



# Policy

## Working Group

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

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#### Ecological Society of Australia

#### Policy Working Group

#### Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The overall Policy Working Group objectives are to:

- I. Coordinate the ESA's:
  - a. response to policy consultations dealing with science policy and environmental policy, and
  - b. comment on environmental matters of public concern;
- II. Improve external communications and outreach with policymakers in State/Territory and Federal government;
- III. Develop effective methods of engagement with policymakers who have particular interests or responsibilities in science, ecology and the environment; and
- IV. Utilise the existing outreach of policymakers to promote and advocate for the work of ESA and ecologists in Australia.

#### Strategic Plan

This working group aligns to AIM 4 and Strategy 4c and 4d of the ESA Strategic Plan 15/16 – 19/20. The working group's purpose and responsibilities are consistent with Section 3.2(a) of the ESA Constitution:

3.2 The Company achieves its principal purpose by:

- (a) protecting and enhancing the environment through:
  - (i) promoting the scientific study of all organisms in relation to their environment;
  - (ii) promoting the application of ecological principles to the development, utilization and conservation of natural resources;
  - (iii) advising governmental and other agencies in matters where the application of ecological principles may be relevant to their planning and decision making processes;
  - (iv) fostering, conservation and ecological management of native biota, their diversity, ecological function, and interaction with the environment;
  - (v) encouraging high professional and ethical standards among the Company's Members and other ecologists;
  - (vi) facilitating and undertaking scientific research in ecology;
  - (vii) facilitating the dissemination and exchange of ideas and information about ecology and the information among the Company's Members, ecologists, other professional disciplines and the general public; and
  - (viii) educating the Company's Members, ecologists, other professional disciplines and the general public about the environment

#### Responsibilities (delete this section if same as purpose)

The Policy Working Group will:



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- identify issues papers, white papers, public consultation processes and other opportunities to comment on matters of public policy where the application of ecological knowledge and principles are relevant;
- prioritise which issues and policy matters the ESA will undertake public engagement on based on an assessment of importance of the issue, and considering the available resources of the ESA and working group;
- conduct analysis and develop considered responses on behalf of the ESA to these issues, which may include:
  - consulting with members of the ESA who have expertise relevant to the issue-at-hand to seek advice,
  - forming writing groups, as required, to draft ESA position papers, statements etc., and
  - providing editorial oversight for any position papers, statements etc. that are prepared on behalf of the ESA;
- identify and promote links between key government policies and the work of ESA and ecology in general; and
- as required, provide advice to the ESA Board, President, and other Executive members regarding ecological issues of national and international significance.

In collaboration with the ESA Board and other ESA working groups including the Media WG, Conference WG, and Local Organising Committees for conferences, the Policy WG will also:

- Develop and maintain a Policymaker Contact List including:
  - Federal (and opposition) Environment and Science Ministers and key staff;
  - State/Territory (and opposition) Environment and Science Ministers and key staff;
  - Local Federal and State MPs at the locality of each ESA event, particularly the annual conferences;
  - CEO and media contacts of each Environment and Science Department (Commonwealth, and State/Territory); and
  - Government appointed advocates i.e. Threatened Species Commissioner, Chief Scientists;
- Identify the most effective manner of engagement with each key contact, i.e. turnaround time of correspondence, appeal to increase likelihood of them contributing to ESA (monetary, promotion, political, policy); and

Encourage the appropriate policymakers to launch and/or promote the ESA Annual Conference and other events each year.

### Membership

Membership of the working group will ideally include up to 9 ESA members, encompassing a diversity of ecological interests, professional affiliations, and geographic location (ideally representatives from each state/territory).

A minimum of 50% of Working Group members are required for quorum.

Role - Name	Special Interest or Expertise
Working group leader (acting), and ESA VP Public Policy & Outreach – Bek	Queensland (non-academic, state and commonwealth government experience, environment and science policy, national collaborative research, political engagement, strategic partnerships)



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Role - Name	Special Interest or Expertise
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Ordinary members (3-7 people)	Provides particular expertise or interest in policy and policymaker engagement.
Member – Jodie Cosham	Victoria (non-academic, state & local government experience (across 3 states of Australia), public land management, bushfire and environmental planning, policy and legislation, executive communications, political engagement), ESA Board member (Secretary)
Member - John Morgan	Victoria (special interest or expertise)
Member – Louise Gilfedder	Tasmania (special interest or expertise)
Member – Jamie Shaw	Western Australia (special interest or expertise)
Member – vacant	Northern Territory (special interest or expertise)
Member – vacant	South Australia (special interest or expertise)
Member – Dale Nimmo	NSW/ACT (special interest or expertise)

#### Working Group Meetings/Teleconferences

The Policy Working Group will liaise remotely via email and teleconference, and will meet annually at the ESA Annual Conference.

The Policy Working Group will meet as required to respond to policy issues, and otherwise as requested by the Chair to address other working group needs.

#### Review of the Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the ESA Board on **27 July 2017** and will be due for revision no later than two years from the above date.