

An underwater photograph of a diver wearing a black wetsuit and a diving mask. The diver's hand is raised towards the water's surface, with fingers spread. The water is clear and blue, with light reflecting off the surface. The text 'SEA LIFE TRUST' is overlaid at the top, with a small globe icon replacing the letter 'A' in 'SEA'. Below the main title is the tagline 'Protecting The World's Oceans'. At the bottom, the text 'ANNUAL REPORT 2019 AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND' is displayed in white capital letters.

SEA LIFE TRUST

Protecting The World's Oceans

**ANNUAL REPORT 2019
AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND**



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR & CEO

The SEA LIFE Trust Australia/NZ continues to work hard on driving conservation outcomes across our focus areas of reducing plastic pollution, habitat protection & sustainable seafood. It's been a great year and so many things have been achieved - where to start?! We continue to work with our SEA LIFE staff volunteers, our partners and communities across the region as we tackle plastic pollution through initiatives such as the Kayak Clean Ups on Sydney Harbour, and strengthening conservation of marine turtles through our Every Turtle Counts project in Timor Leste, now in its second year.

I'm thrilled to see that the Ocean Youth program has now been implemented across all 4 sites in Australia & NZ. It's testament to the hard work and passion of a very dedicated and visionary team. We continue to see amazing young people participate in the program and attribute a lot of value to the program. Now more than ever we need to be building the capacity of our young people to use their voice, energy and passion to influence positive change for our planet. Their future and the future of our planet depends on it.

I'm looking forward to 2020 and seeing how we can continue to realise the amazing potential available to us as we implement our growth plans and 2020 strategy.

ANISSA LAWRENCE, CHAIR

Another year, another reflection on where we've been and what we've done, and boy do they come around fast! Being a one (wo)man charity means life is crazy busy all of the time! We couldn't get by without partnering with other orgs and institutions to fulfill our mission of a world where oceans are healthy, properly protected, and full of diverse life. Working with amazing partners like Sydney by Kayak, the Seabin Project, and Ben & Jerry's also means we continue to grow our reach and build our profile so we can deliver more impact for oceans.

Conservation is an insane rollercoaster ride and for the Trust it's no different. We've had some frustrating challenges with projects but we've also seen some highs as our Ocean Youth program expands in both numbers and locations, & seaweed restoration is deemed a success, which is incredibly exciting!

CLAUDETTE RECHTORIK, Head of SEA LIFE Trust ANZ



"I'm thrilled to see that the Ocean Youth program is now across all 4 sites in Australia & NZ. It's testament to the hard work and passion of a dedicated & visionary team."



CONSERVING WILDLIFE

ASSESSMENT OF SCUBA DIVER IMPACTS ON CRITICALLY ENDANGERED GREY NURSE SHARKS @ WOLF ROCK, QUEENSLAND - DR CARLEY KILPATRICK

The aim of the project is to identify and assess any impacts SCUBA divers have on the numbers, presence/absence and movement of GNS within declared GNS areas at Wolf Rock and Flat Rock and provide recommendations to mitigate any identified impact.

The project has been closely supported by the SEA LIFE Trust Sunshine Coast champions who have been able to accompany Carley on the many dives to tag the GNS in these respective areas.

Final reporting for the project is due by the end of 2019.



CONSERVING WILDLIFE

SUPPORTING TURTLE TAGGING

Last year SEA LIFE Melbourne Aquarium released a rescued and rehabbed turtle called Terry. Terry was fitted with a satellite tag, funded by the Trust, and tracked for about 4 months. This time was slightly shorter than expected as it was a smaller turtle. He was released from Mallacoota and swam to Wilsons Prom which is where all our tagged turtles swim to (Weird Fact!) then to make things even weirder, it swam within 1km of SEA LIFE Melbourne Aquarium and hung around for a few weeks before its last pings around Phillip Island.

This data is shared with leading turtle scientists to feed into a wider database so as to learn as much as we can about the vast ranges of our turtles and the likely threats they face in their travels. Although Terry stopped pinging last year, the Trust continues to pay for satellite time for a period of time after. This is why we will only fund tags for projects that are a part of a wider research project to inform the best available turtle conservation strategies.

We hope Terry is safe and well, wherever he may be!



EVERY TURTLE COUNTS

Last year we began a project in partnership with Conservation International called 'Every Turtle Counts - improving hatchling success rates and restoring turtle populations of Timor Leste.'

A team of SEA LIFE staff headed over to learn more about the situation on the ground and to better understand how we could help communities who wanted to help restore their natural resources, after decades of annihilation under Indonesian & Portuguese occupation.

