



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Shared Environmental Analytic Facility

SEAF

For more information on SEAF, refer to publication *Supporting nature positive outcomes: Shared environmental analysis and reporting* (ISBN 978-0-646-88733-3) published by WABSI and WAMSI.

www.wabsi.org.au

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1.

What is SEAF?

SEAF is a proposed Shared Environmental Analytics Facility that will create access to shared data and analytics for proponents, regulators and the community. It will enable timely access to trusted environmental reporting and forecasting.

2.

Who can use SEAF?

SEAF is designed to be used by regulators, organisations planning a development, Traditional Owners, scientists and the broader community. It will provide efficiency for proponents, confidence for regulatory bodies and other decision makers who assess environmental impacts as well as transparency for consumers.

Continue for further questions...





3.

How is SEAF different from SAFE?

Shared Analytics Facility for the Environment (SAFE) is the framework that SEAF will operate under.

4.

How does SEAF interact with the Biodiversity Information Office of WA ('BIO') and the 'Dandjoo biodiversity data platform'?

SEAF will take BIO data and put it to work. It will integrate data from BIO and other sources and integrate it with other environmental data which can then be turned into a report, map or forecast.

5.

How does SEAF differ from the 'Biodiversity Data Repository' and the 'Atlas of Living Australia'?

SEAF, which has a regional focus, will consume data from these and other data provider platforms and convert it into products and forecasts.

6.

Who owns the data and models in SEAF?

There will be some private, public and research data and they will each have their own individual agreements but it is anticipated they will be able to contribute to shared forecasting tools.

7.


Can I remove my data after it has been used by SEAF?

Yes. Just as it is shared, it can also be withdrawn.



Continue for further questions...





8.

Who funds SEAF?

SEAF is proposed to be funded by a combination of government, industry and research institutions.

9.

Who operates SEAF?

Initially SEAF will be operated by WAMSI and WABSI with a medium-term vision that its operation will transfer to a statutory agency or organisation.

10.

How does SEAF interact with the portal 'Environment Online'?

As a shared facility, SEAF has a different purpose to 'Environment Online' but the systems are complementary. It is anticipated SEAF reports and forecasts will be accessible through 'Environment Online' as relevant.

11.

Is SEAF aligned with state, federal and international legislation?

Yes, SEAF will operate under Australian legislation and international laws.

12.

Can SEAF provide an environmental economic account/natural capital account (NCA) for a region?

No. SEAF will help to support and inform the process of developing a natural capital account. A NCA needs SEAF to describe a state of the environment. Another body will need to put a value on that.



Continue for further questions...

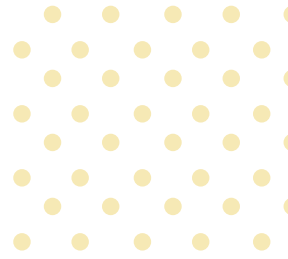




13.

Are SEAF outputs live/real time?

No.



14.

Am I bound by the outputs of SEAF or can alternative models and analysis be conducted?

No. The SEAF platform will support independent modelling and independent analysis.

15.

How will SEAF ensure transparency?

SEAF will be set up with a strong and transparent governance model and set of protocols. It will also have very clear legal agreements in place covering access to data. They will spell out what is and is not contained in each SEAF output.

16.

How will WABSI and WAMSI protect confidential information?

As well as strong protocols around governance and legal agreements, SEAF will use best practice Microsoft security architecture to address threat risks and ensure cybersecurity.

17.

How will SEAF maintain confidentiality while ensuring transparency?

SEAF relies on its good governance and legal agreements along with secure collaboration zones. This is where data can be placed and used by the people or organisations which can legitimately access it. It will be out of reach for those who do not have access to the zone. SEAF will use encrypted data, in the same way health information is managed, to ensure confidentiality.



18.

Why do we need a SEAF in different regions?

