

Water Stewardship Australia Limited

Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016

Water Stewardship Australia's (WSA's) vision [from its Constitution] is that "Water users and managers in our region are water stewards who use fresh water in ways that are socially beneficial and environmentally sustainable". WSA's mission is to "Enable the assessment, certification and endorsement of water stewards in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region". In practical terms, WSA has identified that it is highly valued for creating a collaborative way for Australian businesses, governments and communities to define and deliver great water stewardship outcomes; and for ensuring that locally relevant water stewardship outcomes are embedded in the international standard or created to support its local delivery.

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to guide the organisation to deliver on this vision and mission. To achieve this WSA has identified five strategic goals:

1. **Develop and deliver multi-stakeholder pilots to define Australian considerations for water stewardship.** Engage with Australian water stakeholders to develop and implement a range of water stewardship trials to demonstrate the value of water stewardship in different contexts and identify areas for further development of the international standard and/or local supporting guidelines.
2. **Contribute to the development of the international standard.** Continue active involvement in the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) and the International Standards Development Committee (ISDC), using Australian experience and insights to positively influence the outcome of the Standard.
3. **Develop the means to recognise Australian leaders in water stewardship against the international standard.** For Australian organisations to achieve certification against the international Standard, WSA will need to develop a robust accreditation process, including supporting materials where warranted, to ensure the high level of integrity of an Australian certified water stewardship entity.
4. **Build awareness and support for water stewardship, including alignment to the emerging international standard.** Achieving this goal will require strategic marketing and market development to raise awareness of water stewardship, build financial sustainability and ensure WSA maintains high influence with key stakeholders in industry, government, environmental groups and community groups with an interest in water management in Australia and internationally.
5. **Ensure good corporate governance of WSA organisation.** Develop and maintain robust organisational processes including strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, setting and delivery of organisational objectives, risk and compliance management and monitoring and reporting of performance.

This plan sets out actions that will be taken by WSA to realise these goals over the three year period starting July 2012.

Background

The concept of water stewardship was first articulated by proponents of a water stewardship system in Australia in 2006. This was followed by the establishment of Water Stewardship Initiative Pty Ltd, a series of stakeholder meetings in 2006, 2007 and 2008 and the development of the world's first water stewardship standard in 2009. The standard and all associated intellectual property was passed to Water Stewardship Australia Limited, a membership based not for profit entity, following its establishment in 2010.

The objective for WSA Limited as set out in its Constitution is: The protection and enhancement of the natural environment through the development, communication and promotion of water stewardship in Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

Water stewardship is defined as: The responsible use of fresh water in a way that is both socially beneficial and environmentally sustainable, including:

- (a) water use that is *environmentally sustainable* in that it maintains and improves biodiversity and ecological processes at the watershed level;
- (b) water use that is *socially beneficial* in that it recognises basic human needs and ensures long-term benefits (including economic benefits) for local people and society at large; and
- (c) water use that is *economically sustainable* in that it minimises corporate risk while ensuring that water is available for a multitude of economic benefits and uses over the long-term.

In 2011, WSA completed recruitment of its full Board and created Board sub-committees for technical issues, marketing and finance, and for governance.

WSA's 2009 draft water stewardship standard formed the basis of the first draft international water stewardship standard in 2010. In 2011-12 WSA's Technical Advisory Group (reporting to the Board Technical sub-committee) commented on further iterations of the international standards and developed a second draft WSA Standard for Board endorsement. The WSA Board has agreed to focus future efforts on influencing the international standard by the AWS rather than further developing WSA's standard.

In 2011 John Langford was appointed to the ISDC. Michael Spencer continues as co-Chair of the AWS Board, which he has held since its inauguration.

In early 2012 the Board completed an environmental scan of changes in WSA's internal and external operating environment since the 2010 – 2013 strategic plan and, in July, conducted a Board strategic workshop, which confirmed the vision and mission and identified five strategic goals (listed on Page 1). This document sets out WSA's actions over the coming three years to deliver on each of the five goals.

