



PLANNING DAY MINUTES

(combined with Nov Board)

Sunday 24th November 2019
Meeting commencing 9.05 am

Conference Room, Hotel Grand Chancellor, Launceston, TAS

GoogleDrive Documents:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ev8WRbAkih7TVuGIWnZ5PHJ2Jwtl6Y4R?usp=sharing>

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1.0 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 Chairperson's Welcome and Introduction

Don welcomed all to Planning Day 2019.

1.2 Present and Apologies

Present: Don Driscoll (President), Bek Christensen (President-elect) Nigel Andrew (Austral Ecology – Chair, Editorial Board), Amy Hahs (VP – Research), Jodi Price (VP – Student Affairs & Chair, Conference WG), Ayesha Tulloch (Acting VP – Public Liaison & Policy), Chloe Sato (Secretary), Jeremy Huntley (Treasurer), Pep Turner (EMR – Chair, Editorial Board), Leanda Mason (Ordinary Director – Early Career), Eleonora Egidi (WG Chair – Research Chapters), Sacha Jellinek (WG Chair – Practitioner Engagement), Dieter Hochuli (WG Chair – Schools Engagement), Stephanie Courtney-Jones (WG Chair – Early Career Research), Adam Frew (WG Chair – Equity & Diversity), Maggie Watson (Book Editor), Toni Stevens (Online Media Manager), Jacky Tierney (Finance & Membership Officer), Gail Spina (Executive Officer).

Apologies: Kate Umbers (VP – Membership & Communication), Gerry Turpin (Ordinary Director & WG Chair – Indigenous Engagement), Euan Ritchie (WG Chair – Media), Dale Nimmo (WG Chair – Hot Topics), Marie Dade (Bulletin Editor).

1.2 Minutes of Previous Board Meeting (October 2019) – for ratification*

Motion: That the minutes of the previous ESA Board meeting be accepted as a true and correct record.

Moved: Don Driscoll

Seconded: Nigel Andrew

All in favour: motion carried.

1.3 Minutes of Previous Planning Day (November 2018) – for reference*

Noted.

2.0 ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2.1 Matters Arising from Previous Board & Planning Meetings*

AGENDA ITEM #			ACTION ARISING	PERSON
PD	Nov (#10) 19	5.3.1	Table a report for the Board outlining ECR awards, associated amounts allocated to each in 2019, and to whom they are awarded.	ECR WG
Done. See Item 6.1				
PD	Nov (#10) 19	6.1.1	Draft report outlining what is involved in accreditation of practitioners, cost-benefit analysis to ESA of offering accreditation opportunities, and which groups can benefit from the provision of ESA-branded accreditation.	Practitioner WG
Ongoing. Gail circulated paper about what is involved to become an RTO (August Board). With Practitioner WG; overall strategy needs to be developed and what different models could look like. Carry over to Planning Day for discussion as an options paper. Talking to EIANZ about it, but follow up on getting the conference accredited for professional development.				
Board	Feb (#1) 19	5.3.1	Consider the value proposition of ESA membership.	All Board
See Item 5.0				
Board	May (#2) 19	5.2.1	Allocation of Wiley Funds to be added to the 2019 Planning Day agenda.	Chloe
Done. See Item 6.1.				
Board	Aug (#7) 19	5.9.1	Develop draft sustainability policy.	Gail
Ongoing. Circulated for comment prior to Planning Day. Carry over discussion to February Board. Conference Working Group to develop a conference specific sustainability policy April Board 20.				
Board	Sept (#8) 19	3.4.1	Options for delivering membership database to be provided to the Board for consideration.	Toni
Done. See Item 7.1				
Board	Oct (#9) 19	3.4.1	Forward links to current stage of website development to the Board for discussion at Planning Day.	Toni
Done. See Item 7.1.				
Board	Oct (#9) 19	3.6.1	Confirm venues that are option Sunday evening for conference delegates, and follow up potential local business discounts with Business Events Tasmania.	LOC/PCO/Jodi
Done. Food trucks may be available tonight, and restaurants are open.				
Board	Oct (#9) 19	5.2.1	Amend Planning Day agenda and forward to Secretary.	Gail
Done.				
Board	Oct (#9) 19	5.6.1	Provide feedback to authors of overabundant macropod management position statement.	Done
Done.				

