



ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY
STRATEGY

A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

AN OFFICIAL BOWLS AUSTRALIA PUBLICATION
APRIL 2021

Bowls Australia (BA) is the governing body for Bowls in Australia with over 1,800 Bowling Clubs, which are affiliated with our nine State and Territory Associations (STAs).

BA is a signatory to the United Nations' (UN) **Sports for Climate Action Initiative**. Based on the ongoing evidence provided through Federal Government agencies, including the Bureau of Meteorology and the CSIRO, in documents such as the biennial State of the Climate Report - which is referenced throughout this strategy document - BA is initiating embracing change within the Bowls community to ensure the viability and future of our sport while offering all Australians a chance to engage with the sport of Bowls during their lifetime.

As a part of this responsibility to the community, BA has developed this Environmental Sustainability Strategy as part of the current Strategic Plan, with a vision to implement this across the whole of the sport and be embraced by all STAs and Bowls Clubs around Australia.

Considering the key points below, taken from the **State of Climate Report (2018)**, it is important for sporting organisations to recognise and respect the significant climatic changes Australia is currently experiencing and do their part to ensure the longevity and sustainability of sport and our planet.

- 1. Australia's climate has warmed by just over 1 °C since 1910, leading to an increase in the frequency of extreme heat events.*
- 2. Oceans around Australia have warmed by around 1 °C since 1910, contributing to longer and more frequent marine heatwaves.*
- 3. Sea levels are rising around Australia, increasing the risk of inundation.*
- 4. The oceans around Australia are acidifying (the pH is decreasing).*
- 5. April to October rainfall has decreased in the southwest of Australia. Across the same region May–July rainfall has seen the largest decrease, by around 20 per cent since 1970.*
- 6. There has been a decline of around 11 per cent in April–October rainfall in the southeast of Australia since the late 1990s.*
- 7. Rainfall has increased across parts of northern Australia since the 1970s.*
- 8. Streamflow has decreased across southern Australia. Streamflow has increased in northern Australia where rainfall has increased.*
- 9. There has been a long-term increase in extreme fire weather, and in the length of the fire season, across large parts of Australia.*

BA has a unique opportunity to deliver this strategy by utilising its position and platforms to deliver sustainable outcomes for Bowls for the betterment of the globe and drive education through our participation.

I hope you will join me on this journey and do your part in implementing this strategy now and in the years to come.

Neil Dalrymple

Chief Executive Officer
Bowls Australia

April 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 01 INTRODUCTION	2
SECTION 02 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
SECTION 03 BACKGROUND ANALYSIS	5
SECTION 4 INDUSTRY ANALYSIS	7
SECTION 05 ISSUES, RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES	8
SECTION 06 ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK	10
SECTION 07 OPPORTUNITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS	11
SECTION 08 OUTCOMES	14
SECTION 09 CONCLUSION	14
SECTION 10 REFERENCES	15

SECTION

02 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BA has identified the need for the development of this strategy through:

• Being a signatory to the **Sports for Climate Action Initiative** developed by the UN. The Initiative sets out five key principles for participants to adhere to:

1. Undertake systematic efforts to promote greater environmental responsibility.
2. Reduce overall climate impact.
3. Educate for climate action.
4. Promote sustainable and responsible consumption.
5. Advocate for climate action through communication.

- One of BA's Strategic Plan deliverables is to create a Sustainability Plan by 2022.
- Australia will host the World Championships in 2022 – the largest Bowls event on the global stage.
- Wanting to be a global leader in promoting sustainability in the sport of Bowls.
- Acknowledging the ongoing changes in our climate and how it is impacting our sport and the way we play.

The UN has developed seventeen goals for creating sustainable development on a global scale. BA has identified it can actively contribute to at least nine of these outcomes whilst supporting the remaining eight. The goals can be found below in figure 1 and identify the outcomes that will become BA's focus.



Figure 1: UN Sustainable Development Goals

Embracing a sustainability strategy ensures BA, the STAs and member clubs have a framework to educate, inform and embrace change to ensure Bowls continues to remain vibrant in a rapidly changing climate. The sport of Bowls has a chance to become an industry leader in this field but in order to achieve our desired vision, the sport more broadly must operate as a collective to implement change.

