Earth Care Principle Six

Planet Earth is a Wounded Parent
(The Environmental Dimension)

(They have made my vineyard a desolation; it mourns to me.)  (Jer. 12.11)

Principle Six

Planet Earth is our wounded mother, calling for personal care from her children and deep compassion from the Creator Spirit.
Exploring Ways to Heal our Wounded Parent at Tatachilla Lutheran College.

Tatachilla Lutheran College is an R-12 coeducational Christian school, located in McLaren Vale on the southern fringe of Adelaide, South Australia. The College provides a comprehensive and rigorous academic curriculum, with a particular focus on the performing arts and environmental education. Pastoral care, built on Christian foundations, is integral to College life.

EcoClassroom

In 1997 a 2.4 hectare site within the grounds of Tatachilla Lutheran College was designated as the site for the EcoClassroom. The name was selected to encompass the ethos of this unique facility with the aim:

To be a learning place to facilitate an understanding of plants, animals, soils, water, atmosphere, geography and history of the Willunga Basin.

The essence of the EcoClassroom is to develop in students and visitors an understanding of the importance of nature and natural processes. It is designed to inspire us all to see the wonder of God’s creation. This facility encourages the attitude to enjoy and appreciate nature and at the same time, foster a caring and responsible approach towards the environment. The EcoClassroom revegetation program is modelled on pre-European ecosystems that once existed in the local area. With the assistance of community support, the project goals have been achieved through a number of strategic actions including:

- 1997 - Direct seeding of local species
- 1997 - Development of permanent pond in natural wetland and feral exclusion fencing through Federation Community Projects Commonwealth Grant
- 2000 - Official opening
- 2001 - Introduction of walking trails, 10x10m grid reference markers and seven distinct ecosystems identified and mapped
- 2002 - Introduction of Brush-tailed Bettongs and Long-nosed Potoroos
- 2004 - Boardwalks developed by students via Doorways2Construction with funding from City of Onkaparinga
- 2005 - Tammar wallabies introduced to add to the diversity and ecological sustainability within the area
- 2006 - Kaurna Tappa an Indigenous interpretive trail was developed in consultation with Kaurna Warra Pintyandi
- 2008 - Boardwalks developed by students via Doorways2Construction with funding from City of Onkaparinga
- 2009 - Kaurna Tappa an Indigenous interpretive trail was developed in consultation with Kaurna Warra Pintyandi
- 2010 - Development of EcoSkills Centre, featuring passive design elements including rammed earth walls, comfort glazing and low VOC paints.
- 2013 - Rescue Centre developed by Doorways2Construction students
- 2015 - 0.8 ha extension encompassing revegetation of the nationally threatened Eucalyptus microcarpa community
- Ongoing - Propagation and annual planting with assistance with Trees for Life
Tatachilla Lutheran College welcomes schools, community groups, government and non-government organisations to visit this unique educational resource. Qualified EcoStaff offer hands-on learning activities and guided tours that focus on curriculum and extra-curricular subjects. Visits can be tailored to the required needs of visitors. Topics include:

- Australian natural landscape management
- Wetland and macroinvertebrate investigations
- Chemical analysis of soil and water
- Native vegetation identification and mapping of associations
- Native fauna trapping, monitoring and management
- 10x10m grid reference markers allowing for mapping and scientific investigation
- Kaurna Tappa, an Indigenous Interpretive Trail
- Impacts of colonisation
- Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management
- Doorways2Construction
- Ability to hold camps and field studies
- Management of private sanctuaries

**Ecosystems**
- ecological sustainability
- biodiversity
- natural landscapes
- historical relevance

**Wetlands**
- freshwater macroinvertebrates
- water catchment
- water investigations
- human impact

**Endemic Flora**
- revegetation
- plant identification
- Tree Day for Schools

**Native Fauna**
- habitat
- trapping
- monitoring
- fauna identification
- life cycles
- threatened species

**Walking Trails**
- self-guided and guided tours
- wheelchair accessible

**Educational Resources**
- resources and curriculum support
- qualified educators

**Kaurna Tappa**
- Indigenous education
- cultural tours
- self-guided walking trail

**EcoSkills Centre of Excellence**
- passive design building

The Friends of the EcoClassroom meet regularly to assist with on-ground maintenance. In addition, this group gathers once a term to trap and monitor the wellbeing of the native fauna within the EcoClassroom.