

Policy Type	Corporate
Function	Environmental Management
Policy Owner	Director Infrastructure, Planning and Environmental Services
Policy Contact	Manager Environmental and Health Services
Effective Date	10 September 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- to encourage Council's responsibilities and commitment to prevent, manage and minimise environmental impacts associated with our operations and activities; and
- to advocate protecting, conserving and enhancing sustainable use and management of our natural resources.

Scope

This policy relates to the management of Council's own activities and operations as well as protection and management of natural resources and environmental assets within our Shire. The policy is applicable to all councillors, staff and contractors across all Council sites and operations.

Exceptions

Nil.

Objectives

To achieve a high standard of environmental care in our activities as a local government on land and waterways for the benefit, use and lifestyle of current and future generations of the community.

Policy Statement

As a continual improvement objective, the Burdekin Shire Council will incorporate the principles of ecological sustainable development into our operations and management systems and decision-making processes.

Council will mitigate the effects of its impact on the environment by:

Fostering Sustainable Behaviours

Council will encourage its staff and community to adopt a culture of environmental responsibility at work and at home and promote sustainable practices.

Sustainable Design and Maintenance

Council will encourage sustainable design and practices related to building, infrastructure and maintenance projects to include tropical design, energy efficiency, demand management and greenhouse gas emissions to reduce operating costs over the life of the asset.

Sustainable Planning and Climate Change

Council will consider ecological sustainability principles and the potential impacts of climate change in its strategic land use, infrastructure and development planning to facilitate the protection of Shire's natural environment.

Biodiversity Protection and Management

Council will work with and support the community and other organisations to manage and protect the natural environment including through mechanisms such as the Environmental Levy Policy.

Purchasing Goods and Services

When purchasing goods and services, Council will apply the contracting principles set out in the Local Government Act, one of which is Environmental Protection. Consideration should be given to the effective and efficient use of materials and resources to minimise environmental impact.

Waste Reduction and Recycling

Council will promote the efficient use of resources by applying the waste management hierarchy of waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and disposal as least preferred option.

Water Management

Council will demonstrate continual improvement in its management of water resources through the development and implementation of demand management strategies, leak detection programs and asset management plans. Impacts of wastewater discharge and run off within its areas of operation will be minimised through wastewater treatment upgrades, network reliability improvements and achievement of compliance management via adherence to site based management plans, asset condition assessment programs and environmental monitoring programs.

Reef Guardian

Council as a Reef Guardian Council will work with the community, landholders, environmental and other organisations as well as the state and federal governments to undertake activities to improve the health of the Great Barrier Reef in line with the Great Barrier Reef Plan 2050.

Continual Environmental Improvement

Council will work towards improving environmental management practices and establishing environmental objectives and targets and performance evaluation and reporting systems with associated indicators.

Legislation

Environment Protection Act 1994 & Regulation & Policies

Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 & Regulation

Planning Act 2016

Local Government Act 2009 & Regulation

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (C'wealth)

Clean Energy Act 2011 (C'wealth)

Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995

Fisheries Act 1994

Biosecurity Act 2014

Nature Conservation Act 1992

Vegetation Management Act 1999

Water Act 2000

Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008

Definitions and Abbreviations

- Ecological Sustainability** is a balance that integrates:
- the protection of ecological processes and natural systems at local, regional, State and wider levels; and
 - economic development; and
 - the maintenance of the cultural, economic, physical and social wellbeing of people and communities (*S3 Planning Act 2016*).

- Principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development** include the following:
- decision-making processes should effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations;
 - if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation
 - the principle of inter-generational equity – that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations;
 - the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in decision-making;
 - improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms should be promoted (*Environment Protections and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1990 – C’wealth*).

Related Documents

Reference Number	Document Title
Council Website	Burdekin Shire Council Corporate Plan 2022-2027
Council Website	Burdekin Shire Council Planning Scheme
ECM 1611207	Burdekin Shire Biosecurity Plan 2020-2025
ECM 1623115	North Queensland Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020-2030
ECM 1655624	Environmental Management Plan for RMPC
ENV-POL-0003	Environmental Levy Policy
ENV-FRM-0002	Environmental Levy Funding Application Form
FIN-POL-0017	Procurement Policy
WST-POL-0001	Waste Management Policy
Council Website	Development Permits for Environmentally Relevant Activities

Document History and Version Control

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