03 BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

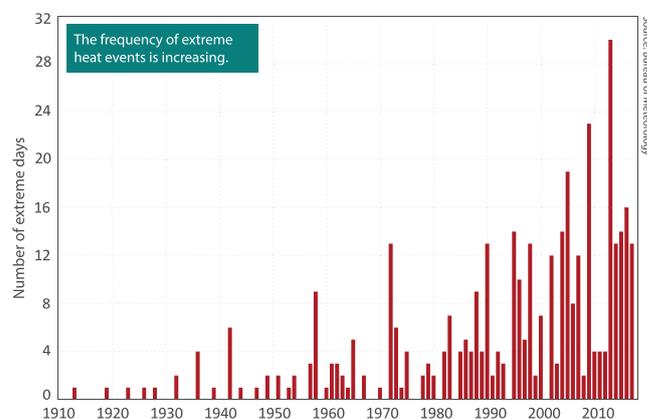
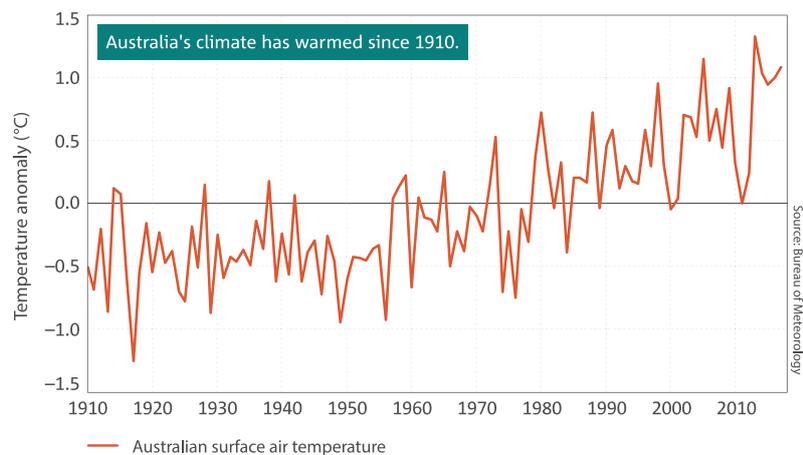
BA's Strategic Plan, **Bowls Unleashed 2020-2022** outlines a specific initiative of implementing an Environmental Sustainability Strategy within the strategic priority Innovation and Change.

The climate is rapidly changing, and the sport of Bowls has a chance to do its part to implement change and become an industry leader. This strategy is designed to create an environmentally sustainable sport that can be enjoyed for generations to come.

In developing this strategy, BA referenced case studies documented in the State of the Climate Report (2018). Temperatures in Australia have risen by 1° since 1910 which has contributed to an increased frequency of heat events and drought conditions. As an example of the heat rise, since 2005, eight of Australia's top ten warmest years on record have occurred.

The majority of Bowls members fall into the over-60 years of age demographic, yet we continue to offer our sport to be played in the hotter months of the year – and play during the hottest times of the day. As the climate continues to change and heat is becoming a worrying factor, we need to look at the way we offer our sport and how we can adapt to keep participation rates high while ensuring the health and safety of our members.

Following are two tables focusing on Australia's increase in temperature since 1910 and referencing the increase in extreme hot days each year:

