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# Management framework

## Government priorities

- Quality and accessible services for all Western Australians.
- Enhance growth in the Western Australian economy and create more jobs.
- Protect and enhance Western Australia's unique lifestyle and environment.
- Ensure sustainable regional developments.
- Improve and enhance the capacity of the Western Australian public sector.

## River Protection Strategy

Over-arching strategy for all river stakeholders to achieve community values and environmental targets.

## Swan River Trust Strategic Plan

- Long-term community benefit of the river system is protected and enhanced.
- Ecological health of the river system is protected and enhanced.

## Management programs

- Riverpark management
- Statutory planning
- River system management
- Strategic policy and planning

## Organisational plans

- Financial management
- Workforce planning
- Occupational safety and health
- Communications and community engagement

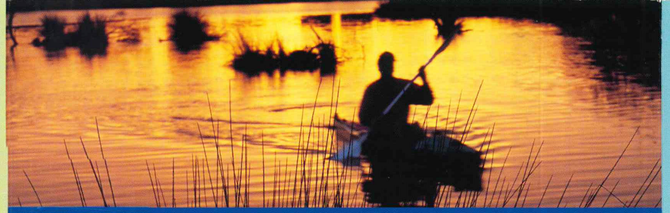
## Swan River Trust Business Plan

## Projects

## Performance reporting

Stakeholder partnerships

Community engagement



## Our principles

The Swan River Trust will act in accordance with the guiding principles incorporated in the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Bill 2005.

### Sustainability principles

- Sound environmental practices and procedures should be adopted as a basis for sustainability for the benefit of all human beings and the environment today, while considering the environmental, social and economic needs of future generations.
- Environmental, social and economic factors should be considered in decision-making, with the objective of improving community wellbeing and the benefit to future generations.
- Environmental practices and procedures should be cost-effective and in proportion to the significance of the environmental risks and consequences being addressed.

### Precautionary principle

- Where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.
- In the application of the precautionary principle, decision-making should be guided by:
  (a) a careful evaluation to avoid serious or irreversible damage to the environment wherever possible; and
  (b) an assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of the options.

### Intergenerational equity

- The present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment are maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.

### Biodiversity and ecological integrity

- Biodiversity and ecological integrity should be maintained or enhanced as part of the irreplaceable life support systems upon which the earth depends.

### Shared responsibility

- Protection of the environment is a responsibility shared by Government, industry, business, the community and the people of the State.

### Best practice

- When designing policies, systems, procedures or technologies, the best practicable measures available at the time should be used.

### Continuous improvement

- Implementation of natural resource management should aim for continuous improvement and extend beyond compliance with relevant laws and requirements.

### Accountability and transparency

- Members of the community should be given:
  (a) access to reliable and relevant information; and
  (b) opportunities to participate in policy and program development.
- Decisions should be made in a transparent manner and be made public.

Government of Western Australia

SWAN RIVER TRUST

# Strategic Plan 2006 - 09

The Swan River Trust was established in 1989 with planning, protection and management functions for the Swan and Canning rivers and associated land.

## Our vision

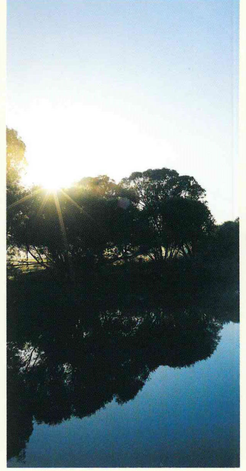
The Swan and Canning rivers are a valued part of our environment and a source of enjoyment for the community forever.

## Our mission

To work with the local, State and Commonwealth governments and the community to protect the Swan and Canning rivers and associated land to ensure ecological health and community benefits are enhanced.

*Caring for the Swan and Canning rivers*

## Chairman's message



The Trust has undergone considerable change during the past three years, and continues to achieve many successes. Ongoing change can be expected with new legislation and changing administrative arrangements.

