

Australasia–Pacific Extension Network (APEN)

Strategic plan 2012 – 2017



What is extension?

Extension is the process of enabling change in individuals, communities and industries. Extension occurs through the process of capacity building which enables people to resolve problems and create more sustainable futures through innovation, change and learning. Extension involves the work associated with applied research and demonstration, adult education and training, community development, action research and learning, participatory empowerment and facilitation, one-to-one mentorship, provision of client advice by commercial sales agents and private consultants, and communication activities through either print or electronic media.

Worldwide, extension is being reborn in many new forms. Many different organisations and industries are realising the need to be involved in facilitating change across communities. To effect these changes, extension practitioners need to learn new skills and draw on the learning and resources of others to improve their practice and theory.

APEN's Vision for Extension is;

Extension is recognised and valued as a vital tool for achieving change in primary industries, natural resource management and communities and that extension specialists are recognised for the unique skill sets that they bring to facilitating often complex change.

Who is APEN?

APEN is a network representing about 500 extension professionals across Australia, New Zealand and the broader Australasia-Pacific Region. It has active groups in every state of Australia with new ones being added. Our members are from government agencies, private practice, NRM bodies, agribusinesses and educational institutions.

APEN is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation, governed by a constitution and managed by a volunteer management committee that works in tandem with a paid secretariat. The committee is made up of the elected coordinators from each of the member regions, currently New Zealand, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria. APEN derives funds through membership fees, events, sponsorship and through funding grants to deliver services to members and the wider extension profession.

Revision of APEN Strategic Plan

The APEN Management Committee met in May 2012 to review the APEN strategic plan. This document is a revised strategic plan for APEN for the 2012 to 2017 period.



CORPORATE STATEMENT for APEN:

The organisation for extension professionals: Working with people to facilitate change and innovation in primary industries, natural resource management and communities

VISION for APEN is:

To be recognised as the leading professional organisation for extension and voice for those who work in extension and related fields in Australia, New Zealand and the broader Australasia-Pacific region.

MISSION of APEN is:

Providing a platform for professional development, networking and representation for the benefit of APEN members and the broader extension community.

VALUES are that APEN:

- is apolitical;
- performs in an impartial and professional manner with the highest ethical standards;
- is openly accountable for its actions
- is responsive to the needs and wants of our members;
- delivers services fairly, effectively, impartially and courteously to our members;
- has leadership of the highest quality;
- focuses on achieving results;

PRINCIPLES of APEN are:

- inclusiveness,
- participatory decision making,
- environmentally aware,
- showcasing good extension practice at APEN events,
- recognising different values and social contexts,
- operate in a cost effective manner,
- encouraging members to participate in and organise events
- hosting of APEN international and national events in regional areas

STRATEGIC GOALS for APEN are:

1. To be the peak body representing members, their professional interests and to advocate for the extension profession
2. To build and maintain a vibrant and effective extension network
3. To provide and promote professional development opportunities to members
4. To be a well managed, highly effective professional organisation

STRATEGIC DIRECTION for achieving the goals of APEN is:

Strategic Goals	To be the peak body representing members, their professional interests and to advocate for the extension profession	To build and maintain a vibrant and effective extension network	To provide and promote professional development opportunities to members	To be a well managed highly effective professional organisation
<p>Themes & Strategy</p>	<p>Representation & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grow APEN membership to beyond 1000 members. Increase recognition of APEN amongst agribusiness, NRM, community development and decision makers in government and industry. Activate the State Extension Leaders Network (SELN). <p>Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elevate an understanding of the value of extension services amongst industry and government policy makers. Support professional accreditation scheme(s). <p>Extension Research & International Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in international extension networks beyond Australia and New Zealand. Increase links between extension research and extension practice. Provide opportunities for members to publish work. 	<p>Membership support & services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver local and regional events. Support cluster coordinators. Facilitate peer to peer interactions and learning. Diverse membership base that reflects the changing nature of extension delivery. Management Committee and Cluster Coordinator positions that are highly sought after within APEN. <p>Internal communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A professional, current and user friendly website that is the go to place for extension resources. Professional and effective promotional materials are used to promote APEN. Effective use of social media. Regular communication with members through ExtensionNet, e-bulletins and social media. 	<p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an annual program of professional development events, activities and schemes. Facilitate peer to peer interaction and learning. Support professional accreditation schemes(s). Promote good extension practice and provide opportunities for extension professionals to have their skills and experience recognised by their peers. Opportunities for professional development through assisting with APEN initiatives, projects and management positions. Partnerships with members to deliver APEN activities. 	<p>Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Management Committee and subcommittees. Position the organisation for growth (staffing structure and governance arrangements). Implement strategic and business planning processes. <p>Financial Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We take a commercial business approach to activities. Growth in financial and organisational capacity (budget, staff and outputs). <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We evaluate and review what we do. <p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build the reputation and profile of APEN amongst potential members, policy makers, sponsors and funders. Build strategic alliances with other industry bodies

