusion of microplastics analysis and litter tracking by EPA Victoria (2015)
- Melbourne Water Healthy Waterways workshops (2017)
- Successful advocacy to list plastics as a threat to waterways in Victorian law (2018)
- Expert advice for the Victorian plastic bag ban (2019)

Spoke up for the Bay through books, reports, radio and TV, public events, conferences and film:

- Country Connect – A Guide to the Protection of Aboriginal Sites in Victoria (2010)
- Produced Baykeepers documentary film (2014)
- Little Bit of Litter music clip (2015)
- Clean Bay Blueprint: Microplastics in Melbourne report (2020)
- Best Practice Guidelines for Removal of Northern Pacific Seastar (*Asterias amurensis*) In Port Phillip Bay (2021 update)
- Pioneered best-practice citizen science to systematically monitor streets, waterways and beaches:
  - Applying specified search effort to clearly defined search areas
  - Capturing data representative of all conditions on-site
  - Standardising data field terminology to accord with other major national studies
  - Developing a best-practice citizen science design rubric







The EcoCentre is a leading community-managed organisation with a dedicated team of scientists, educators and volunteers who design and implement innovative environmental programs. Our expertise is the health of Port Phillip Bay and the urban ecology of Greater Melbourne, within the traditional lands and waters of the Kulin Nation. We bring together people of all ages and backgrounds to spark solutions and inspire environmental leadership.

[www.ecocentre.com](http://www.ecocentre.com)

Email [info@ecocentre.com](mailto:info@ecocentre.com) to find out more about our team and our initiatives.

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