



# Annual Review 2025

Zero Emissions Byron Limited  
ABN 48615604852  
[zerobyron.org](http://zerobyron.org)

## SHORT AND LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

ZEB's **purpose** is to accelerate Byron Shire's transition to net zero emissions by continuously engaging our local community to increase their uptake of emission reduction activities.

The **rationale** for ZEB is to successfully champion, educate, inform, and inspire action aimed toward zero emissions for the Byron Shire and beyond.

Our current stated **objectives** are to engage the community in emissions reduction activities.

Our current focus is on **Land Use and Renewable Energy**

1	Transport	To inspire and increase the uptake of electric vehicles in the Shire, and to encourage fuel efficiency, and use of car share platforms.
2	Land Use	Increase and encourage native revegetation and/or regenerative agriculture. Develop and promote the Good Fire project.
		Foster, promote, monitor, and record the impact of any land use changes in the Byron Shire leading to carbon sequestration.
3	Buildings & Energy	Promote the uptake of sustainable and flood-resilient buildings, retrofitting for energy security
		Conduct a series of small events, such as 'Open Homes' days, to illustrate best practice towards 'Rebuilding Flood Resilient' homes.
4	Emissions Tracking	Promote emissions tracking for the Byron Shire.
		Consolidate all data and communicate outcomes toward zero emissions in Byron Shire.

## PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES DURING 2025

- **2025** funded by **Northern Rivers Community Foundation** \$24,972, the *Open Ecosystem Restoration using Ecological and Cultural Fire - Professional Development Training* was for both the development and delivery of a pilot professional development training program for biodiversity and NRM Practitioners and Managers.

**RESTORING OPEN ECOSYSTEMS WITH ECOLOGICAL & CULTURAL FIRE**

**Professional Development Training for:**

- Restoration Practitioners
- Natural Resource Managers
- Threatened Species Officers
- Biodiversity Managers

Over the last 200 years, the reduction of Aboriginal cultural fire in the Northern Rivers has degraded open ecosystem biodiversity and increased fuel loads that drive destructive bushfires. This shift now threatens human, plant and animal communities and severs key carbon sequestration pathways and the ability for Aboriginal custodians to care for Country.

Good Fire is beneficial to biodiversity. Applied under the right conditions it is cool, controlled and staged in mosaic patterns over multi-year intervals. Awareness of the need to restore Good Fire is growing but its implementation is hindered by a limited understanding of how ecological and cultural values decline in absence of fire and available approaches for restoring fire.







Fire country in the Northern Rivers includes dry and wet sclerophyll forests, heath and grassland ecosystems which provide essential habitats for 75% of threatened fauna in our region including iconic species such as koalas, glossy black cockatoos, large forest owls, long-nosed potoroo and greater gliders. The exclusion of Good Fire is a threatening process that can result in localised extinctions of fire-dependent plants and animals.



The objective of this professional development training is to bridge traditional fire practice with contemporary ecological restoration and build your capacity to support and implement Good Fire across the Northern Rivers. The training will increase your awareness of the ecological processes of open ecosystems and the crucial role of good fire in their regeneration, maintenance, and protection from destructive wildfires. It will increase your understanding of culturally appropriate approaches to caring for Country through cultural fire and open-ecosystem restoration techniques used by Indigenous fire practitioners.

The Northern Rivers are world leaders in rainforest vegetation and regeneration. This training will build your skills toward restoring open ecosystems and protecting their biodiversity values.

**TRAINING PROGRAM**

**28 May 2025, 9am-5pm.**

Open ecosystem and fire ecology, cultural values and protocols, and good fire restoration planning. Field trip to learn from Country.

**04 June 2025, 1pm-5pm.**

Cultural burn on a freehold property which has a Good Fire Restoration Plan led by Jagun Alliance Aboriginal Corporation.

**01 October 2025, (TBC) 1pm-5pm.**

Post-burn field trip to learn the restoration needs of Country after fire.

**Tutors:**  
 Dr Andy Baker – Wildlife Ecological Services and Southern Cross University Fire Ecologist.  
 Shane Ivey - Madhima Gulgan Bush Regen Tutor,  
 Marcus Ferguson – Jagun Alliance Fire Practitioner.