Implementation Plan 2013 – 2016

<p>Goal 1: Develop and deliver multi-stakeholder pilots to define Australian considerations for water stewardship. Engage with Australian water stakeholders to develop and implement a range of water stewardship trials to demonstrate the value of water stewardship in different contexts and identify areas for further development of the international standard and/or local supporting guidelines.</p>		
<p>(A) Develop and deliver multi-stakeholder pilots</p>	<p>Outcome envisaged by Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete field trials and identify and document areas for further development of international standard 	
<p>Action Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete 1 full field trial Secure agreement and funding for 1-2 more trials using both standards 	<p>Action Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure 1 trial for implementation in Asia-Pacific Secure 1 trial for implementing in unregulated river in Australian region 	<p>Action Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify further areas requiring trial, as necessary, to explore unresolved areas for further development of the system
<p>(B) Identify areas for further development of Standard or for supporting guidelines</p>	<p>Outcome envisaged by Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assessment of whether international standard can be supported in Australia and, if yes, work progressing on supporting guidelines 	
<p>Action Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Advisory Committee (TAG) to review feedback from field trials and identify key findings and technical implications TAG to liaise with John Langford on ISDC developments and incorporate into field trials Identify preliminary topics/areas for local/regional guideline development 	<p>Action Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAG to assess whether/how international standard is going to work in Australia and make recommendations to Board on need for supporting guidelines 	<p>Action Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Advisory Group for Asia-Pacific Develop Guidance for implementation in at least three key sectors

<p>Goal Two: Contribute to the development of the international standard. Continue active involvement in the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) and the International Standards Working Committee (ISWC), using Australian experience and insights to positively influence the outcome of the Standard.</p>		
<p>(C) Participate in Alliance for Water Stewardship</p>	<p>Outcome envisaged by Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed international water stewardship standard, with Australian input Play a leadership role in the Alliance for Water Stewardship 	
<p>Action Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain AWS Board Representation Broaden stakeholder engagement in AWS Host 2012 AWS meeting in Australia Contribute to AWS longer-term governance structure 	<p>Action Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop regional program with AWS and expand regional involvement 	<p>Action Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align WSA governance processes to AWS
<p>(D) Influence water stewardship standard</p>	<p>Outcome envisaged by Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard finalised and fully operational Mature sector themes (e.g. irrigated agriculture, food processing, mining, forestry, urban water supply) 	
<p>Action Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop with AWS a standard approach to field trial reporting Work with AWS to develop and incorporate information from field trials Develop influencing strategy for ISDC 	<p>Action Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAG liaison back to AWS via ISDC and AWS Board on implications for implementation of international standard 	<p>Action Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final standard with review process

Goal Three: Develop the means to recognise Australian leaders in water stewardship against the international standard.

For Australian/Asia-Pacific organisations to achieve certification against the international Standard, WSA will need to develop a robust accreditation process, including supporting materials where warranted, to ensure the high level of integrity of an Australian certified water stewardship entity.

(E) Develop verification system	Outcome envisaged by Year 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry best practice verification system established • Balance of strong integrity with accessibility achieved 	
Action Year 1	Action Year 2	Action Year 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to scope verification guidelines through involvement of certification body in dairy field trial • Discuss potential future relationship with ASI or JASANZ (Australia/NZ) • Consult on model for integrated verification with other standards • Develop accreditation standard for certification bodies including levels of accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise relationship with accreditation body • Finalise model for integrated certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation of at least three certification bodies for verification of compliance with Australian standard • Adapt verification system to sector themes • Put in place formal links with other related conformity assessment programs for joint certification
(F) Market drivers	Outcome envisaged by Year 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong market-based drivers for uptake of standard and willingness to submit to verification • Flexible, adaptable market linkage that reflects diversity of water use situations 	
Action Year 1	Action Year 2	Action Year 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate outreach to key market influencers (Coles, Unilever, Nestle) to understand and engage with their supplier programs • Understand what Sustainable Agriculture Initiative doing successfully and apply lessons learned • Identify key outcomes/products for market e.g. stepwise approach for retailer suppliers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop business model for ongoing model • Engage in development work for brand concept • Trademark name, letters • Validate and finalise long term business model • Register logo • Incorporate chain of custody options to field trials • Pilot labelling, brand and recognition system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise chain of custody standard • Trademark management system in place • Develop and implement program to market brand