Although it's relatively early days for a brand new project in a new country we've learnt that the communities have been busy monitoring turtle nests and protecting them from feral animals. Awareness of the importance of protecting turtles has significantly increased since implementing our project, which is a minimum of 3 years' commitment from the Trust.

The SEA LIFE + Trust team have completed a second trip to Timor Leste to continue building relationships with both CI and the coastal communities. We have a comprehensive plan to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable natural resource management. Watch this space!

OCEAN YOUTH

Our youth program is going from strength to strength as it grows in both reach and numbers.

This year we received an unprecedented number of applications for the Sunshine Coast, a location where the program has been particularly impactful. SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast is located in a smaller, regional centre, within walking distance to some of the most beautiful beaches and coastlines in Australia. It is also a mecca for nesting turtles. The community are relatively engaged in ocean initiatives so it's no surprise its young people are keen to get involved in a program like Ocean Youth.

We received over 100 applications for Ocean Youth Sunshine Coast and accepted 63. We also partnered with Sunreef and its associated Registered Training Organisation to deliver the Cert 2 in Outdoor Recreation. This course is free to anyone over 15 (funded by the Queensland Government) and equips them with entry level boating skills, diving and First Aid. The students received points from the accreditation that can go towards their final exams.

This year we welcomed Auckland to the Ocean Youth family. Starting small, we received 13 applications from young, ocean loving teens who were keen to try us out. They had a whale of a time, literally, as their field trips took them out into the stunning waterways around Auckland spotting whales with Whale Safari Auckland, participating in clean ups and learning the role marine parks play in keeping our oceans healthy and abundant with life. A highlight was releasing a rescued turtle into Poor Knight's Marine Park.

We're aiming to go global next year with a number of SEA LIFE sites being flagged for an Ocean Youth trial. Exciting times!!!
You can learn more about our OY Ambassadors via www.oceanyouth.org + OY socials.



HABITAT RESTORATION

OPERATION CRAYWEED:

This project also has gone from strength to strength as the translocation of crayweed is now showing second and third generation offspring, or 'craybies' in established sites. Monitoring studies have shown strong recruitment of crayfish (lobster), larger fish and an array of invertebrates.

This year the UNSW Operation Crayweed team expanded their sites to include Manly, which won a local My Community grant to see a new underwater garden site established.

This is the final year of the industry partnership between SEA LIFE Trust ANZ, UNSW & Operation Crayweed to restore Sydney's underwater forests but we hope to continue being involved in whatever way we can.





HABITAT RESTORATION

Sydney Harbour Kayak Clean Ups

Earlier in the year the Trust supported a number of Sydney Harbour Kayak Clean Ups as a new and different way to engage the SEA LIFE teams to take positive action against the pervasive issue of problematic litter in our waterways.

Almost 50 SEA LIFE Sydney staff got up at the crack of dawn to head out onto our beautiful harbour before sunset to get paddling whilst cleaning up. It's safe to say it was a resounding success when even Merlin accountants got out of their office and on the water!

Not only did staff engagement around clean ups go through the roof, we developed a wonderful partnership with the owners of Sydney by Kayak's Ben and Laura Stone, who generously subsidise our staff clean ups. They have also fundraised to contribute funding for our first Seabin @ SEA LIFE Sydney which was deployed in September!

Thank you Laura & Ben, owners of Sydney by Kayak. You can book a Sydney Harbour Kayak Clean Up here: <https://sydneybykayak.com.au>



24 HOUR GLOBAL BEACH CLEAN

2019 RESULTS

**SEA LIFE
TRUST**
Protecting The World's Oceans



MORE THAN



**CLEAN-UPS
HELD AROUND
THE WORLD**



**2442
VOLUNTEERS**



**3972
BAGS OF LITTER
COLLECTED**

**MOST
COLLECTED ITEMS**

CIGARETTE BUTTS, BOTTLE TOPS,
STRAWS, PLASTIC BOTTLES,
FOOD WRAPPERS



**1929 KGS
OF LITTER REMOVED FROM
THE ENVIRONMENT**

THIS IS THE EQUIVALENT APPROXIMATE
WEIGHT OF TWO FULLY-GROWN ADULT
LEATHERBACK SEA TURTLES, 8 ADULT
MALE GREY SEALS, OR BOTH BELUGA
WHALES LITTLE WHITE AND LITTLE GREY!

SEA LIFE Trust is a charity registered in England & Wales (1175859) and company limited by guarantee (10833916); both are registered at Link House, 25 West Street, Poole, BH15 1LD.

World Oceans Day (8th June 2019), saw SEA LIFE Trust launch its biggest clean-up mission yet. A 24-hour beach clean event starting in New Zealand and ending in California! The 24-hour event was hosted across 50 different SEA LIFE attractions taking place from Sydney to Scarborough.

