

Zoos Victoria claims world first carbon neutral status

Carbon foot, hoof, paw and claw prints now equal zero at Zoos Victoria, with three iconic attractions being the first in the world to achieve carbon neutral status.

Low Carbon Australia has certified Zoos Victoria's Melbourne Zoo, Werribee Open Range Zoo and Healesville Sanctuary as carbon neutral against the Australian Government's National Carbon Offset Standard (NCOS).

Low Carbon Australia's CEO Meg McDonald congratulated Zoos Victoria on its world-leading stance and its commitment to demonstrate to zoos internationally what they could do to reduce the environmental footprints of their own organisations.

"Zoos Victoria's certification milestone is part of its commitment to inspire millions of visitors to live more sustainably and protect wildlife and the environment for future generations," she said.

"Being such well-loved attractions of international standing, Melbourne, Werribee and Healesville are ideally placed to showcase how sustainability works and to inspire visitors across all generations to think twice about how their actions can make a difference."

Zoos Victoria reduced its carbon emissions through a range of energy efficiency and waste reduction measures. It then purchased and cancelled carbon offsets to bring its carbon emissions total to zero.

A solar PV system is powering energy efficient lighting in Melbourne Zoo's front retail shop and improvements to Melbourne Zoo's Butterfly House have significantly reduced the amount of gas needed to keep its temperature a constant 28 degrees.

In addition to its carbon neutral activities, Zoos Victoria has undertaken a number of other environmental activities including rainwater harvesting at Healesville's animal hospital and significant tree planting and habitat restoration along the Werribee River.

Ms McDonald applauded zoo staff for their concern for the environment and their enthusiasm for sustainability, which had helped the zoos make further significant inroads into reducing energy use and carbon emissions.

Ahead, Zoos Victoria will continue promoting its sustainability message and is looking to develop renewable energy options on site to provide green power and further energy efficiency savings for the zoos.

About Zoos Victoria

Zoos Victoria is a not-for-profit conservation organisation aimed at saving endangered wildlife from extinction. Combined, Zoos Victoria's Healesville Sanctuary, Werribee Open Range Zoo and Melbourne Zoo, see more than 1.9 million visitors each year.

Zoos Victoria is dedicated to connecting its visitors to wildlife and providing them with actions they can take to help save species in the wild. Since 2008, Zoos Victoria has had an overarching strategy to manage all environmental impacts associated with operating its zoos.

Melbourne Zoo was the recipient of the prestigious Award for Excellence which was awarded to the Zoo for its outstanding contribution to water sustainability. Through the implementation of an extensive water management plan, the Zoo has been able to halve its water usage.

Zoos Victoria is the first zoo in Australia and one of only a handful in the world to achieve iSO14001 status.

About the Carbon Neutral Program

Low Carbon Australia provides financial solutions and advice to Australian business, government and the wider community to boost investment in energy efficiency, cost-effective carbon reductions, and clean technology.

Low Carbon Australia Limited is the Australian Government's official certifier of carbon neutrality. Low Carbon Australia's Carbon Neutral Program is a voluntary scheme for Australian organisations seeking carbon neutrality for their whole organisation, part of their organisation, an event, product or service.

Certification is against the National Carbon Offset Standard (NCOS), which provides integrity through its guidance on genuine voluntary offsets and its minimum requirements for calculating, auditing and offsetting a carbon footprint to achieve carbon neutrality.

To be carbon neutral means that the net emissions associated with a product or an organisation's activities are equal to zero. For an organisation or product to become carbon neutral, best practice requires an organisation to:

1. Measure its carbon footprint;
2. Reduce emissions; and
3. Offset any residual emissions

The combined efforts of Carbon Neutral Network members have resulted in more than 1 million tonnes of carbon emissions being avoided each year. Learn more about the Carbon Neutral Program at www.lowcarbonaustralia.com.au

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