



## **Society of Wetland Scientists Oceania Chapter December 2020 Newsletter**

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### **News from our AGM**

Congratulations Maria VanderGragt on unanimously being elected to the position of VP!

Thank you to those who were able to attend, we are looking forward to working together on several workshops, conferences and other activities planned for 2021.

### **Upcoming SWS webinars**

SWS-O will continue our webinar partnership with the newly launched Sydney Wetland Institute. The next free webinar is scheduled for World Wetlands Day, 2 February 2021 on the topic of wetland management and the Ramsar convention. For more details visit <https://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au/education/sydneywetlandinstitute>.

The next SWS members webinar will be on 'SWS History – 40 Years of Globalization' on Friday 18 December, log into the SWS website to register:  
<https://www.sws.org/About-SWS/upcoming-webinars-for-members.html>

All webinars are also available via the SWS YouTube channel to view at Oceania-friendly times:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8NOIq5cy6-c7N0C7cpoNIV7Fmcqy2hOL>

### **SWS on Twitter**

With World Wetlands Day following hot on the heels of the festive season, the SWS virtual conference coming to a close, as well as wetland field work in full swing across much of our region, there is a lot of wetland news at the moment! If you are a tweeter, you can keep up with what's happening in our region and abroad via Twitter @SWS\_org

We will be sharing World Wetlands Day events happening in our region via Twitter (as well as email in case you are not a tweeter!), and we would love to feature your own wetlands research or news too.

### **Wetland conferences**

The 11<sup>th</sup> INTECOL International Wetlands Conference has been rescheduled to 10-15 October 2021. Abstract submission will be reopening on Monday 14 December, closing 17 March 2021. We hope to see many of you in Christchurch for this much-anticipated in-person event! <http://clpinz.org.nz/intecol20>

