

2025
2026

Highlights in research collaboration and impact

Shared Purpose **Shared Knowledge**



A message from our CEO

This year marks ten years since WABSI was launched. What began as a new partnership has grown into Western Australia's trusted home for biodiversity research collaboration, bringing together government, industry, researchers, Traditional Owners and the community to tackle the state's biggest environmental challenges, together.

This year, that collaboration delivered real results: a world-leading environmental data platform piloted successfully in the Pilbara, a new project to guide research investment in the Northern Jarrah Forest, over \$3.6 million in new research investment secured, and four major publications setting research priorities for the issues that matter most to Western Australia, from inland waters to the economics of nature.

None of this is possible without the shared vision and purpose of our funders and partners. WABSI is proudly funded by the Government of Western Australia and delivers its work in close partnership with our joint venture members. Together, we turn shared knowledge into real outcomes for Western Australia.

As we mark this milestone, our focus remains the same as it was a decade ago: connecting independent science with the people who need it, so Western Australia can make confident, well-informed decisions about its environment and its future.

PROFESSOR OWEN NEVIN

Chief Executive Officer, WABSI



WABSI at a glance

WABSI is Western Australia's independent research partnership. A collaboration mechanism which brings government, industry, researchers and the community together to solve the state's biggest biodiversity challenges, turning independent science into practical knowledge that decision-makers can trust.

We do this by:

- Coordinating practical research shaped by the people who use it — industry, government, regulators and community.
- Focusing research on the issues that matter most to Western Australia.
- Growing the state's ability to successfully implement world-class research partnerships.
- Making public investment go further by attracting industry and philanthropic co-investment.



10

Years of impact
since launch



\$3.6m

New research
investment
2025–2026



4

Major research
priority
publications
this year



900

People came
together to share
biodiversity
science
knowledge



This year's highlights

Eight achievements from the past year show how WABSI's research collaboration model is delivering real benefits for Western Australia.

2025 2026

1.

A world-first environmental data platform for the Pilbara

WABSI led the successful pilot of the Shared Environmental Analytics Facility (SEAF), a first-of-its-kind platform giving industry, government, regulators, Traditional Owners and the community access to a shared, science-based view of the Pilbara region's environmental data. The pilot secured investment and support from partners including Rio Tinto, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, the Department of Energy and Economic Diversification, the Australian Research Data Commons, BHP, Fortescue and Mineral Resources, and now underpins more transparent, evidence-based decision-making across the Pilbara.



Image: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



2.

Trusted to guide collaborative research to conserve the Northern Jarrah Forest

WABSI was appointed to administer the biodiversity research component of a Commonwealth Government-directed Enforceable Undertaking linked to Alcoa's operations, coordinating research targeted at the region's ecological priorities in partnership with land managers, Traditional Owners and conservation groups. This appointment reflects WABSI's standing as Western Australia's trusted mechanism for delivering complex, scientifically rigorous research collaborations.



Image: Alcoa



3.

Four new publications set the roadmap for WA's biggest biodiversity issues

WABSI published four major research priority reports this year, each shaped by extensive consultation with the people who use biodiversity science every day: ***From Knowledge to Action***, capturing WA's overarching biodiversity knowledge priorities; ***Scaling Up the WA Restoration Economy***, setting priorities for the state's fast-growing restoration sector; ***Nature on the Balance Sheet***, mapping research priorities in biodiversity economics and finance; and ***Navigating Knowledge Gaps for Western Australia's Inland Waters***, setting priorities to protect the state's rivers, wetlands and groundwater systems.



Image: Threshold Environmental



4.

Building new scientific capability to protect WA's underground biodiversity

The Subterranean Fauna Research Program continued to unite researchers, government and industry to protect Western Australia's unique groundwater ecosystems. Advanced biomonitoring is being developed, thanks to an Australian Research Council Linkage grant, secured by the University of Adelaide and Curtin University, in conjunction with WABSI, industry partners and the Subterranean Fauna Steering Committee. The WABSI program is also building a new, easy-to-share data repository for subterranean species DNA data, helping unlock its value for evidence-based decisions.

