



Science Strategic Action Plan SSAP: a 12-18 month roadmap

Process

The department is developing and implementing a Science Strategy Action Plan (SSAP) to improve the delivery and application of science to support evidence-based policy, regulatory and operational decision-making.

The SSAP was developed through workshops held with senior science leaders from across the department in October 2020. It builds on outputs from workshops held in July/August 2020 with science staff from across the department.

Vision

The Department is a leader in solving problems through science. We produce, commission and apply world-class science to inform regulatory and policy decisions and find innovative solutions to enhance Australia's agriculture, unique environment, heritage, and water resources.

We do this by building the scientific capability of our staff, collaborating with research institutions, innovators and Indigenous Australians, and sharing our expertise and findings with our stakeholders, partners and the community.

Objectives

SUPPORT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION

To support the department's policy and regulatory efforts through evidence, based on the best available science

NEEDS-DRIVEN SCIENCE, BASED ON RELATIONSHIPS

To build effective stakeholder relationships to properly understand stakeholder needs, problems and opportunities

QUALITY PARTNERING

To build goal-oriented networks collaborating with research institutions and innovators both internally and externally

DELIVERY OF IMPACT

Through quality and timely communication with end users, deliver impact through translation and take up of scientific findings

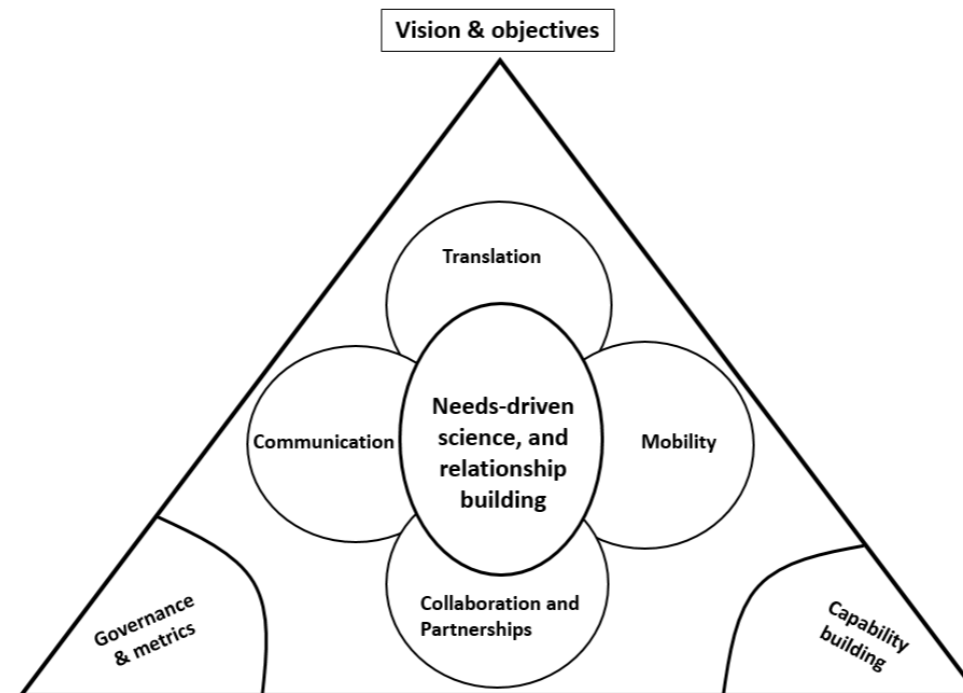
CAPABILITY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

To support science capability; and ensure the department's scientific cohort are motivated, well resourced and connected.

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

Partnering with Indigenous communities to actively incorporate Indigenous knowledge

Actions



STAFF MOBILITY AND COLLABORATION/PARTNERSHIPS

- Enable and incentivise short and longer term staff transfers/exchanges
- Increase cross-fertilization and collaboration with the external research sector through strategic partnership arrangements
- Scope the feasibility of a departmental science capability search tool
- Ensure early and genuine Indigenous engagement is incorporated into departmental practices for science development and application

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (NEEDS-DRIVEN SCIENCE) AND TRANSLATION

- Increase targeted stakeholder relationship building
- Scope potential for better utilizing relevant steering committee boards

ENHANCED COMMUNICATION

- Increase communication training for departmental scientists
- Better (and more) communication around the science we do, and its impact, across a range of platforms and opportunities

CAPABILITY: CAREER DEVELOPMENT + RESOURCING

- Create a policy that specifically recruits and retains high performing talent, and provides tailored scientific career progression provisions
- Enhance tools, systems and technologies to support science practitioners

GOVERNANCE

- Establish robust and sustainable departmental science governance and increase executive level science representation

Metrics

STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION, INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

'How readily applicable, and valuable in impact, are our science outputs and commissioned science to both internal and external end users and science partners?' (Annual survey)

INTERNAL STAFF SATISFACTION

'How well are our scientific staff supported to produce high quality and impactful science outputs and commissioned science?' (Annual survey)

RETURN ON OUR INVESTMENT IN SCIENCE

'Do we get good value for money from the science developed in the department as well as procured by the department?' (End of project assessments)

SCIENCE QUALITY ASSESSMENT

'How do our departmental science outputs and commissioned science rate, relative to appropriate research sector standards/benchmarks, and can be improved?' (Bi-annual independent reviews)

Implementation

"Vision without execution is hallucination", Thomas Edison, Inventor & Business Leader, (1847-1931)

Our plan...

- Executive Board sign off for SSAP (by mid-November)
- Put in place Science Council meetings (mid-November, mid-December)
- Communicate SSAP appropriately, inc. initiate related external stakeholder discussions
- Initiate implementation of three cross-divisional projects in the next three months (including developing a resource budget); conclude "new look" CSIRO contractual arrangements; etc.

Resources

"A strategy isn't a strategy unless resources shift", GG Garrett & GJ Davies, "Herding Cats", Triarchy Press, UK (2010)

- Resources = \$ + people's time, i.e. importantly, how we might expect people to operate differently
- We recognise departmental fiscal resources are very tight.
- At this point in time the only likely financial requirement is to provide project leaders with backfilling capacity when we are utilising their key staff members for focused, cross-boundary projects (as per implementation action 4 above)