



HEALTHY CATCHMENTS
HEALTHY OCEANS

Position Description and Information

Position Title:	SeaNet Extension Officer – Western Australia
Employer:	OceanWatch Australia Ltd
Location:	(Fremantle) Perth, WA
Reports to:	Executive Officer, OceanWatch Australia
Employment Status:	12 month, full-time fixed term contract (with possible extension)
Salary:	\$51,250 p.a. plus superannuation

OceanWatch Australia is a national not-for-profit environmental company that works to advance sustainability in the Australian seafood industry. OceanWatch key activities involve:

- enhancing fish habitats and improving water quality in estuaries and coastal environments
- working with industry and local communities to minimise environmental impacts
- introducing industry and communities to sustainable technologies and behaviours.

To achieve these positive outcomes, OceanWatch Australia works in partnership with the Australian seafood industry, federal and state governments, natural resource managers, private enterprise and local communities.

OceanWatch Australia has three funding sources; a voluntary contribution from the seafood industry, federal and state government grants and through fundraising activities.

SeaNet Extension Officer Position Description & Responsibilities

Project Description - SeaNet in Brief

The SeaNet project is a national commercial fisheries environmental extension service funded under the Australian Government's Caring for our Country program. SeaNet has officers on the ground in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales.

SeaNet is managed by OceanWatch Australia as part of our Advancing Sustainable Fisheries program, which seeks to improve the environmental sustainability of Australian fisheries. We do this by working with the fishing industry to develop cost effective, practical solutions to reduce the environmental impacts of commercial fishing. The purpose of the

SeaNet project is to promote the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) to commercial fishers through the extension of improved fishing gear, technology and methods. Initiatives such as assisting with developing and facilitating the uptake of bycatch reduction devices and supporting the development of Environmental Management Systems have recently been the central focus of SeaNet's activities.

Aims of SeaNet

In pursuing the goal of facilitating the move to ecologically sustainable fisheries, SeaNet aims to achieve the following:

1. Increase the rate of uptake of improved fishing gears and practices.
2. Increase the rate of transfer of fisheries' research relevant to new fishing gear, technology and methods to commercial fishers.
3. Improve communication between stakeholders in Australia's commercial fisheries (i.e. fishers, researchers, managers, etc.) to ensure the continued sustainability of the nation's fisheries.
4. Provide information, support and advice to fishers and others seeking to make changes to their fishing gears and/or practices.

Basis for SeaNet

The introduction of extension services into Australia's rural agricultural regions during the late 1980's proved to be the most successful method of making research available to farmers to ensure the continued improvement in farming practices, and hence sustainability of the agricultural sector.

The need for similar extension programs within the commercial fishing sector was identified in the Fisheries Research & Development Corporation's (FRDC) Corporate Plan, the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Priorities and the draft National Policy on bycatch.

To fill this need, the SeaNet Environmental Fisheries Extension Program was developed in 1999. In its formulation, SeaNet borrowed from a number of existing and successful entities, including:

- ❖ the US Sea Grant Extension Service;
- ❖ the Marine and Coastal Community Network; and
- ❖ the National Landcare Program.

The model finally adopted for SeaNet was also influenced by feedback from researchers and fishers who agreed that such a service was required, if not essential.

How SeaNet Operates

SeaNet Officers are the employees of OceanWatch Australia Ltd and are employed under fixed term contracts. Officers are usually hosted in State Industry Associations offices under an agreed Memorandum of Understanding with the Association and OceanWatch Australia. Guidance is provided by a national SeaNet Steering Committee which typically would comprise representatives from OceanWatch Australia Ltd., the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), National Aquaculture Council, the State/Territory seafood industry organisations and others.

Each SeaNet Officer also works closely with a State Reference Group, which provides direction and state priorities to their work plans.

Current Status

SeaNet is now in its 12th year of operations and is currently working on a broad spectrum of projects with both Commonwealth and State Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Opportunities

SeaNet provides opportunities for commercial fishers, researchers and managers who have an interest in facilitating change. Researchers can increase the exposure of their research results once the project is complete. Fishers will have face-to-face access to sources of advice. We facilitate opportunities for interaction between the private and public sectors in the areas of research, development and training/education.

SeaNet provides opportunities for agencies with a commitment to co-management to use an industry/environment initiative to facilitate moves towards ecologically sustainable fisheries. SeaNet provides an extension service staffed by full-time, trained and experienced officers.

Further information on SeaNet can be found on our website at: www.oceanwatch.org.au.

Key Responsibilities of the SeaNet Extension Officer

1. Promote ecologically sustainable fishing practices by:
 - a. Working with fishing industry participants to identify areas for improvement and potential solutions.
 - b. Liaising with researchers and other stakeholders to increase knowledge about ESD in a fisheries context.
 - c. Facilitate the exchange of information about fisheries ESD between commercial fishers and other fisheries stakeholders.
 - d. Organise and/or participate in appropriate community and industry projects/events that promote awareness of, or use of sustainable fisheries practices.