Two PhD students at Curtin University are building new research capability in the state, applying genetic and chemical analysis to monitor groundwater health in high-development regions such as the Pilbara.



5.

Uniting Western Australia's biodiversity community to share knowledge

WABSI hosted and supported the Biodiversity Conference in October 2025, themed 'Nature Positive', bringing together 900 delegates, Traditional Owners, researchers, conservationists, policymakers and representatives from government, industry and the non-government sector. The conference reduced barriers to information sharing and forged new partnerships across sectors, strengthening Western Australia's collective capability to deliver effective, collaborative biodiversity research.



Images: Viewfinder Photography



6.

New collaborations to build science capabilities

WABSI welcomed new collaborations; organisations which are helping us extend our reach: Gaia Resources joined as a technical partner on the SEAF Pilbara pilot; Restore WA, a new not-for-profit, partnered with WABSI to build restoration skills and career pathways for students and emerging professionals; and the WA Local Government Association drew on WABSI's *Building Biodiversity for Thriving Urban Ecosystems* research to launch its Climate Ready Street Tree Trials, backed by new funding.



Image: Greening Australia



Image: DevelopmentWA

7.

Engaging audiences and sharing knowledge to better protect biodiversity

WABSI continued to extend the reach of biodiversity science, making research and knowledge more accessible to the people who use it. Across our digital channels, publications, webinars, networking events and newsletters, audiences showed strong interest in practical, decision-focused content and opportunities to engage directly with biodiversity experts.

Our Big Issues in Biodiversity Science Webinar Series, featuring global experts sharing new knowledge, attracted 1,557 participants from 25 countries and 176 distinct organisations. 136,000 visitors accessed the

WABSI website, extending awareness of WABSI's work beyond its established networks. Social media channels reached 60,000 people, with 50% representing a new audience. WABSI publications were downloaded more than 2,800 times from the WABSI website, with audiences exploring information on biodiversity issues, end user research priorities and how shared data and analytics is supporting more informed environmental decisions.



8.

Taking Western Australian expertise onto the world stage

WABSI's Owen Nevin and Ram Pandit hosted a workshop and panel discussion at the World Biodiversity Forum in Davos, Switzerland, bringing together leading experts and thinkers. The discussion focused on a whole-of-systems approach to better understand the nature market.

At the session, market and environmental economists highlighted the global 'nature finance gap', an annual shortfall of hundreds of billions of dollars needed to protect ecosystems. Even a small shift in investment, to close this gap, has the potential to drive better outcomes for the environment; current investment levels constitute only a small proportion of global transactions. Natural capital funding needs to increase significantly to reverse biodiversity loss and meet global climate and land restoration targets.





10 years of impact

Since launching in October 2015, WABSI has built a track record as Western Australia's trusted collaboration mechanism for biodiversity science, valued by industry, government and regulators for its independence and its unique ability to bring the right people to the table.

Over the past decade, WABSI has led research collaboration that has delivered new biodiversity discoveries, strengthened access to scientific knowledge and environmental data, and developed practical tools used in real-world decisions to better conserve nature and biodiversity.

SEAF

A flagship achievement in environmental data and insights

One of WABSI's flagship achievements is the Shared Environmental Analytics Facility (SEAF), developed together with the Western Australian Marine Science Institution. The success was shared with stakeholders at an event which brought industry and government together to celebrate successful pilot projects in Cockburn Sound and the Pilbara. The projects are delivering smart data analytics from the vast volumes of environmental data collected in WA each year. SEAF is turning fragmented environmental data into trusted, shared insights, helping government and industry make faster, better-informed decisions for regional planning and environmental assessment.

Science Minister Stephen Dawson congratulated WABSI and WAMSI and partners in a video statement and Environment Minister Matthew Swinbourn attended the event.



