

Strengthening Sustainable Infrastructure Delivery through WAF Environmental and Social Management System

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Why This Matters at this Seminar

Infrastructure investment across the Pacific is accelerating. This requires stronger collaboration between:



Governments

Policy makers and regulators



Contractors

Construction firms ensuring compliance



Investors

Financial institutions funding projects



Development Partners

Multilateral Development Banks & International organizations

“At WAF, we are not just delivering infrastructure — we are building systems that ensure projects are sustainable, compliant and investment-ready.”

WAF Mandate & Scale ~ Water Sector Strategy 2050

Core Role

National utility delivering water and wastewater service across Fiji.

Critical infrastructure supporting:

Public health

Tourism

Economic growth

Scale of Service

94% Access to basic water

83% Connected to piped water

11 Wastewater treatment plants

Investment & Growth

F\$3.2 Billion

Infrastructure Investment Pipeline

Expanding:

Water supply systems

Wastewater treatment

Climate-resilient infrastructure

“Increasing scale = increasing responsibility for sustainable and compliant infrastructure delivery”

Challenges Experienced

Operational Risks

- Environmental compliance gap
- Community & stakeholder grievance
- Limited structured safeguard processes
- Reputational exposure
- Weak monitoring of E&S risks

Project Delivery Risks

- Approval delays due to incomplete E&S processes
- Contractor capability & compliance gap
- Land access and resettlement challenges
- Cost escalation from late risk identification
- Inconsistent application of safeguards



"Without structured safeguards, infrastructure delivery becomes slower, riskier and more expensive."



The Shift

Introducing WAF Environmental & Social Management System

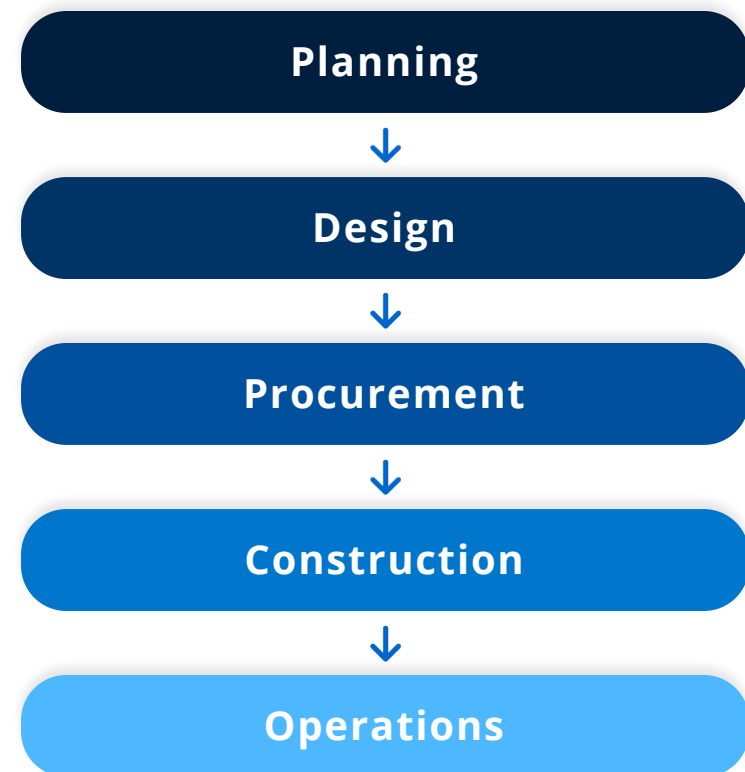
Transforming infrastructure delivery through structured risk management and sustainable practices

From Reactive Compliance to Structured, System-Wide Risk Management

ESMS enables WAF to systematically:

- ✓ Identify risks early
- ✓ Manage environmental & social impacts
- ✓ Strengthen accountability across projects
- ✓ Ensure consistent compliance

Applied across the full project lifecycle:



Institutionalising ESMS Across WAF



ESMS Framework

Environmental & Social Management System framework **Approved** and operational across WAF.

 **Board Approved**



ESS Policy


Environmental & Social Safeguards Policy **Adopted** and guiding implementation across all units.

 **Policy Adopted**



Organisation Rollout

ESMS rollout **underway** across all strategic business units.

 **Rollout in Progress**



Strategic Milestone: WAF has established a Board approved ESMS Framework, supported by policy and ongoing implementation across the organization.

Embedding ESMS Across WAF Structure and Functions

Each business unit plays a defined role in implementing environmental and social management

Governance Hierarchy



Board
Governance



CEO
Executive



Strategic Business Units
6 Departments



Each business unit plays a defined role in implementing ESMS

From governance to operations, ESMS is embedded across all levels



Environment Safeguard Unit

Drives ESMS implementation, compliance, and performance across WAF



Infrastructure Delivery

Integrates ESMS into planning, design, and project delivery

- **Planning & Design**



Assets Management

Manages lifecycle risks and sustainability

- **Risk Management**



Water & Wastewater Operations

Ensures compliance and protects communities

- **Compliance**



Procurement & Contract Mgt

Drives contractor compliance and accountability

- **Contractor Management**



Human Resources & OHS

Builds capacity and ensures labour standards

- **Labour Standards**



Lands & Stakeholder Engagement

Manages land access and stakeholder engagement

- **Community & Stakeholder Engagement**

Nine (9) Essential Safeguard Principles of ESMS

Source: Photos from WAF Facebook



Assessment & Management of E&S Risk & Impact

Identify, assess and manage E&S risks in all operations and projects.



