

QESSI Organisational Structure for 2011-2013

The **Queensland Environmentally Sustainable Schools Initiative** (QESSI) is a contemporary approach to environmental education for sustainability in schools. The QESSI vision is to encourage all schools in Queensland to become environmentally sustainable. QESSI is neither a program nor a product; it is a transformative process-based concept that focuses on building partnerships between key stakeholders that supports schools in the area of environmental education for sustainability.

QESSI Patron is Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe and his role is to provide advice for and promote the work of the QESSI.

The **QESSI Alliance Strategic Plan 2005 – 2007**¹ is based on the Planning Web^c model which sets the strategic direction for QESSI. It was developed through a strategic visioning facilitated forum in April 2004, and is set in the context of the United Nation Decade for Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014 and underpinned by the values and principles of the Earth Charter. It is highly recommended this original strategic plan is read before reading the third **QESSI Alliance Strategic Plan 2011-13** (see attached) to get a broad understanding of the complexities and subtleties of the QESSI concept.

The **QESSI Alliance** is a voluntary cooperative loose coupling model involving service providers of environmental education for sustainability for schools from government and non-government and corporate organisations and agencies. QESSI recognises all participants are valued and important. The QESSI Alliance has the objective of building capacity within each organisation; improving quality of service provision to their clients i.e. schools; establishing a strong professional dialogue with the view for collaboration; avoiding duplication of resources where possible and investigating cooperative projects to benefit the vision of the QESSI concept. Key stakeholders engage in a range of ways, representing their level of commitment and types of relationships. The QESSI Alliance model acknowledges that relationships and involvement can change from time to time, so members of the QESSI Alliance can place themselves where they want and need to be, and where they fit in. There are five types of membership to choose from: **Core**; Patron and **Champion**; **Affiliate**; Sponsor; and **Friend** and Supporter and are highlighted in the list below.

The **QESSI Alliance Steering Committee** is the governance group for the QESSI Alliance and is guided by the QESSI Alliance Strategic Plan. Organisations that have a commitment to environmental education for sustainability in schools are invited to nominate a representative from their organisation to be part of the QESSI Steering committee. The terms of reference of the QESSI Steering Committee sets out the operating principles for the group. This steering committee focuses on a strategic leadership and direction to support the sustainable schools agenda; hence there is a need to refine the role of the QESSI steering committee to be predominately strategic. The Steering Committee is tasked with the implementation of the 2011-2013 QESSI Alliance Strategic Plan.

¹ <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/environment/outdoor/aboutqessi.html>

Membership for the 2011-2013 QESSI Steering Committee

No	Organisation and Program	QESSI Steering Committee	Position
1	Department of Education and Training (DET), Chair	Anna Brazier	Director , Teaching and Learning
2	QESSI Regional Hub and O&EEC Representative	Noeleen Rowntree	Principal Bunyaville EEC
3	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Reef Guardian Schools	Karen Vohland	Manager, Communication and Education
4	Australian Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Communities AuSSI	Daniel Whyte	A/Director, Product Stewardship - Packaging
5	Department of Environment and Resource Management	Sue Larson	Principal Project Manager, Urban Water Policy
6	DET, Earth Smart - QESSI secretariat	Di Aylward	State Coordinator
7	Envirocom, Waste, Water and Energy education	Glenn Eales	Regional Manager, Envirocom
8	Keep Australia Beautiful –Qld; Green and Healthy Schools	Grant Evans	Chief Executive Officer
9	DET – Environmental Sustainability,	Cam Mackenzie	Principal Advisor
10	Association of Independent Schools Queensland	Jenene Rosser	Assistant Director (Curriculum & Research)
11	Queensland Catholic Education Commission, On Holy Ground	Vera Zappala	Executive Officer – Catholic Education Commission
12	Queensland Youth Environment Council	Eve Kirkwood	Co-chair
13	Indigenous Education Representative	TBC	TBC
14	Tertiary Institutions, Research	Lisa Ryan	Doctoral student, Griffith Uni
15	Queensland Transport, Travel Smart	Mark Aburn	Manager, Travel Smart
16	Greening Australia - Plant Smart	Cristyn Mealth	
17	CSIRO, Carbon Kids	Angela Colliver	Manager, CSIRO Education
18	Gould League	David Walker	Executive Officer
19	Global Learning Centre	Shane Albertson	Co-ordinator
20	Green Cross Australia ²	Miranda Mason	Education Manager
21	Principal Champion	Michael Zeuschner	Bulimba State School

