



Water Stewardship Initiative

The Water Stewardship Initiative (WSI) is a collaborative, multi-stakeholder project to build a credible system that will allow responsible commercial and industrial water users to be recognised and rewarded. In so doing, it aims to promote responsible water use through the example set by recognised water leaders.

Responsible water use will be defined in standards based on principles and criteria that have been developed through an inclusive and transparent stakeholder endorsement process. A global water stewardship brand will identify users who meet WSI standards and create opportunities for those organisations, their products and services to gain market recognition.

In June 2007 WSI hosted its second Water Stewardship Forum (WSF) involving some 80 stakeholders from business, NGOs, community groups, indigenous peoples' groups, water authorities and regulators. The forum confirmed widespread support for further development of a viable water stewardship scheme.

Following the forum, the WSI Team – a group of individuals with extensive experience developing similar initiatives in other sectors – developed a work program to realise the objectives of forum participants and take WSI to the next stage of development. The team has also opened dialogue with water initiatives in the United States and Europe.

WSI – the next steps

WSI supporters have indicated they would like to see the project develop to the stage of a working model as soon as possible. They have said they would like to see a model that recognises the range of standards and other audits companies are already working with and manages relationships with global stakeholders to avoid a proliferation of 'WSI-like' initiatives.

The WSI Team has mapped out a work program to establish the relationship between WSI and other standards or initiatives relevant to water management; to articulate principles and criteria for responsible water use by commercial and industrial users, and; to consider the need for specific industry and geographic requirements.

A reference group is being established of leading experts who hold the respect of stakeholders to review the work of the WSI Team and provide feedback. The WSI Team is also taking the lead in organising a meeting of other groups from different parts of the world who have been working on global responsible water use initiatives.

In parallel with this work, the WSI Team will also be developing options for a WSI governance model to assume control of Water Stewardship once it is developed; a verification process for ensuring WSI standards are being met; a system for recognising responsible water use through the supply chain; a brand identity; a marketing program, and; a trademark licensing system.

At the conclusion of this current work program, it is expected that elements of the WSI system will be pilot tested by participating companies. The results of both the work program and initial results of the pilot testing program will be reported to a third Water Stewardship Forum to be held in mid 2008.

Implementing the work program and meeting targets set will depend on securing adequate corporate sponsorship. To date the program has been generously supported by a number of leading Australian companies and the National Water Commission (NWC).

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Funding Requirements and Supporter Opportunities

The WSI Team has estimated that a budget of \$180k is required to complete the work program described. The NWC has offered 'in principle' to provide one dollar for every two contributed by corporate supporters. The WSI Team is now approaching existing and potential new corporate supporters for \$120k to complete the work program.

Three 'packages' are available:

'Partner' packages

- \$20k in two payments of \$10k (the second payment after achievement of milestones agreed with NWC)
- Up to 4 Partner Packages will be available
- Comes with rights ...
 - for prominent Partner branding using corporate logo on WSI material and Third Stakeholder Forum (including speaking opportunity)
 - to promote WSI Partnership status
 - nominate relevant person for participation in the WSI Reference Group
 - to review and comment on options paper draft
 - regular e-mail updates and face to face meetings if required
 - to invite up to 10 guests to the Third Stakeholder Forum

'Key Supporter' packages

- @ \$10k in two payments of \$5k (the second payment after achievement of milestones agreed with NWC)
- Up to 8 Key Supporter Packages will be available
- Comes with the rights ...
 - for Supporter branding using corporate logo on WSI material and Third Stakeholder Forum
 - to promote WSI Key Supporter status
 - to review and comment on options paper draft
 - regular e-mail updates and telephone briefings if required
 - to invite up to 5 guests to the Third Stakeholder Forum

'Supporter' packages

- \$5k in one payment at the start of the work program
- Comes with the rights ...
 - for name only recognition on WSI material and Third Stakeholder Forum
 - to promote Supporter status
 - regular e-mail updates on progress
 - Up to two nominees for Third Stakeholder Forum