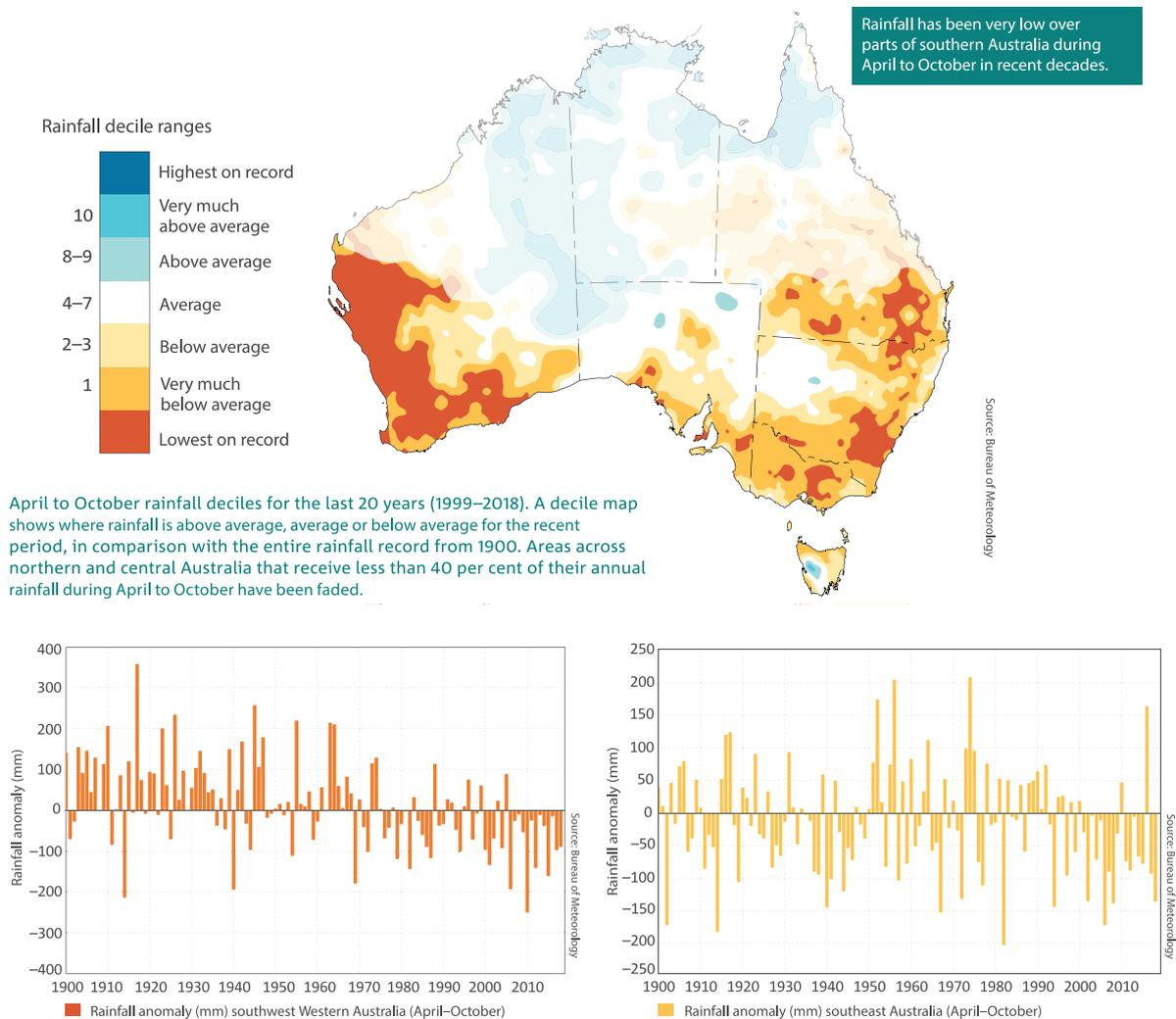


Figures 2 & 3: State of the Climate Report (2018)

Based on the 2018 findings, rainfall is another worrying factor in Australia. Since 1970, across southwest Australia, rainfall has decreased considerably, whilst in the months of May to July, rainfall has dropped by around 20 percent. However, over the last 20 years, northern Australia has had an increase in above average rainfall.

Considering Bowls is played in all parts of Australia and clubs typically occupy spacious blocks of land with anywhere up to four bowls greens, the decrease in rainfall is a concern for our sport and the sustainability of clubs. If rainfall is decreasing how will clubs continue to water their greens when the price of water supplies rises? A focus for the Bowls community will be creating sustainable infrastructure at clubs that utilises renewable energy and measures such as rooftop rainwater harvesting programs and solar energy. The changing climate will also drive an increase in the number of undercover complexes being built - which will enable Bowls to be played all year round.

Following is an infographic and two graphs, which outlines the rainfall averages from the last 20 years (1999-2018).