ACTION PLAN for implementing the strategic direction of APEN for the 2012 to 2017 period is:

1. **To be the peak body representing members, their professional interests and to advocate for the extension profession**

Themes & Objective	Strategy	Actions	Performance Targets	Subcommittee responsible
<p>Representation & Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To advocate network wide and at national, state, territory and industry levels, about reforms in RD&E systems that will build capacity and resilience in industries, communities and institutions. Partnership/Strategic Alliances are formed to enhance our ability to influence policy change, increase membership and provide services to a diverse membership base. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grow APEN membership to beyond 1000 members. Increase recognition of APEN amongst agribusiness, NRM, community development and decision makers in government and industry. Activate the State Extension Leaders Network (SELN). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop APEN marketing and development plan. Conduct a network analysis and create linkages and strategic partnerships with target groups identified in network analysis (e.g. agribusinesses, NRM bodies, community development, government and industry). Promote SELN participation amongst state extension providers. Lobbying & advocacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership grown to 1000 members by 2017. APEN membership represents a diverse range of extension service providers. 75% of network targets achieved by 2014. SELN is an active network. 	<p>Business development, marketing and market research</p> <p>National extension Policy (Australia)</p>
<p>Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change management policy and practice is influenced by APEN at industry and government level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elevating an understanding of the value of extension services amongst industry and government policy makers. Support professional accreditation scheme(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in the NEFA (National Extension Framework Australia) and PISC (Primary Industries Standing Committee) processes. Policy research and development on accreditation options (VET Sector). Promote university sector developments in postgraduate education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEFA and PISC review processes completed with APEN input. Extension accreditation scheme researched and recommendations implemented. Members are aware of postgraduate extension education opportunities. 	<p>National extension Policy (Australia)</p> <p>Accreditation and postgraduate education</p>

Themes & Objective	Strategy	Actions	Performance Targets	Subcommittee responsible
<p>Extension Research & International Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APEN provides input to the development of contemporary principles, philosophy and practice of change management (extension). • To research and interpret extension practice and systems and advise relevant government industry and community stakeholders about the potential application of elements of those systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in international extension networks beyond Australia and New Zealand. • Increase links between extension research and extension practice. • Provide opportunities for members to publish work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop formal linkages with GFRAS (Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services) and APIRAS (Asia Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Service). • Develop a research and development strategy for extension. • Maintain connections with EFS journal to publish conference proceedings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APEN has a representative on GFRAS and APIRAS by end of 2012 and is resourced to attend events where appropriate. • Extension research provides are informed of APEN's Extension research priorities. • APEN international Conference proceedings are published in the EFS 	<p>EFS journal and international initiatives</p>

2. To build and maintain a vibrant and effective extension network

Themes & Objective	Strategy	Actions	Performance Targets	Subcommittee responsible
<p>Membership support & services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members have a sense of belonging, responsibility and importance. There are strong linkages between the Management Committee, the clusters and members. Clusters are supported to increase local activity. Members are able to share their expertise through the website and social media platforms. The members are aware of, informed about, and satisfied with APEN. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver local and regional events. Support cluster coordinators. Facilitate peer to peer interactions and learning. Diverse membership base that reflects the changing nature of extension delivery. Management Committee and Cluster Coordinator positions that are highly sought after within APEN. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Cluster Coordinator recruitment strategy. Undertake professional development and networking activities for cluster coordinators. Develop and deliver regional roadshow program every 2 years. Regular communication with APEN membership. Articulate benefits of Management Committee and Cluster Coordinator roles as professional development opportunities to members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership grown to 1000 members by 2017. APEN membership represents a diverse range of extension service providers. Management Committee and Cluster Coordinator roles are filled in each region. Cluster coordinator meeting/teleconference held every 12 months. Regional Road show delivered 2012, 2014 and 2016 	Cluster coordinator and regional activities
<p>Internal communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The newsletter, website, e-bulletins and social media provide platforms for sharing facts, opinions, and experience. APEN's purpose, quality and integrity is reflected in promotional materials. APEN members contribute relevant and interesting material for publication and circulation to members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A professional, current and user friendly website that is the go to place for extension resources. Professional and effective promotional materials are used to promote APEN. Effective use of social media. Regular communication with members through ExtensionNet, e-bulletins and social media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APEN Website redevelopment. Review and update APEN promotional materials. Develop and implement social media strategy. Publish quarterly editions of Extension Net. Publish ExtensionNet electronically. e-bulletins circulated to members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revamped website launched by end of 2012. 50% of APEN members are using APEN social media platforms by 2017. 11 e-bulletins circulated to members per year. 4 editions of ExtensionNet published each year. 	Corporate Communications