<p>Goal Four: Build awareness and support for water stewardship, including alignment to the emerging international standard. Achieving this goal will require strategic marketing and market development to raise awareness of water stewardship, build financial sustainability and ensure WSA maintains high influence with key stakeholders in industry, government, environmental groups and community groups with an interest in water management in Australia and internationally.</p>		
<p>(G) Build membership base</p>	<p>Outcome envisaged by Year 3 NEED INPUT FROM MKTG COMMITTEE – ALIGN TO AGREED BOARD POSITION</p>	
<p>Action Year 1</p>	<p>Action Year 2</p>	<p>Action Year 3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop membership strategy and structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership increases membership to 100 – 150 (if consistent with membership strategy) Rolling program of membership activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership grows toward 500 (if consistent with membership strategy)
<p>(H) Business model</p>	<p>Outcomes envisaged by Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient financial resources to support organisational activities described above Relationship with key donors and/or agencies willing to provide financial support for development Earned income (including membership) sufficient to sustain the organisation post development 	
<p>Action Year 1</p>	<p>Action Year 2</p>	<p>Action Year 3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earned income from coordinating field trials for awareness raising, standards development and policy development (expected to get harder) Achieve DGR status Develop training offering for paying customers Develop revenue streams from licensing standards and guidelines to consultants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure sufficient revenue sources (membership, fees, events etc) to meet expenditure Develop donor/funder program including philanthropic entities Implement donor/funder program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide fee-for-service offering in training, licensing of standard
<p>(I) Stakeholder and market engagement</p>	<p>Outcome envisaged by Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program of events and other communications that ensure WSS is recognised as leading Australia/Asia Pacific provider of water stewardship-related products and services 	
<p>Action Year 1</p>	<p>Action Year 2</p>	<p>Action Year 3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host an Australian water stewardship event (revenue generating) in at least 3 cities Continue to build e-newsletter and web site to provide regular updates on work output Develop a communications plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a major Australian water stewardship forum to broaden stakeholder engagement Further development of Year 1 activities New branding for communication outlets Work with mass media outlets to broaden awareness of water stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host the first biennial Asia Pacific WS Forum Further development of Year 2 Major launch event of completed project work.

<p>Goal Five: Ensure good corporate governance of WSA organisation. Develop and maintain robust organisational processes including strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, setting and delivery of organisational objectives, risk management and monitoring and reporting of performance.</p>		
<p>(J) Build organisational capacity</p>	<p>Outcome envisaged by Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five staff (some will be part-time): Executive Director, Technical Manager, Marketing & Communications Manager, Events and Membership Coordinator and Administration Support • Office in convenient location for staff and stakeholders • Support systems (IT, Legal, Accounting) 	
<p>Action Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain part-time Administrative Support • Appoint external book keeper and accountant • Engage Executive Officer 	<p>Action Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical manager engaged to complement ED and admin support • Marketing, Communication and Events capability developed • Office in convenient location • Update 2013-2015 strategy • 	<p>Action Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All key staff and administrative functions in place.
<p>(K) WSA Governance</p>	<p>Outcome envisaged by Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable governance model with credibility amongst members, stakeholders, participants and consultants 	
<p>Action Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and approve budget for 2013-14 • Maintain effective Board membership above 8 • Complete Directors and Officers insurance • Develop consultant MoU • Establish IP governance arrangements • Complete risk and other governance systems for WSA 	<p>Action Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved budget for 2014-15 • Review WSA Governance for meeting dual objectives of well managed organisation and multi-stakeholder governance of system • Review business model and update strategy 	<p>Action Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved budget for 2015-16 • Review business model and update strategy

Glossary

ASI Accreditation Services International

AWS Alliance for Water Stewardship. A global alliance of key groups interested in the development of international standards, verification, branding and education for water stewardship. Members include the world's two largest international conservation organisations (the Worldwide Fund for Nature and the Nature Conservancy), Water Stewardship Australia (a multi-stakeholder business initiative), Water Witness International, the Water Environment Foundation, the Pacific Institute and the European Water Partnership.

DGR Deductable Gifts Recipient

GWRT Global Water Round Table. Developed by AWS, the annual Global Water Roundtable that is being used to further engage key stakeholders from different sectors on the strategic issues to be considered in the development of international standards.

ISDC International Standards Development Committee . The ISDC forms the primary decision-making body in relation to AWS standards content and is charged with synthesizing stakeholder input from throughout the world to form the International Water Stewardship Standard.

MoU Memorandum of Understanding

SAI Abbreviation of SAI Global

SRG Stakeholder Reference Group. Group drawn from a wide variety of stakeholders in water stewardship to provide input and feedback on the development of the water stewardship approach in Australia. Supports stakeholder consultation requirement in standards development.

TAG Technical Advisory Group. Supports WSA in the revision of Australian draft standards and verification guidelines. Overseen by the Technical Subcommittee of WSA Board and chaired by a WSA Board member.

WSA Water Stewardship Australia. Water Stewardship Australia (WSA) is the not-for-profit member based entity establishing a regional water stewardship program for Australia and Asia-Pacific. WSA is creating globally recognised water stewardship standards and certification procedures, supported by a credible brand endorsement system. WSA seeks widespread stakeholders engagement from across the spectrum of industry, government, environmental and social interests.

WSS Water Stewardship Standard