2. Contribute to the development and promotion of OceanWatch Australia's SeaNet project by:
 - a. Providing feedback on the effectiveness of SeaNet as a whole and the effectiveness of individual extension work.
 - b. Identify areas where SeaNet can and should have a role, including research needs.
 - c. Identify sources of potential funding and potential partnerships.
 - d. Provide information about the role of SeaNet to interested members of the public, industry and government.
 - e. Contribute towards achieving the objectives of SeaNet's strategic plan.

3. Assist in the sound administration of SeaNet by:
 - a. Provide information to the Executive Officer, OceanWatch Australia, Administration Officer, state reference groups and national steering committee, where required, in a timely manner.
 - b. Contribute information to the OceanWatch Australia newsletter and web site or other materials prepared by OceanWatch Australia.
 - c. Maintain detailed records that meet the program's funding and reporting requirements.
 - d. Provide information to assist in the preparation of progress reports to the program's funding providers.

Duty Statement for the SeaNet Extension Officer

- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall be responsible for developing an awareness of fishing industry sustainability issues (specifically in respect to bycatch) and identifying, in consultation with fishers and other stakeholders, opportunities for facilitating any practical and feasible changes in fishing practices.
- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall work to increase industry's understanding of the needs of the wider marine environment during fishing operations.
- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall:
 - Provide information to fishing industry participants in an appropriate form.
 - Liaise with the media, government and the community on bycatch management issues.

NB: liaison does not include lobbying.

- Monitor and collate information on industry progress on bycatch mitigation and provide this to OceanWatch Australia and the National Steering Committee for reporting purposes when requested.
- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall be aware of, and work within the requirements of any agreement signed between OceanWatch Australia and the Steering Committee.

- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall attend meetings of SeaNet Extension Officers as organised by OceanWatch Australia and maintain regular liaison with the Executive Officer.
- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall provide to OceanWatch Australia any material required for the preparation of newsletters or related promotional material.
- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall, in consultation with their State reference group, the Program Steering Committee and OceanWatch Australia, prepare a workplan for an agreed portion of the contract period. This workplan should include a list of intended activities and timelines, agreed reporting requirements, a budget and any other factors required by the SeaNet Strategic Plan. The SeaNet Officer should have regular review meetings with the State Reference Group to monitor progress on implementation of and refine as required, the workplan.
- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall provide OceanWatch Australia with any material required for the preparation of progress reports to the funding bodies and take note of any reporting requirements in the SeaNet Strategic Plan and MERI Plan.
- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall participate in the review/development of a SeaNet Strategic Plan and identify opportunities for partnerships, research and or funding sources.
- The SeaNet Extension Officer shall participate in training to ensure they develop skills relevant to the position.
- SeaNet Extension Officers must be prepared to work out of normal working hours and on weekends and be prepared to spend a considerable amount of time away from home, at sea or on the road, consulting with fishers and researchers.

Notes:

The SeaNet Extension Officer will be guided by a State Reference Group comprising representatives from OceanWatch Australia, the State Fishing Industry Association (generally the hosting organisation) and the SeaNet Extension Officer's research partner, and key industry representatives.

All SeaNet Extension Officers are engaged on a fixed term contract, as determined by the availability of funding.

Positions with OceanWatch Australia are subject to a three month probationary period.

OceanWatch Australia is committed to the principles of EEO and OH&S.

This position will be hosted at the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC) office in Fremantle, but the role of the officer will cover the whole state of Western Australia and therefore will entail travel both on land and occasionally, at sea.

Selection Criteria

Please note: Only applicants who address the following selection criteria in their applications, will be considered for interview:

Essential

1. Demonstrated experience working and communicating with key stakeholder groups relevant to commercial fisheries (i.e. commercial fishers, researchers, management agencies, and the wider community).
2. Proven commitment and understanding of environmental issues relevant to the commercial fishing industry.
3. Excellent written and oral communication skills and proven ability to communicate with people from a variety of backgrounds in particular commercial fishers and other stakeholders.
4. Knowledge of government policies and responsibilities with respect to fisheries management in Australia.
5. Have completed the Elements of Shipboard Safety (At Sea Occupational Health & Safety) – or be willing to complete these prior to commencing employment.
6. Senior First Aid Certificate - or be willing to complete these prior to commencing employment.
7. Demonstrated ability to work unsupervised and within a specified budget.
8. Possess a current full driver's license and access to a vehicle.

Desirable

1. Possess a degree in fisheries management, environmental resource management, or equivalent.
2. Previous experience working in the provision of extension services or an understanding of extension services.
3. Well-developed network of contacts in the Australian seafood industry.

Submitting your application

Applications must be received by close of business on Wednesday 24th August 2011.

Applications should include a copy of the applicant's CV and a letter, which must address the selection criteria.

Applications should be addressed to:

**Lowri Pryce
Executive Officer
OceanWatch Australia Ltd
Locked Bag 247
Pymont NSW 2009**

Applications can also be submitted via email: recruitment@oceanwatch.org.au