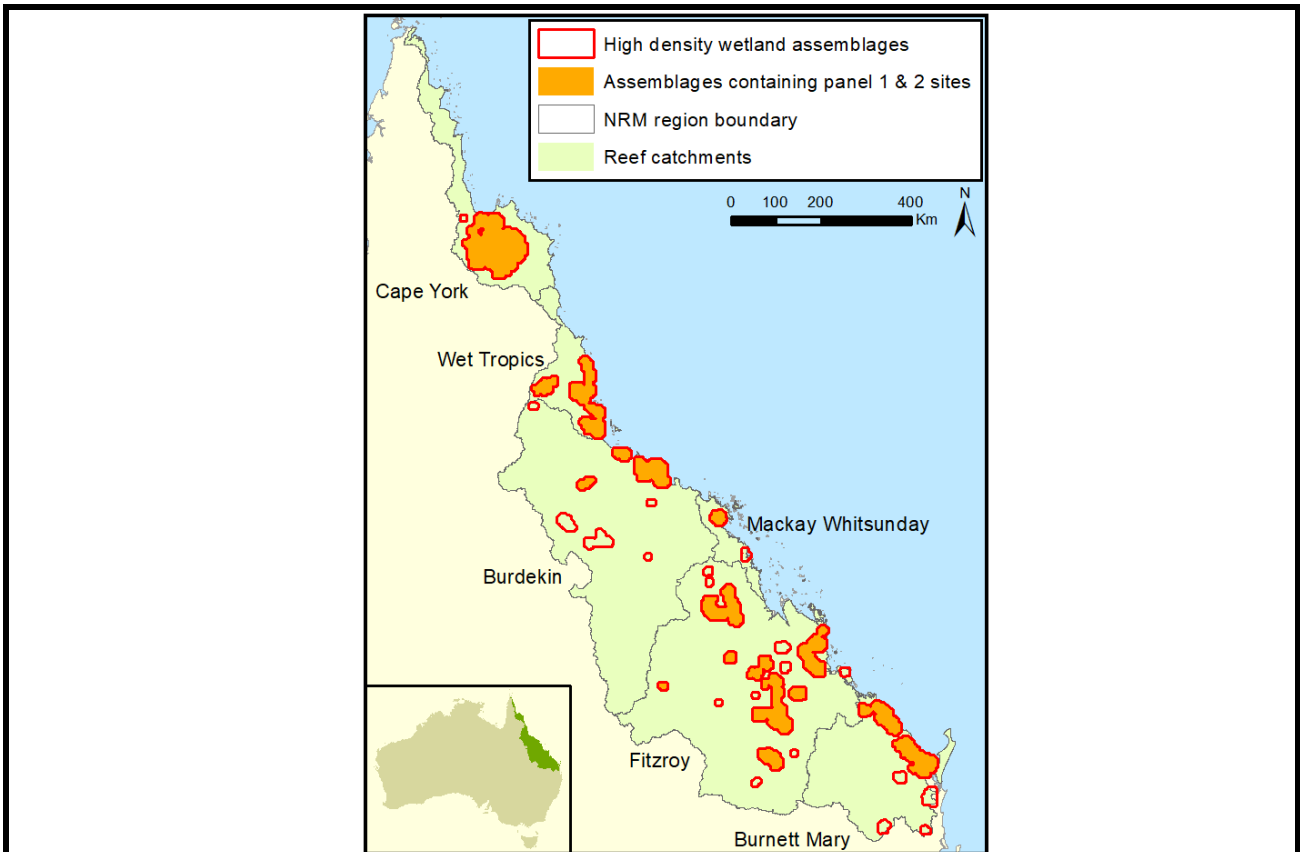
### Notes from the field

The Oceania chapter covers a very large region with an amazing diversity of wetlands and wetland projects. To capture this diversity, we'd like to showcase a wetland project or two from around our region in each newsletter. If you have an interesting project on the go or just a great wetland experience that would make others smile, please share it with us!

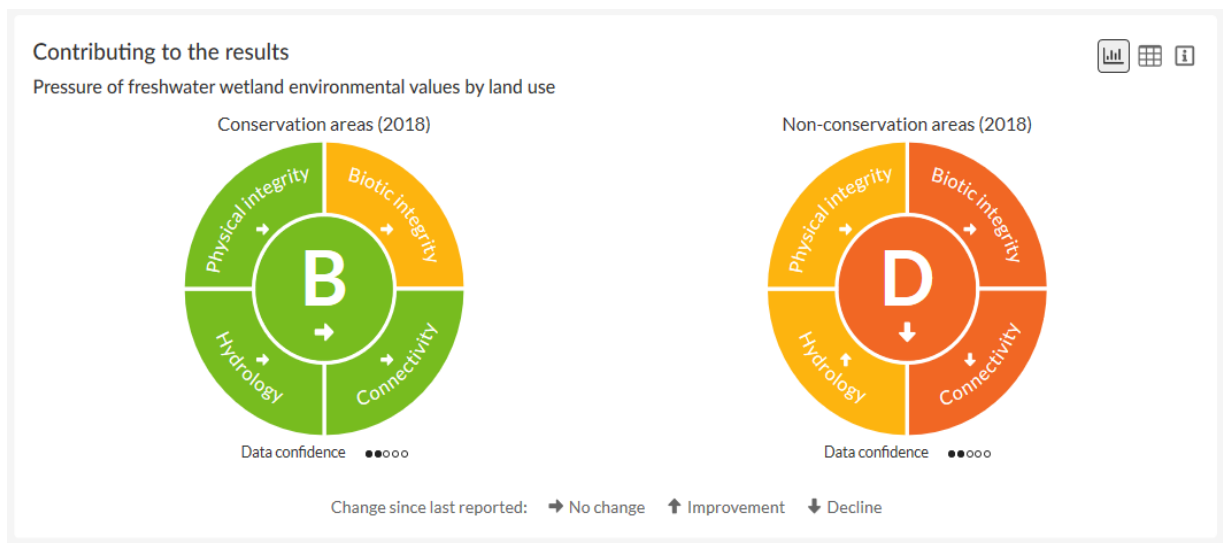
#### **Reporting the condition of wetlands in the Great Barrier catchment area – Maria VanderGragt**

The Great Barrier Reef catchment area (GBRCA) is rich in remnant wetlands and wetland aggregations with ecological values of regional, national and global significance. Many of these wetlands are hydrologically and ecologically connected coastal habitats supporting the ecosystem health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR). Recognising the intrinsic importance of freshwater wetland ecosystems and their vital role in Queensland's catchment and coastal ecology, the Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan includes an objective to improve wetland condition.

The GBR wetland condition monitoring program (lead by the Queensland Department of Environment and Science) monitors trends in wetland condition over time and reports on whether the objective of improved condition is being met. The program monitors floodplain wetlands occurring in larger aggregations thus capturing around 65 percent of GBRCA floodplain wetlands from Southern Cape York in the north to the Burnett–Mary ≈ 1400 km to the south, and west to the Great Dividing Range. A spatially balanced random sample was selected using the GRTS<sup>1</sup> sampling method and wetlands are monitored using an augmented serially alternating panel design. Over time a total of 275 wetlands will be included in the full sample. At GBR-wide and regional scales, this will enable reporting of both the anthropogenic pressure on the wetland population and the state of its wetland environmental values. Over time, it will also allow the impact of pressure (or reduced pressure) on wetland environmental values to be reported.