Terms of Reference

1. Set the strategic direction of the Queensland Environmentally Sustainable Schools Initiative (QESSI) as outlined in the 2011-2013 QESSI Alliance Strategic Plan.
2. Monitor and evaluate the progress and achievements of the QESSI Alliance Strategic Plan.
3. Report as appropriate to Federal, State and local government and members' governing bodies on the outcomes of the QESSI Alliance strategic plan and associated actions.
4. Support QESSI by identifying additional funding and promotional opportunities through individual members and networks.
5. Provide support to the QESSI regional hubs.
6. Provide input on new developments in environmental education for sustainability in schools across Queensland.
7. Provide opportunities to access broader dialogue about sustainability that can inform the educational agenda across Queensland.

² Currently not a member of the QESSI Alliance; however should be considered due to their involvement in environmental education support for schools through the Green Lane Diary

QESSI Alliance Structure

A **QESSI Network** consists primarily of organisations, agencies, school and teachers that receive products and services as clients of the QESSI Alliance member programs. The role of the QESSI network is to disseminate information, participate in professional development activities, share case studies of sustainable schools and offer advice to the QESSI Alliance members as ‘critical friends’.

The **QESSI Special Interest Groups (SIGs)** include existing groups that have been formed around a common focus theme on environmental education for sustainability in schools. These include a) Queensland Waste Educators Group b) Energy Efficiency in Schools Roundtable, incorporating Solar Schools c) Water Education Network d) Queensland Education Partnerships for Sustainability (Natural Resource Education group). They will be represented on the QESSI Alliance Steering committee through an appropriate Core representative.

QESSI Regional Hubs act as a regional implementation component for the QESSI concept. A QESSI Hub will act as a ‘one-stop-shop’ to support schools in their endeavour to become more environmentally sustainable. The current network of 21 QESSI Regional Hubs collaborates with the existing QESSI Alliance member programs, products and services as well as developing their regional Alliances. Expressions of Interest (EOI) to become a QESSI Regional Hub were called and the QESSI State coordinator supports these Regional Hubs with advice, funding, professional development and strategic planning. Each QESSI Regional Hub is required to develop their own QESSI Regional Action Plan for Sustainability (RAPS) and Regional Investment Strategy (RIS) and produce an Annual Report of the Sustainability Outputs, Actions and Outcomes. **QESSI regional coordinators** are responsible for all the financial, administration and reporting accountabilities as well as managing of the regional QESSI facilitators. The **QESSI regional facilitators** are responsible for supporting the cluster of schools to embed the whole of school approach to sustainability. Currently the Earth Smart Science program for state primary schools is being implemented by facilitators. The **QESSI state coordinator** is responsible for managing the state-wide implementation of the QESSI concept through fostering partnerships and synergies between all the key stakeholders.

QESSI secretariat is the officer who is dedicated to coordinating the QESSI concept. This role has several functions and they include:

- Secretariat support for the QESSI Alliance Steering committee
- Provide support for the QESSI Alliance through electronic communication and meetings
- Provide a conduit between QESSI and AuSSI (Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative)

A **QESSI Regional Action Plan for Sustainability (RAPS)** is based on the QESSI Alliance Strategic Plan and is a guide for each QESSI Regional Hub to develop their own locally relevant implementation strategy. The RAPS which are submitted the QESSI manager³ for approval and act as a contract for each regional QESSI hub.

The **QESSI Regional Investment Strategy (RIS)** will include all regional organisations, agencies and individuals that form part of the QESSI Regional Implementation teams contributions (cash and in-kind) to achieve common objectives and outcomes for sustainable schools. RIS can be optional for QESSI hubs.

QESSI Reports. The local and regional sustainability outcomes i.e. environmental, economic, social and educational, for each of the QESSI Alliance goals are aggregated to form the basis of the **QESSI Progress Report 2005-07**, as well as the **State of the Environment Reports** at a school, regional, state or national level. QESSI Alliance members are also invited to submit annual reports and biannual reports to the **Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI) Working Group** that highlight the outcomes from their individual programs.

