



HEAPS BETTER – TRANSCRIPT

Episode 1: How can we be better planet savers?

Ash: Have you ever listened to a podcast or watched a documentary about what's happening to our climate and thought, wow, this is huge. So... What do I do? But then they don't even tell you and they just roll the credits and then you shrug and go to bed and can't sleep.

Jess: This is not that kind of podcast. This is about doing stuff that will get you out of anxiety and into action because it's pretty hard to do anything productive when you're cowering in the fetal position, which is where we were at the start of 2020.

Ash & Jess: I just go from being so charged up and wanting to take action and then like the whole country is on fire, so everything I do seems pointless and futile. And then I fall into despair and it's just completely overwhelming. And there's so much to do. Just want to make the future beautiful. Should we quit driving? Go vegan? Do the power saving lightbulb thing? I mean, obviously, I should stop flying. Donate to charities... but which one? Don't use paper, don't even use toilet paper. Does it even make a difference? The sixth mass extinction!?

David Ritter: So just for a moment, let's put all of that advice to one side and just take a breath. I'm seeing a great breath being taken. That's a great, great deep breath.

Jess: So glad you're here David Ritter, CEO of Greenpeace Australia Pacific.

Ash: I was about to lose hope.

David Ritter: Above all, hope is having a plan of what to do. And, you know, we've got a plan of what to do. We've got a plan. We've got a plan... *echoes away*

Jess: David, where'd he go? Come back! David? I need a plan!

Ash: I really hope he comes back.

Ash: Hello, fellow human, I'm Ash.

Jess: And I'm Jess, and we're two mates on a mission to do something about this climate crisis. We've all got a lot of questions.

Friends: Yeah, climate change keeps me awake at night. I have a keep cup and I try to recycle. Well, I do recycle, but where does that go anyway? Yeah I tried to watch the recent David Attenborough documentary on Netflix, and I couldn't I couldn't finish watching. The biggest question I have is whether or not it's ethical to have children at this point in time. I often find it far too overwhelming to even think about.

Jess: In this podcast, we want to figure out the best things that we can do to make the world heaps better, then do them together because we heaps better together.

Ash: And to help us out, we tapping into the brilliant minds of our planet-saving friends at Greenpeace Australia Pacific.

Ash: Before we blindly rush into saving the planet, let's consider the amazing legacy of sustainability and caring for country of our first people.

Jess: We'd like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands where we make this podcast.

Ash: In my part of Sydney, I pay my respects to the Gadigal people of the Eora nation.

Jess: And for me, it's the Ngarigo people, the traditional custodians of the New South Wales Snowy Mountains. We extend our respects to any First Nations people listening.

Ash: We live among the oldest continuing culture in the world. We have a lot to learn.

Jess: We also want to acknowledge the grief and despair that climate change brings and generally the year 2020.

Ash: I mean, it started with bushfires, then moved on into COVID, and that's kind of how we started doing this podcast... Like every other man and his dog.

Jess: Yeah. Ash and I got together right at the start of 2020 and made a pinky promise to help each other stay sane, figure out what we could do that would actually make a difference and do things that make you feel good like you are right now, Ash.

Ash: Oh, you mean like my what you call my finger harp? What else do you play a harp with? Like a toe harp!?

Jess: Whatever you do for a bit of self care! We've also heard that action is the antidote to despair. But we're not activists, we're not scientists, we're not battery engineers. We're just normal people. So where do we start?

Ash: Yeah, I mean, who should we listen to about climate change?

Jess: I've got this hilarious sort of mattress pillow set up around me at the moment because there are like 70km winds howling outside, which is kind of perfect for speaking to an extreme weather expert but not so great for a podcast recording! Ash, I've found us a climate scientist.

Ash: Show me her papers, is she really real?

Jess: She's published papers called things like "Embracing the complexity of extreme weather events when quantifying their likelihood of recurrence in a warming world"

Ash: OK, so this is the kind of person we should be listening to. Mm hmm.

Jess: Who are you and what do you do?

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick: OK, so much right now, a couple of hours ago I was a mother, but now I can be a scientist. So my name's Sarah Perkins Kirkpatrick. I research extreme weather events, but I mainly focus on heatwaves.

Jess: I hope this isn't too much of a personal question, and feel free not to answer it if it is, but has becoming a mother changed how you go about your job or how you feel about the job that you're doing?