3.0 FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOP

3.1 Financial Literacy 101

Jeremy Huntley presented a 'Financial Literacy 101' mini-workshop covering key accounting concepts to assist Board members in understanding and interpreting Board financial documents. Concepts included materiality, debtors, creditors, capitalisation of assets (and depreciation over time), and revenues in the context of accrual accounting.

An overview of the accounting software used by ESA (Xero) was provided; Xero is used to track finances each month, allows Treasurer and Finance Officer to produce monthly reports for Board meetings and for the auditors, and links with ESA bank accounts.

The two types of reporting that are important to the ESA Board are:

Financial statements. Financial statements (once a year: 30 June reporting) follow strict rules and are verified by audit. These include profit & loss statements (transactions over a period of time, usually a year), balance sheet (finances at a single point in time), cashflow (which isn't provided every month - only provided if cash becomes an issue for the society), and statement of changes in equity.

Important terms in P&L statements include revaluation (where we provide a best guess at how long an asset will last for), write off (where you can fully depreciate an asset in one financial year to allow for the purchase of a new asset), depreciation (which applies to tangible assets), and amortisation (which applies to intangible assets). Important terms in balance sheet include Cash at bank (liquid funds e.g. Perpetual), trade & other receivables (what people owe us), current assets (cash now), non-financial (cash in a year), liabilities (money we owe other people), deferred revenue (money received in advance e.g. Holsworth), employee benefits (leave, LSL), deferred revenue liability (e.g. Barbara Rice), and total equity (what is paid out if society is closed).

Management reports. Management reports (monthly) facilitate decision making through comparisons to budget with commentary and full year forecasts. The format and information in management reports can be tailored for decision making so feedback on their usefulness is important here.

Currently presented as variance between actuals and budget. Variance to budget driven by volume (more/less sold), price change, and timing of purchase. Volume/Price result in real variance, which will impact the end of year position but timing will not. Timing can give an insight into project management and delivery. For example, is it on track? Is it necessary? Does the project need more attention?

Board are encouraged to email queries prior to Board meeting. Minor issues can be addressed at upcoming Board meeting, while major issues will likely be carried over to next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_3.1.1	Circulate financial literacy presentation to Planning Day participants.	Jeremy	Feb Board 20

3.2 Treasurer's Report

Jeremy provided financial report in financial literacy. In summary, all KPIs are in line with expectations.

Jeremy highlighted that FGWG takes overall responsibility for overall budget figures. However, from a WG chair and VP point of view, need to look at lines that relate to their WG(s) and check that activities are reflected appropriately in the financials that are circulated to Board. The Board should know what is being done with ESA money as they are liable for how money is being moved around (and should be able to justify movement of money to any member of the society who queries it).

Board suggested that financial documents could consider visually representing how budget is tracking over 4-yr time frame.

4.0 MAKING THE STRATEGIC PLAN WORK

Don provided an overview of the strategic plan and governance structure for the Board and WG Chairs.

4.1 Using the Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Need to develop the mechanisms to allow the Strategic Plan to remain a living document over its lifetime including a timetable for review, outcomes reporting and links to budget development.

WG Chairs should take Strategic Plan back to their WG, and make a plan for the year ahead to ensure the actions are undertaken. Alternatively, WGs need to think about whether to remove actions, whether funding is needed or whether additional WG members are required to complete actions. WGs also need to consider whether there are overlaps with other WGs. If there is, WG Chair should contact relevant WG Chair(s) to discuss plans in 'overlap' space, and how you are going to work together to achieve the strategic goal.