It is estimated that 8 million tons of plastic waste enter the world's oceans each year and that by 2050, the oceans could have more plastic than fish. Most of the littered plastic waste worldwide ultimately ends up at sea. The litter washing up on our local shores is not just unpleasant to look at; it also harms and kills our precious wildlife. Hundreds of species of marine wildlife including seals, seabirds, turtles and whales have mistaken marine litter for food resulting in starvation, poisoning and fatal stomach blockages.

Thanks to the hard work of SEA LIFE staff and community volunteers:

- More than 40 clean-ups held around the world
- 2442 volunteers took part
- 3972 bags of litter collected
- 1929 kgs of harmful litter removed – that's the equivalent weight of 2 fully-grown leatherback sea turtles, or 8 adult male grey seals, or both beluga whales Little White and Little Grey!!

This is even more impressive as the most collected items included small and light items such as bottle tops, straws, plastic bottles, and cigarette butts!

A huge thank you to all for your support and involvement including our clean up partner - Ben & Jerry's Australia/New Zealand!

HABITAT RESTORATION

SEABINS for SEA LIFE Sydney & SEA LIFE Melbourne

This year we invested in 2 seabins: one each for SEA LIFE Sydney and SEA LIFE Melbourne aquarium.

The seabin concept was developed by two surfers who were tired of seeing an increasing amount of rubbish in our oceans. They did extensive R & D to hone their simple devices, which can collect up to 20kgs of marine litter each day.

SEA LIFE Sydney's seabin was co-funded with our friends at Sydney by Kayak and was deployed in September 2019. Melbourne's location is being finalised and will be deployed imminently.

A huge thanks to Laura & Ben from Sydney by Kayak for their generous support!



HABITAT RESTORATION



Although SO Manly has morphed & meandered into various forms (Plastic Free Manly), and Manly SEA LIFE Sanctuary has long since closed, we continue to support the SO Manly team with various community initiatives, the latest of which being Strawkling.

Coined by one of SO Manly's co-founders, Harriet Spark, the term mashes up snorkeling for straws, an activity carried out regularly in Manly Cove. For some unknown reason, the beach adjacent to the old Manly SEA LIFE Sanctuary is a sink for littered plastic straws. Over 200 were collected by 12 strawklers at the last event.

The local community loves these hands on events and continue to participate to keep Manly's beaches plastic free. Thanks to Harriet Spark, Alicia Lloyd & the strawkling team for their time & commitment to the Plastic Free cause!



SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD

When you order your fish and chips do you wonder what kind of fish it is? How it was caught? Whether it's an endangered species or a species that may not be that great for you to eat?

Chances are, probably not.

