

**March 22**

**This month we celebrated UN World Water Day**



**The 2024 Theme is 'Water for Peace'**

Water is a powerful source. It nourishes us and we cannot live without it.  
It has the power to bring us together and create peace.

However, just as water can bring solidarity, it unfortunately also has the power to incite conflict.

When there are inequalities in the access to water or the quality of water, tensions can build. This can be within communities but also countries.

More than 3 billion people worldwide depend on water that must cross international borders. Yet, only 24 countries have cooperation agreements for this shared water.

As the devastating impact of climate change increases coupled with the growing population, the urgency within and between countries to unite to protect and conserve the most precious resource increases exponentially.

Public health, prosperity, food and energy systems, economic productivity and environmental integrity all rely on a well-functioning and equitably managed water cycle.

## **Creata Positive Ripple Effect**

When we cooperate on water, we create a positive ripple effect fostering harmony, generating prosperity, and building resilience to shared challenges.

We must act upon the realisation that water is not only a resource to be used and competed over. It is a fundamental human right and intrinsic to every aspect of life.

Each World Water Day, we all need to unite around water and use water for peace, laying the foundations of a more stable and prosperous tomorrow.

## **Act now and help to make an impact!**

As global citizens we need to recognise collaborate of the global campaign on “Water for Peace”. The world needs everyone – individuals and families to companies and governments – to do what all they can to cooperate on water and pave the way for a more harmonious society.

## **The UN has specific messages for World Water Day 2024:**

- **Water can create peace or spark conflict.** Inequalities in water access and quality increase tensions. By cooperating on water, we can balance everyone’s water needs and help stabilise the world.
- **Prosperity and peace rely on water.** As nations manage climate change, mass migration and political unrest, they must put water cooperation at the heart of their plans.
- **Water can lead us out of crisis.** Harmony can be fostered between communities and countries by uniting around the fair and sustainable use of water – from the international level to actions at the local level. Every action helps.

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*“This country gave us life”*



**Last Wednesday on March 20th, UNAA Victoria and UNAA YP celebrated 2024's UN World Water Day with a film screening of "Heart of Country".**

**This short but strikingly powerful short documentary film shifts our focus to outback Australia and the significance of water to First Nations' Peoples as well as Country.**

It was an honour for us to be able to share this special film with our members and other participants. The film explores the significance of First Nations Peoples' connection to water, the sacred lifeblood of country.

Josie Alec, a proud Kuruma Marthudunera woman travels around Australia where other First Nations individuals share the special significance of water to them in their own words.

The increasing threat of fossil fuels and nuclear projects are posing significant risks and destroying heritage that spans millennia such as Indigenous rock art up to 28,000 years old. Efforts have failed to protect many of these sites.

*"These are ancient waters- not yours to destroy".*

Water is described as the songline and the heartbeat to this Country. "Heart of Country" takes these stories from all over Australia and weaves them together beautifully to show us how Country and water is being affected.

We must take this as an urgent call to action. We need to learn to honour Country's past by protecting the environment for future generations. The effects are intergenerational and these environmental issues will only become worse for our children, grandchildren, and those who follow them. It will likely be too late. We still have time now to save our beautiful nature- our mother- what nourishes us.

Josie says, "... this story is deeply personal. My country is hurting, and I need the world to know. Every time they dig a hole or desecrate ancient rock art, it's dirty air, dirty water, dirty everything".

"Heart of Country," shows how these continual actions will irretrievably damage Australian nature, Indigenous heritage, as well as contribute to the climate crisis.

*"If you break that story, you can't get it back together".*

Gomeroi elder, Polly Cutmore states, "we seem to be losing the fight in connecting [to country]". People are not connecting or valuing Country as in the past to be fighting for its preservation. We cannot undo this damage that is being done. We need solidarity. We need to come together and find ways in our own lives with actions- big or small- to help us combat the destruction.

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“Heart of Country” is an impressive and impactful short film that resonated with all of us on the committee. We are appreciative of all the insightful, innovative, and informative discussions that we were able to share with you on this night. Everyone contributed in such a valuable way and we thank you.

We hope to see you at our future events shortly.

To watch the short film, “Heart of Country”, [click here](#).

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On behalf of the UNAAV Young Professionals Committee

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