



Department of Planning and Environment

Science Economics and Insights Knowledge Statement

Guiding knowledge acquisition, integration and sharing



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Overview

Purpose

This knowledge statement informs how the Science, Economics and Insights (SEI) Division acquires, integrates and shares knowledge to meet the needs of the wider Environment and Heritage Group (EHG) and broader government. It outlines the core concepts that support the delivery of SEI Division knowledge.

This knowledge statement is the foundation of our Knowledge Approach (the Approach). The aims of the Approach are to:

- strategically build knowledge and foster collaboration both internally and externally
- improve resource efficiencies by enhancing availability and accessibility of knowledge
- deliver rigorous knowledge and advice against known needs
- share knowledge and support excellence.

Our role

The SEI Division has a fundamental role in the acquisition, integration and sharing of knowledge across the NSW Government environment portfolio. SEI Division provides:

- integrated scientific research
- evidence-informed advice
- expertise
- environmental, scientific, economic and social knowledge
- analytical insights.

These capabilities and functions underpin operational and policy delivery across the E&H Group, the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) and the broader NSW Government environment portfolio. To focus these capabilities, SEI Division fulfils 3 main roles through the Approach.

Create and deliver knowledge

SEI Division has a significant role in knowledge production. We deliver the research, data and insights needed for evidence-informed decision-making across DPE and government. Knowledge is generated via a range of scientific and Aboriginal cultural knowledge sources, as well as monitoring, experimentation, modelling and spatial data collection.

Collaborate and partner to build knowledge

SEI Division continues to form partnerships to expand and deepen our expertise and meet prioritised knowledge needs. We maximise capabilities across DPE through internal partnerships to deliver cross-theme programs and achieve long-term environmental, economic and social outcomes. We form external partnerships with all levels of government, universities, community and First Nations groups to build on knowledge bases and deliver high-quality research. The SEI Division makes sure the right knowledge gets to the right people at the right time

Use and share knowledge for impact

Our work demonstrates the impact of rigorous and strategic research. The knowledge we generate informs actions that produce environmental, social and economic outcomes and the development of policy, strategies and programs. We ensure:

- knowledge is available and accessible
- the sharing of knowledge
- efficient use of research efforts by building on what is known.



Knowledge management principles

We have identified 4 key knowledge management principles to realise the integration, visibility and practical use of knowledge. These principles will help us shape how environmental, social and economic knowledge is acquired to maximise its impact for current and future users.

1. Knowledge is discoverable, accessible and integrated

Interpretability of knowledge is achieved through co-design, clear explanations about the concepts, classifications and sources used to create or collect the data. This aids in the understanding and use of knowledge.

Our science, research and information is published and made available to the NSW community. Data-sharing platforms such as the Sharing and Enabling Environmental Data portal and Information Asset Register enable us to integrate and share our knowledge. SEI Division fosters a culture of knowledge exchange to build trust and credibility with stakeholders and increase knowledge integration through collaborations.

2. Knowledge is relevant and fit for purpose

The value of our knowledge is recognised through the collective impact of knowledge generated from and for multiple programs and purposes. The knowledge SEI Division produces:

- aligns with organisational needs
- enhances environmental, social and economic understanding
- is easy to use.

Data and information are collected for multiple users and can be appropriately tailored to meet end-user needs. SEI Division works with users to ensure the successful integration of knowledge into policies and programs. Through this stewardship, our knowledge maintains relevance and is used to guide contemporary decision making as well as forecast and predict emerging needs.

3. Knowledge is developed with rigour

SEI Division knowledge is produced in line with the E&H Group's [Scientific Rigour Position Statement \(PDF 208KB\)](#) and [adaptive management principles](#). We are committed to scientific rigour and our process ensures that our knowledge is credible, accurate and reliable.

International standards of knowledge production and research include having a transparent project design and methods, and sound implementation and independent peer-review. This ensures:

- investment in research is maximised
- research meets the highest scientific standards
- published research is unbiased.

4. Knowledge is built through collaborations and partnerships

SEI Division, and DPE, have a rich history of collaboration. By collaborating with diverse partners we acquire knowledge in creative and productive ways. Collaborations and partnerships allow co-design of projects and invite diverse expertise and perspectives. They create information-sharing opportunities to collectively problem solve, deliver mutual benefits and help understand emerging and future needs.

Knowledge needs

The information and data SEI Division produces informs environmental sustainability, economic and social outcomes through legislation and policy changes.

There are 3 different types of knowledge needs:

- gaps in the existing knowledge base
- barriers that impede project/program delivery
- emerging issues that support future strategic directions.

Gaps

Knowledge gaps occur when there is a lack of data, information, or knowledge or a lack of understanding of the knowledge held and how to use it. In some cases, data is not being collected, which makes the knowledge gap a barrier to effective program delivery. Addressing knowledge gaps expands and deepens our ability to inform policy development, program design and improve on-ground delivery of projects.

Barriers

Knowledge barriers are obstacles to acquiring, using or sharing knowledge. They obstruct knowledge integration and the delivery of projects or programs. These barriers may relate to organisational processes and systems. Disparity in access to data, information or tools can be caused by limitations or incompleteness of the information, ineffective data management systems and restrictions on data accessibility. By understanding and addressing knowledge barriers, we can improve access to data. We recognise that knowledge creation and acquisition is never complete and we aim to continually improve knowledge practices and programs to meet community and environmental expectations.

Emerging issues

Emerging issues are knowledge areas that have future application and link to the future strategic direction of SEI Division programs. Identifying emerging issues enables us to strategically plan and partner to ensure that knowledge and research investment are balanced between current and future needs. With this foresight we can build knowledge strategically to address upcoming challenges and ensure the best knowledge is available and accessible.



Ongoing implementation

This statement captures the guiding principles and high-level goals for the ongoing Approach that aims to:

- build knowledge relevant to users
- make SEI Division knowledge discoverable and accessible
- develop knowledge with rigour
- support partnerships focused on acquiring relevant and useful knowledge.

Continued analysis and consultation by SEI Divisional staff will help ensure currency and priority of knowledge needs, and progress towards meeting these needs. This ensures that the advice stemming from the Approach is relevant and timely.

Addressing different types of knowledge needs will require different pathways and resources. Knowledge needs may be met through integration of existing knowledge, generation of new knowledge from in-house research or external partnerships and collaborations. Strategic planning for future knowledge needs ensures a legacy of delivering outcomes that continuously benefit the people of NSW.

SEI Division's strategic knowledge acquisition, integration and sharing will be achieved through a commitment to:

- continued engagement with staff across the E&H Group to understand knowledge needs
- strategic acquisition of priority knowledge needs to inform E&H Group expertise and capabilities
- determine the best approach to meeting knowledge needs, be that in-house or through external relationships
- effective integration of relevant knowledge across the E&H Group
- productive research partnerships and collaborations that focus on meeting knowledge needs
- development of tools to support effective knowledge sharing.