3. To provide and promote professional development opportunities to members

Themes & Objective	Strategy	Actions	Performance Targets	Subcommittee responsible
<p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One International Conference is run every four years. • One National Forum is run every four years. • There is a facilitated a program of professional development workshops for clusters. • A Mentoring Scheme is available to members. • Webinars are facilitated across the APEN Network. • A regional road show is delivered every 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an annual program of professional development events, activities and schemes. • Facilitate peer to peer interaction and learning. • Support professional accreditation schemes(s). • Promote good extension practice and provide opportunities for extension professionals to have their skills and experience recognised by their peers. • Opportunities for professional development through assisting with APEN initiatives, projects and management positions. • Partnerships with members to deliver APEN activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International conferences and national forums are held. • Develop annual activities program. • Develop an annual webinar program. • Offer an annual mentoring scheme for young members. • APEN awards offered every 2 years. • Develop regional road show programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International conferences held in 2013 and 2017. • National Forum held in 2015. • Webinar program delivered each year. • Mentoring scheme offered each year. • APEN awards offered in 2013 and 2017. • Regional Road show delivered 2012, 2014 and 2016. • Conference proceedings published on APEN website • Members have opportunity to publish papers in EFS. 	<p>International Conference Committee</p> <p>National Forum Committee</p> <p>Cluster Coordinator and regional activities</p>

To be a well managed highly effective professional organisation

Themes & Objective	Strategy	Actions	Performance Targets	Subcommittee(s) responsible
Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operations of the Management Committee and Secretariat are effective and efficient. The membership, potential members, partners, sponsors and funders are efficiently serviced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Management Committee and subcommittees. Position the organisation for growth (staffing structure and governance arrangements). Implement strategic and business planning processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a tender process and documents for contracting APEN services, projects or roles. Review staffing, structure and governance arrangements. Appoint APEN Business Development Manager. Review strategic plan. Develop an annual operating plan and associated budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance targets from 2012 strategic plan met. 2018 to 2023 strategic plan developed. Annual operating plan developed and budgeted. 	Management Committee Strategic planning
Financial resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust financial systems are in place and being used. APEN is financially stable and resilient through membership, sponsorship and other funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We take a commercial business approach to activities. Growth in financial and organisational capacity (budget, staff and outputs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop annual budgets and strategies that allow for growth in financial capacity of APEN Annual review of membership fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APEN has trebled its income by 2017. 	Finance, budget and governance
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is efficient and effective collection of data to evaluate progress and impact of APEN Continuous improvement and innovation guides the delivery of APEN strategic actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We evaluate and review what we do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review portfolio structure for Management Committee operations and reporting. Members Survey conducted and recommendations implemented. Annual review of APEN's achievement of strategic plan performance targets. Review effectiveness of tender processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subcommittee structure implemented for Management Committee reporting. Member's survey conducted in 2012, 2014 and 2016. 	Business development, marketing and market research

Themes & Objective	Strategy	Actions	Performance Targets	Subcommittee(s) responsible
<p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APEN has a high profile amongst and understands the needs of potential members, policy makers, sponsors and funders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the reputation and profile of APEN amongst potential members, policy makers, sponsors and funders. • Build strategic alliances with other industry bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement APEN marketing and development plan and appropriate budget. • Develop strategic alliances and partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding derived from grants and or sponsorship. • Events delivered in conjunction with strategic partners. 	<p>Business development, marketing and market research</p>