

# PARTNERING BUSINESS WITH NATURE

 Regeneration  
Projects

COE ∞ LAB

Photography:  
Landscape by Wild Adventures Melbourne, Australia  
People @Regen 101 workshop with Destination Phillip Island & Stakeholders -  
overlooking Westernport Bay and Bass Strait

# Regeneration Projects formalising business partnership with Two Bays

By utilising an adaptive Earth equity (Ee) model we are co-creating a regenerative human economy in harmony with the Earth's ecology - treating non-human beings as stakeholders within our organisations, and ultimately shifting our roles to careholders of the places we live, work and play.

Ee is based on the concept of Euterra - the dynamic interconnectedness of wholeness or oneness with nature - the feeling of being interconnected with Earth and sourcing action from that ground. This is the internal shift we aim to support and with which external shifts on the level of finance, governance and ownership can more deeply take root, strengthening relationships between bioregions and companies.

We are currently exploring Regeneration Projects as a catalyser for a Two Bays Future Fund, focused on the biological region of the Nairn / Port Phillip Bay and Westernport Bay catchments. This would include representative rotating governance to administer the fund, including nature to sit at the trustee level, and inviting other local businesses to join.

## Two Bays Future Fund

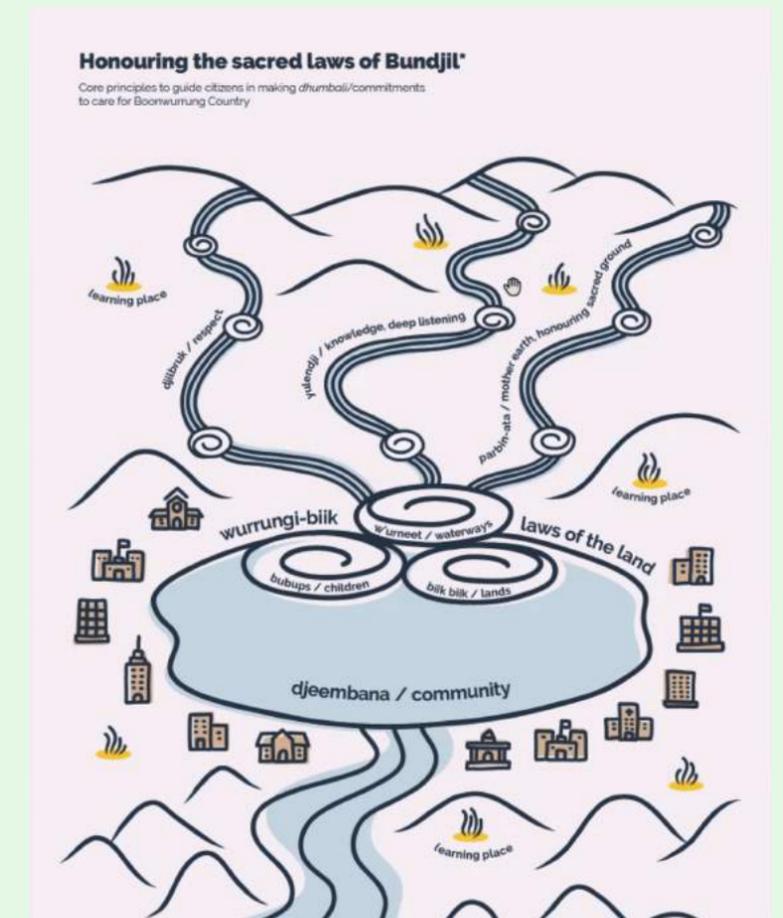
### ECOSYSTEM SERVICE SUBSCRIPTION

In exchange for 10% of annual profit, with an indicative breakdown including:

- 3% for the waterways
- 3% for the land
- 3% for the children
- 1% for the community to govern



The 'Two Bays Future Fund' seeks to embed the regeneration of Nairn / Port Phillip Bay and Westernport Bay into Regeneration Projects business model.



Building upon existing partnerships with the local First Nations-led Boonwurrung Land & Sea Council, Regeneration Projects is seeking to re-honour cultural and governance principles that have served communities in this region for millennia.

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IMAGINE NETFLIX, BUT FOR ECOSYSTEMS

## A newcomers account by Daniel Rasbash Mornington Peninsula, Australia November 24th 2022

Have you ever met up with some mates at a café or bar and they're in the middle of a conversation, and you're not entirely sure what's going on? That's how I felt when I joined the weird, wise and wonderful Willow, Matt and Reggie on a warm and blustery Thursday on Melbourne's Mornington Peninsula (Boonwurrung & Bunurong Country).

The aim of the day was to think about ways to put Nature back into the heart (or at least the minds) of businesses. That much I understood, but that was about all that I understood. At least at first. We strolled down to the beach, where Matt ([Regeneration Projects](#)) shared an acknowledgement of Country and grounded us in our geography. Reggie ([CoELAB](#)) dove into examples of Earth equity where people are implementing these concepts, and using this mentality. What exactly these concepts and mentality were, remained a mystery to me. You see, Willow, Matt and Reggie had been hanging out virtually and in person long before I joined in. But instead of asking for clarification, I stayed silent, as every self-respecting socially awkward guy does around cool and interesting older people. They spoke about [Patagonia](#), the [Whanganui river](#), and [Takaka Cohousing](#) projects, all of which are integrating Nature into their business model.