\$1.4b

Estimated value
of avoided
project delays
over 10 years in
the Pilbara



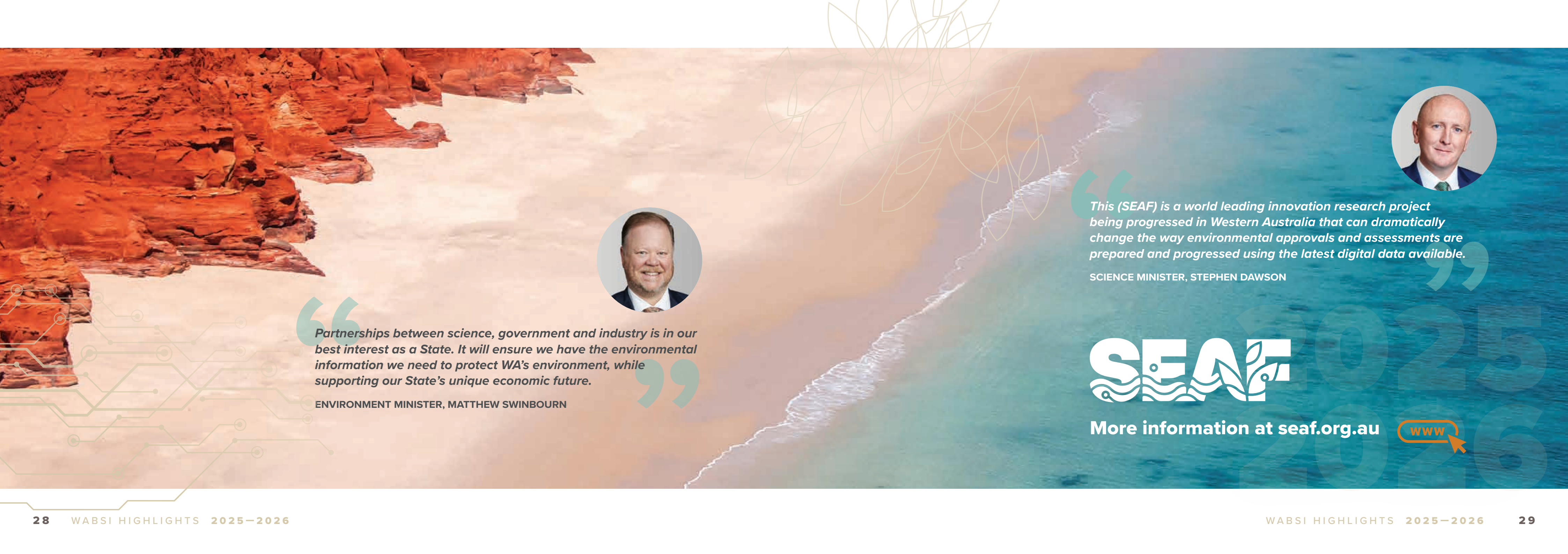
\$227m

Estimated
equivalent value
in Cockburn
Sound



These figures come from an independent feasibility assessment of SEAF's potential benefits to Western Australia over the next decade.

Inset image (Right): Western Australian Marine Science Institution



“Partnerships between science, government and industry is in our best interest as a State. It will ensure we have the environmental information we need to protect WA’s environment, while supporting our State’s unique economic future.”

ENVIRONMENT MINISTER, MATTHEW SWINBOURN



“This (SEAF) is a world leading innovation research project being progressed in Western Australia that can dramatically change the way environmental approvals and assessments are prepared and progressed using the latest digital data available.”

SCIENCE MINISTER, STEPHEN DAWSON



More information at seaf.org.au





How WABSI is governed

WABSI is governed by a Board of Directors, drawing on expertise from research, industry, government and the community.

The Board is supported by two groups that help keep WABSI's research connected to the people who use it: a technical committee made up of research-active partner organisations, and a council of senior representatives from its partner organisations.

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Board of Directors 2025–2026

The WABSI Board brings together experienced leaders from science, industry, government and the community to guide WABSI’s strategic direction and operations.



