

# SOCIETY OF WETLAND SCIENTISTS

## 2005-2010 STRATEGIC PLAN

### SWS Mission Statement:

To promote understanding, conservation, scientifically based management, and sustainable use of wetlands.

### SWS Vision:

Wetland Science will:

- Form the basis of the public's understanding of the important functions and values of wetlands
- Advance as a rigorous interdisciplinary body of endeavor and knowledge
- Provide the foundation for management, conservation, and policy

The Society of Wetland Scientists will:

- Strive to be recognized as the leader in wetland science
- Lead the education of wetland professionals and the public regarding wetland science and applications
- Continue to promote the development of wetland science programs around the world, particularly in developing countries, and to promote diversity among SWS members
- Actively promote the inclusion of sound science in wetland policy and stewardship

### SWS Goals, Objectives, and Actions:

#### GOAL 1: Promote Basic and Applied Wetland Research of High Quality

- 1.1 Support student research
  - 1.1.1 Maintain and expand the SWS Student Grants Program
  - 1.1.2 Expand student paper and poster awards
- 1.2 Provide forums for identifying basic and applied research gaps
  - 1.2.1 Solicit special symposia or workshops to identify research gaps
    - 1.2.1A Communicate results and advocate funding priorities from these symposia to funding agencies
  - 1.2.2 Publish scientific syntheses on wetland topics
  - 1.2.3 Promote high quality state-of-the-science symposia, special meetings, and articles
  - 1.2.4 Provide a venue for announcing research opportunities and activities by geographic area or by wetland type
- 1.3 Encourage interdisciplinary and innovative perspectives
  - 1.3.1 Hold interdisciplinary symposia during annual meeting
  - 1.3.2 Design conference sessions for innovative/emerging science
- 1.4 Partner with other professional societies
  - 1.4.1 Engage organizations representing other professions (e.g., engineering, human health, socioeconomics) in activities, such as co-hosted technical sessions that addresses common interests in wetlands
  - 1.4.2 Promote wetland science at other society conferences
  - 1.4.3 Build on current MOU's and develop further MOU's with other professional societies

#### GOAL 2: Support Wetland Education and Public Awareness of Wetlands

- 2.1 Develop collaborations with educators to enhance wetland curricula
  - 2.1.1 Provide suggested course content outlines (grade school through continuing education)
    - 2.1.2 Assist educators in devising innovative courses
  - 2.1.3 Establish an award for educators
  - 2.1.4 Establish an award for SWS members who excel in outreach to educators
- 2.2 Foster future generations of wetland professionals
  - 2.2.1 Promote involvement by under-represented groups (*see 7.2.3*)
  - 2.2.2 Provide a mentoring program for young people at the SWS annual conference (e.g., career symposium, student mixer)

- 2.3 Enhance professional development for wetland scientists and practitioners
  - 2.3.1 Provide training classes during Annual Meeting
  - 2.3.2 Expand course and training content of website by linking to agencies and training centers
- 2.4 Provide outreach to non-technical audiences
  - 2.4.1 Investigate creation of a non-technical audience magazine
  - 2.4.2 Establish a mechanism for publishing non-technical summaries of research papers
  - 2.4.3 Offer a webpage on wetlands for a non-technical audience
  - 2.4.4 Provide information on the web site that summarizes research activities and topics, including geographic locations
- 2.5 Collaborate with groups that communicate with the public
  - 2.5.1 Establish MOU's with organizations involved in wetland communication (e.g. NGOs such as The Nature Conservancy, government agencies, and other appropriate organizations)

**GOAL 3: Provide Forums to Disseminate the Latest Scientific Results**

- 3.1 Maintain and improve SWS publications
  - 3.1.1 Evaluate possible changes to the society's publications, such as initiation of new journals, reorganization of contents and style of existing journal, and dissemination of journal by different means
- 3.2 Continue to improve the effectiveness of SWS annual meetings and chapter meetings
  - 3.2.1 Provide conference guidance to local organizing committees
    - 3.2.1A Revise and update Meetings Manual
  - 3.2.2 Make conferences more affordable
  - 3.2.3 Encourage research symposia
  - 3.2.4 Encourage disciplinary diversity in the meeting program
- 3.3 Promote technical conferences on wetland science (ranging from local to international venues)
  - 3.3.1 Collaborate with other societies on meetings
  - 3.3.2 Provide speakers for other organizations' conferences
  - 3.3.3 Invite other disciplines to present papers at SWS meetings

**GOAL 4: Promote Science-Based Stewardship of Wetlands**

- 4.1 Promote the application of research directly relevant to conservation, management, and sustainability
  - 4.1.1 Sponsor appropriate symposia, plenary speakers, synthesis papers
  - 4.1.2 Develop a publication outlet for papers related to conservation, management, & sustainability
- 4.2 Promote the application of scientific knowledge to conservation, management, and sustainable use
  - 4.2.1 Develop white papers
  - 4.2.2 Develop lists of peer reviewers/experts, coordinating with related organizations
  - 4.2.3 Provide a mechanism for experts to be identified and invited to participate in technical and scientific advisory committees
- 4.3 Encourage forums to bring wetland research scientists, practitioners, and managers together
  - 4.3.1 Offer and support symposia, field trips, workshops, and special meetings, including those that provide information on basic wetland identification, functions, and values for non-technical audiences
- 4.4 Promote and recognize excellence in wetland science application
  - 4.4.1 Create awards for conservation, management & sustainable use
  - 4.4.2 Solicit bulletin articles about successful applications