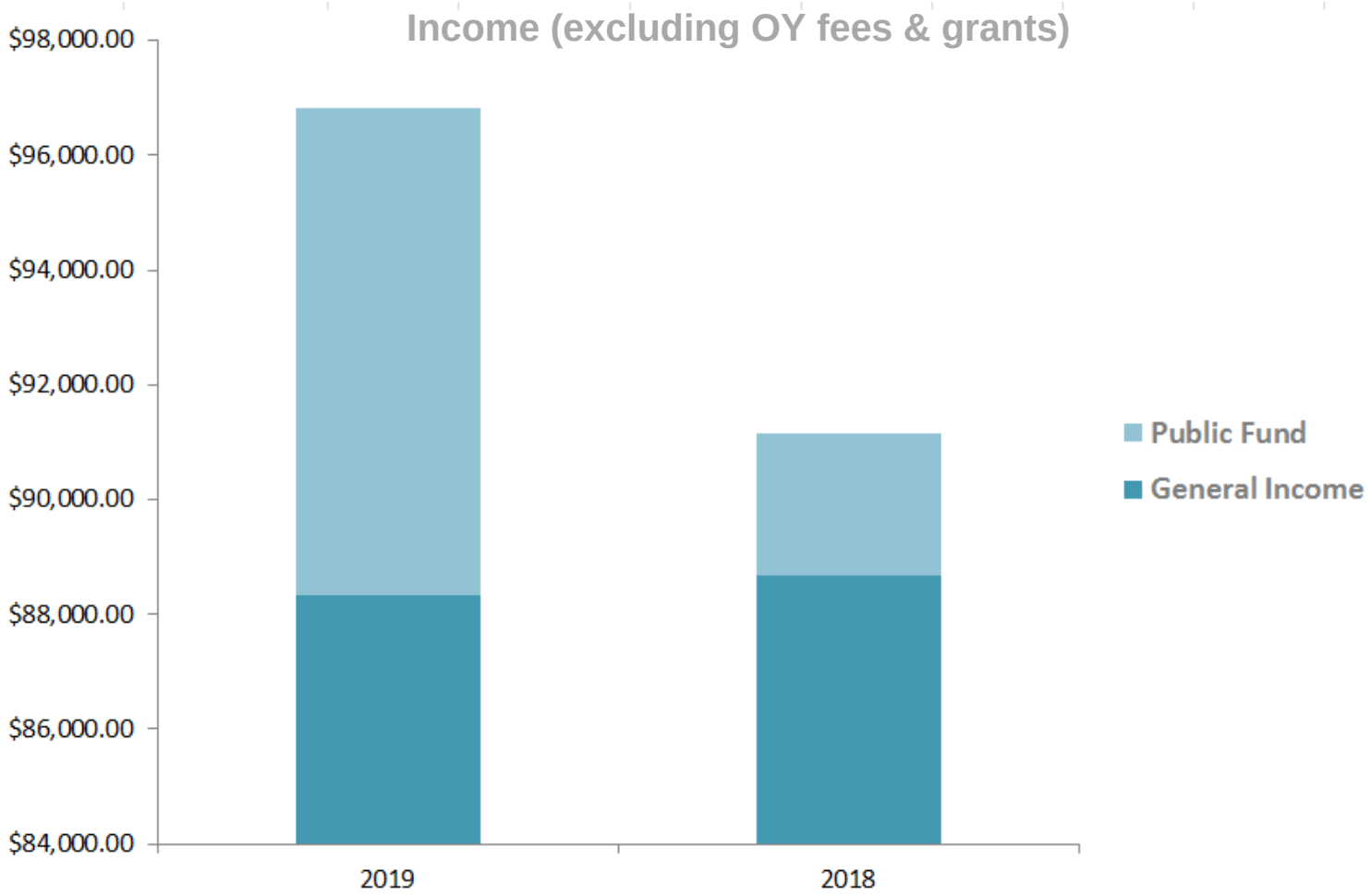
It's highly likely that you've got no idea what fish you're actually eating, and potentially neither does the person selling it to you. You could be sold 'deep sea perch' but it's a 100+ year old Orange Roughy. And if it's 'flake', a generic term for shark, what kind of shark is it? Could be a threatened or endangered species?

To find out more about what's behind your fish and chips, the Trust supported a Masters student research project to genetically test a range of fish samples from random fish and chip outlets to see if the fish they're selling you is the fish you're actually eating. To date, researchers have successfully DNA sequenced ~ **90 samples and found a range of species being traded including species under threat.** They also found major inconsistencies in the labeling of shark product.