Labour & Working Conditions

Ensure fair, safe and respectful working conditions for all



Resource Efficiency & Pollution prevention

Promote efficient resource use and prevent pollution across all operations and projects

Cont'd Nine (9) Essential Safeguard Principles of ESMS

Source: Photos from WAF Facebook



Community Health, Safety & Security

Ensure meaningful consultation and transparent information sharing with communities and stakeholders.



Climate Change

Integrate climate adaptation and mitigation measures to build resilient communities and infrastructure.



Land Acquisition & Involuntary Resettlement

Promote fair and transparent land processes and restore livelihood.

Cont'd Nine (9) Essential Safeguard Principles of ESMS

Source: Photos from WAF Facebook, google images



Biodiversity Conservation & Sustainable Management

Protect and conserve biodiversity and sustainable management of living natural resources.



Indigenous Peoples

Respect the rights, dignity, culture, and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples in all WAF operations and project.



Cultural Heritage

Avoid or minimize involuntary resettlement and mitigate adverse social impacts.

How ESMS Delivers Better Infrastructure Outcomes

Environmental Outcomes

- ✔ Improved compliance across operations & projects
- ✔ Reduced environmental pollution
- ✔ Improved water & wastewater management
- ✔ Protection of catchments and water sources
- ✔ Climate resilience integrated into infrastructure

Project Delivery Outcomes

- ⦿ Early risk identification
→ Reduces delays
- ⦿ Proper land due diligence
→ Reduces disputes
- ⦿ Clear approvals pathway
→ Enable faster implementation
- ⦿ Better contractor oversight
→ Improves quality



Working with WAF Under ESMS



What Contractors Gain

- ✓ **Clear compliance expectations** ~ aligned with *Environment Management (Amendment) Act 2025 & other relevant legislations*

Well-defined environmental and social standards

- ✓ **Standardised requirements** ~ consistent with *Department of Environment environmental approvals & regulatory processes*

Consistent ESMS protocols across all contracts

- ✓ **Faster grievances & issue resolution** ~ supports *community engagement under Environment Management (Amendment) Act 2025 & safeguard practices*

Streamlined communication and problem-solving through Grievances Redress Mechanism

- ✓ **Reduced project uncertainty** ~ *early screening ensures compliance with permit and approval requirements in Fiji*

Clear guidelines minimize delays and cost overruns



What WAF Expects

- ✓ **Compliance with ESMS requirements** ~ *full compliance with Environment Management (Amendment) Act 2025 and related regulations*

Full adherence to environmental and social system

- ✓ **Environmental and social accountability** ~ *aligned with EMA 2005 and social obligations*

Taking responsibility for project impacts

- ✓ **Strong site management practices** ~ *aligned with Health & Safety at Work Act 1996 & environmental compliance requirements*

Professional construction and operational standards

- ✓ **Transparency and reporting** ~ *supports regulatory reporting & monitoring under EMA 2005 and other regulatory requirements*

Regular updates and proper documentation

Alignment with Development Partners

Fully Aligned With

ADB Environmental & Social Framework

Asian Development Bank standards

World Bank Environmental & Social Framework & IFC Performance Standards

Global best practices

Strengthens

MDB Confidence

Enhanced credibility with banks

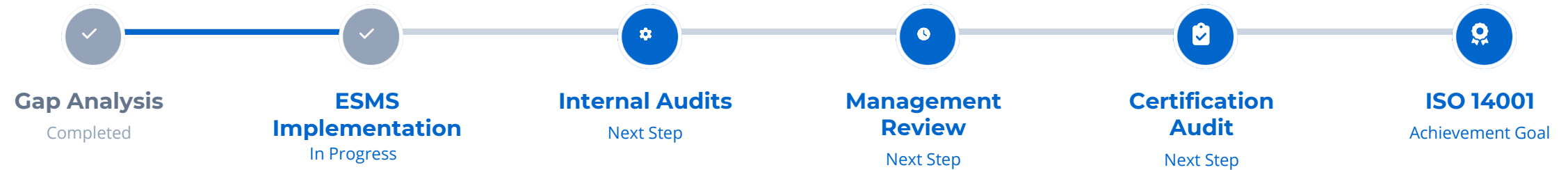
Financing Readiness

Better access to international funding

“ESMS positions WAF as a trusted delivery partner.”

Pathway to Achieve ISO 14001 Certification

* Key next steps are indicated in blue below.



🔍 **Gap Analysis Results**

Completed

⚙️ **ESMS Implementation**

ESMS framework deployed
 Staff training ongoing
 Documentation ongoing

➔ **Key Next Steps**

Complete internal audits
 Conduct management review
 Execute certification audit

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