**GOAL 5: Encourage Incorporation of Sound Wetland Science into Policy**

- 5.1 Raise the awareness of SWS members regarding the importance of communicating with policy makers
  - 5.1.1 Invite policy makers to participate in the annual meeting
- 5.2 Incorporate the latest science into new and existing policies
  - 5.2.1 Offer workshops for highlighting science that underlies policy development and management, and explore ways to integrate science into the decision making framework
  - 5.2.2 Increase the involvement of wetland scientists in policy making
    - 5.2.2A Use the AIBS Public Policy office to communicate with policy makers
  - 5.2.3 Create a venue in one of the SWS publications for identifying and discussing relevant wetland policy issues, new legislation, key court cases, etc.
- 5.3 Advocate the use of ecosystem and watershed principles and science in policy development
  - 5.3.1 Develop white papers on these topics

## **GOAL 6: Foster the International Scope of Wetland Science and SWS**

- 6.1 Develop and communicate an effective international structure for SWS
  - 6.1.1 Develop a framework for international chapters
    - 6.1.1A Use the framework to develop additional international chapters
  - 6.1.2 Add “USA” to the names of current US chapters (e.g. Central USA Chapter) in all communications
  - 6.1.3 Incorporate and emphasize "international" in references to SWS policies and activities in all communications and publications
- 6.2 Promote wetland science in developing countries
  - 6.2.1 Solicit endowments to sponsor memberships for scientists from developing countries
  - 6.2.2 Make the journal available to universities and government agencies in developing countries
- 6.3 Maintain worldwide representation in SWS publications and annual meetings
  - 6.3.1 Seek high quality manuscripts from outside North America
- 6.4 Promote the development and co-sponsorship of international conferences
  - 6.4.1 Co-host INTECOL Wetland Congresses

## **GOAL 7: Ensure that the Growth and Evolution of SWS are Sustainable**

- 7.1 Increase the visibility of SWS
  - 7.1.1 Investigate possible name changes to promote inclusiveness and international scope, for instance “International Society for Wetland Science”
  - 7.1.2 Develop a communications arm for the society to coordinate media outreach
    - 7.1.2A Identify appropriate spokespeople for wetland science (media outreach)
    - 7.1.2B Develop press releases for significant articles
  - 7.1.3 Take advantage of free ad space (e.g. in BioScience)
  - 7.1.4 Develop a public relations training workshop for the annual meeting
  - 7.1.5 Arrange press conferences during the annual meeting
  - 7.1.6 Produce an SWS promotional CD/video
  - 7.1.7 Redesign the website for attractiveness and utility
    - 7.1.7A Create a members-only intranet
- 7.2 Increase ethnic diversity of the wetland science community
  - 7.2.1 Reach out to under-represented groups in carrying out local, regional, national, and international SWS meetings
  - 7.2.2 Market job section of website to under-represented groups
  - 7.2.3 Market student funding programs, including the NSF Undergraduate Fellowship for Under-represented Groups and SWS Student Grants
  - 7.2.4 Establish regional links with institutions that serve under-represented groups
  - 7.2.5 Establish a program to continue mentoring undergraduate students from under-represented groups who have been supported in SWS programs
- 7.3 Increase and diversify the Society’s membership
  - 7.3.1 Conduct member drives regularly
  - 7.3.2 Incorporate membership into non-member annual meeting registrations
  - 7.3.3 Survey non-renewing members regularly to find out why they did not renew
  - 7.3.4 Establish new membership categories that would attract professionals outside traditional wetland science disciplines
- 7.4 Ensure the value of membership remains high
  - 7.4.1 Establish a process for creating disciplinary sections (e.g. hydrology, vegetation, wildlife, biogeochemistry)
  - 7.4.2 Survey the membership regularly on their opinions of membership value
  - 7.4.3 Describe how dues support member services during each Annual Meeting
  - 7.4.4 Communicate the value of membership to members via all media outlets (website, the bulletin, annual dues notices, email broadcasts)
- 7.5 Promote, celebrate, and support membership involvement in the governance of the society
  - 7.5.1 Publicize the work of members through the bulletin (e.g., photos, announcements, awards)
  - 7.5.2 Publicize involvement opportunities
  - 7.5.3 Examine the mission and structure of each SWS committee to ensure its energy and capacity are equal to its task
- 7.6 Increase student involvement (members and nonmembers)
  - 7.6.1 Provide forums to help students network
  - 7.6.2 Select student representative for chapter boards and Board of Directors
- 7.7 Increase income
  - 7.7.1 Increase current sources of income
    - 7.7.1A Reevaluate investment strategies including the use of a professional financial management firm
    - 7.7.1B Review dues rates annually

- 7.7.2 Seek new sources of income
  - 7.7.2A Develop non-technical, subscription-based magazine
  - 7.7.2B Identify new endowment opportunities and develop a marketing strategy for all endowments
- 7.8 Balance expenses with income
  - 7.8.1 Establish a policy for matching expenses with specific income streams for both programs and operations
  - 7.8.2 Establish a policy for matching the income and expense for any new programs and funding requests
  - 7.8.3 Establish a policy for effective use of the endowments
- 7.9 Maintain effective governance and operations
  - 7.9.1 Evaluate governance structure and efficiency periodically
  - 7.9.2 Evaluate operation structure and efficiency periodically
    - 7.9.2A Evaluate business management services
    - 7.9.2B Investigate the need for and cost of an Executive Director
    - 7.9.2C Evaluate publication services
    - 7.9.2D Evaluate services provided by AIBS