Queensland Sustainable Schools website www.sustainableschools.qld.edu.au is the “one point of truth” resource for all Queensland schools. All QESSI Alliance members encourage the schools participating in their own program to utilise this website and in particular the School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) Builder and Resource Use Monitoring Tool which are available to assist schools to embed environmental education for sustainability into their curriculum and reduce the schools ecological footprint in their operational practices.

The Relationships between each of the parts of the QESSI Structure
(refer to diagram below)

1. **Network <-> School.** Representatives from the three Schools sectors i.e. Education Queensland, Queensland Catholic Education Commission and Independent Schools Queensland; Teacher Associations, Environmental Education Associations; Universities and other individual and organisation who are involved in someway with the QESSI concept, but do not see themselves as core QESSI members, are part of this relationship.
2. **Special Interest Groups (SIGs) <-> School.** All the Special Interest Groups will continue to support individual schools through their existing programs, products and services. These groups will have continual relationship with their respective client schools. This relationship is basically ‘*business as usual*’. However, all SIGs are encouraged to network with each other and the QESSI regional hubs to development synergies and partnerships and avoid duplication.
3. **Regional Hub <-> Schools.** QESSI Hubs will work with a selection of schools to add value in their pursuit to become environmentally sustainable. It is envisaged that the 21 QESSI Regional Hubs will work with a cluster of schools across the state. Most of these schools will already be part of an existing QESSI Alliance member program, so the role of the QESSI Hubs is to add value to these programs in particular the development of Schools Environmental Management Plans (SEMP).
4. **Network <-> QESSI Regional Hubs.** There are organisations that will both assist Regional Hubs and be assisted by QESSI Regional Hubs. Each QESSI Regional Hub will be encouraged to develop their own regional network of active teachers, schools and organisations, through which the Regional Hub could

disseminate information, present professional development for school staff, organise environmental education expos and other networking functions.

5. **Special Interest Groups <-> QESSI Regional Hubs.** Each QESSI Regional Hub will be encouraged to establish QESSI Regional Alliances with service providers in their region. These Special Interest Groups are existing organisations and agencies, in particular Regional Natural Resource Management bodies and regional or city councils. RAPS and RIS could be developed in partnership with these regional organisations.
6. **Steering Committee <-> Regional Hubs.** The EOI process to become a QESSI Regional Hub is managed by the QESSI coordinator. The QESSI Steering committee will assist each Regional Hub and will provide assistance in the development of the RAPS and RIS. Also professional development opportunities will be available to every QESSI Regional Hub, especially train-the-trainer in-service workshops to assist the staff within QESSI Regional Hubs and Alliance members.
7. **Network <-> Steering Committee.** Specific representatives from the QESSI Network of organisations and associations are invited to be part of the QESSI Steering Committee. These Network members have the role and responsibility of contributing to the QESSI concept and reporting the outcomes to their respective organisation on the steering committee. All Network members are be part of a communication strategy that includes updates on professional development for staff, products and programs available for schools etc through e-group newsletters.
8. **Steering Committee <-> Special Interest Groups.** The relationship between the Steering Committee and the Special Interest Groups is a critical aspect for the success of the whole QESSI concept. The QESSI Alliance Strategic Plan is pivotal document that cements the relationship around which the QESSI concept is progressed. The chair of the QESSI Steering Committee is the Director, Teaching and Learning Branch, DET. All core members of the QESSI Alliance and specific members of the network are invited to be members of the QESSI Steering committee.
9. **QESSI <-> Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI).** The Department of Education and Training is the lead agent for QESSI and is responsible for managing the any funding from the Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Communities (DSEWPAC). Also QESSI has been developed to include the common agreed elements and indicators for Sustainable Schools. Support from the DSEWPAC is not only financial; there is professional assistance through participation in the AuSSI Working Group of the National Education for Sustainability Network (NEfSN). The **AuSSI Partnership Agreement** outlines the relationship between all the state and territory Sustainable Schools initiatives and the Commonwealth was endorsed by all the Ministers for Environment and Education in 2008.

Queensland Environmentally Sustainable Schools Initiative (QESSI) Alliance Organisational Structure

