

## **MSDI 2021 Annual Report: Video message from John Thwaites, Chair and Tony Capon, Director (Transcript)**

### **Reflections on 2021 from John Thwaites, MSDI Chair and Tony Capon, MSDI Director**

In 2021, our lives were dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic and it was at least as challenging as the year before. However, it was great to see the way that our staff and students kept their focus throughout this time.

We came through the year pretty well, thanks to an amazing effort by our teams. It is remarkable that, despite the challenges of Covid in 2021, we've continued to grow and make a real impact through our work. A special mention goes to the education team who kept teaching through this incredibly difficult time using hybrid methods; both online and some face-to-face.

But we do need to recognise that this period has put a lot of stress on our staff while, at the same time, we were managing caring responsibilities at home with family and friends, and in the community.

So while 2022 may bring us new challenges, we'll face these together.

### **What can we learn from 2021?**

Our new MSDI strategy began this year and we have a central purpose that is the wellbeing of people and planet for current and future generations.

This ambitious purpose proves to be more relevant than ever. These last few years have really helped society sharpen its focus on the connections between human health and sustainable development. And it will be really important to keep this focus as we all look ahead and plan for the future.

It is also worth reflecting on how closely we followed the science advice during the pandemic. We believe we would all be much better off if we could do the same thing in climate and sustainable development.

Because, of course, another big factor this year has been the climate debate. And in 2021, we had COP26 where the world inched slowly, but positively, towards a better outcome.

### **At MSDI, we are made up of many voices.**

At Monash University, and with our academic colleagues around the country and internationally, we have access to remarkable expertise. And that expertise doesn't only lie in academic disciplines.

The wisdom of experience, the lived experience of people in communities, and the expertise of Indigenous people over millennia; all of these knowledges are really important for sustainable development. Our role at MSDI is to make sure that we're open-minded and that we value these different ways of knowing, which will achieve better outcomes for our communities and our partners.

MSDI's success depends entirely on our partnerships and our collaborations with government, and colleagues from academia, industry and civil society. We are able to work with policy makers in government to achieve the policy outcomes that are going to make a real difference in sustainable development and help to build resilience.

## **This is what gives us hope**

Young people are increasingly engaged with sustainable development challenges; they're innovative and they're stepping up to drive change. We will see more of this in the future.

We're also inspired by the incredible ideas and passion by the people in our organisation. We're not negative and we don't look for the problems. We look for the solutions.

That is what gives us hope.

Please enjoy these following stories of our people, work and impact in MSDI's 2021 Annual Report. We look forward to working, partnering and learning with you in 2022.