

30 08 2019

Mr Johan Frijns  
Director  
BankTrack  
By email to: [johan@banktrack.org](mailto:johan@banktrack.org)

Westpac Place  
Level 19, 275 Kent Street  
Sydney NSW 2050  
[stoohill@westpac.com.au](mailto:stoohill@westpac.com.au)  
[westpac.com.au](http://westpac.com.au)

Dear Mr Frijns,

Thank for your letter dated 29 July 2019 and your continued interest in the Principles for Responsible Banking.

As you are aware, the Principles are ambitious and aspirational, and they contain a strong underlying commitment to transparency, accountability and impact. Their purpose is to provide signatory banks with guidance and one comprehensive framework to support each bank's approach to addressing sustainable development across its entire business.

Banks that sign up to the Principles are taking a leading step forward towards aligning their operations with society's goals and supporting their customers, clients, employees and investors in adopting sustainable practices. These practices create measurable, significant and positive impacts to realise the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change. This includes strong underlying requirements and mechanisms around transparency and accountability which require banks to manage what matters most by setting targets and publicly reporting back to stakeholders on progress made.

Given the urgency of the recognised need to transform the business world, signatory banks are expected to start implementing the Principles immediately after signing up. However, given the diversity of the banks around the world that have and are expected to adopt the Principles, flexibility is needed to allow progress at the appropriate pace for the markets in which each bank operates and based on their respective prior experience in the area of sustainable development. This approach allows for future signatory banks to benefit from the practical experiences of the Founding Signatory banks as well as from other stakeholders such as research centers and experts, through the network community created through the UNEP Finance Initiative.

You might be aware that Westpac developed its first sustainability strategy and commenced sustainability reporting in 2002. Our current [2020 Sustainability Strategy](#), and associated [Climate Change Position Statement and 2020 Action Plan](#), and [Human Rights Position Statement and 2020 Action Plan](#) set out our approach, objectives and targets. We were the first bank to report against the Principles for Responsible Banking – mapping our FY18 sustainability performance against the Principles on page 13 of our [2018 Sustainability Performance Report](#).

Coordinated by UNEP FI, development of the Principles included a six-month consultative process, in which more than 500 stakeholders provided valuable feedback, including BankTrack. As a result, more than 100 banks are now poised to become signatories at the formal launch of the Principles in September 2019. With this high number of initial banks committed to supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement for climate change, through the Principles for Responsible Banking, significant impacts will be realised around the globe.

After the launch of the Principles in September 2019, we look forward to sharing with you and our other stakeholders, in our public reporting as per the timeline and requirements of the Principles and their implementation Framework, the targets we will set and the subsequent progress we will achieve towards these. We encourage you and our other stakeholders to review this public reporting, so that you are aware of the impacts we will be working to realise.

Thank you again for your interest in this important initiative, the Principles for Responsible Banking, and your positive contribution to the public consultation process that contributed to its development.

Yours sincerely,



Siobhan Toohill  
Group Head of Sustainability