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick: I was a climate scientist before I had a family, but when I was pregnant with my first daughter, it was a pretty bad summer at the time. And I remember sitting in a conference and having a health expert talk about the health impacts of heatwaves in thirty five years time. So basically, when my daughter is my age. I'm thinking, this poor child, she's not done anything and she's going to bear the brunt of this. This is completely unfair and put me in a bit of a dark space for a while thinking, you know, why am I doing this? I wanted to be a parent for so long, yet I'm bringing this child into a world that is... shit, you know? And she has not contributed to it, it's completely unfair. But I then had a colleague tell me that that child might be the one that can make a significant difference in reducing our emissions or keeping our emissions low, or whatever the world might look like when she's my age. And that was a bit of a wake up call. So, yeah. It's a good point. We can't necessarily think always about how bad it's going to be.

Ash: Imagine explaining climate change to your child as a climate scientist.

Jess: Yeah, well, I asked it to tell me how it all works real simple.

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick: Naturally, we have a certain amount of what we call greenhouse gases in the atmosphere of which carbon dioxide is one. There's also a number of others. And what they do in really simplistic terms is create kind of like a blanket in the lower 10 kilometers of the atmosphere. So they trap in a bit of heat into that part of the atmosphere. It's kind of like when you put a blanket on at night.

Ash: Oh, a blanket, I feel a bedtime story coming on...

Jess: Ash is now the time?

Ash: I can't help it, Jess. The metaphor it calls to me. Once upon a time, there was a little planet called Earth. Earth was just the perfect distance from the sun for life to flourish, not too close to get toasted, not too far to get freezing, but just right. Space around it was a little cold, but luckily, Earth had a little blanket around it to keep it warm. But seriously, like we're in what scientists call the Goldilocks zone, not too hot, not too cold, just right. And it also helps that we have this nice tilt and reliable seasons and a certain amount of warmth from those gases in the atmosphere. So everything has been just right and stable for thousands and thousands of years. It's like a nice little baby bear porridge for life to flourish in.... But then the industrial revolution happened and we started burning fossil fuels for energy.

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick: What we're doing with our way of life is increasing the thickness of that blanket. We're putting more carbon dioxide and other gases, but mainly carbon dioxide at the

moment to tap into the atmosphere.

Jess: And how long have we been aware of these of the manmade reasons for this blanket getting thicker?

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick: Hundreds of years. This has been proven in labs since the 1850s. Actually, the first person to discover this was Eunice Foote. So a woman. And she basically demonstrated that certain gases have heat trapping properties.

Ash: Our way of life changed. So much so, that things are no longer just right.

Jess: But there is a plan, thanks to 6000 scientists who brought this terrible tale to all the world leaders in Paris and said alrighty, we need to keep the world under one point five degrees of warming in this century. And 195 countries, Australia included, all made this epic pinky promise to say, all right, we're in it together. We're going to keep things from going wrong,.

Ash: OK? I love it. Pinky promise, though? I mean, not exactly binding.

Jess: Exactly. And I don't know if you can break a country's finger. Anyway, the Paris agreement is all online, you can read the whole thing, just Google it.

Ash: The global goals set up by this Paris pinky promise are: halve global emissions in the next 10 years and no more emissions in 30 years time. So if you've heard the 10 years to fix the planet thing, that's where it comes from.

Jess: This this is also probably the wrong question. How long have we got?

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick: Well, I struggle with this question. So there's been a push in recent times about the critical decade - this has come from a number of sources, both Australian and international - that we need to act now. It's important to get that message across that the time is now, however, I also think there's a little bit too much emphasis placed on that, because if it can incite a bit of fear in some people like, you know, well crap if I don't act now, we're done like we're just basically all going to die. What's the point? You know, it can it can induce some sort of anxiety, I guess. So, even if for some reason we can't reduce our emissions as much as possible right now, even doing that in 10 or 20 years time will have an impact down the line.

Ash: OK, so it's not like 10 years till the apocalypse, but we've got to do everything in our power to quit fossil fuels within the next 10 years. Or I guess everyone can just gang up on us and break our metaphorical pinkies.

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick: We need to stop burning fossil fuels, but it's hard to achieve that if there aren't incentives, you know, from governments or, you know, other organizations. And that's, I think, where the most frustrating part is like, you know, people in positions of power have a moral responsibility, and, you know, they're also able to make huge changes that help everyone. But that just doesn't seem to be happening is nearly as much as it should.