In a vast country such as Australia there are big economic, environmental and cultural differences between regions. The SEAF focus on regions acknowledges those differences and priorities. It will develop products based on data coming from these varied areas. SEAF operates on the principle that 'one size does not fit all' and will efficiently develop products based on regional needs.

19.

How can SEAF be used for cumulative impact assessment?

SEAF is designed to provide an efficient and effective way of capturing and managing knowledge and data and turning that into products such as maps, reports and forecasting tools. These can help the regulator, proponent or community understand the impact of a new pressure or pressures. SEAF is not a decision-making body but it will supply information to help determine the impact of a pressure on an ecosystem and how it can be forecast. It is a shared analytic facility providing trusted, evidence-based forecasting tools that help inform how proponents or the regulator or community assess cumulative impacts. The first stage is understanding pressures such as noise and temperature change. The next is to understand the current state of the environment and then assess what the impact will be.



Continue for further questions...





20.

Can SEAF have a role in fact checking?

Yes. SEAF is based on having access to the best available science, independently fed from multiple sources and with good governance. SEAF outputs and products would be the best available. It is designed to be open and transparent. As a community member, if you want to check a company's position that states 'we have no impact on seagrass' then you can check that data. SEAF could be likened to the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), a weather forecaster, but SEAF forecasts will focus on environmental forecasts with different pressures. As with BOM, SEAF will issue the results of forecasts as products such as maps, forecasts and reports.

SEAF will be a trusted source of environmental data, environmental products and forecasts for a particular region.

21.

Does SEAF recognise Traditional Owner values?

Yes. SEAF is respectful of Traditional Owner values and traditional knowledge of the natural environment. It is not a data facility for cultural or spiritual information.

22.

Can SEAF identify and protect marine values?

SEAF will be able to identify marine data but will not have a direct role in protection. As with other areas SEAF operates in, decisions will be left to regulators and other organisations that make decisions on protecting marine values.



Continue for further questions...





23.

Can SEAF save money for organisations?

Yes, SEAF is a shared environmental analytics facility. By sharing the cost of data collection and curation and legal agreements it brings costs down. If the culture of sharing data is working well, data collected by one organisation can be shared with another. As with train infrastructure, it is much for efficient to have one train line than 10.

24.

Can SEAF save organisations' times?

Yes. By using shared environmental analytics and data through a trusted governance process and trusted legal agreements, SEAF will effectively provide again a common infrastructure and shared service. It not only saves time, it allows users to maximise value by bringing down the cost of, often expensive, field research and data collection.

25.

Where is SEAF data stored?

SEAF's data can be stored in three places – Microsoft Azure Cloud, the Pawsey Supercomputing infrastructure and with a proponent or organisation-specific cloud service.

26.

Is SEAF profit driven?

No, SEAF is designed as a not-for-profit cost recovery model. It aims to commoditise activities that are relatively expensive such as research and data collection and create an environment where this information can be shared.



Continue for further questions...





27.

Is SEAF trustworthy?

SEAF relies on people and organisations having trust in the shared facility.

As BOM is a trusted place to understand the weather forecast, SEAF would be trusted place for an environmental forecast. Its governance will help ensure transparency and trust in its operation, outputs and products.

28.

Does SEAF work in all industries and regions?

Yes, SEAF is relevant to all regions where there is economic development and where industry may have an impact on the environment or where environmental monitoring is required.

29.

Can SEAF identify and protect biodiversity values?

SEAF will be able to identify biodiversity data but will not have a direct role in protection. As with other areas SEAF operates in, decisions will be left to regulators and other organisations which use the information on protecting biodiversity values.

30.

Are there examples of SEAFs in other jurisdictions?

We are not aware of any equivalent models in other jurisdictions. While some areas face similar data sharing challenges, their solutions to these have been membership based. This proposed SEAF model does not have the same restrictions on access. It will be transparent and shared while maintaining data security and safeguards.