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**Reviewing ECEfS in 2016**

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The past year has been significant for Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS) and the paragraphs below provide an update of the highlights. There is much to celebrate in 2016!

The state-based ECEfS networks are moving ahead with professional learning events, newsletters and conference days. If you are seeking ECEfS information the groups to contact are listed below, plus there are key people in other states too including Megan Mentz and Anne Pettit\* at Little Green Steps, WA and Jenny Dudgeon with The Tasmanian Department of Education.

Environmental Education in Early Childhood (EEEC Victoria).

www.eeec.org.au

New South Wales Early Childhood Environmental Education Network (NSW ECEEN).

[www.eceen.org.au](http://www.eceen.org.au)

Queensland Early Childhood Sustainability Network (QECSN).

www.qecsn. org.au

Early Education for Sustainability South Australia Inc (EESSA)

[www.eessa.org.au](http://www.eessa.org.au)

\*Anne is co-author, with Sally Sneddon, of 'Sustainability in Action in Early Childhood Settings' (2016). 

In May this year a group of about 20 ECEfS educators, academics and policy makers representing most Australian states and ECEfS networks, plus two New Zealanders, met to discuss forming an alliance. In the past this group has joined forces over key policy issues, but the intention now is to become a recognisable group. The proposed name is the Australia-Aotearoa Alliance for Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (The Alliance). The Alliance will bring together ECEfS networks across Australia and Aotearoa as a strong and united voice to further build capacity.

Early Childhood Australia, the peak national organisation for early childhood education, has recently launched an EfS webinar to promote professional learning across the early childhood sector. Julie Gaul and Deb Watson (NSW ECEEN) were instrumental here and the webinar can be purchased from: <http://learninghub.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/elearning/education-for-sustainability/>

The NSW OEH Environmental Trust funded a consultative ECEfS study in 2014 and this year has published an online public document (Elliott, McCrea, Newsome & Gaul, 2016) to further inform and support uptake in the field. Available from <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/dissemination.htm>

The recent translation of key texts authored by predominantly Australian researchers and practitioners confirms our leading role internationally. The publication *Research in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: International perspectives and provocations* (Davis & Elliott, 2014) has been translated into Korean and moves are now underway to translate *Young Children and the Environment* (Davis, 2015) into Chinese.

The nature play movement continues unabated with various governments and organisations offering significant support. I can only question where was this support when EE began in the early childhood sector some 30 years ago? Are we at risk of simply turning the clock back here to the greenness of EE, while ignoring the other dimensions of sustainability? The Victorian bush kinder educators have formed an Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Network (ECOLN) and held their very successful inaugural conference day in 2016, refer <http://earlychildhoodoutdoorlearning.weebly.com>

As we look forward another *Transnational Dialogues* (TND) *in ECEfS Research* meeting is being organised by Lyndal O’Gorman and Sue Elliott for September 2017 to coincide with the next *World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC*) in Vancouver, BC. The international TND meetings have created a research continuum and become a mainstay of the ECEfS field globally. A recent conference paper by TND members was awarded ‘Best Paper’ at the World Symposium on Sustainable Development in Universities (WSSD-U), Boston, USA. The paper presented by Emery, Davis, Ferreira and Sageidet will be published next year in the *Handbook of Theory and Practice of Sustainable Development in Higher Education* (Filho, Brandli, Castro, & Newman).

In summary, 2016 has been a busy year for ECEfS and this reflection naturally leads to visions for the future. We must continue to advocate for maintaining the sustainability elements within the National Quality Standard (ACECQA, 2013), promote preservice teacher qualifications which include EfS, reinstate a national ECEfS conference and continue to build momentum for ECEfS with our international colleagues.