Jane Fonda: (Firedrill Fridays) Are you angry? I hope you are frigging angry.

Ash: Jess, what are you doing?

Jess: I'm doing I'm doing retro aerobics like Jane Jane Fonda style!

Ash: (Laughs) Are you wearing a leotard!?

Jess: Yes (laughs) it's one of my favorite things to do. It's my toe harp! It helps me feel really good, it's good for my body. It makes me laugh all the time. But actually, in all seriousness, I'm doing it while I'm watching Jane Fonda's Firedrill Fridays. I'm going to show you my screen -

Ash: You mean, Jane Fonda, the aerobics legend?

Jess: Yes but Jane Fonda in her 80s is a climate hero. I hold and I'm going to share my screen and show you.

Jane Fonda: (Firedrill Fridays) This is a collective crisis that requires collective action. We hold the power to change.

Jess: So every Friday in January, Jane Fonda led these epic climate demonstrations in the state of Washington. She teamed up with Greenpeace and had this huge turnout. And then since the pandemic, she's been doing virtually.

Jane Fonda: (Firedrill Fridays) And it must be a just transition that leaves no workers behind.

Ash: Amazing. I love that. OK, so is this making you feel better or..?

Jess: Yes, but I still feel really frustrated. I feel like we've got this perfect roadmap, but it doesn't really seem like we're following it. And how do you feel?

Ash: Look, I'm I'm actually feeling a little bit embarrassed and on behalf of my country, just because I Googled whether or not we were on track to meet the Paris climate target, and then I hovered over Australia and this digital map and it said, in big capital letters, INSUFFICIENT!

Jess: OK, I think we should channel Jane Fonda -

Ash: What, like put out like aerobics videos?

Jess: And get some help from Greenpeace!

Ash: What, just knock on Greenpeace's door and be like, hey, guys, how do I save the planet?

Ash & Jess: Hi. Hi. Hi, I'm Jess. Hi, I'm Ash.

Jess: Well, we did. And not only did they answer the door, but the CEO of Greenpeace Australia Pacific invited us around to his home for a cup of tea

David's kids: Well, my dad is David Ritter. He's the CEO of Greenpeace Australia and Pacific.

Ash: While David was making us a cup of what he calls 'hippie herbal', we tested out our Covid safe podcast set up with his kids and asked them how they could save the planet.

David's kids Like sneaking into parliament and dressing up as a local politician. Then I'd say that I'm going to stop using fossil fuels and get and gather all of the money that we got from burning it and just put that into like solar panels and electric cars and yeah, just trying to get rid of greenhouse gases.

Ash & Jess: Good luck to you. Yeah, yeah. You got my vote for sure.

David's kids: We're not a party yet.

Jess: No, because you're in two, and year six!

Jess: So yeah, we're having a laugh and feeling inspired by the future generations.

Ash: And then we're like, hey, we need to get back to our counseling session with David here because the anxiety and overwhelm is definitely still there.

Jess: This was a whole bunch of these reasons why Ash and I got together were ways that we could be like, OK, well, how do we keep each other trucking but be actually doing productive things at the same time?

Ash: Particularly when, you know, we were shut inside from smoke and then we're shut inside from covid. And the whole idea that we were just miles from each other, all grieving was I mean, that was just the predominant feeling of those months. I just felt so charged up to do something, but so far from being able to do anything, I mean. Can I just ask, like, maybe the question that I wanted to ask back then, which is, is all hope lost?

David Ritter: No, no, hope isn't lost, but there's also no reason not to grieve. But we need to balance grief and belief simultaneously. And I mean, I don't like talking about wars because Greenpeace, you know, it doesn't sort of fit that much. But my mum and dad were Second World War generation kids. My father escaped and one of the children's trains out of Czechoslovakia, he was 14 years old. Virtually all of his family were murdered. He met my mother in England. They both survived the bombings and they've both passed now. But one of the things that my mother always talked about was, you lost friends you knew weren't coming back. You lost family. You lost places that were destroyed. But there was an abiding iron determination that there was something through it on the other side. Now, I've been part of this Australian community that we've seen the reef bleach, we're seeing what's happening to the mangroves, the kelp forests in the south, the Murray-Darling, 35 million hectares of our country burnt over spring and summer. This is a blitz of the natural world that we are seeing, but we also know the very best science tells us that we can also come out through the other side of this with something that is as beautiful as anything in the cosmos.