Figures 4, 5 & 6: State of the Climate Report (2018)

As can be seen from these infographics, rainfall has reduced in most parts of Australia over the last 20 years. As a sport that relies heavily on water to maintain our facilities, Bowls Clubs in Australia will need to ensure more sustainable practices are widely implemented to harvest the water throughout the year.

SECTION

04

INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

As reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2013, sport contributes over twelve and a half billion dollars to the Australian economy; with more than seven and a half million Australians attending at least one sporting event annually. There is no doubt sport makes up a large part of the Australian culture. The impact of climate change presents a very real risk to the identity of Australians. Sport as a whole has a responsibility to accelerate sustainable plans and practices so we can continue to see Australia prosper.

The UN Sports for Climate Action Initiative has identified some key reasons why sport plays a large role in the future sustainability of our environment.

1. Global warming is placing our planet and future generations at risk. Meeting the scale of the challenge requires action by all sectors, including the sport sector to achieve the goals of the Paris Climate Change Agreement. Around the world, governments, cities and businesses are taking bold climate action, leading the way towards a healthier and more sustainable future. By employing solutions to global warming each of us will be improving and contributing to public health, promoting social justice, preserving natural resources, creating reliable sources of energy and contributing to the society and economy as a whole.

2. Businesses are now looking to respond to the challenges of climate action in tangible ways. Companies are committing to renewable energy and energy productivity, are setting concrete targets in line with the climate science and cross-sectoral business initiatives are recognizing and addressing the climate impacts of supply chains and resource use on agriculture, land use, transport and water. Collectively climate action by non-state sectors can provide building blocks for 21st century business models and for delivering the scale needed to transform economies. Yet, there is a universal recognition that more ambitious and effective climate action from all levels of government, the private sector and civil society is needed now to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and avoid the worst effects of climate change.

3. Sports organisations can display climate leadership by engaging actively and collectively in the climate neutrality journey, in turn helping to differentiate from competitors, build brand reputation and engage their sports personnel, employees and members on environmental issues.

4. This can be achieved by taking responsibility for our climate footprint, helping global ambition step-up and incentivising action beyond sports to take meaningful and transformative climate action.

This framework is what BA has modelled our strategy on and we believe by aligning our sport with the United Nations plan, we will ensure we can prosper into the future.

ISSUES, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 WHOLE OF SPORT: CLUBS, MEMBERS & PARTICIPANTS

BA has developed a conscious approach to environmental sustainability by establishing the issues, risks, and opportunities currently associated with our sport's landscape and the actions that can be taken. This approach will cover a front office approach lead by BA and the STAs as well as the sport as a whole (ranging from clubs, players and others associated with Bowls).

RANK	SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES	RISK	OPPORTUNITY	HOW AND WHY
1	Carbon Footprint- Energy, Water, Travel, Devices, Materials	Embracing change and cost associated with initial setup.	Conservative approach to limit consumption while initiating best practices.	Given the breadth of travel throughout Australia it is hoped that the BA approach can in turn be delivered across all levels of Bowls as well.
2	Waste management	Embracing change	Develop a whole of sport waste management plan.	Given that BA has outlined within this framework its intention to create a waste management plan it is anticipated that this may be adopted across all levels of the sport.
3	Paper consumption	Heavily dependent on paper resources. Cost associated with set up could be a detering factor.	Implement online consumption in the workplace.	It is well known that scorecards are a massive resource over-utilised within Bowls. BA will be soon introducing an online system with capabilities to manage scoring.
4	Lack of understanding within our participation base	Members and clubs do not adopt the Environmental Sustainability Strategy.	Ability to deliver various educational sessions for clubs and members to drive understanding of this Strategy.	The key to change is to ensure that the messaging and education is being delivered at the grassroots level of the sport, achieved through upskilling RBMs and ensuring commercial partners can promote opportunities for local clubs.

