

SCS-060 Environmental Management Policy

TRIM Reference: D24/88388 Due for Review: June 2028
Responsible Officer: Manager Environment and Sustainability

Purpose

Council's organisational purpose is to help its community and environment to thrive.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline Council's commitment to managing and minimising its environmental impact, fulfilling environmental obligations and continually improving environmental performance.
- Describe Council's approach to delivering on these commitments.

Policy Principles

The following principles underpin Council's approach to managing environmental outcomes:

- Accelerating positive change through environmental leadership, partnerships, engagement, innovation and knowledge-sharing.
- Supporting the community in their efforts to drive positive environmental outcomes.
- Approaching environmental compliance from a risk management based perspective, ensuring awareness, prevention, mitigation and management are demonstrated.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Councillors, Council staff, contractors and volunteers that undertake Council related work that impacts on, or risks impacts to the environment.
- Council operations, activities, strategies, policies and programs.

Policy

Council is committed to:

- Managing and minimising its environmental impact by:
 - Reducing corporate emissions and adapting to climate impacts
 - Supporting the community to reduce emissions and adapt to the changing climate
 - Avoiding waste and maximising resource recovery in Council operations
 - Actively promoting and participating in the circular economy
 - Practicing sustainable procurement through purchasing products made from recycled content and using suppliers that utilise sustainable products and/or supply chains
 - Embedding environmentally sustainable design principles in Council building and infrastructure projects
 - Reducing potable water use and improving water quality
 - Ensuring stormwater and water sensitive urban design assets are appropriately designed and well-functioning
 - Driving environmentally sustainable development principles in planning and development
 - Identifying, managing, monitoring and reviewing environmental risks
 - Addressing risk of harm from contamination of land and groundwater
 - Educating staff and where appropriate contractors and other key partners
 - Collaborating with key partners to develop and deliver environmental initiatives
 - Continuously improving its environmental performance.
- Addressing its environmental obligations and duties by:
 - Complying with relevant Federal and State environmental legislation

- Implementing and continually improving an Environmental Management System.
- Ensuring diverse views and perspectives are considered in decision making.
- Caring for Country by:
 - Walking with Traditional Owners to heal and care for Country
 - Protecting and enhancing our natural environment by safeguarding cultural, biodiversity and landscape values.

Policy Implementation

This Environmental Management Policy will be implemented through:

- The continual review and improvement of the Environmental Management System
- Communication of the *Environmental Management Policy* and the Environmental Management System to staff, contractors, stakeholders, suppliers, consultants and volunteers.
- Actions, targets, measures and reporting associated with a number of Council policies, plans and management procedures including but not limited to: Climate Emergency, Circular Economy, Water, Sustainability, Risk and Governance, and Caring for Country.

SCS-060 *Environmental Management Policy* helps Council undertake obligations and duties required under a suite of State and Commonwealth legislation, Australian standards and local and regional plans.

Of particular note, this policy strengthens Council's response to:

- *Environment Protection Act 2017* (Vic) and its General Environmental Duties.
- *Climate Change Act 2017* (Vic)
- *Climate Change Act 2022* (Cth)

Table 1 below describes the relevance of the *Local Government Act 2020* to this policy.

Table 1: Principles of the Local Government Act 2020 and relevance to SCS 060 Environmental Management Policy

Principles	Applicable to policy	If yes, provide details
<p>Governance and Supporting Principles (Consideration of the Governance and Supporting Principles under s.9 of LGA 2020)</p>	Yes	<p><i>The following governance and supporting principles are particularly relevant:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law</i> b) <i>priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations</i> c) <i>the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted</i> d) <i>the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making</i> e) <i>innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued</i> f) <i>collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought</i>
<p>Community Engagement (Consideration of Community Engagement Principles under s.56 LGA 2020)</p>	Yes	<p><i>This policy's commitment to walk together with Traditional Owners to heal and care for Country (via Registered Aboriginal Parties) is consistent with the Community Engagement Principles listed in s56 of the Act</i></p>

<p>Public Transparency (Consideration of Public Transparency Principles under s.58 of LGA 2020)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>a) Council decisions regarding this policy will be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act. b) & (c) Information regarding this policy is intended to be available, understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community</p>
<p>Strategies and Plans (Consideration of Strategic Planning Principles under s.89 of LGA 2020)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>This policy is consistent with the Community Vision and Council Plan</p>
<p>Financial Management (Consideration of Financial Management Principles under s.101 of LGA 2020)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>This Policy is consistent with the Financial Management Principles of the Act</p>
<p>Service Performance (Consideration of Service Performance Principles under s.106 of LGA 2020)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>This policy is consistent with the Service Performance Principles, in particular: d) a Council should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the municipal community in response to performance monitoring</p>

Definitions

Environmental Management System (EMS) is a systematic approach or framework used to manage environmental hazards and risks, fulfill compliance obligations and address risks and opportunities.

AUS/NZ ISO14001 is an international standard that can help an organisation fulfil its environmental compliance obligations, enhance environmental performance and achieve environmental objectives. *AUS/NZ14001 Environmental Management Systems* has been used to guide the development of the Surf Coast Shire Council EMS.

Related Policies, Plans and Management Procedures

- Council Plan Incorporating Health and Wellbeing Plan (2021-2025)
- Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (December 2023-December 2024)
- Climate Emergency Response Plan 2021-2031 (incorporating Climate Emergency Response action plans)
- Environmentally Sustainable Council Facilities Policy (SCS 055)
- Acknowledgement of Country Policy (SCS 061)
- Asbestos Management Policy and Procedure (MPP 032)
- Circular Surf Coast: A Circular Economy Action Plan 2024-2027
- Surf Coast Planning Scheme
- Enterprise Risk Register, incorporating environmental risks
- Compliance and Enforcement Protocol (MPP 056)
- Control of Noise from Council Facilities Policy (SCS 015)
- Plastic Wise Events and Markets on Council owned / managed Land Policy (SCS 008)
- Project Management Framework
- Risk Appetite Statement for Environmental Leadership (Theme 3, Council Plan): “We have a higher appetite to increase the prominence of environmental leadership in our decision making even if it means disrupting traditional and current assumptions/patterns of expenditure and effort.”
- Risk Management Policy (SCS 021)
- Rabbit Management Policy (SCS 029)
- Risk Management Framework (MPR-033)
- Statutory Obligations Register (Review), 2024
- Strategic Asset Management Policy (SCS 005) and related Asset Management Plans

- Stormwater Treatment Asset Selection and Design Standards
- Native Vegetation Offsets Policy (SCS 036)

References

- Paleert Tjarra Dja, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation Country Plan (2020-2030)
- Meerreengeeye Ngakeepoorryeeyt, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation Country Plan (2015)
- *Australian Standard 14001: Environmental Management Systems*
- *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (Vic)*
- *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021 (Vic)*
- *Climate Change Act 2017 (Vic)*
- *Climate Change Act 2022 (Cth)*
- *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 (Vic)*
- *Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic)*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)*
- *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic)*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Marine and Coastal Act 2018 (Vic)*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020 (Cth)*
- *Recycling Victoria: A new economy (2020)*
- *Wildlife Act 1975 (Vic)*

Document History

Version	Document History	Approved by – Date
1	Original	Council Resolution – 25 June 2024