David Ritter: And one of the things the scientists cannot measure is the speed of politics and politics can change very, very fast. I'm old enough to remember when the Cold War seemed like it was a permanent condition. I'm old enough to remember when apartheid seemed like it was a thing that was going to be forgiven if these things had been swept away to the dustbin of history. And so

the fossil fuel will soon pass.

Jess: OK, so let's just set the scene here. We're both being really covid safe at the other end of this table, separated by, like DIY sneezeguards and these frame window things.

Ash: But I was patting his dog a lot. So maybe not that Covid-safe! And also feeding them all the treats (dog barks).

Jess: And the winds howling outside, we've got a cup of tea. We are getting into it.

Ash: Yeah, it went from zero to 100 real quick. Climate change is not a binary. The world is inherently and history is not.

David Ritter: And above all, hope is having a plan of what to do and we've got a plan of what to do, we've got a plan.

Ash: It's such a Goliath of a problem, you know, how do you come up with a strategy for how how you're going to attack it as an organization?

David Ritter: OK so strategy is a way of making sense of complex problems. So the greatest threat right now is the climate emergency. The number one driver of the climate emergency is the use of fossil fuels, coal, oil and gas. Well, within Australia, we know that Australia is the third largest exporter of emissions. We know that Australia is the largest exporter of coal. And the most important thing for us to do is to kick coal as fast as we possibly can. And then gas is really coming up on us now as well.

Ash: Australia is the coal capital of the world, sometimes we get the impression that Australia can't have much of an impact on the global scene, we do. We are punching way above our weight in emissions.

Jess: And if we look at our emissions per capita or per person, as is three times higher than the global average,.

David Ritter: The next step is to say, well, how do you make the interventions? And we know there are interventions that we can make about speeding up the retirement of Australia's 22 coal burning power stations. There are interventions that can be made around no new coal or gas mining.

Ash: As as Australians, does that mean that our strategy should also be to sort of, you know, bring an end to coal and to speed along renewables?

David Ritter: Absolutely bang on. That should be the strategy of every Australian who really wants to get in and use their power to the maximum impact.

Jess: So you need to retire coal burning power stations, no new gas or coal mining. How can people like us do this?

Ash: What is the realistic thing that Jess and I can do? How can people like us who I mean, we're not professional activists at all, what should we be dedicating our concentration and our time to?

David Ritter: So let's think, first of all of the scale of the problem. But we've got to think about this in a global system. This is a crisis that's being driven by these massive systems of production and consumption and transport of energy. Clearly just speaking to us, he's not. I think we we kind of all know that, you know, in our hearts, but we also know that we've got to make the systems change.

Ash: OK, we know in our hearts that just changing our consumer behavior isn't going to be enough. Introducing systemic change!

David Ritter: So, systemic change means that rather than a proportion of the population have just changed their consumption habits in the next 10 years, that Australia has shifted all of its electricity generation in the next 10 years to clean energy, something that multiple studies have now said that we can we can do relatively easily.

Jess: Hey Ash, you know, you little bedtime story when you're talking about the Goldilocks zone? You know, it's actually the baby bear zone. Goldilocks is the system, though, so Goldilocks is the fossil fuel era weight, so Goldilocks, so like little little golden reality, Goldilocks is actually the fossil fuel. And this Goldilocks is lying in our just right bed and is so tied up in our political system, our media, our way of life. And you and I are losing sleep over all these little individual things, like how much we're driving or changing our light bulbs? It's just not going to make a dent. It's kind of like all the bears saying like, oh, well, I guess I could just sleep on the floor.

Ash: Oh, yes. So what we're doing what we're doing now is we're like following Goldilocks or like fossil, the fossil fuel era. We're following it around the house, cleaning up after a trail of destruction when maybe we need to get it to stop destroying everything.

Jess: So park the individual thinking the only way we're going to bring on systemic change is through collective action. Mama Bear, Papa Bear, Baby Bear, all the little neighbors bears in town working together to boot Goldilocks out the window and start cleaning up the house.

Ash: OK, so I get a collective action, something that we need to do. We can't think of ourselves as just individuals. But then what is what is maybe the what is the enemy of collective action?

