

## Water Sensitive Cities Index Benchmarking Brief

### What is a Water Sensitive Cities Index?

The Water Sensitive Cities (WSC) Index is a tool that has been developed by the CRC for Water Sensitive Cities (CRCWSC). It offers users the ability to benchmark cities (at the metropolitan or municipal scale), based on performance against a range of urban water indicators that characterise a Water Sensitive City. This allows organisations to set targets and collaborate more effectively with other industry organisations to manage water in ways that enable, liveable, productive, resilient and sustainable urban communities.

The Index is accessed through a web interface which provides visualisations of benchmarking results for a range of audiences, including policy-makers, service providers and community, and will offer greater insights into processes and outcomes for better urban water management.

### The WSC Index aims to:

- provide a communication tool for describing key attributes of a Water Sensitive City.
- articulate a shared set of goals of a Water Sensitive City.
- foster collaboration among stakeholders
- provide benchmarking for a city's or municipality's water-sensitive performance.
- measure the progress and direction towards achieving Water Sensitive City goals.
- assist decision-makers prioritise actions, define responsibility and foster accountability for water-related practices.

More information about WSC Index benchmarking can be found [here](#).

A demonstration of the WSC Index web interface can be found [here](#).

### The WSC Index Tool

The WSC Index Tool identifies all the key components (indicators) of a Water Sensitive City. The Tool covers 7 goals and assesses 34 indicators that represent important attributes of a Water Sensitive City:

1. Ensure good water sensitive governance
2. Increase community capital
3. Achieve equity of essential services
4. Improve productivity and resource efficiency
5. Promote adaptive infrastructure
6. Improve ecological health
7. Ensure quality urban space

## Methodology and Deliverables

There are 3 major phases in delivery:



**Figure 1: Phases in the WSC Index benchmarking process**

### *Workshop set up*

A suitable workshop date is identified, pre-workshop logistics are organised, note-takers are nominated and the invitee (participant) list is finalised. Workshop invitees include a diverse group who are best suited to score the indicators and discuss the rating scores at the workshop i.e. experts and professionals. Workshop participants could include individuals from councils, water authorities, state agencies, developers and peak bodies. The invitee list is finalised at least 1.5 months before the workshop and invitations to participants are sent at least 1 month prior to the workshop.

### *Workshop*

A full 1-day WSC Index benchmarking workshop, with participants is facilitated and delivered. During the workshop scores are determined using a three-step method for scoring each indicator:

- live polling to gauge individual participants' perspectives on the score for the indicator in question
- interactive discussion to uncover evidence and justification to inform the indicator score
- reach consensus amongst the participants on the score assigned

A presentation and explanation of the results is also presented to the group at the workshop.

### *Post-workshop*

Following the workshop, a WSC Index benchmarking and assessment report is submitted and includes information about the Tool and a comprehensive review of the results. A summary of the discussion from the workshop and the evidence to support the ratings is also included in the report. Clients and participants will also have access to web interface and will be able to view the benchmarking results.

## Roles and responsibilities

It is suggested that providers will:

- provide support during the workshop set up process
- help clients work through their invitee list to ensure that the right people are invited to the workshop
- provide all the necessary documentation including email templates, WSC Index rating guides for participant preparation and the workshop, workshop participant invitee list examples, note-taking sheets, guidance notes for note-takers and the workshop agenda template
- deliver the workshop
- write up and submit a WSC benchmarking and assessment report

It is suggested that clients are responsible for:

- working within the appropriate timeframe as discussed during the pre-planning meeting, including sending invitations to participants 1-1.5 months prior to the workshop
- preparing the list of invitees
- organising workshop logistics, unless otherwise agreed
- providing feedback on the draft report in a timely manner
- nominating two note-takers for the workshop, unless otherwise agreed