[Bookings click HERE](#)

Cost: \$59.54

Please call Wren McLean on 0437643008 or email [wren@zeroemissionsbyron.org](mailto:wren@zeroemissionsbyron.org) to be put on the waitlist for this or future trainings.





**ZERO EMISSIONS BYRON**

Zero Emissions Byron, in collaboration with Jagun Alliance Aboriginal Corporation and Madhima Gulgan Community Association have secured funding from the Northern Rivers Community Foundation to restore Good Fire to conserve biodiversity, increase community resilience and co-operation, increase bushfire safety, and continue connection to Country.



## Open Ecosystem Restoration using Ecological and Cultural Fire - Professional Development Training

- Secured \$4000 of bush regeneration work for Madhima Gulgan's (MG) bush regen team through collaboration with NSW Government Koala Strategy, Koala Ark.
- Aquila's landholder hosted the burn workshop and will subsequently receive MG bush regeneration services in exchange for a \$3000 donation.
- Training involved 2 full days consisting of;
  - o 1 day in classroom and visiting fire country around Byron Bay including Woodlands burn site from 2024.
  - o ½ day cultural burn led by Jagun Alliance Aboriginal Corporation
  - o ½ day post burn follow-up on November 26th 2025.
- The training was delivered to ~ 30 participants including; landholders, Local Council biodiversity staff from Tweed, Lismore, Kyogle and Ballina, bush regenerators, consultants, Crown Lands, Local Land Services, Landcare representatives, and State Gov DCCEE staff plus 15 Indigenous participants from Madhima Gulgan, Rous Water and Jagun Alliance.

*This training was fantastic - the presenters have outstanding knowledge of fire from both ecological and cultural standpoints, and the two approaches work together well.*

Dr Brian Hawkins,

Senior Threatened Species Officer, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water



## ECOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL FIRE WORKSHOP AND BURN AT AQUILA ON THE KOONYUM RANGE.



- 25 September **2025**, **Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal** grant successful for Befriending Fire: Delivering Ecological and Cultural Solutions for Community, Country and Climate, for \$19,976. This project will run throughout **2026**.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

- ZEB is a community member representative on **Byron Shire Council's Climate Change and Resource Recovery Advisory Committee**. Its purpose is to "assist Council in the development, implementation and review of relevant sustainability, resource recovery and climate change mitigation and adaptation plans, policies and projects."
- ZEB formed a partnership with the **Brunswick Residents Association** to successfully lobby standing candidates for the Council Election of 2024 to include renewable energy in their policy platform. We succeeded in having a motion for consideration put to the Byron Shire Council for a feasibility study, which was passed unanimously, into the installation of a community battery for Byron Shire.
- **The Community Battery Working Group was** formed and held its first meeting on 09 April 2025; followed by 14 May, 03 June, 15 June, and 02 September. During deliberations it was agreed that a Community Battery in front of the meter was too difficult as previous groups had taken 7-10 years without guaranteed success. The Working Group then decided for behind the meter batteries to deliver an immediate benefit to the community. As a result of their work an allocation of \$40,000 to undertake a Feasibility Study into behind the meter batteries for Council owned buildings to serve the community, and potentially act as evacuation centers has been advertised for tender in September. The saving from this enterprise would be returned to the community and allocated to the Revolving Energy Fund.

- June 2025 ZEB participated in a Stakeholder Consultation on **Action 6, NSW Consumer Energy Strategy**, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. The aim of this grant program is to ensure that communities can benefit from the ongoing energy transition. We want to support them in leveraging various aspects of this transition, including but not limited to energy efficiency (EE), large-scale electrification, virtual power plants (VPPs) and microgrids.
- 04 August 2025, ZEB as a member of the **Coalition for Community Energy** in response to Action 6 co-signed a Letter to Hon Penny Sharpe MLC, Minister for Energy and Climate, advocating for a substantial increase in the proposed \$5 million ( \$1m of that was for Government administration) community energy fund in the **NSW Consumer Energy Strategy**. We requested that at least \$28 million of the \$280 million Consumer Energy Strategy be allocated to community-led energy initiatives - representing 10% of the total strategy budget - and reflective of the importance of funding at the local level. The outcome was another \$1m on top of the \$4m coming to a full amount of \$5m.
- 01 August 2025, **Business NSW Energy Roundtable**: Discussed regional insights and current barriers and hurdles, brainstormed issues, and opportunities for our future and plotted a plan to 2040 with Foundational Actions, Programs of Support and Catalyst Projects.
- 29 August 2025. **Summit 2025 Regional Leaders, Business NSW**: Business Transformations, People Planet Place, how purpose, resilience and innovation are defining success. Themed: ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) how to evaluate a business's sustainability, societal impact, and long-term financial viability. The factors within ESG include a company's impact on the planet (Environmental), how it treats people and communities (Social), and the ethics and transparency of its leadership and business practices (Governance).

