



SPORTS  
ENVIRONMENT  
ALLIANCE®

### **Statement by Dr Sheila Nguyen**

In 2007, I arrived from the US to Victoria in the midst of the Millenium Drought and saw how directly devastating the drought was on our sporting community with unplayable, hardened surfaces and restrictions on water use.

Knowing that this experience was only the tip of the climate impact iceberg, I started asking sport industry friends, “what can we do to mitigate the impact of climate change on sport?” This was met with many blank faces.

Fast forward, I had the great privilege to meet my mentor and friend, Malcolm Speed, AO, who was my co-conspirator in the development of the Sports Environment Alliance (SEA).

Our aspirations were for sport to use its voice to advocate and advance climate action as well as build its own capability to be nimble to the impact of climate change. We spent countless hours white boarding and letter writing. We knocked the doors of sport leaders and read the crystal ball on climate; it was an exciting time.

In the same year that sport, and we, were invited to COP21 in Paris, we also launched the Sports Environment Alliance and our SEA family grew from 12 at our launch in 2015, to 60 today, representing all the major sports, and equally important, engaged community sport clubs. We started as volunteers, and now have a talented and dedicated team delivering SEA’s vision.

Our priorities to share knowledge and grow networks in the sport and climate space have been successfully advanced, and we are now at a point where we are seeking to implement strategic actions towards a new frontier and another phase of growth.

The Sports Environment Alliance was a seed of an idea in 2008, and today it has well and truly sprouted.

Where it is today, is only possible due to the incredible generosity of the people in the sport and climate movement; there are too many to mention, but you know who you are, and you know I #envirolove you.

I am proud of how far the movement has gone, impressed by how important planetary health has become, and what work has been done to coach the sport industry to be a ‘voice for the trees.’

I am grateful for the belief, support, and contribution of all involved from the starting line - from those who hacked at a website, to those who developed resources and provided sage governance advice as well as tips on how to lead an effective team.

I have dedicated 15 years of my life to the Sports Environment Alliance at the helm, and it has been a true honour.

It is with a smile on my face that I reflect on the good work we have done, and I am excited to focus on sharing my experience in my ongoing commitment as a Director on the SEA Board.

In a very solid place on its journey, SEA is riding a wave of momentum, and facing its next steps just beyond the horizon. In the hands of Jack Peterson, interim CEO, SEA will continue its intentional steps forward towards our clean future, with the wider #OnePlanetTeam.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Nguyen', written in a cursive style.

Dr Sheila N Nguyen  
12 April 2022