

<b>LIGHT REGIONAL COUNCIL</b>	
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY</b>	<b>Section 10 Policy No. 04</b>
<b>Original Policy:</b>	<b>Issued: 20 October 2009</b>

**1. Purpose:**

To outline the Light Regional Council's commitment to environmental sustainability. The policy provides a framework for Council to:

- Protect and enhance the natural environment.
- Incorporate environmental sustainability into decision making and management practices in order to achieve environmentally responsible and sustainable outcomes for the region and its communities.
- Fulfil and exceed the requirements of the Local Government Act in terms of considering ecologically sustainable development.
- Raise awareness of environmental sustainability and increase community participation.
- Recognise Council's responsibility for addressing the potential adverse impacts of climate change.

**2. Scope:**

This policy applies to the following activities of Council:

- The way Council delivers its services to the community, including services delivered by Council's contractors.
- The way Council manages the land and buildings it owns or controls, including local roadsides, reserves, public open space, offices and depots.
- Council's own business and administration functions which impact on the environment, including the consumption of energy and resources and the generation of waste and emissions.
- Council's role in regulating land use, development and amenity within the region.
- Leadership provided by Council in relation to environmental matters, including community engagement, education and advocacy.

**3. References:**

- LRC 10 Year Strategic Plan 2008 - 2018
- LRC Development Plan
- Local Government Act 1999
- Natural Resources Management Act 2004 (NRM Act)
- Zero Waste SA Act 2004
- Native Vegetation Act 1991

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- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972
- Environment Protection Act 1993
- Development Act 1993

#### 4. Policy

##### Summary statement

Light Regional Council and its management are committed to working towards environmental sustainability.

Light Regional Council is committed to establishing, promoting and maintaining a culture of sustainability and environmental responsibility by the Council, Council staff and the community. The elected members and staff of Light Regional Council will work together with the community to consider and minimise the impact of our activities on the environment and work towards environmental best practice.

Light Regional Council commits to undertake its business in an environmentally sustainable manner and strives to exceed the requirements of environmental laws and regulations. This commitment to environmental sustainability will be specifically supported in Councils plans, strategies, services and management.

It is important to remember that sustainability is a direction and not a destination, so Light Regional Council is committed to monitoring and continually seeking ways to improve our environmental, social and economic performance.

##### Policy Detail

The Light Regional Council is committed to working in partnership with its community to improve environmental sustainability within the region.

The Council recognises that local environmental issues can have global impacts and will endeavour to reduce the ecological footprint of its own operations and that of the local communities.

The Council will lead by example by undertaking to achieve the following core objectives across all its functions and activities:

- Protect what we have
- Reduce what we take
- Minimise what we leave
- Share what we learn

The following actions will support the achievement of these objectives.

**Protect what we have:** To protect and enhance the natural environment by:

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- Ensuring that Council controlled land is managed in ways that protect and enhance native flora, fauna, natural habitat and indigenous cultural values.
- Controlling and, where possible, eradicating pest plants and animal species on Council managed land (particularly in public open space and road reserves).
- Implementing work practices that limit site disturbance and avoid adverse environmental impacts.
- Incorporating environmental impact risk assessment and mitigation into the planning of major Council projects.
- Developing statutory planning policy, development guidelines and by-laws to incorporate improved environmental management in development proposals.
- Working in partnership with other land and catchment management agencies and private landowners to:
  - Better coordinate environmental protection and enhancement, and
  - Balance environmental protection with the need to address community safety obligations with respect to fire and emergency management and road safety.
- Encouraging the adoption of sustainable land management practices amongst private landowners, through planning policy guidelines, education and the consideration of environmental incentive schemes.
- Identifying and managing the risks to council-managed natural assets associated with the potential impacts of climate change.