Improving water quality continues to be the key environmental challenge facing the Swan and Canning rivers. Continuing high nutrient levels in the rivers and tributaries feed algal blooms. Low oxygen levels in the middle and upper river reaches put aquatic fauna at risk.

Sedimentation, non-nutrient contamination and acidification are emerging as potential risks to water quality. Climate change may also affect water flows and water quality, further complicating management.

Rising demand for higher density urban development, urban infill and commercial opportunities in and around the rivers must be carefully managed to ensure they do not compromise the very attributes the community is seeking to enjoy.

The strategic plan reflects the complex interactions between the water, land, flora and fauna and various human activities in the waterways and catchment, and recognises the interconnection between social, cultural, economic and environmental factors.

The responsibility and involvement of local governments, State government agencies, catchment groups, business, research organisations, and the community in protecting the health and amenity of the rivers is equally complex.

We are taking a more integrated approach with river stakeholders, fostering productive partnerships, and taking a greater leadership role in debate, dialogue and policy decisions that relate to the Swan and Canning rivers.

We are also giving emphasis to the Government's priorities and policy direction, and to the cost-effectiveness of the management programs.

The strategic plan is an evolving document that we will use to measure progress towards our outcomes and as the basis for public reporting.

Charlie Welker
Chairman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## Government goal

To ensure that Western Australia has an environment in which resources are managed, developed and used sustainably, biological diversity is preserved and habitats protected.

## Government strategic outcome

Healthy river systems.

## Government priorities

- To provide quality accessible services for all Western Australians.
- To enhance growth in the Western Australian economy and create more jobs.
- To protect and enhance Western Australia's unique lifestyle and environment.
- To ensure sustainable regional development.
- To further improve and enhance the capacity of the Western Australian Public Sector.

The Swan River Trust's work intersects with all these priorities, with a particular focus on lifestyle and environment.

## Our approach

To achieve our vision, the Swan River Trust will:

- be an inspirational leader in river management;
- be open, honest, accessible and accountable in all our dealings;
- act with courage, in a way that earns respect and credibility;
- develop collaborative and supportive relationships with all our stakeholders;
- respect people's views and rights;
- support our staff and value diversity;
- pursue learning and innovation;
- monitor and respond to environmental, social and economic trends; and
- be guided by our strategic priorities in all our decision making.

## Our values

The following values underpin the Trust's activities.

We recognise that the Swan Canning river system is a highly-valued environmental, social and economic asset for the whole community. The Trust believes that:

- the river system should be accessible to the whole community and support a diversity of environments, cultural values, uses and landscapes;
- the interests of the whole community should be valued and recognised;
- the Nyungah community has particular and special interests in the protection and management of the river system;
- local interests should be balanced with regional and strategic priorities, and community values and uses;
- the rivers should not be alienated without enhanced public benefit; and
- all residual adverse impacts from new development should be appropriately offset.

We are committed to the Swan Canning river system being a healthy dynamic ecosystem. The Trust believes that:

- the rivers' biophysical structure, processes and functions should sustain a wide range of environments, community values and a productive and diverse ecosystem; and
- the ecosystem's resilience should be protected so it can recover from short to medium term environmental changes.

River stakeholders working in partnership is vital for success. The Trust believes that:

- stakeholders should be involved in managing the river system;
- roles and responsibilities of all involved should be clear and unambiguous;
- a unified management strategy which integrates the efforts of all stakeholders is required for the river system;
- management programs should be complementary, address priorities and focus on whole system goals; and
- stakeholders need to work together to continually improve our understanding and management of the river system.

SWAN RIVER TRUST

# Strategic Plan 2006 - 09

**River stakeholders work in partnership to protect and enhance the Swan Canning river system.**

Priorities:

- foster stakeholder understanding of the river system;
- develop stakeholder capacity and engagement;
- build partnerships; and
- provide effective planning and management arrangements.