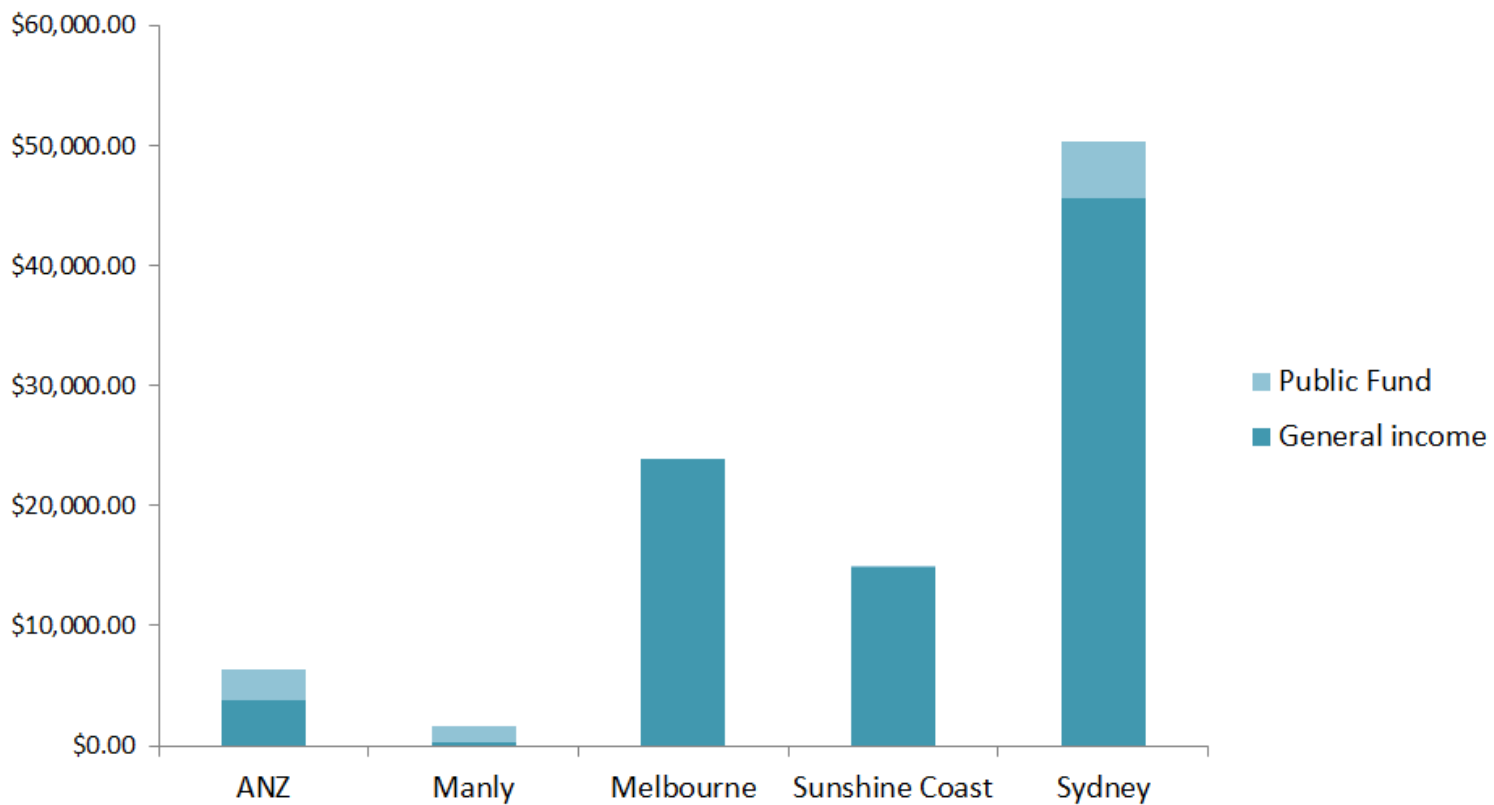
We'll be sharing the findings in more detail once the research has undergone peer review, to increase awareness of sustainable seafood and the need for appropriate seafood labelling.