David Ritter: Well, look, the the the enemy of collective action, first of all, I guess, is just nothing is just ah, well screw it. I'll just be endlessly ironic or, you know, I'll just I'll retreat into escapism or I'll just consume stuff and I'll try and consume a bit better. You know, there's nothing wrong with that, but it doesn't get us there. Or it's or it's to retreat into nihilism. Oh it's all over. There's nothing we can do. Completely untrue. So it's putting all of those kind of individualist behaviors to one side. So how do we feel big and how do we act as big as we possibly can? Let's map Jess and Ash.

Ash & Jess: Are you ready to map yourself? To power map yourself, no less?

David Ritter: My kids have a lot of pens and pencils if like if that's what's holding you back. We can get the pens and pencils that I get.

Ash: Oh, my gosh. This is crafternoon, crafting the future!

Ash: I'm so ready for this. So a power map is a tool that organizations like Greenpeace use to

map out relationships and networks of influence when they're planning social or environmental campaigns. And we're just going to do one for normal people, like ourselves.

Jess: So Ash and I took David Palitha instructions to a cafe and had one of the best little highlights as well, just in case you need those.

Ash: Yeah, and we're putting those instructions on the website. There's a link in the show notes.

David Ritter: OK, so first thing we do is we do a what what other things that are my set of special powers. Clearly, you know how to do podcasts, but everyone knows how to do different things. So it's worthwhile making down a list of stuff you know how to do. What are we good at? What do we like doing so we know we're going to do more of it?

Ash: It's really nice to do this one with a buddy who can point out what you're good at.

Jess: Yeah. Like I used to work at a radio station with and I know that she's really good at interviewing.

Ash: You're super organized, you love making things happen, getting stuff together, that sort of thing.

David Ritter: And then we define the where, and if you think about the where it's everything you're part of, where you graduated from, what sports clubs have you ever been part of? Or community or workplace? What social clubs? What street do you live on?

Ash: Do you do you think we need to have a really big relationship to these places that we're talking about?

Jess: I think I think it's anywhere that you have a connection to.

Ash: I'm in I'm in a group called Just Dance and we meet on Mondays and just dance.

Jess: Seriously?!

David Ritter: All of those what's all have carbon footprints and the have carbon footprints that are much bigger than any individual.

Ash: So I had things like my stint in politics and the local radio station where I met you, Jess.

Jess: Yes. And we both know the team of podcasters at Audio Craft, who I work with.

Ash: One of whom had a friend who worked at Greenpeace

Jess: And all these colleagues or neighbors or friends of friends, they're our circles of influence. It's actually an epic list when you start to like going through all these totally random connections.

David Ritter: So now you feel like you've defined what's your super power and you've started to define the areas of your influence. Now once you've got those things and you've mapped out the

terrain in front of you, woah boy, there are so many things that you can do, like the fantastic regional hospital that said they weren't going to accept sponsorship from coal mining companies. How inspirational was that? It always comes back to that exercising mapping of where you are in the world, who you know, what you how you can reach people and what you love doing.

Jess: So beyond just Ash and I making that pinky promise to share information between us, we could tap into all these brilliant people that we kind of already knew.

Ash: And then it turned into a podcast so anyone in the world could learn along with us.

David Ritter: And you're doing that for the why, and the why is not about, oh, we got to stop bad stuff, the why is because the world is beautiful and we want the world to become a more beautiful place in the future.

Ash: I don't understand the why can you make the why makes sense to me?

Jess: Why is, why are you doing this in the first place? Why are you trying to save the planet? Why are we even sitting here put any effort into doing a Power Map? Why are you giving a shit, like why did we go to David Ritter? Why did we even decide to start this podcast? And it's because, in David Ritter's words -

David Ritter: We want an earth capable of nurturing life in all of its magnificent diversity, so we all of us are doing this not because we want to make each other feel bad about it, but because the world is magnificent and we can increase the quantum of justice in that world.

