



Case Studies

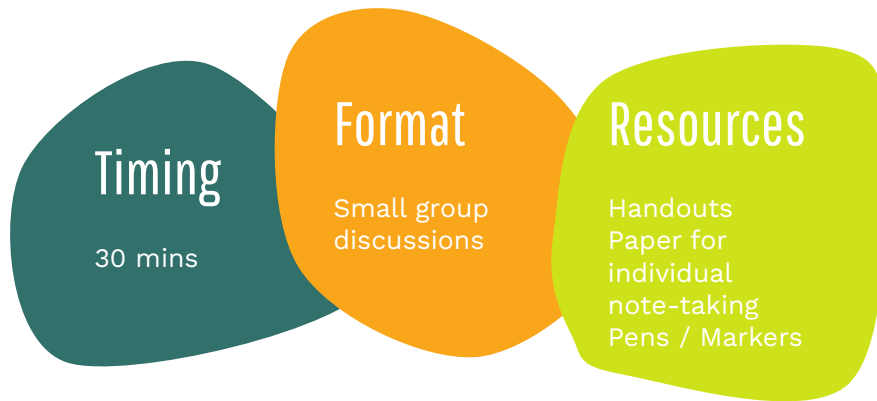
Purpose

This activity provides case examples to explain what we mean by “regenerative business”. These case studies help demonstrate how businesses can contribute to regeneration.

Goals and Outcomes

- Provide practical examples of regeneration
- Inspire regenerative action
- Spark ideas for business models

CASE STUDIES



Instructions

Assumptions

This activity assumes that participants are involved in or may wish to be involved in a business, project, initiative, or enterprise.

Step 1: Instructions [5 min]

- Provide case study handouts
- Assign one case study to each group. There may be more than one group doing the same case study

Step 2: Group discussion [15 min]

In groups at tables
Allow the groups time to read the case study. Discuss the following questions:

- What is this business delivering?
- How is it regenerative? - Environmentally, socially, economically?
- Does it give you any ideas for your project?

Step 3: Debrief [10 min]

Ask each group to share a little about their discussion.

Handouts

On the next pages you will find the following Case Studies:

- **re.source** - Creating safe products from coal-ash dams
- **Hepburn Energy** - A hybrid wind, solar and battery co-operative
- **Wayfairer** - Community-conscious online travel marketplace
- **Native Foodways** - First Nations owned and led native foods marketplace

Go Further

- **Live interview** - Do a live interview with someone who is some way down the path of developing a regenerative business. Have a dedicated interviewer and open up the floor to questions after. Ask about the history of the business, the journey they have been on to learn what people value, and the ways the business contributes to regeneration (environmental, social, and economic).
- **Questions for Regenerative Business** - Follow this activity with the Questions for Regenerative Business. Alternatively, provide the Questions together with the case studies or prior to the interview. Participants can use the questions to unpack the case studies/interview.
- **Link - Regenerative Business Model Canvas** - Follow the Case Studies and Regenerative Business Questions with the Regenerative Business Model Canvas activity.



INNOVATE TO
REGENERATE

THE
AUSTRALIAN
CENTRE FOR
SOCIAL
INNOVATION



HANDOUTS

Local Learning Lab CASE STUDY: **re.source**

re.source

The origins

A handful concerned community members established the Coal-ash Community Alliance Inc. mid-2019, following the public launch of 'Out of the Ashes' a report, which details the pollution of Lake Macquarie from two large coal ash dams, where power stations store their waste.

With the help of the Hunter Community Environment Centre the Alliance organised the National Community Summit 'Power & Pollution' in February 2020, followed by a Public Forum the following year, which brought together all parties interested in the re-use of coal ash.



The Research Coordinator of the Coal-ash Community Alliance, an economist, had been investigating ash uses that were environmentally sound, economically viable, and used large quantities of coal-ash. She soon realised that none of the established businesses would tackle this thorny issue, and so she teamed up with the most promising inventors invited to the 2021 Forum, and together they established Wilco Envirotech.

The opportunity

There are more than 200 million tonnes of coal-ash stored in unlined dams around NSW, to which every year some six million tonnes are added.



Case study shared as part of the WWF Innovate to Regenerate Local Learning Labs in partnership with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation.