THE NUMBERS

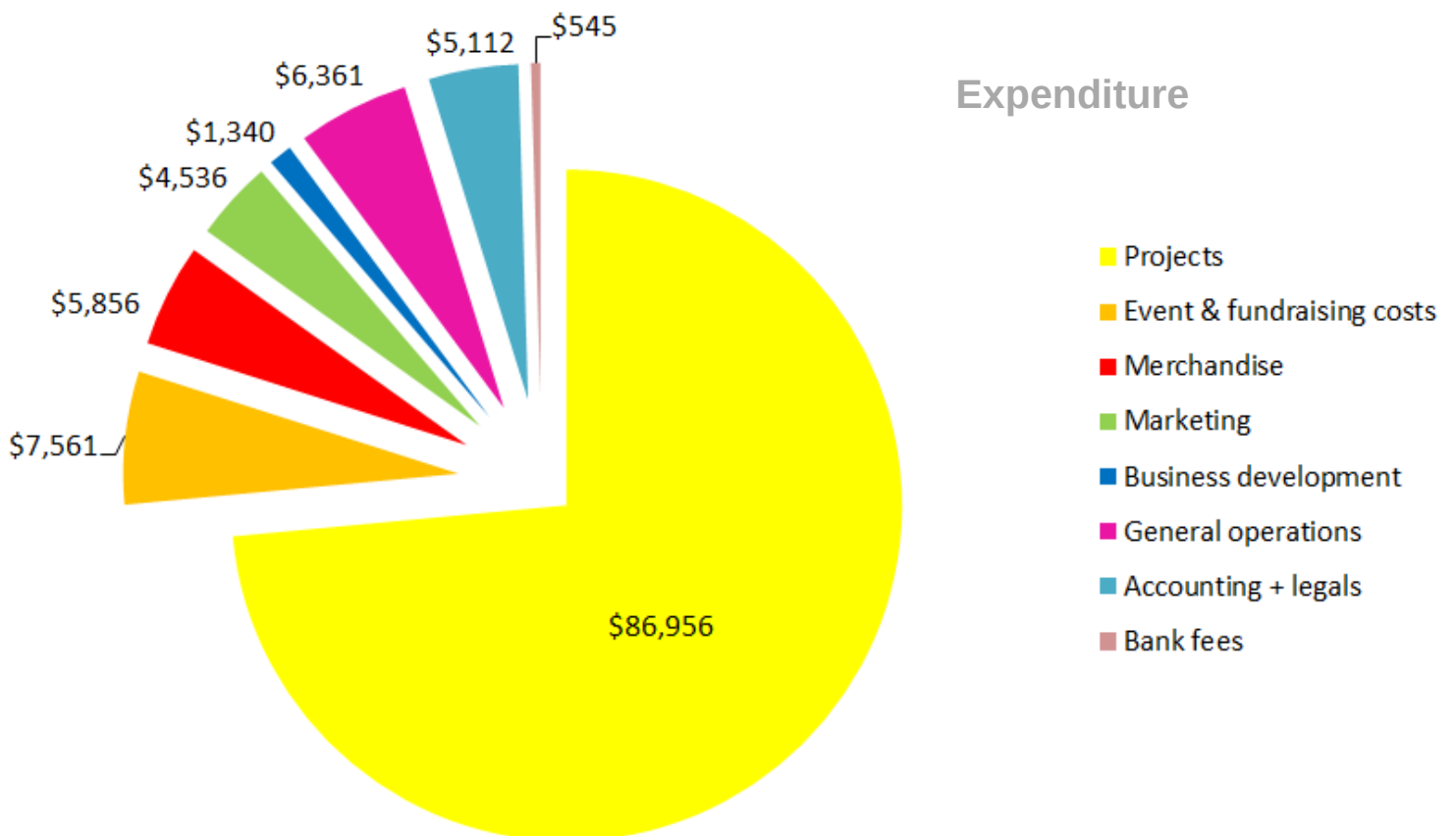
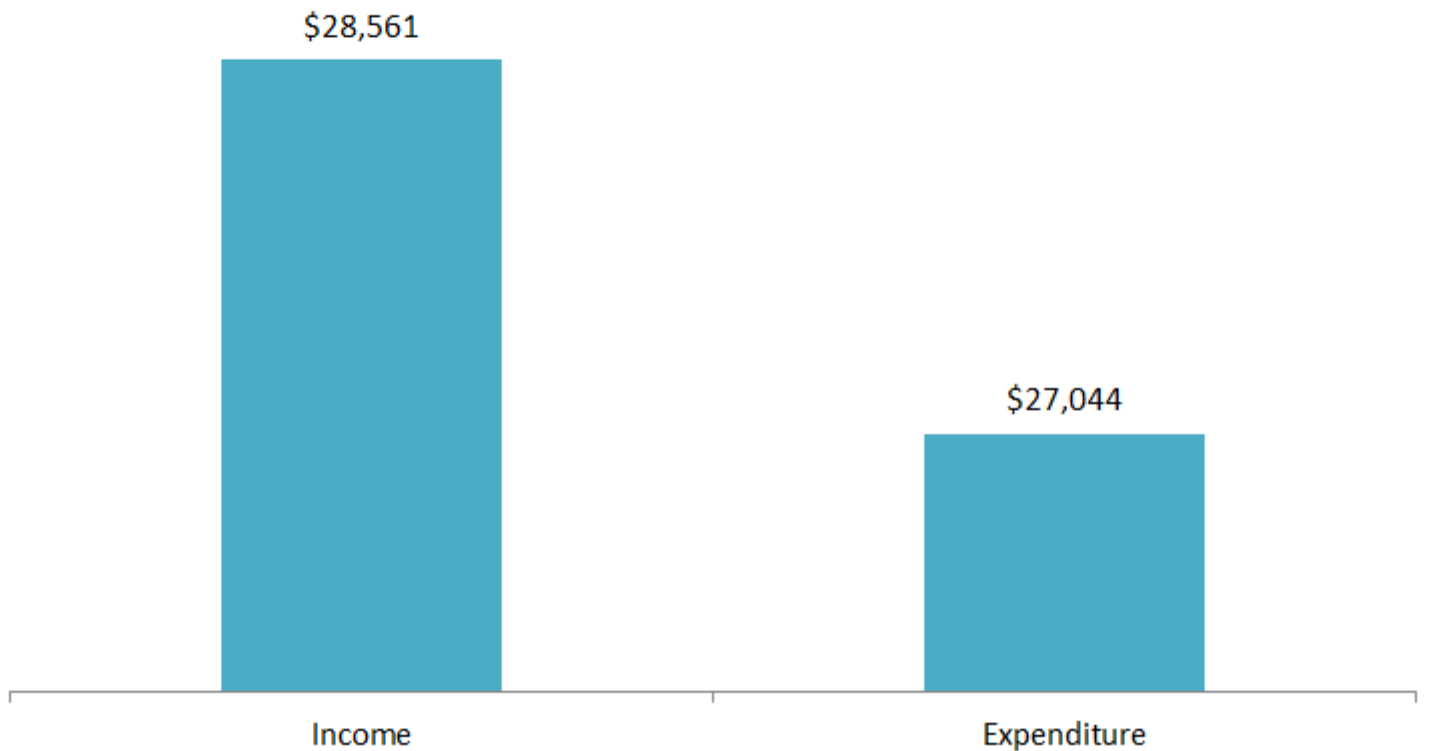


