



WWF-Australia Eminent Scientist Group (ESG) Terms of Reference

The WWF-Australia Eminent Scientists Group (ESG) is an Advisory Group appointed by, supporting and reporting to the Board. The ESG supports WWF-Australia staff to enable it to operate effectively as a science-based, solutions focussed organisation. The group provides guidance and advice on the strategic direction of priority programs, cross-cutting themes, and emerging issues in conservation. It contributes to reviews of priority programs. ESG's agenda is prepared collaboratively by the Chair of ESG, CEO and Chief Regenerative Officer (CRO).

The WWF-Australia Eminent Scientists Group would:

1. Consist of some of Australia's most eminent and up-and-coming scientists and practitioners in areas of WWF-Australia's priority programs, as articulated in the organisation's Strategic Plan.
2. Have a maximum of ten members appointed by the Board of Directors, supported by the Nominating & Governance Committee and ESG Chair, with experience across key areas of the regenerative conservation strategy. At least one member of the ESG would also sit on the Board of Directors.
3. The ESG Chair would be appointed by the Board.
4. The WWF-Australia governors would be a principal nomination source of the ESG membership. In addition, eminent scientists and practitioners from outside this group could also be members to fill specific gaps in expertise. Early and mid-career professionals may be appointed as "associate members" to promote inclusion and ensure a phased approach to succession planning of ESG membership.
5. ESG will seek to work collaboratively with the Indigenous Knowledge Holders and local communities through both formal and informal mechanisms within WWF's network.
6. In consultation with the Chair of ESG, CEO and CRO, additional experts, particularly from the Governor pool with subject matter expertise may be invited to participate in specific meetings or agenda items to add further expert perspectives and advice.
7. The President of WWF-Australia has a standing invite to participate in the ESG.
8. Each ESG member would serve a three-year term (from the date of full appointment) with the consideration of one additional term at the discretion of the Board.
 - The term of appointment of an ESG member who is also a Director will be deemed to continue for so long as they continue to hold that office. ESG members who are also Governors, will be afforded an additional Governor term at the conclusion of their ESG term.
9. The primary roles of the ESG are to:
 - help, support and advise WWF-Australia so that it operates effectively as a science-based, solution-focused organisation; and
 - share relevant and provide guidance on the use of appropriate, timely and relevant research and practice to underpin conservation outcomes.

- Secondary roles of the ESG are to: a) mentor senior staff, advising on best available science and practice to support WWF’s Regenerative Conservation Goals and on research that could be assisted by WWF to support these goals; and b) advise the Board/CEO/CRO on the strategies, focus, and outcomes of the Strategic Plan.
10. Advice to the Board is conveyed via the committee representative(s) sitting on the Board, at the next Board meeting following a meeting of the ESG, and via the ESG meeting minutes being made available to the committee members and Board. Summary of ESG deliberations shared with Governors via existing communication channels.
 11. The WWF-Australia ESG would have a minimum of 2 meetings per year ideally consisting of one formal, face-to-face meeting annually with an additional 2-3 meetings convened as needed (maximum 4 meetings/year). The additional meetings will be either face-to-face or via virtual, at the discretion of the ESG.
 12. WWF-Australia staff should not limit their engagement with the Australian science and practitioner community to the ESG but should develop additional networks of experts as informal ‘reference groups’ on particular topics. The ESG, working with the CRO, would advise on the most appropriate external advice and ‘reference group’ members, some of whom could be considered as future candidates for the ESG and/or WWF Governors.
 13. ESG members agree to fully participate in this community of practice, which provides two-way learning opportunities and supports personal and professional growth within a multidisciplinary, expert, nature positive network. ESG members are not remunerated, WWF-Australia may cover reasonable costs of travel and associated expenses to participate in face-to-face meetings where required.
 14. Intersessionally, ESG may be asked to represent WWF-Australia as an ambassador to promote regenerative conservation goals, to convey potential opportunities that further those goals and to identify potential new nominees for future Governor and ESG membership opportunities.
 15. These ESG Terms of Reference will be reviewed periodically, at least every 5-years.

REVISION HISTORY

ACTION	DATE OF MEETING
Revisions approved by Board	June 2023
Revisions approved by Board	25 February 2025