5.2 WITHIN BA & STAS

RANK	SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES	RISK	OPPORTUNITY	HOW AND WHY
1	Carbon Footprint- Energy, Water, Travel, Devices, Materials	<p>Embracing change and cost associated with initial setup.</p> <p>Being a national body there are times where various domestic travel duties are required.</p> <p>Regional based employees require efficient communication platforms.</p>	<p>Conservative approach to limit consumption while initiating best practices.</p>	<p>Being a national body with employees spread across Australia means that travel expenses and requirements are high.</p> <p>Travel planning has become a major priority to review and establish how we can better manage this.</p>
2	Waste management	Embracing change	<p>Develop a head office waste management plan.</p> <p>Promote annual initiatives such as Green Week, World Environment Day etc.</p>	<p>The ability to align with existing national/international programs that are relatively cost effective will enable BA to participate in sustainability initiatives, whilst developing a culture within the workplace to continue this development.</p>
3	Lack of presence of environmental sustainability in key messaging	<p>Not aligning our major events with that of our sustainability strategy.</p> <p>Staff not adopting the sustainability strategy in the workplace.</p>	<p>National events have greater focus on sustainability.</p> <p>Driving programs within the workplace while encouraging sustainable actions.</p>	<p>In order for BA to become a global leader in driving environmental sustainability, we need to ensure that our messaging reflects that of our dedication to the S4CA framework and our link with the initiative.</p>
4	Lack of understanding within our participation base	Members and clubs do not adopt the Environmental Sustainability Strategy.	Ability to deliver various educational sessions for clubs and members to drive understanding of this Strategy.	<p>BA understands that Bowls has typically utilised traditional operational management systems that we believe can be improved on as means of improving our environment through our business operations.</p> <p>It is important that BA leads these processes and advocates and encourages the STAs to follow suit.</p>

ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK

When developing the whole of sport commitment to an Environmental Sustainability Strategy, BA embraced the UN Sports for Climate Action Principles and analysed the current sustainability issues that our sport experiences within Australia. As a result the below issues have been identified in order to assist us in creating a strategy that will lead to ensuring we are creating a more sustainable environment for our community and sport as a whole.

CREATE CHANGE	REDUCE	EDUCATE FOR CLIMATE ACTION	PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION	ADVOCATE FOR CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH COMMUNICATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement appropriate strategies and key deliverables within the strategy that are endorsed by the BA Board. • Analysing the internal and external influencers of climate impact within Bowls. • Understanding climate impacts and how these affect our organisational structures and operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive understanding of our current impact on climate. • Undertake measurable objectives to demonstrate overall sustainability performance. • Focus areas in strategy link back to achieving climate neutrality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise BA major event platforms to drive commercial awareness of the strategy. • Endorse best practice procedures delivered by venues throughout Australia • Align strategy with global and regionally relevant contexts and incorporate lessons into the strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review how we conduct day-to-day business operations. • Build communication strategies that promote greener and sustainable options to our market. • Adopt sustainable procurement policies to motivate providers to develop better options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish suite of assets to be utilised during BA broadcast events and general communication. • Demonstrate effective leadership in sustainability to feed down into member STAs. • Utilise marketable athletes, volunteers and members to convey messaging through media channels.

To allow for a streamlined process of achieving our targets as a Bowls community we have broken down our key objectives to reflect the strategic priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan, **Bowls Unleashed 2020-2022**. By focusing on these areas BA aims to accelerate our ability to make considerable change in the Australian environmental landscape. The below focus areas have been selected and are in no particular order of priority.

BUSINESS MODEL	FAN EXPERIENCE	MORE PLAY	INNOVATION AND CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a global leader in the Australian sports industry in driving sustainability initiatives. • Generate commercial partnerships that compliment key objectives within the strategy. • Support a diverse working environment and create innovative structures and check lists for staff to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide clubs into sustainable infrastructure and planning for the future. • Connecting communities through the platforms BA can provide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering innovative, digital and commercially viable events. • Promote sustainable outcomes and initiatives more prominently through our digital formats. • Analyse smarter ways and times when we can play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continually challenge standard thinking. • Promote greater use of online systems for use within Bowls. • Continue to enhance the event product.

OPPORTUNITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 ENGAGE IN ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

Opportunity

BA to encourage the Bowls community to create awareness and get involved with environmental initiatives throughout the year. On a yearly basis there are many opportunities for BA to show our commitment as a sport to a sustainable future such as:

- *Clean up Australia Day*
- *Earth Hour*
- *Business Clean-up Day*
- *National Water Week*
- *National Recycling Week*
- *World Environment Day*
- *Adopt a Green Office Week*
- *Keep Australia Beautiful Week*
- *Sport Environment Alliance events and awards*

It will be important to promote success stories around these initiatives to build the profile of our commitment to Climate Change and showcase our sport as an industry leader.

Recommendation

BA Board and management can select some key programs that we can participate in moving forward whilst being able to build a communications plan around this so that we can build awareness through our broader channels.

7.2 MOVING TO AN ONLINE COMMUNITY

Opportunity

As we have witnessed over the course of the COVID-19 outbreak, a greater portion of the Australian population has transitioned to using online platforms to communicate. With our core demographic being over 60 years of age it has always been a challenge for Bowls to encourage our membership to digitally evolve however, the current pandemic presents our sport with an opportunity.

The current environment is the perfect platform to enable the sport of Bowls to start transitioning everyday operations to a more paperless environment with a more pronounced digital focus. This is a great time to educate our members on the changes we can make in this area to become more environmentally sustainable.

Changes that we can make in line with becoming more conscious of our consumption of paper will be in our events space. Events at a BA, STA and club level can become more digitally focused around entries, results, scoring - with an end goal of developing online scorecards.

Recommendation

Events whether it be social or competition based at club level or National/International events are major part of our sport. The events area is where we can make some small changes which will have a big impact on improving our carbon footprint.

A focus area would be the reliance our sport has on paper and the way we consume this at events with the main areas including scorecards, paper/plastic drinking cups, results sheets, posted draws etc. For an example at a national event when running the Australian Open we use over 5,000 paper scorecards to run the competition. While club events would typically use around 5,000 cards per year, which means as a sport, Bowls is using around 9,000,000 scorecards each year.

The recommendation is for BA to develop a scorecard app capability within BowlsLink that can be rolled out to our members in lieu of paper scorecards. BowlsLink can also meet the demands for reducing paper for draws and results as all this can also be assessed online or via a smart device.

To implement a new technology like this will take time, but as a sport we can start taking small steps to reduce our consumption of paper at events:

- *Source bio degradable cups and scorecards*
- *Limit one scorecard per rink rather than two. Additionally, encouraging members to just use a club scoreboard during social activities*
- *Encourage members to bring their own water bottle to avoid using paper/plastic cups*
- *Educate and encourage members to access draws and results online*

Making small changes across the sport in the way we operate in the events space can be a great way to achieve sustainability and success against our strategy.

7.3 BA STAFF, AUSTRALIAN JACKAROOS AND LOCAL LEGENDS

Opportunity

BA has the ability to achieve a high uptake of this plan through BA and STA staff, and in particular our Regional Bowls Managers (RBMs), who are the face of the organisation at a grass roots level. RBMs service almost every Bowls club in Australia each year which enables us to have a connection with our members on a personal level.

As a sport it is important to have this personal connection with all clubs. It will enable everyone involved in our sport to be on the same page when it comes to working together as a collective. RBMs will play a key role when educating and informing our members on the environmental sustainability plan and how, by making small changes, we can rapidly improve our environment while at the same time improving our clubs economically.

Additionally, BA can utilise the Australian Jackaroos and key Club volunteers to become Local Legends as ambassadors for the environmental sustainability strategy. The ambassador program will be aimed at using Jackaroos and Local Legends to educate and inform clubs through a series of social media promotions, club visits and spreading awareness at the grass roots level.

Recommendation

Utilise the training sessions and webinars to upskill the BA and STA staff so they can communicate sustainability opportunities to clubs throughout Australia and incorporate this into part of the role. This could also be done through implementing sustainability data into the Traffic Light Assessments delivered

clubs on a yearly basis.

In terms of the Australian Jackaroo squad and Local Legends, an ambassador program could be established with the purpose of advocating for sustainability by utilising our most prominent players, STA workforce, volunteers and members to convey the appropriate messaging to our audience.