Income by site (excluding OY program fees and grants)



THE NUMBERS

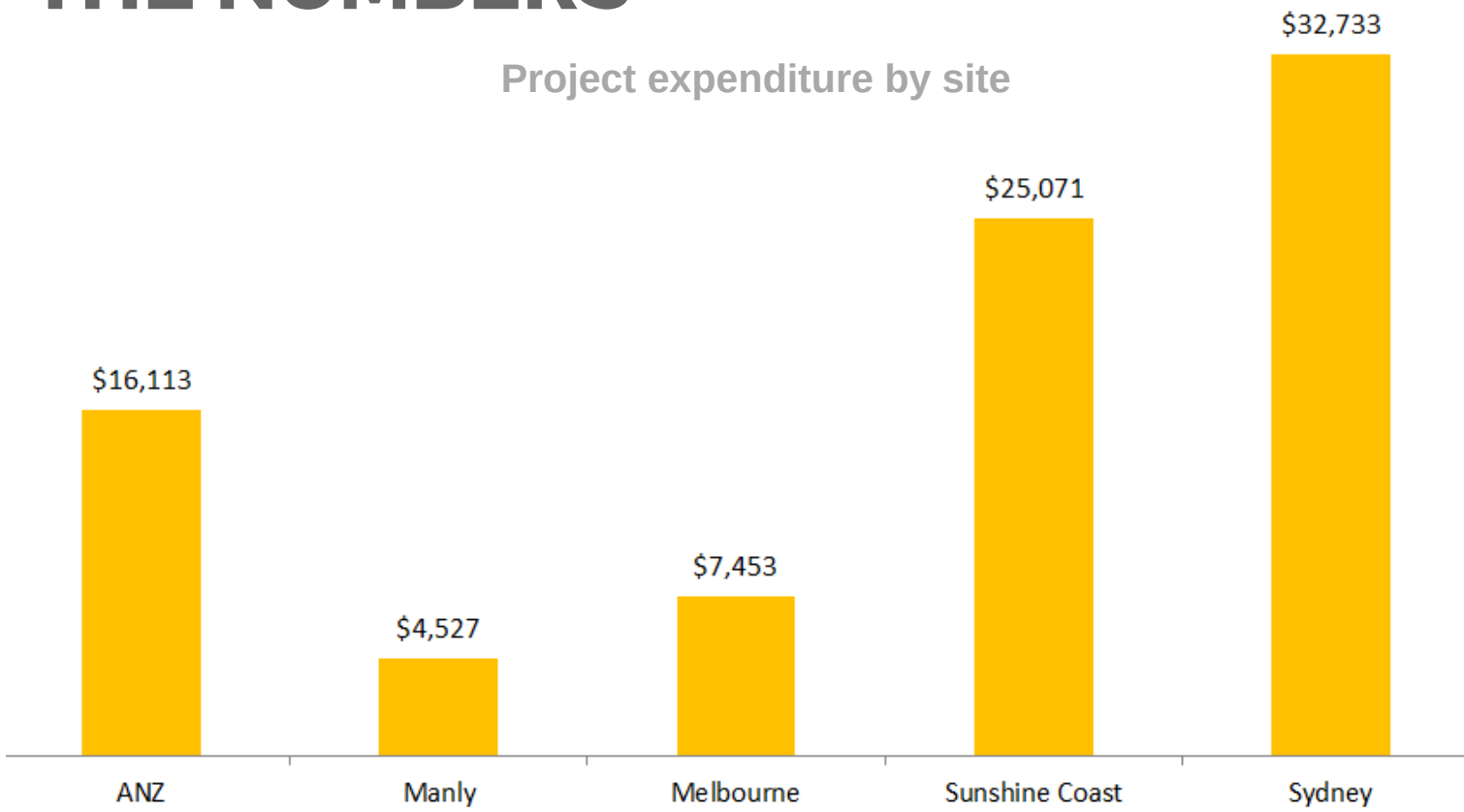
Ocean Youth Income + Expenditure



Thanks to Merlin Entertainments for covering SEA LIFE Trust ANZ operating costs (1 PTE wages) we are able to contribute the majority of income earned to conservation projects.

THE NUMBERS

Project expenditure by site



Funding by project



THE GRATITUDE

As always, a **HUGE** thank you to all our SEA LIFE visitors who donate to our spinners, SEA LIFE Trust members & donors & sponsors for enabling us to continue supporting the important work we do.