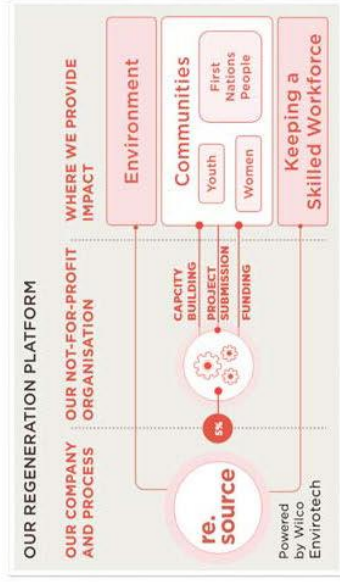


This ash contains potentially hazardous material, which in large quantities poses serious threats to surrounding waterways. The ash also contains potentially valuable elements that can be processed and sold.

The solution

By using a novel combination of established chemical processes and existing equipment from the mining and chemical industries, coal-ash dams can be emptied and used to manufacture environmentally safe products. The processing and sale of the valuable elements will fund the processing of the hazardous ones into environmentally safe products that have well-established markets with large growth potential – think lithium batteries, greener aluminium or more sustainable construction materials.

The **re.source** project, powered by Wilco Envirotech, not only tackles a major environmental problem, it also creates jobs for the communities around coal-fired power stations. As a regenerative business the **re.source** project establishes a regeneration platform, which enables these communities to collaboratively articulate their priorities, develop their own projects, and secure the funding to manage and successfully own these projects.



What do they do?

Wilco Envirotech powers the **re.source** project, an alliance of businesses that collaborate to empty coal-ash dams by manufacturing environmentally safe products and to resource the regeneration platform with 5% of their profits.

Who

Founders: Chemical Engineer Nick Willis and Economist Ingrid Schraner

Contribution to regeneration

Environmental:

- Removes potentially hazardous elements from power station waste and transforms this waste into valuable inputs for other manufacturing businesses
- Reduces the carbon footprint of those products
- Empowers communities to be in control of the regeneration of their own environments

Social:

- Builds on the strengths in communities around coal-fired power stations and enables them to identify their priorities together
- Further develops the local capacity to successfully develop, manage and own projects

Economic:

- Creates good quality, well remunerated local jobs while re-using power station waste
- Provides key resources for local clusters of advanced manufacturing businesses while contributing to import substitution and shorter supply chains
- Introduces the circularity of wealth into the circular economy of waste and develops a model how mainstream businesses can safely participate in circulating wealth locally

How is value created?

Business Model:

The **re.source** project is an alliance of businesses that support the regeneration platform, which allows these businesses to fund regenerative projects under community control and ownership without exposing their own business to undue risks.

Services / Products:

The **re.source** project manufactures a range of valuable materials that other businesses use in their production processes to make products as variable as aluminium, paint, batteries, solar panels, fertilisers, metal alloys like high-strength stainless steel, or lightweight pre-cast concrete products.

Benefits / Social and Economic Impact:

The **re.source** project creates high quality jobs in communities around coal-fired power stations, so that their well-trained and highly remunerated workers can stay in their communities in comparable jobs. The project directly addresses a key environmental legacy left by power stations, and empowers communities to be in control of their own regeneration and that of their environment.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

We are a regenerative business
We give back more than we take - through a model that empowers communities to be in control, without putting undue risks on our business.
We **re.source** a not-for-profit organisation that enables communities to formulate their priorities, develop their projects, and successfully manage and own them.

We care about our environment
We have developed a novel process to extract all of the potentially hazardous material and all the material that can become a **re.source** for others.
Our aim is to safely use up all the coal-ash and to **re.source** the local communities so that they can regenerate their environments.

We create good jobs for our communities
Half of a power station's workforce used to be local trades people. We **re.source** our workforce from here, locally.
And we provide the **re.sources** so that together we can slightly shift the focus from electrical to chemical engineering, but with the same high-quality and high-r-remuneration jobs.

We are building circular economies
We use power station waste as our key **re.source**, together with their workforce.
We **re.source** modern manufacturing industries, from local lithium battery production to greener aluminium smelting, from solar panel production to specialist pre-cast concrete products.
And we **re.source** the circulation of the wealth created, together with our local communities.

Hepburn Energy

The opportunity

Community-led climate action through community organising and ownership of local electricity generation. Prior to the commissioning of the wind farm, the region was largely dependent on electricity from the coal-fired power stations in the Latrobe Valley.

Building on over 10 years of experience in generating 42% of Hepburn Shire's energy needs through renewables.

Plans for solar and battery storage, build on current connection to the grid.

Key is to foster climate resilience and helping the Shire reach zero-net emissions by 2030.

Solution

Hepburn Energy (formally Hepburn Wind), located north west of Melbourne, has been powering change in energy and renewables for over a decade. Starting as Australia's first community-owned wind farm; now working on being the first hybrid wind, solar and battery co-operative.

