



Photo by Ricardo








Agile and innovative, listening to client needs and leading the consultancy knowledge challenge. Constantly reinvented itself and sought to embrace novel developments and academic research into the consultancy offering.


COMPANY IDENTITY

	Ricardo	Name of the company
	United Kingdom	Country
	www.ricardo.com	Web site

COMPANY BY NUMBER

	6,000,000€	Last year annual revenue
	14	Year of activity
	300	Nr. of clients
	56	Nr. of staff
	10	Nr. of countries served

BUSINESS SECTORS

-  • Water industry
- Flooding and coastal development
- Industrial and commercial development
- Airports
- Government and public sector policy and regulation.

VISION AND MISSION



Vision: Cascade's 7 guiding principles, developed at company inception are: 1. Technical excellence in our service; 2. Professionalism in our approach; 3. Responsibility in our environmental management; 4. Trust in our relationships; 5. Pride in our product; 6. Innovation in our way of thinking; 7. Enjoyment in our work.

Mission: Cascade did not have a formal mission statement, but sought to be a respected environmental consultancy with deep technical knowledge and a strong reputation for delivery of innovative solutions. This mission was achieved by the point of acquisition by Ricardo AEA in 2015.

MAIN INNOVATIVE BUSINESS MODEL ASPECT



Cascade is a successful and entrepreneurial business as it focusses on growth, profitability and niche expertise – starting up with a small team, which has grown progressively over 15 years, taking advantage of the upturn in water and public sector work. The Cascade business model has been successful as it has not been frightened of change and risk. It has reacted to an increased market share through organic growth, accommodating client needs and requests quickly and diligently, something that larger companies cannot easily facilitate. We have listened to clients and sought to have a close business relationship that is mutually advantageous. The relationships are centred on providing technically excellent advice and working together with clients to provide quality outputs. To achieve this in a growing company, Cascade has developed a mix of technical and commercial staff, which has encouraged delegation and clarity, and allowed technical staff to concentrate on project delivery rather than undue process. Giving suitable roles to all staff has been critical – do not put staff into roles that they cannot develop into, but provide suitable levels of challenge to keep all motivated.

HIGHLIGHT WORK/PROJECT



Cascade, in association with Eftec, worked with the Welsh Government to establish the preferred approach to natural capital accounting and ecosystem services assessment for catchment management in Wales. The study considered all of the available environmental economic instruments to promote the use of the ecosystem services approach and in particular the use of Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES). The study recommended suitable approaches and the use of pilots to establish the proof of concept for future land management. Subsequently the team worked with the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum to investigate the development of a PES/market-based nutrient offsetting scheme between land managers, industry, commerce, government and the third sector to reduce emissions to the Milford Haven SAC and two large catchments (Cleddau). Cascade Consulting worked with ADAS to review current global ecosystem banking initiatives, identify different nutrient sources of environmental concern and evaluate how a nutrient offsetting scheme, or 'Ecobank', could be successfully applied. The scheme is currently being considered for funding by Welsh Government.

COMPANY HISTORY



Everything started in 2001, when Cascade was established by Drs Kieran Conlan and Topsy Rudd, technical experts in water sector and EIA development. 2005 was the year of growth and consolidation, with a fast growth to 25 staff, a turnover of £3.4m and profit of £730,000 by 2007. Recession had a significant effect on UK business in 2008 and 2009, so by 2011, it was time to restructure and expand. Strong growth and profitability followed from 2011 due to upturn in water and public sector work. In 2015, Cascade was sold to Ricardo plc.: 35 staff and turnover of Euro 5 million. Now the Cascade Practice is part of Ricardo Energy & Environment (itself part of Ricardo plc).

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



Cascade currently sits as a practice within Ricardo Energy & Environment, it is now also known as the Water and Environment practice. Headed by Daressa Frodsham, the business has been restructured to adopt a sectors and services matrix approach:

- Practice Director; Delivery Manager responsible for management.
- 4 Business Area Managers (BAMs) (water and infrastructure development) responsible for projects.
- 3 Heads of Function (HoF): technical water; ecology; SEA and EIA.
- Line management for all staff through the HoF.
- Support services from Ricardo Energy and Environment (HR, Finance etc).

SHORT BUSINESS STRATEGY



Cascade has a 3 year Business Plan that sets out the vision for the company, the financial and operational targets (in terms of revenues, profit, staff and resourcing, opportunities and threats, actions to grow company), the budget to achieve growth, and the business processes required to facilitate staff and revenue expansion. The plan required growth in core sectors, including water, infrastructure (airports, road and rail, commercial development) and regulatory policy support (Governments and regulatory agencies). It also requires development of core services, including technical water services (hydrology, water quality etc); ecology; SEA and EIA; natural capital accounting and ecosystem services assessment.

MAIN CLIENTS & PARTNERS



- Both public and private companies, e.g. -
- Policy support to governments – UK Defra, Welsh Government, EC
 - Regulatory analysis and guidance – Environment Agency, Natural England
 - Strategic implementation of water schemes – United Utilities
 - Ecosystem services & environmental economics – Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Yorkshire Water
 - Strategic water investigations – Thames Water, Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water

SERVICES



Provide public and private companies with the following services:

- Environmental policy and regulation
- Natural capital and ecosystem services assessment
- Catchment management and ecosystem service
- Hydroecology science and investigations
- Environmental surveys, modelling and assessment
- Planning, EIA and development control

ENTREPRENEURS' PROFILE



Our entrepreneurial team is made by:

Bright ideas that sometimes work – Kieran Conlan

Organising the team to deliver on the bright ideas – Daessa Frodsham

Putting logic into our bright ideas – John Sanders

Radical thinking to stretch our knowledge – Trevor Wade

Delivering the ideas to our enthused clients – Liz Baker

The next generation of ideas – Peter Mulder

Making sure our people have the tools and training – Ben Stansfield and Richard Andrews



“We have to create the next generation of ideas to stay ahead of the crowd. We are a niche company that has to thrive on developing future thinking...”

“At our core we care about the environment. Our commitment is to develop ways of working that facilitate better management of the world we live in, including broader uptake of Natural Capital thinking.”

(Kieran Conlan)