Wetland assessment involves a desktop analysis of 14 indicators (mainly of pressure) and field survey of 10 indicators (mainly of state). Wetland Tracker, the soon to be published assessment instrument, comprises two indices for assessing wetland condition: overall pressure and overall state. For reporting purposes, indicators are also aggregated into four pressure-class sub-indices and four state sub-indices based on particular wetland environmental values. In the 2018 wetland condition report there was moderate overall pressure from catchment land use with loss of connectivity and pest species being the leading pressures. Reporting of wetland condition (pressure and state) also considers differences between wetlands within conservation land use areas and those within non-conservation areas.



Wetland condition is reported in the Reef Water Quality Report Card every two years starting with the 2016 baseline report. The next report card is due for release in 2021.

<sup>1</sup>GRTS Generalised Random Tessellation Stratified sampling



### **Jobs for Nature: a post-COVID19 initiative in New Zealand – Philippe Gerbeaux**

On 1 July 2020, Te Papa Atawhai (the NZ Department of Conservation) established a Jobs for Nature Unit, with the task of allocating part of the Government's \$1.3 billion investment in nature-based jobs; an initiative to make a difference to the lives of New Zealanders economically affected by COVID-19. A lot has already been achieved but much more still lies ahead, and it could help restore or enhance many wetlands in New Zealand.

The Jobs for Nature programme represents a new way of working for Te Papa Atawhai and a new approach to economic recovery for Aotearoa. The Jobs for Nature programme is based on the understanding that the health of our people and environment are closely linked. *Toitū te marae a Tāne, toitū te marae a Tangaroa, toitū te tangata* – If the land is well and the sea is well, the people will thrive.

Te Papa Atawhai (TPA), along with all other agencies, were asked by the Government to design their own post-covid response strategy. This provided an opportunity never presented before. Jobs for Nature had to show innovation (*whakaauaha - we innovate*) in the design of criteria to elevate the Treaty partner relationship, with mana tangata representation in all Alliances (and in some instances, leading the Alliance).

TPA's contribution to the programme is the allocation of \$500 million to projects that will realise the creation of 6,000 nature-based jobs over four years. The focus of that funding into three streams that are believed, will make the biggest difference to helping our economy recover, communities prosper and Papatūānuku (Mother Earth) thrive.

The three Jobs for Nature funding streams are:

- Kaimahi for Nature (\$200 million). This funding will be targeted towards helping distressed businesses maintain their workforce through nature-based jobs.
- Restoring Nature (\$154.3 million) for enhancing biodiversity on public and private land, including freshwater initiatives.
- Protecting Nature (\$147.5 million) for creating employment while carrying out pest and predator control.

Wetland restoration is definitely on the cards! (see the following link: Te Arawa Lakes Trust among first to benefit from Jobs for Nature and biosecurity investment)

Under the Kaimahi For Nature funding stream, the establishment of regional Alliances is an innovative way for the Department to grow conservation through others. Through the formation of these Alliances with Treaty partners, regional councils, and other government agencies, TPA can empower regions to make decisions about where to invest funding for the greatest outcomes. Alliances are in varying phases of being set up across the country and are working to identify projects to fund. They are a wonderful example of whakaaauaha to fulfil the Treaty partner relationship.

The purpose and role of Alliances can go beyond distributing Kaimahi for Nature funding - partnerships are just the way we work to achieve enduring environmental outcomes. Alliances will be 'connecting the dots' between various projects and funding initiatives within the Jobs for Nature programme, ensuring strong, integrated outcomes now and in the future.

### **Recent papers on wetlands in Marine & Freshwater Research**

Davies et al 2020. Towards a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Wetlands.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/MF20219> (open access)

Kumar et al 2020. Wetland ecological character and wise use: towards a new framing.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/MF20244>

Chen et al 2020. A trickle, not a flood: environmental watering in the Murray-Darling Basin, Australia. <https://doi.org/10.1071/MF20172> (open access)

Babcock et al 2020. Recurrent coral bleaching in north-western Australia and associated declines in coral cover. <https://doi.org/10.1071/MF19378>

Timms 2020. Drivers restricting biodiversity in Australian saline lakes: a review.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/MF20205>

McDowell et al 2020. Implications of water quality policy on land use: a case study of the approach in New Zealand. <https://doi.org/10.1071/MF20201> (open access)

Joy & Canning 2020. Shifting baselines and political expediency in New Zealand.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/MF20210>

Koehn et al 2020. What is needed to restore native fishes in Australia's Murray–Darling Basin? <https://doi.org/10.1071/MF20248> (open access)