The cooperative looked to a variety of sources for funding including \$10 million raised in small investments from over 2,000 local and non-local retail investors, and the balance from state government grants and a bank loan from Bendigo Bank.

What do they do?

Launching a community electricity offer providing Hepburn Shire residents and Hepburn Energy members with a closer link to local renewables.

Who

Owned and operated by the Hepburn Community Wind Park Co-operative

How is value created?

Business Model

- Member owned co-operative and community owned wind farm.
- Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity.
- Total of 2009 shareholding members, mostly from the local region and a much wider pool of supporters who engage with our projects and programs.

Services / Products:

- **Electricity regeneration:** Wind, and planning to add solar and battery storage.
- **Energy Park Tours,** events and artist residencies.
- **Impact fund:** Supports collaboration with the community on partnerships and projects: The annual funding pool is \$30,000; a partnership approach is adopted; staff co-design proposals with a proponent.
- **Hepburn Z-NET:** partner on collaborations to support community members get on track to zero-net emissions - increasing EV, home energy assessments, supporting solar bulk buy to move residents to solar.

Contribution to regeneration

Environmental

- Reduction in 100,834 CO2 tonnes abated
- Renewable electricity generation through wind.
- Solar farm to be located on least arable land
- The array design reduces land space used
- Sensitive design to retain all trees

Social

- Takes action on climate change and advocates for community energy, seeking to reduce local emissions and build community resilience.
- Cooperative model supports self-determination
- Reduced visual impact through design.

Economic

- Majority of shareholders are located within the region, dividends are local.

Reference: <https://www.hepburnenergy.coop/about/>

Case study shared as part of the WWF Innovate to Regenerate Local Learning Labs in partnership with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation.

WAYFAIRER

The opportunity

There is a growing demand for sustainable travel. In 2021, 72% of Australian travellers believed that sustainable travel is vital. [Sustainable travel report, 2021]

Existing travel platforms are unable to meet this demand.

In 2021, over \$150 million was paid to international travel booking platforms with little reinvested back into local communities. [www.tra.gov.au/data-and-research]

Solution

Wayfairer is an online marketplace that creates a fairer way to travel by connecting conscious travellers to community-led travel accommodation and experiences to restore and regenerate regional destinations.

Wayfairer disrupts the extractive booking model of AirBnB which reduces housing affordability, and hollows out communities.

Who

Founders: Rohan Clarke and Andrew Keast

What do they do?

Booking platform that connects conscious consumers with community-led travel accommodation and initiatives that restores the natural environmental and community.



Step #1

Communities choose projects for approval by local representatives



Step #2

Hosts list their accommodation & experiences



Step #3

Guests visit region & 50% of booking fees are paid to projects



Step #4

Community run projects and report on their impacts

Reference: Innovate to Regenerate; Wayfairer.au and Accenture Song Accelerator. Case study shared as part of the WWF Innovate to Regenerate Local Learning Labs in partnership with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation.

How is value created?

Business Model

Community owned co-operative model that creates a closed economic loop, with 50% of travel booking fees reinvested back into local people, local food and the local environment.

Services / Products:

It's a non-profit platform that enables booking revenue to stay in Australia's communities - promoting tourism destinations through sustainable, locally-led initiatives.

Benefits / Social and Economic Impact: /

Social Impact

Promotes jobs; catalyses local investment; reinvests in environmental regeneration; supports local regenerative food systems; supports resilient communities

Environmental

- Impact revenue directed towards community regen projects - focused on nurturing native wildlife, biodiversity and ecosystem restoration at landscape scale

Social

- Works with communities to determine the regenerative needs of the region.
- Grows and strengthens local initiatives, distributes wealth more equitably and creates more resilient communities.
- Belong to communities through regenerative-led experiences.

Economic

- Support local jobs, with re-investment.
- Money circulates within a local economy, rather than going off-shore.
- Contribute towards community wealth-building.

Supports local regenerative experiences through the platform across three themes: food, people and environment



Food

Regenerative agricultural and local food system projects that produce benefits to environments and communities.



People

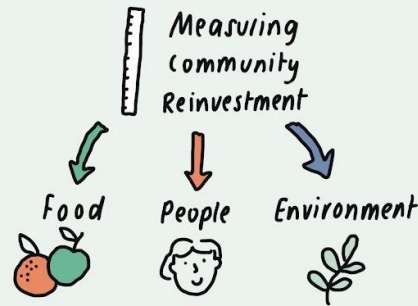
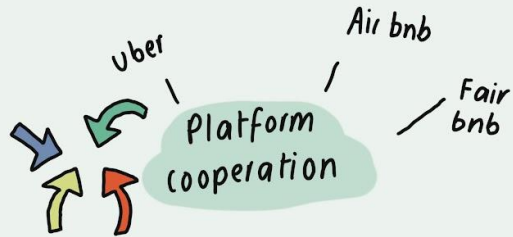
Sustainable work and circular economy projects to foster regenerative economies and resilient communities.