**Reduce what we take:** To reduce the consumption of natural resources by:

- Reducing the consumption of goods and materials across the organisation.
- Developing procurement policies / procedures that give preference to environmentally friendly products (renewable, recycled) and services, where value for money is not compromised.
- Reducing Council's water consumption through the development and implementation of improved efficiency measures, low consumption infrastructure and acting upon other recommendations from the Water Management Plan developed as part of the Councils ICLEI Water Campaign involvement.
- Increasing the utilisation of alternative water supplies in Council's operations, including recycled stormwater, rainwater and wastewater.
- Employing and promoting water sensitive urban design that improves water quality and retains as much water as possible, for as long as possible, within its natural catchment.

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- Implementing efficiency measures to reduce Council's consumption of energy derived from fossil fuels.
- Investigating cost-effective use of alternative, renewable energy sources across council's operations.
- Encouraging and educating the community and industry to conserve water, energy and other natural resources.

***Minimise what we leave:*** To minimise the adverse impacts of the Council's and the community's activities on the environment by:

- Identifying and continually reducing greenhouse gas (carbon) emissions and other pollution across all Council operations, including Councils buildings, vehicle fleet, public lighting and waste facilities.
- Investigating the means of offsetting residual corporate greenhouse gas emissions, that cannot be reduced or avoided, with the aim of offsetting all emissions.
- Promoting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by households and businesses in the municipality.
- Reducing the volume of Council's corporate waste through recycling and reuse.
- Maximising the recovery of all reusable or recyclable resources from all municipal waste streams.
- Implementing community education initiatives that encourage waste minimisation, litter prevention and recycling.
- Providing opportunities and facilities for the safe disposal of chemicals and materials that are toxic and/or hazardous to the environment.
- Preventing storm water runoff containing litter and contaminants from entering waterways.
- Encouraging private development that can either avoid or offset adverse environmental impacts.
- Prevent effluent entering waterways and otherwise reduce its' impact on environmental health.
- Containing and minimising the leaching of contaminants from Council's waste management facilities and depots.
- Increasing community awareness and knowledge about air quality issues and the impact of their behaviours on air quality.

***Share what we learn:*** To encourage the adoption of sound environmental practices within Council and the broader community by:

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- Increasing the capacity of Council employees to assess and refine work practices to improve environmental performance.
- Promotion of Council's environmental management practices and performance.
- Encouraging building and construction practices within the Council and community that incorporate sound environmental design principles, low impact materials, efficient and renewable energy requirements and the conservation of natural resources.
- Establishing collaborative partnerships with the community, other Local Government bodies, business groups and relevant organisations that promote environmental sustainability.
- Utilising council's communication mediums and community networks to promote environmentally sustainable practices to the wider community.
- Advocating on behalf of the local community to other agencies and levels of government on issues of local environmental concern.
- Supporting events and programs in the community that promote the awareness of environmental issues.

Policy Actions

In order to achieve these commitments the Council will develop an environmental management strategy and action plan that will:

- Progressively integrate environmental sustainability considerations into Council's strategic, corporate and operational planning, policy development and decision-making.
- Provide an overview of, and prioritise, significant environmental assets under Council's management.
- Actively seek relevant funding sources and participate in appropriate government initiatives to increase the capacity of the Council to address environmental sustainability issues.
- Where funding allows, enable the employment of appropriate resources to provide expertise on environmental issues concerning the Light region.
- Set annual priorities as well as realistic and easily measurable targets to give effect to the commitments of this policy and monitor their achievement.
- Report to the community on the Council's environmental performance annually or more regularly if certain targets/milestones are reached.
- Ensure the Council's compliance with all relevant government policy, legislation and regulations in relation to environmental management.

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- Instigate the formation of an Environment Advisory Committee, consisting of community and Natural Resource Management Board representatives to advise Council on environmental matters, including the further development of this Policy.
- Involve the formation of an internal working group made up of representatives from across the organisation focused on reducing Council's ecological footprint and co-ordinating efforts to address this Policy and key priorities of the Environmental Management Strategy.

#### 5. **Policy History**

1. Draft Policy provided to General Managers for Comment September 2009  
Review by: Andrew Philpott, Nathan Cunningham, Greg Barrowcliff
2. Adopted at Ordinary meeting of Council, Tuesday, 20 October 2009 (refer Minuted Item 10.4.8 at Page 2009/309)