Special thanks to:

SEA LIFE Sydney Aquarium (**Merlin Entertainments**) who cover the salary for one PTE employee which we would not be able to do much without.

SEA LIFE Trust Executive Committee for donating their precious time and energy to keep the organisation on track with budget and strategy. A particular thanks goes to our Chair, **Anissa Lawrence**, who has given so much of her time and expertise which is infinitely appreciated.

Alicia Lloyd, Harriet Spark and Vicki Brown for their time and effort driving SO Manly & SO Sunshine Coast. Trying to fit a project in around busy working and parenting lives is no mean feat yet they do it with such grace and enthusiasm.

Vicki Brown, Peta Howard, Tiarna Chetcuti, Lidia Davidovics-Smith, Emma Ferguson for their incredible support and commitment in driving Ocean Youth and continuing with the vision, despite the hiccups on the way.

Steve Dafnakis (auditor extraordinaire) & **Helen Rosoux** (bookkeeper) for consistently making themselves available to ensure we're financially an A-Team.

And all our other volleys who drop in and out but provide a huge array of value to our organisation; whether it's attending a beach clean, posting for our social media, IT, governance, or design, it's all very valuable work that we as a one part-time equivalent operation can't always get to.

How you can help:

Become a member for just \$20 per year (the equivalent of 5 coffees or 2 beers brewed by bearded brewers). Every dollar raised goes directly to our projects as our operational costs are covered by our main sponsor, Merlin Entertainments.

Attend one of our events – all proceeds raised from our events go straight back into our projects.

Donate - All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

You can do all of the above including making a general donation or learning more about SEA LIFE Trust ANZ via our website www.sealifetrust.org.au.





THE FUTURE

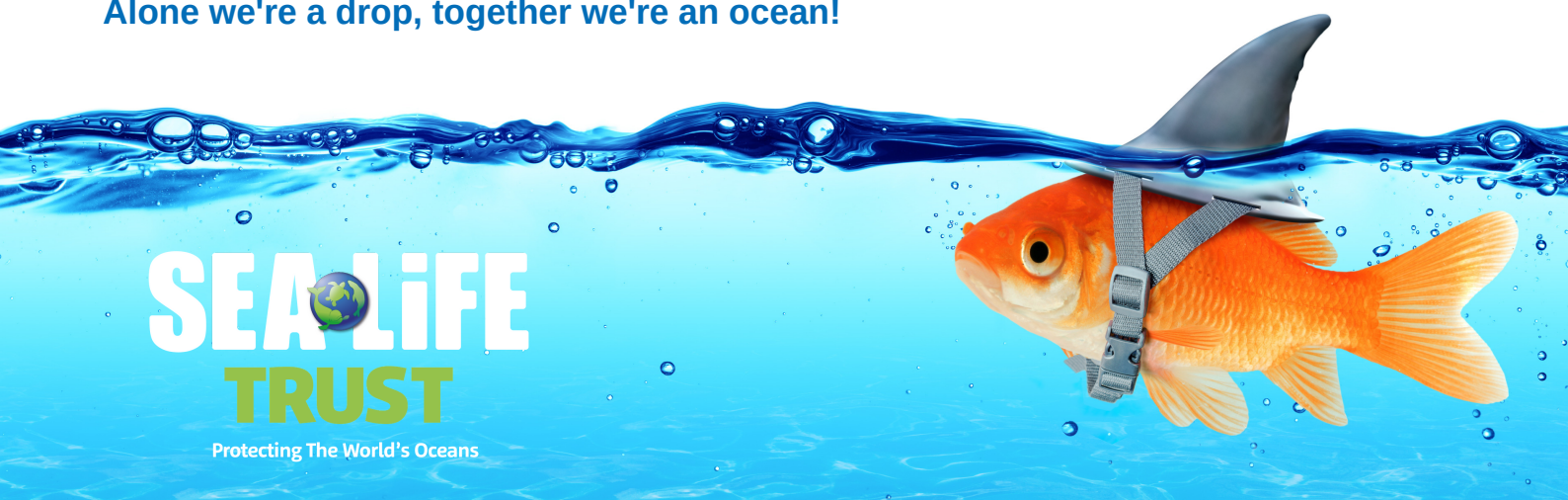
We're planning loads of engaging activities for 2020 in our **Positive Action for Healthy Oceans Plan**.

We are aligning more closely to the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 14: Life Below Water and have incorporated the top 4 objectives into our strategic focus for 2020 & beyond.



We hope you'll join us for an event, or to help spread the awareness and actions to secure the health of our oceans. After all:

Alone we're a drop, together we're an ocean!



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