## News Articles

- 16 January 2025, **Echo**, article on *Nuclear vs Renewables*.
- 11 February 2025, **Echo**, *Power to the people: how Byron Council could lead the way in energy resilience*
- March 2025, **The Byron Wave**, *Low gentle flames, and the crackle of tussock grass*.

## Directors for 2025

**Dr Anne B Stuart (Chair & Secretary)** has worked with state and federal government agencies and government-owned corporations, in environmental policy development, legislation and stakeholder engagement. Currently an Adjunct Research Fellow at Griffith University.

**Beth Wilson (Treasurer)** is a highly qualified BAS Agent with 23 years' experience in the finance industry. As the owner of a successful bookkeeping practice, she has provided expert financial services to a range of local businesses, including NGOs and NFPs. Beth's proven track record in compliance, accuracy, and her strategic decision-making ensures our organisation's fiscal health.

**Dr Michelle Olivier** is an advocate for sustainability, localisation, and wellbeing, with a 35-year career dedicated to this pursuit. She has wide experience in and knowledge of sustainability. She has wide experience working in the fields of sustainability, education and conservation projects including working in universities, TAFE, business, and local and state government, non-government sectors, in private consultancy and advisory roles. Michelle was mentored in her early career by a Narungga, Kurna and Ngarrindjeri elder and worked with the Indigenous community in South Australia. She has been in the Shire for 15 years and is slowly regenerating her property outside Mullumbimby.

**Dr Andy Baker** is a highly respected fire and vegetation ecologist with 25 years of experience across the NSW North Coast and South East Queensland. Since founding Wildsite Ecological Services in 1997, Andy has established himself as a leading regional expert in fire ecology and the restoration of fire-dependent Eucalypt forests and heathlands, and is a lecturer at Southern Cross University.

**Ms Jill Moonie**, B.Ed. Fine Arts COFA, Uni NSW B.A Film & TV - AFTRS, has been a professional content creator, producer and educator in the screen and creative sector for 35 years, working at University, TAFE, and in government agencies. As a Member of the Bayside Residents Association Jill brings to ZEB a well-connected community approach. Jill has a commitment to energy resilience and energy justice and believes that a creative and networked approach is vital in working towards regional climate, economic and social solutions, and that the power of community led projects is key to success. Jill has been in the Shire for nearly 20 years.

### Project Officer

**Wren McLean**, has 1st Class Honours in Conservation Management, and has a strong sense of responsibility to protect the health of our planet for future generations of all species and has committed her working life to the environmental sector. As a conservation professional, her experience covers varied projects in the fields of protected area management, biodiversity conservation, environmental education, and ecological restoration and has led her to establish strong project management and collaboration skills.

## BOARD MEETINGS AND DIRECTORS' ATTENDANCE 2025

Confirmation of appointment of new Director, Ms. Jill Moonie, December 2025.

Confirmation of resignation of Dr Kylie Day, September 2025.

<b>Date: 2025</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>16 January</b> 9:00am-10.00am 5/77 Frasers Road, Mullumbimby.	Anne Stuart (Chair), Beth Wilson, Kylie Day, Andy Baker, Wren McLean (Project Officer). Apologies: Michelle Olivier.
<b>17 June</b> 12:30 pm 2:00 pm via Teams	Anne Stuart (Chair), Michelle Olivier, Kylie Day, Andy Baker, Beth Wilson Wren McLean (Project Officer).
<b>08 October</b> , 10am -11am, 5/77 Frasers Road, Mullumbimby. <b>AGM</b> <b>08 October</b> 11am - 12pm 5/77 Frasers Road, Mullumbimby.	Anne Stuart (Chair), Beth Wilson, Michelle Olivier, Jill Moonie Wren McLean (Project Officer). Apologies: Andy Baker