7.4 CULTIVATING OUR UNITED NATIONS RELATIONSHIP

Opportunity

Given that BA is now a signatory to the UN Sports for Climate Action Initiative it is important that the organisation continues to grow its link with this program through collaborating with the UN and ensuring that outcomes within this strategy align with that of the UN's. The alignment with such strategies delivered by the UN will also increase the strategy's commercial interest and therefore increases BA's opportunities to promote and deliver on all of its objectives.

Recommendation

BA continue to engage with the Sports for Climate Action Initiative and promote more global and national programs through our communications platforms to encourage the Australian Bowls community to participate in a range of initiatives.

7.5 MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Opportunity

In order to successfully deliver on the key outcomes set within this strategy, it was agreed that BA would partner with sponsors, commercial entities and NMP Licensees that reflect the strategy's values in demonstrating ethical sourcing and responsibility.

It is important that BA pursue commercial partners that can directly offer benefits to our clubs and STAs so that we continue to build on our sustainability objectives and promote their benefits. BA must also recognise that by implementing this strategy it is imperative that all partners have similar values and beliefs around sustainability in order for relationships to flourish and to reinforce the strategy as a whole.

Recommendation

Construct an ethical certification program which is utilised in finalising all future commercial partner contracts (including NMP licensees) so that these parties are aware of the objectives of the organisation and are demonstrating ethical sourcing and abiding by all local laws and regulations.

By undertaking the necessary reviews and conducting the regular Operational Health Checks with clubs, this will enable better understanding of the need in our local venues and how particular partnerships can help contribute to achieving outcomes.

SECTION 08

OUTCOMES

By delivering on this strategy it is anticipated that the below items are just some of the many positive and tangible outcomes which BA will achieve.

- *Creation of a working committee to manage the strategy moving forward which comprises a dedicated sustainability staff member, STA delegates and key volunteers throughout the country.*
- *Contributing to the success of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the Sports for Climate Action Initiative.*
- *Adoption of strategy by all STAs creating the ability for them to utilise this document to promote sustainability outcomes within their own respective State or Territory.*
- *Generating discussions and social change within the Bowls community to make our participants more knowledgeable and aware of sustainability at their local club.*
- *Recognising key people within the Bowls community who actively contribute to sustainability outcomes and endorse the strategy.*
- *A reduction in the scorecards developed across the nation with the advent of online systems becoming more prominent therefore reducing our paper footprint.*
- *Developing stronger partnerships that can directly benefit clubs.*
- *A more diverse working environment resulting in reduced travel on a yearly basis and potential for increased employee satisfaction.*
- *Green and open facilities making them more attractive to patrons whilst contributing to the environment.*
- *More satisfied players as match play and fixtures move to more suitable times throughout the day that support people's health and wellbeing.*
- *Suite of assets for communication purposes and marketing collateral that clubs and others can utilise to promote BA initiatives.*
- *Ongoing exposure to sustainability outcomes through our major events and capitalising on this exposure.*
- *Commercial partners who adopt ethical sourcing practices and can prove this via applicable certification.*

SECTION 09

CONCLUSION

With the ongoing changes to our environment and the constant concerns raised by the data surrounding climate change, it is imperative that all sports act as leaders in our communities to accelerate change in behaviours around environmental sustainability.

Through the actions that have been outlined within this strategy, it is hoped that by achieving its objectives BA is contributing as a leader in Australia towards building a brighter and more sustainable future for the sport and the community as a whole.

- Climate, S. o. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.bom.gov.au/state-of-the-climate/>
- Institute, T. C. (n.d.). Sport and Climate Impacts. Retrieved from https://www.connect4climate.org/sites/default/files/files/publications/Sport_and_climate_report.pdf
- Meterology, B. o. (2018). State of the Climate 2018. Retrieved from Australian Government Bureau of • Meterology: <http://www.bom.gov.au/state-of-the-climate/>
- Meterology, B. o. (n.d.). State of Climate. Retrieved from <https://www.csiro.au/en/News/News-releases/2018/State-of-the-Climite-2018-Shows-Continued-Warming-of-Climite-and-Oceans>
- (n.d.). Sports for Climate Action. Retrieved from <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/sectoral-engagement/sports-for-climate-action>

ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY
STRATEGY

CONTACT

admin@bowls.com.au
www.bowls.com.au