### **Wetland Professional Certification Program**

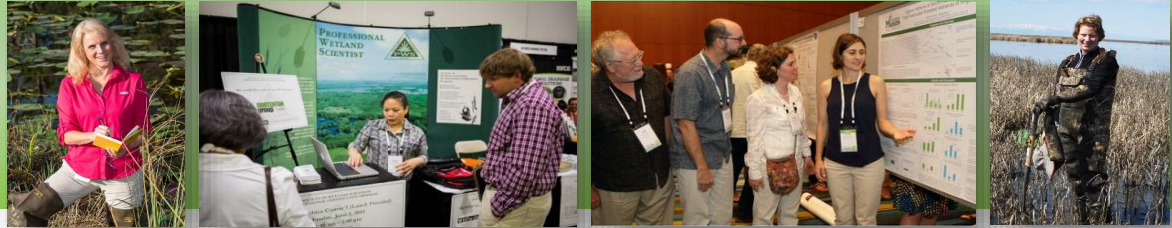
The Professional Wetland Scientist program is an international initiative with more than 2000 Professional Wetland Scientists (PWS) and Wetland Professionals In Training (WPIT). Membership indicates qualified wetland professionals, educators, consultants and others who uphold the highest level of professional and ethical standards. If you are interested in applying or would like further information visit <https://www.wetlandcert.org> and have a look at the information flyer below.





## Society of Wetland Scientists - Professional Certification Program

An International Organization with over 2,000 Professional Wetland Scientists certified since 1994



The **Society of Wetland Scientists** was formed to promote understanding, conservation, protection, restoration, science-based management and sustainability of wetlands. The Society developed a program in 1994 for certification of wetland science training and experience to meet the needs of professional ecologists, hydrologists, soil scientists, educators, agency professionals, consultants, and others who practice wetland science. The **Professional Certification Program (PCP)** is aimed at serving the public and governments' need to identify qualified individuals to assess and manage wetland resources.

### What is a PWS or WPIT?

#### Professional Wetland Scientist or PWS

- ✓ Meets stringent academic and work experience standards
- ✓ Adheres to high level of professional ethical standards
- ✓ Conducts & practices wetland science in multi-disciplinary work environments
- ✓ Holds special international designation that is comparable to other professions, such as a Professional Engineer or Landscape Architect

#### WPIT (Wetland Professional in Training)

- ✓ Meets stringent academic standards
- ✓ Works on gaining qualifying employment experience and/or some types of volunteer experience in wetlands
- ✓ Adheres to professional ethical standards

### What are the requirements?

#### Academic Requirements – PWS / WPIT\*

- ✓ 15 credits in Biological Sciences, such as biology, botany, zoology, ecology, etc.
  - ✓ 15 credits in Physical Sciences, such as chemistry, soils, hydrology, geology, etc.
  - ✓ 6 credits in Quantitative Sciences, such as math, computer science, statistics, etc.
  - ✓ 15 credits in Specialized Wetland Course Work (PWS only), such as wetland plant taxonomy, wetland hydrology, soil morphology, wetland mapping, wetland restoration / creation / mitigation, wetland delineation, wetland ecology & management, etc.
- \* Before applying, applicants must have earned a Baccalaureate degree or higher.

#### Qualifying Work Experience – PWS

After earning a Baccalaureate degree or higher, required experience is:

- ✓ 5 years of full-time professional experience while working in consulting, industry, non-profit, public or academic sectors.
- ✓ Experience calculated on percentage of time devoted specifically to professional wetland activities which can be pro-rated
- ✓ Statement of Expertise essay
- ✓ 5 references attesting to your qualifications

Fees (USD)	Developed Countries		Developing Countries	
	SWS Member	SWS Non-Member	SWS Member	SWS Non-Member
PWS	\$300	\$400	\$100	\$140
WPIT	\$100	\$200	\$30	\$60

### How do you apply? Visit <https://www.wetlandcert.org/>

For questions or help with submitting your application, contact:  
Adrianna Borczyk., Program Coord. [ABorczyk@association-resources.com](mailto:ABorczyk@association-resources.com)  
Toll Free: 877.226.9902 | Fax: 847.885.8393

John Lowenthal, Certification Standards [John.Lowenthal@cardno-gs.com](mailto:John.Lowenthal@cardno-gs.com)  
Rob Shannon, Certification Review [rds13@psu.edu](mailto:rds13@psu.edu)  
Robbyn Myers, Outreach [bgerobbyn@comcast.net](mailto:bgerobbyn@comcast.net)

## Bring a friend!

Do you have a friend with a watery-bent? Do you have colleagues in the wetlands space? Please share this newsletter with them! We'd love to bring more people together who are working, studying or just interested in the wonderful world of wetlands. If they'd like to know more about the benefits of being an SWS member, visit [www.sws.org](http://www.sws.org)

**Questions? Comments? Reply to this email, we'd love to hear from you!**

**email test list**

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