Environment

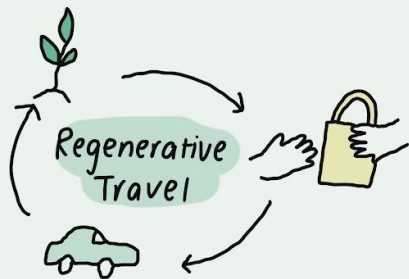
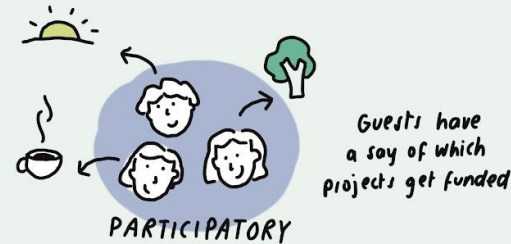
Regenerative projects that nurture native wildlife, biodiversity and ecosystems at landscape scale.

Reference: Innovate to Regenerate; Wayfairer.au and Accenture Song Accelerator. Case study shared as part of the WWF Innovate to Regenerate Local Learning Labs in partnership with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation.



case study

WAYFAIRER



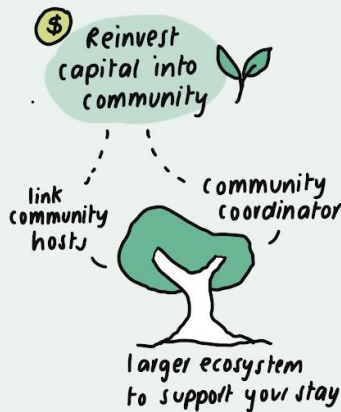
CURRENTLY **25** properties listed in East Gippsland

Not For Profit cooperative



Guests want to actively participate in communities

It is now expected companies **GIVE BACK**



2030 GOAL
3-4 regions across Australia involved

Native Foodways

The opportunity

Raise awareness of native foods as healthy and tasty across Australia; growing interest from consumers in unique foods, and regenerative agriculture; need for meaningful economic opportunities for First Nations farmers.

Solution

Native Foodways is a First Nations owned and led social enterprise dedicated to strengthening the native food system in a way that is regenerative, culturally respectful, and benefits First Peoples.

Drawing on Indigenous Knowledges and collective wisdom we are driving an increase in the regenerative and meaningful cultivation and distribution of native foods in Australia.

What do they do?

- A collaboration of people and organisations working to sow seeds, cultivate plants, and ethically harvest and share native foods.
- Growing a network of First Nations-led native food farms, kitchens, and marketplaces.
- Supporting First Nations farmers to buy and sell crops.

Who

Native Foodways is owned and led by Kubin woman Carla McGrath (Moa Island in the Torres Strait), Pitta Pitta woman Cristillee Houghton, Wiradjuri man Jason Gianville, Wiradjuri man Lachlan McDaniel, and Australian-Hungarian man (born and raised on Gadigal Land) Mickey Kovari.

References: Podcast - [Native Foodways](#) - regenerative enterprise, centring First Nations ways of knowing, being, and doing - interview with Mickey Kovari, Co-founder on Better World Leaders (61 mins) (2022) (website: <https://nativefoodways.com.au/pages/about-us>)

How is value created?

Business Model:

- Collaborates with First Nations people, native food growers, landowners, philanthropists, restaurateurs, and volunteers.
- Develops relationships with landholders who have surplus land that can be used by First Nations farmers to grow Native crops.
- Generates revenue through their food market place.
- Invites investment from investors and philanthropists.

Services / Products:

- Native Foodways Farms, Kitchens, Markets, Narratives, Communities, Strategy and Consultancy.
- Runs the Native Foodways Market Platform, working with First nations native food enterprises to buy and sell native seeds, plants, and foods.

Benefits:

- Invests profits into strengthening and increasing number of First Nations-led native food enterprises.

Contribution to regeneration

Environmental

- Supports land conservation through sustainable farming and the regenerative and meaningful cultivation and distribution of food.

Social

- Strengthens the native food system in a way that is regenerative, culturally respectful, and benefits First Peoples.
- Works to raise awareness and understanding of native foods across Australia.
- Supports links between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous businesses.
- Builds a community around native foods.

Economic

- Creates economies of scale through bulk buying and improved distribution efficiency through logistical hubs
- Increases employment for First Nations peoples.