Ash: And so that is the why I would like to come back to my why that is like it ties together my past and my future and like connects with my heart. And that is. When I put my head, you know, like I'm going to cry! When I put my head under the water of the Great Barrier Reef when I was a kid, it just it just blew my tiny mind, you know, it was just so magical. And I felt connected to it all. And I was able to to to browse this, like, life library. And I don't want to turn up to the library one day. And there's only one book to read, you know, and I want to be able to see children enjoying it the same way I did. You know, that's why for me

Jess: And I just became a godmother twice. Well, a hairy fairy godmother is the term that I've been given. One of them was born during lockdown in Victoria and I'm in New South Wales, so I haven't been able to meet her yet with the borders being closed. But one of my why's is that like a lot of people, my work disappeared overnight during the first lockdown. And with all that time on my hands and being stuck in one place, I started really noticing all the birds around me and trying to recognize them by their different songs. It's like I aged 40 years overnight, but I love it and I want my little guide babies to be able to hear this beautiful symphony of birdsong too.

Ash: Jess, I have a present for you.

Jess: Ash! Is that a Currawong?

Ash: Yeah, I recorded it just in the park near my house! It's amazing what you can hear in the middle of the city when you actually listen.

David Ritter If you are thinking of that why, it starts to be a blessing, this work, it starts to be work you are doing with joy. With joy.

Ash: So are you saying that as the CEO of Greenpeace, you don't go into work every day thinking, let's make the bastards, hey, we're going to get them?

David Ritter: You know, I loved Greenpeace since I was a kid. And no matter how hard the days, I still feel like I'm a school kid sort of skipping to work. I don't quite get to do it when we're working from home. But the ethos is fundamentally one of love. It's love for the natural world and it is a love for the miraculousness of people. You know, you if you work within a movement and you give yourself over to that, you you are all the time refreshed by the realization that people working together can do just about anything.

Ash: So we were talking about collective action winds with David and like the global boycotts that helped to end Apartheid in South Africa was one example that came up. And then David mentioned one that happened in Australia, the Fight for the Bight Jess, which you were actually part of.

Jess: I also was living down the Great Ocean Road the last few years, and my community was paddling out and in paddle outs, you know, and took and and fighting for the Bight

David Ritter: And you're asking me what to do! What, can we tell this story?

Ash: OK, so why were you paddling out?

Jess: All right, so we were paddling out in the water in protest against a Norwegian oil company called Equinor, and they had plans to drill for oil in the Great Australian Bight. And if there'd been an oil spill down there, the impacts would have been completely devastating. I don't know if you remember this and if you saw -.

Ash: Yeah, dude, I saw these maps that scientists had drawn up that they showed how the oil spills, just because of currents, would have happened in the Bight under South Australia and then curved all the way around Victoria and all the way up the coast to northern New South Wales.

Jess: Exactly. So it would have had devastating impacts for all these local communities like tourism, the fisheries, the local ecology. But not only that, economic environmental plan had pretty much failed to consult with traditional owners along the South Australian coast.

Aunty Sue Haseldine: My name is Sue Haseldine and I'm a First Nations Kokatha woman from the far west coast of South Australia. My old people would spend the winter months out bush. Then during the summer months, they would come down to the ocean where there was so much food.

Jess: This is Kokatha Elder Aunty Sue Haseltine, and she sent this spoken letter asking Equinor to reconsider their plans to drill for oil.

Aunty Sue Haseldine: We know you can't eat, breathe or drink money. Drilling for oil can only mean disaster. It would be a catastrophe if anything happened to our pristine waters and our way of life. No drilling in our Great Australian Bight. We don't want you here. We don't want your oil rigs. We don't want your oil spills. Don't ignore us because we're not going to go away. We are here. We have

been here for thousands and thousands of years and we will still be here when the oil age is over.

Jess: Aunty Sue didn't get a response. More people around the coast start hearing about Equinor's plans and jump on board this fight for the Bight.

Grace Gardiner: I had no idea. And I was and it was like from the town I was from. So I was pretty shocked. And I was like, right, we've got to do something about this.

Jess: This is Grace. She's a high school student from Apollo Bay. And she organized her whole town to take to the harbor in a flotilla in protest.

Grace Gardiner: And when we got down there, it was just awesome. And people just started flooding in. There was just little kids, all screaming "Fight for the Bight!", and all the older people. And it was really, really good.

Jess: And meanwhile, in the town where I was living, a couple of local surfers get together and have this big dream for a paddle out.

Jarrah Bassal: Our local fight for the Bight campaign started like all good stories in the local pub close to midnight and only really a week or two before our first paddle out.

Jess: This is Jarrah.