Important considerations for achieving strategic plan goals include:

- **ONGOING ACTION:** the method ESA Board/WGs will use to track and provide updates on actions (template for WG Chairs or GoogleDocs documents that is shared but not official)

- **SEPTEMBER ACTION:** WGs evaluate against KPIs and review activities for following financial year in a report for VP to take to September Board meeting (assist with budget development and tracking strategic plan progress)
- **OCTOBER ACTION:** VPs report against strategic plan KPIs/actions in Year-in-Review (October synthesis with assistance for each of the WGs they oversee)
- **NOVEMBER PLANNING DAY:** review progress against Strategic Plan and amend Strategic Plan as necessary. Any underspend, can consider how to reallocate funding for next financial year.
- Also need a mechanism to make a decision on whether an action is ongoing, or whether it is a one-off project-based fund.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_4.1.1	Circulate strategic plan documents to all Planning Day participants.	Chloe	ASAP

4.2 Strategic Plan 2019/20 review

Small groups based around WGs identified priorities & any changes to actions/funds/goals in strategic plan, and identified resource implications for any identified changes to plan.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_4.2.1	Advertise strategic plan (particularly mission and values) more broadly on website and create slide for advertising in each of the conference rooms.	Toni	ASAP

4.3 Working Group discussion

President opened the floor to WG Chairs so that they could discuss WG activities and raise any issues relating to their portfolio for discussion by Planning Day participants.

Don:

EMR: all on target (make editorial open access?)

Austral: Promotion in South America an issue; need to balance South American authored papers that aren't cited by Australian authors, but South American authors don't have access to Austral as Wiley subscription is too expensive for libraries over there. Potential solutions may be to have a dedicated commentary editors to synthesize and cite papers from the journal (\$100 per article; 4 papers per year; Nigel will work with specific editor to develop funding application); to recruit comic authors from South America as comics are really well received by people who see them; for social media person to work specifically for the journal to write tweets (possibly budget for Toni's time to support journals).

Ayesha:

Hot Topics: issue lies with speed of publication. Looking at how to facilitate fast publishing of articles. 5 reviewers for 3-4 paragraphs seem excessive, and topics are currently reactive. Want to move towards strategic elicitation of topics from people. Strategic elicitation would involve developing topics throughout the year but publication would be staged so that they come out when they are topical and relevant. It would make more sense to change KPI to turnaround time, rather than the number of Hot Topics published in a year. No additional budgeting would be required to implement changes.

Media: considered in February after conference considered.

Jodi:

Strategic plan actions, budgets and timing good for each WG.

Education: looking to have a face-to-face meeting to develop the plan.

ECE: Main limitation of the group is membership. Need additional members, perhaps a mid-career to support the activities of the ECE. Potential pathways to fill gap include an informal mixer at conference, or tap on shoulder to get help. Next Gen award managed in this group, but will look to move as ECEs don't want to handle award that they could apply for. WG will put in bid for April funding to facilitate putting all the resources together.

Student Awards: rebrand to Next Gen and include Next Gen award (to solve issue with ECE WG managing award).

Amy:

Research Chapters: WG will look to rephrase and revisit KPIs to make sure that they really reflect intention of group, and that previous issues are overcome.

Practitioner Engagement: Working to simplify actions. There are multiple activities with similar aims, and the KPIs mirror this. Funding requests for some activities will be required but nothing major.

Jeremy:

Fundraising & Sponsorship: The main risk for this WG is the Director of Fundraising role is currently vacant. This position is a key domino for various actions under this portfolio. It is possible to still develop a prospectus but need director to develop strategy (where to advertise it, and who to send it to). No need to change anything at this point but if can't recruit someone, then will need to revisit actions to meet objectives. For prospectus, we need flexibility to tailor document to specific activity or specific audience at a particular time, but there should be a focus on function and tangible impact (via projects and case studies). It should be a glossy brochure that outlines the scope of work that we do and where the opportunities are to fund the society, then send out to large funds during mid-May/early June so that they can support specific projects.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_4.3.1	Draft Prospectus for Board. Board to then populate with potential case studies/projects.	Jeremy	May Board 20

Bek:

Corporate Aims: Added one activity, position descriptions to be made available on website by July 2020. The History of ESA project also needs discussion, as it has shown no progress. Scope is a narrative of Australian Ecology using ESA as a vehicle for discussing this (i.e. changes in academic freedom, employability etc). Potential solution is to commission work by a journalist (Maggie Watson has a contact). A budget required for this project.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_4.3.2	Liaise with Maggie and seek quotes for ESA History synthesis, ready for next budget bids.	Gail/Maggie	February Board 20

Gail:

Conference: No actions, funding timelines changed.

Equity & Diversity: Activities remained relevant, but look to address misconceptions around equity & diversity survey. Propose a series of videos (interview that go out with e-news) to do this.