Moving along to another section of beach, Matt started talking about the two bays on either side of the Peninsula (Nairn / Port Phillip Bay and Westernport Bay), and the catchment of ecosystems surrounding them. He explained through his work with Boonwurrung Elders and Culture Carriers that the 'Two Great Bays' are written into their cultural and economic narratives. What could that mean for the way non-First Nations businesses operate?

I sat and listened, still unsure exactly what the purpose of the day was, but gradually starting to understand some of these concepts – Nature is an actor in its own right; businesses need to reframe their relationship with nature; we have disconnected from our local surroundings. Obviously these concepts are not universal, but as a society they generally hold true.

"If you were to create a council, to represent the interests of this ecosystem, who would you invite?" When Willow (CoELAB) asked this question, I realised that we were gathered here today to discuss how to promote the interests of the Two Bays bioregion, as an entity deserving of rights and upon which millions of people depend. In answer, Matt quickly rattled off a list of potential partners in this project, and I was ready to start planning how to build this Council of the Two Bays. But then they moved on. I wasn't quite as up to speed as I had thought.

We started talking about the journey of Regeneration Projects, and how in the next months or years it might graduate from a sole trader status to a fully-fledged company. During this transition, Matt is hoping to reframe and strengthen his business' commitment to Nature. There were already beginnings, Matt does weekly beach clean-ups (#RegenFridays), and starts every week by walking down to the water for a moment of reflection, but he wanted more. He spoke of bringing Nature into the boardroom and sharing profits with it. Many businesses already do this through initiatives such as [1% for the Planet](#), but this feels somehow disconnected to place, and Nature remains an afterthought that needs to be helped.

But of course that isn't the case, we need Nature, and we need to start respecting it. Matt wanted to build a commitment to Nature and the local ecosystems into his business.

Now I understood what was going on. Willow and Reggie have expertise in connecting business with Nature through governance and Earth equity, and had teamed up with Matt to pilot their models through Regeneration Projects and the Two Bays bioregion.

This is when the seed was planted and I started thinking about legally codifying commitment to Nature in a business. Perhaps a legally binding contract between the company and the bioregion, as represented by the Council of the Two Bays.

Meanwhile, the conversation continued, what counts as the local bioregion? The Bays. But what about all the rivers that lead into them? So the rivers and the bays. But the ecosystem goes beyond the waterways. So the entire catchment area. But what about the eagles and whales that are only in the bioregion sometimes? Do we need to include the corridors of their migration paths? Could there be a way to collaborate with other regions and businesses to incorporate these corridors?

These questions do not have easy and obvious answers. But that wasn't the point. The point is to ask the questions and keep asking them. The next issue was the language to use. An ecosystem tax, or a fee. These have negative connotations and are associated with burdens and disdain. A contribution sounds nice, but it seems woolly and voluntary. What about a subscription? It sounds modern, committed and positive. This was my first contribution, and I said it half jokingly, but Willow jumped on it, and slowly we built up the idea.

Businesses already subscribe to many services, from paper to mobile internet to HR, so it would be a familiar kind of contract. You can also have it at different levels, and make it flexible, subscribing to the aquatic systems in the bioregion, or a higher level subscription to the entire bioregion, or even a future focused subscription with an emphasis on the land, the water and even youth and children, the later being directly inspired by Boonwurrung traditions. The subscription service would be a contract supported by the Council of the Two Bays, but it could be scaled up to other regions with their own council, and even trans-geographic councils along whale migration corridors. Businesses could subscribe to multiple services based on their perceived impacts and use of ecosystem services.

It's important to note that this subscription is aimed at and between businesses (B2B), rather than individuals. This is to support the shift from the current paradigm of it's up to individuals to change their lifestyles to prevent climate catastrophe, and encourage a new brand of corporate activism.

Essentially, we're looking at a multi-tier B2B ecosystem service subscription service for businesses aiming to catalyse ecological regeneration and honour ESG commitments. This would take place through various programmes such as those around local bioregions or along migratory routes. It's like Netflix, but for ecosystems.



Daniel Rasbash is a postgraduate in Environment and Natural Resources currently on a working holiday visa in Australia focused on regenerative business and practice. He's passionate about sustainability in urban spaces, and conservation through regeneration. For more info, connect with him here: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rasbash/>

## More information

### REGENERATION PROJECTS

Working to build reciprocal partnerships between Business, Nature and First Nations, Regen Projects is a B Corp-certified consultancy at the leading edge of the purpose beyond profit movement.

[regenprojects.earth](https://regenprojects.earth)

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### CoE LAB

Life-centred design consultancy; a collective of humans on purpose, building bridges to the next economy. Moving with urgent patience to heal and regenerate bioregions.

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Together we are building  
**Coalition of Everyone**  
for the regeneration of everything