Jarrah Bassal: The team, crew and multiple friends pitched in their various skills, whether it was social media or organisation.

Jess: Then the local Surfrider Foundation gets behind it and it's like, we'll sort out all your council permits so you can make this an official event. Pro surfers started getting behind it, journalists covering it. All these people around Australia hear about it. And this little dream for a paddle out turns into a national day of action where there is something like 50 paddle out happening all over Australia. And even in Norway!

Jarrah Bassal: We tapped into something that the local community cared about deeply and they came out in numbers to support it, from kids to grandparents to pets. People supported it in whatever way they could.

Jess: And all these people are just normal people who never organized a protest before, high school students even.

Jarrah Bassal: And it really just goes to show what collectively we can achieve. None of this would have been possible if any one of us had set out to coordinate these paddle outs.

Jess: And then in February 2020, Equinor announced that they were pulling out. They were canceling their plans to drill for oil in the Bight!

Grace Gardiner: I was midway through a test at school, and then I went to the bathroom. One of my friends who organized it with me, she came with and she looked at her phone, and she's like, oh, my God. I'm like, what? She just told me. She was like, oh, my God, Equinor pulled out of the Bight!

I was like, What are you joking? That's awesome! And we just saw, like, celebrating in the school bathroom.

David Ritter: It's an amazing story. I mean, you were part of a globally, significant defeat of a fossil fuel company, like, how could you be keeping this silent! Go and ask some bloke what he thinks when you actually know the answer.

Jess: I mean, it was very exciting. But I but I agree. It felt so exciting to be even just paddling out with the hundreds of people at our little beach on those days that we did. But I also know that we were we were only one piece of the puzzle.

David Ritter: It's let's think of it as a patchwork quilt of refusal to big oil that was put down from Albany to Botany Bay because that's what happened, right? We had First Nations people, the Mirning mob who said you are not drilling for oil in the middle of our whale dreaming. We had surfers paddling out saying these breaks, they are too important. We had scientists saying this is madness. We had people inside the companies that were leaking the spill or we had journalists who were saying, well, this is one of the most important stories. We had a local councilors saying, we are not going to have this here. We had the environmental organizations. I mean, Greenpeace was big in this. But let's do a shout out to our mates and our colleagues at the Wilderness Society and at ACF and AYCC and Seed and everyone else was involved. And this patchwork of communities and surfers and kids and schools in Apollo Bay and Kangaroo Island and elsewhere who just said Nup. Not gonna happen. We did it collectively, you ask what collective action is that was collective action, we closed a frontier to big oil. Forver.

Ash: Sorry, I'm going to stop you, that just is that a good news story in 2020?

Jess: Yes, yes. We needed it so bad!

Ash: I just love that that's not it's not only environmental activists, it's everyone just saying, nup.

Jess: OK, let's get into action. Share this podcast with a mate. Then sit down and do a Power Map with them. You just name one sweet hour of time, couple of pens or pencils.

Ash: It doesn't take that long. And honestly, it feels really good. It'll show you how you can get into action right where you already are now.

Jess: Our mates at Greenpeace helped make all this info a simple step by step action plan. You can download it from the website [Greenpeace.org.au/heapsbetter](https://www.greenpeace.org.au/heapsbetter). There is a link in the shownotes too.

Ash: We've got a plan, but there is still so much we need to know look like,.

Jess: Can we go from being a superpower to a renewables superpower?

Ash: Spoiler alert! We can, but can we get there fast enough? And can people like you and I make it happen faster?

Jess: Subscribed to heaps better on Spotify, Apple, or wherever you listen, and if you like what you heard, please write and review this podcast. It's a huge help.

Ash: Heaps Better is a podcast made by us, Jess Hamilton and Ash Berdebes with Greenpeace Australia Pacific and Audiocraft . The mixing engineer is Adam Connelly, EP is Kate Montague and the Creative Lead at Greenpeace is Ella Colley.

Jess: A huge thank you to the Greenpeace team for getting us out of the weeds and showing us the bigger picture, especially David Ritter and his kids.

Ash: Thank you to Sarah Perkins Kirkpatrick and all the scientists out there working so hard for so long to tell us what we need to know.

Jess: Thanks also to Grace, Aunty Sue, Jarrah and the entire Fight for the Bight community, whether you were using your voice to shout out loud or quiet. And thank you for coming with us! We are heaps better together.

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