Membership: will be discussed in Agenda Item 5.0.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_4.3.3	Send link to Board to update strategy spreadsheet (via Google Drive); WGs to update.	All Board/All WGs	February Board 20

5.0 THE VALUE OF ESA MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Review of ESA Membership

A discussion paper reviewing membership fees, Corporate & Association/Reciprocal membership, the current 'value' of ESA membership to different sectors, as well as how to enhance and promote membership was tabled for Planning Day participants. Interested in getting Board feedback on potential new membership categories and how they might work.

Corporate: Pick a simple model and test it out. Can then tailor based on the uptake of the corporate membership. Financial risk is low. Also possible to do a mailout to practitioners (through Practitioner WG) to seek feedback on corporate membership (i.e. why uptake was high/low etc.)

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_5.1.1	Discussion paper on corporate membership, including costed out options and incentives for membership.	Membership WG	March Board 20

Emeritus: Need to seek additional feedback from Carla Catterall to flesh out what services Emeritus members would like, and what services they can provide. Could transition full members to Honorary/retired members, so might have higher retention. However, members need a role in ESA. *Developing Countries:* BES and ESAmerica have this as their scope. Worthwhile space to get into to help support journal and to maintain relevance. It is also worth thinking about markets that we haven't considered (e.g. Indonesia), and how ESA supports diversity. Opportunity to use the Darwin conference to highlight the initiative, and liaise with Darwin Tourism/Business agencies to support attendance from international students. Board agrees that there should be a developing country membership at the student rate.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_5.1.2	Draft strategy around engaging with developing countries, including engagement/facilitating access to Darwin conference.	Membership WG	February Board 20

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_5.1.3	Identify strategies to use at annual conferences to engage international students.	Conference WG/Equity & Diversity WG	February Board 20

Contributing: Before this type of 'membership' can be considered, need to check rules of 'gifts' with ATO. Look to delay for a year but worth exploring further. Need strategy for donations.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_5.1.4	Develop strategy for donations to ESA.	Gail/Jacky	February Board 20

Affiliate/Institutional: Support EMR and groups who might want to have access to EMR but members can't afford it. MOU that they advertise to their members via physical copy.

Beginner Student: Honours and undergraduate students only. Include students from developing countries in this category. Looking to increase interest in ecology as we don't have much exposure until PhD. The benefits would include access to e-news, so they can see postgrad opportunities. The benefits for ESA would be an increase in the membership database, and potential retention of some members for longer periods.

ECE: Cost of conference and cost of membership when salary is poor.

6.0 ESA AWARDS

6.1 Review of current ESA Awards

A discussion paper reviewing current ESA Awards was tabled for Planning Day participants that outlined the purpose of different awards, potential ways to improve impact and profile, Wiley award allocations under the new contract, and the potential for a new ESA 'John Maddox' type award.

In small groups, Planning Day participants discussed ways we could restructure awards to cater for different sectors of ESA membership, and possible funding allocations for awards.

Bek:

Student awards are important but there is room in how much funding is allocated to these awards. Potential for and ECE award (0-3 years since completion), small professional development grants, Applied as well as Fundamental Next Gen Award, and an opportunity to hold a post-grad day for later-year membership (an activity that combines retirees and ECEs).

Maggie:

Some student award funding could be redistributed to support an ECR award (e.g. maintain book grant funding for student prizes but reallocate \$5000 for ECR. In addition, a parental leave transition support grant (to \$2000) and travel internationally plus commentary award (to \$2000) could support different sectors of ESA membership. For Wiley Next Gen, useful to narrow focus/scope of what is applied for (with award to \$3000). Another option for consideration would be a \$2500 research grant for

consumables. Finally, many prizes have promise of plenary: should this be reconsidered? Or should the length of a plenary be reconsidered?

Jodi:

Restructure awards so there is an Outstanding Student Presentation Award (\$700, \$500, \$300); speed talk awards are increased in value; an ECR Prize for 'Best in Show' is offered; NextGen changed to have someone else nominate you (details and a couple of sentences why they are being nominated which triggers email to nominee), and award is about the quality of the applicant; seed grants could be offered for projects with a fully costed budget; a fundamental award could be offered for both ECRs and students; regional could be completely rebranded as ECR grants for activities that you want to run locally OR as leadership/teaching award (with professional development/training workshop); indigenous travel grant should be increased (but look for additional external funding to support); and an award for excellent 'non-traditional communication open to all ESA members.