Reporting our progress:

- involvement in demonstration and capacity building activities;
- the extent to which organisations and communities are changing behaviours;
- number of partnership agreements; and
- progress towards new planning and management arrangements.

## Management programs

The Swan River Trust is focused on four key program areas to deliver ecological and community outcomes. The Trust will involve its partners and the broader community and will report regularly to keep the community informed of changing river and catchment conditions.

### Riverpark management

Manage the Swan Canning Riverpark, in partnership with other river stakeholders. Work areas include foreshore restoration, waste and hazard removal, regulation compliance, local government and community liaison, and logistical support for river incidents.

Planned three-year achievements:

- establish the Swan Canning Riverpark and management plan, in partnership with river stakeholders;
- implement foreshore restoration priority projects;
- secure long-term funding for foreshore restoration;
- advise the Western Australian Planning Commission on foreshore and parks and recreation reservations; and
- increase community awareness of river recreational opportunities.

### Statutory planning

Ensure landuse planning and development in the Trust's Management Area protects and enhances the ecological health and amenity of the Swan and Canning rivers. In the catchments, the Trust will work with planning agencies and the development industry so that further urban and rural development protects and enhances the health and amenity of the rivers.

Planned three-year achievements:

- establish a strategic framework for riverside development;
- develop planning partnerships for priority river precincts with local and State government agencies;
- prepare the Development Control Area Management Program;
- establish a licensing framework to regulate the use of the rivers;
- enhance the Trust's compliance assessment and enforcement efforts; and
- increase the Trust's influence over landuse planning and development in the catchments.

### River system management

Implement the environmental programs for the Swan and Canning rivers. Key parameters of the river system are monitored and assessed, and management responses are implemented in partnership with other river stakeholders.

Planned three-year achievements:

- finalise and implement Phase II of the Swan-Canning Cleanup Program (Healthy Rivers Action Plan);
- develop a river system model (conceptual and physical);
- finish the Foreshore Assessment Project to establish priorities for foreshore restoration and to guide river precinct planning;
- increase effective use of intervention technology in rivers, drains and tributaries; and
- develop and implement a Water Quality Improvement Plan with the Commonwealth Government.

### Strategic policy and planning

Establish a policy and planning framework to guide the Trust's strategic direction.

Planned three-year achievements:

- facilitate passage and implementation of new legislation;
- develop ecological health and community benefit targets and the River Protection Strategy;
- establish high level close working relationships with key State and local government organisations;
- establish stronger collaboration with community groups, including Nyungah groups; and
- influence reform of drainage governance arrangements.

## Outcomes

The Swan River Trust works to deliver two outcomes to protect the rivers. The outcomes contribute to the Government's goals and fulfil the Trust's responsibilities under its legislation.

### The long-term community benefit of the Swan Canning river system is protected and enhanced.

Priorities:

- define and protect the community's river values;
- establish a strategic and policy framework to guide development and enhance community benefit;
- provide good information and opportunities for community involvement in river planning and management; and
- secure resources to restore important river values.

Reporting our progress:

- progress made towards defining and protecting community values in priority areas;
- level of community satisfaction with the information and opportunities for involvement provided in river planning and management; and
- progress made towards establishing a strategic and policy framework.

### The ecological health of the Swan Canning river system is protected and enhanced.

Priorities:

- develop and implement a long-term nutrient reduction plan, focused on key sub-catchments;
- develop conceptual and physical models to support river system management;
- establish ecological health indicators and water quality targets;
- assess, develop and demonstrate drainage and river intervention techniques;
- assess and implement measures to protect and enhance foreshore condition and values;
- implement a research and development program;
- develop and implement a fertiliser reduction strategy; and
- report to the community on the health of the river system.

Reporting our progress:

- changes in key ecological health indicators – via report cards for the rivers, 15 tributaries and foreshores, and reporting the occurrence of fish kills, algal blooms and pollution events; and
- published information regarding river health and best practice management techniques.

*Caring for the Swan and Canning rivers*