PROFESSOR IAN CRESSWELL

Board Chair, environmental scientist with a background in biodiversity conservation, oceans and fisheries governance, and national environmental reporting



DR STEVE MORTON

Director and Chair, Collaboration, Leverage and Integration Committee, ecologist and former CSIRO executive



ANDREW DOLLING

Director, Executive Director, Science and Innovation, Department of Energy and Economic Diversification



DR CHRISTINE LAMONT

Director, Executive Director, Biodiversity Conservation Science, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



VERN NEWTON

Director, senior industry leader in resources and construction materials, with a focus on land restoration



GAVIN PRICE

Director, senior environment and sustainability leader in the minerals and resources sector



DR BRETT MOLONY

Director, Science Director, Environment Research Unit, CSIRO



HEIDI MIPPY

Director, Noongar and Thiin-Mah Warriyangka woman with extensive experience working with Indigenous communities and organisations



Image: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Collaboration, Leverage and Integration Committee (CLIC)

CLIC is a Board sub-committee made up of representatives from WABSI's research-active partner organisations. It identifies opportunities for research collaboration and funding and advises the Board on project proposals and research priorities.

Participant Council

The Participant Council brings together senior representatives, typically Directors General and Deputy Vice Chancellors, from each of WABSI's joint venture partner organisations, ensuring WABSI's work stays connected to the priorities of the organisations it serves.

Joint venture partners

WABSI is a joint venture partnership between leading Western Australian research and government organisations.

- CSIRO
- Curtin University
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
- Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Edith Cowan University
- Murdoch University
- The University of Western Australia
- Western Australian Museum

WABSI is funded by the WA Government through the Department of Energy and Economic Diversification.

Our team

A small team leads WABSI’s day-to-day work, translating Board strategy into research programs, partnerships and practical knowledge for Western Australia.

- **PROFESSOR OWEN NEVIN**
Chief Executive Officer, experienced conservation biologist and research leader
- **DR RENEE YOUNG**
Program Director, Conservation and Restoration, ecological restoration specialist
- **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR RAM PANDIT**
Research Director, Biodiversity Economics and Finance, environmental and resource economist
- **SONJA MENNEN**
Program Director, Subterranean Fauna, Ecosystem Threats and Processes, water resources and ecology specialist
- **PREETI CASTLE**
Strategic Engagement Director, specialist in strategy, stakeholder engagement and strategic communications
- **CHRIS GENTLE**
Program Director, Biodiversity Data and Information Management, specialist in environmental information systems
- **BRENDAN BUSCH**
Technical Lead, SEAF project
- **AMBER DANIELS**
Policy and Data Governance Lead, SEAF project
- **ANTHONY ARANGIO**
Spatial Information Lead, SEAF project
- **EILIN MANGAN**
Executive Assistant to the WABSI team





Looking ahead



Looking to the year ahead, WABSI will:

- Continue delivering against the end user research priorities identified in From Knowledge to Action and in WABSI's other priority-setting research program publications.
- Progress the Northern Jarrah Forest research program in partnership with land managers, Traditional Owners and conservation groups.
- Build on the success of the SEAF pilot, exploring how the platform can support decision-making in other regions of Western Australia.
- Continue building the state's research capability through PhD and student opportunities.
- Pursue longer-term and diversified funding arrangements to give research partners greater certainty.

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Thank you

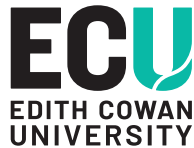
WABSI is proudly funded by the Government of Western Australia and delivers its work in close partnership with the WABSI Joint Venture Partners. None of this work is possible without that shared funding and shared purpose, together with our industry collaborators and the researchers, Traditional Owners and community members who shape our research priorities.

Thank you for another year of working together to protect Western Australia's unique biodiversity.



Image: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

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Department of **Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions**



Department of **Mines,
Petroleum and Exploration**



Department of **Energy and Economic
Diversification**



Department of **Primary Industries and
Regional Development**



Department of **Water and
Environmental Regulation**

More information at info@wabsi.org.au 

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wabsi.org.au