Don:

Restructure funds for student awards so prizes are \$500, \$300, \$100. This award structure is applied to spoken and speed and poster. In addition, offer ECE awards for spoken and speed talks (\$1000 each). Finally, offer seed grants for ECEs: 2 @ \$3000, one for uni, one for non-uni (there may be issues for DGR status but could be handled through contract).

Nige:

Offer an award for international, potentially ECE, plenary (costs for travel, accommodation and conference) that focuses on work that has been done but they can communicate. Another award could be for secondary educators that align with location and offer students/teachers access to conference for a day). Finally, offer a lifetime award of \$1500 for Gold Medal OR lifetime membership rather than money.

Need to identify how much ESA wants to spend, then allocate money.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_6.1.1	Draft Grants Discussion Paper for circulation to Board, including current grant expenditure, ideas raised at planning day, potential external supporters for awards.	Jeremy/FGWG	February Board 20

John Maddox Prize

Public informed about evidence with respect to some controversial issue in the face of adversity. Should ESA offer an award like this? It could be in the realm of \$2000, and the benefit would be that the awardee could enhance and expand communication avenues for work they have been doing e.g. via plenary and feature in Bulletin. Would need to think about name for award.

Media Training Award: to deliver this award, would need funding to allow Toni to create resources or to contract an external to provide resources.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_6.1.2	Develop Media Training Award discussion paper for Board, including costings associated with internal vs external resource development/delivery.	Toni	February Board 20

7.0 WEB DEVELOPMENT

Web development update & tour

Link to be circulated for feedback. Orion not as expeditious in completing web pages as hoped.

Membership database options

Membership database is currently broken and not fit-for-purpose. Difficult to use and reporting becomes inconsistent. New membership fields asked for this year can't be found in database as it is not penetrable.

Off-the-shelf database options are a bit clunky and have big limitations. Web developers suggested custom made option that integrates with website and mailchimp (for mail outs). However, this is an

expensive option for development and construction. In future, ESA would have trouble customising an already customised database. As an alternative, Membes does everything ESA wants it to do. It is not a cheap off the shelf solution; it costs about same amount as custom made option. However, it comes with all support, back ups, security check ups. There is also a significant ongoing cost, however, if ESA are unhappy with database the worst-case scenario is that we lose the system but retain the data (will need to back up data ourselves somewhere).

Given the alternatives presented by the Online Media Manager, Membership Manager and Executive Officer, the Board endorses the proposal to develop the ESA Membership Database through Membes.

8.0 GENERAL BUSINESS (Discussion and/or Voting)

8.1 Education WG Terms of Reference – Dieter Hochuli*

Education WG is sought ratification of ToR by Board.

Board requested that ToR be translated to the standard template used by all WGs, and that the strategic alignment in the ToR be updated to match with the new strategic plan.

AGENDA ITEM #	ACTION ARISING	PERSON	DUE BY
PD_Nov_19_8.1.1	Education WG to update strategic alignment in the ToR to match new strategic plan, and translate final ToR to standard template.	Education WG	February Board 20

Motion: That the Board endorses the Education WG ToR subject to amendments discussed above.

Moved: Dieter Hochuli

Seconded: Don Driscoll

All in favour: motion carried.

9.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (For Noting or Information Only)

9.1 Ecol Soc presidents meeting at the American ESA in 2019 – Dieter Hochuli*

Dieter attended the presidents meeting at the American ESA in 2019, and tabled a report for Planning Day participants. In brief, US ESA wants to develop a strong community of ecology societies, US ESA are planning a symposium in 2020 on challenges to ecological societies (proposal circulated in agenda papers), and issues raised appear to be common among societies but the biggest difference is in the appetite/treatment of advocacy.

9.2 Secretarial update – Chloe Sato

A brief reflection from Chloe on Board processes and documentation.

10.0 NEXT MEETING & CLOSE

Next Board Meeting – Thursday 27 February 2020 @ 11.00am

Meeting close: 17:14 pm