

Environmental Management

STRATEGY 2006



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Libby Mears
Mayor
Surf Coast Shire

Foreword by the Mayor

This land, its natural and cultural resources has long been cared for by its original Indigenous custodians the Kirrae Wurrung, Wada Wurrung and Gulidjan communities. The Surf Coast Shire acknowledges this relationship and pays respect to the past and present Indigenous people for their ongoing nurturing of this land.

As a community we are privileged to live, work and play in a beautiful and unique natural environment. From our thriving coastal and rural towns, to our national parks, nature reserves and wondrous coastline, our estuaries, rivers and wetlands and productive farmland, we have a responsibility to future generations to ensure that in partnership we manage and protect these precious natural assets. This Environmental Management Strategy aims to enhance these environmental values, while being sensitive to social and economic needs of our vibrant and active communities.

This Strategy adopts a holistic approach to environmental management. It is a broad ranging document affecting all business units within Council, the wider community and other local authorities that have management responsibilities within the Shire. There is also clear intention by Council to ensure all Council decisions and activities are not done in isolation, but consider regional, state-wide and national priorities, while always working in partnership at the local level to address local issues.

The Environmental Management Strategy is a shared vision – it reflects the values and aspirations of our community. Particular thanks must go to those who have contributed to this Strategy; to the Environment and Open Space Planning Department and other Council staff and partners for guiding the development of the Strategy; to the members of the Surf Coast Shire Environment Advisory Committee who have contributed their significant skills and expertise as well as their passions for our environment, and to the many community members who have participated in programs or provided input into environmental strategies or plans for our region – their participation and input has helped shape the issues addressed in this document.

Our challenge is to now implement this Strategy and ensure the protection and enhancement of our precious natural environment now and into the future.

Introduction

Surf Coast Shire is committed to creating sustainable communities.

In 1987, the World Commission on the Environment (WCED) published a report 'Our Common Future' which defined the concept of sustainable development as:

"...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs."

In 1992, Australia published a National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development, which chose the following definition for Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD).

"...using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased."

In 1997 John Elkington broadened the concept to encompass what we now know as the triple bottom line of environmental, social and economic responsibility. He defined sustainability as;

"The principle of ensuring that our actions today do not limit the range of economic, social and environmental options open to future generations."

Surf Coast Shire strives to create communities that are prosperous from all three perspectives. Indeed, all three pillars of sustainability are interconnected and support each other. It is difficult to manage the environment effectively if the economy is failing, and hard to create a healthy economy in a society without social capital. Similarly, a healthy environment underpins both a vibrant society and a strong economy.

Environmental values are important in their own right for their aesthetic and spiritual qualities. However, rich biodiversity, clean water systems and climate stability are

vital to the protection and proper functioning of natural ecosystems. These ecosystems sustain the natural resource base on which we survive, namely productive farm land, water supply, clean air and species diversity.

The Surf Coast Shire has a wealth of natural resources, some of national and international significance. All sectors of the environment are ultimately connected, whether it is indigenous vegetation binding river banks and filtering water before it enters an estuary and then the ocean, or an increase in global temperatures potentially pushing that indigenous vegetation to extinction. This interconnection makes it vital to take a holistic approach to environmental management, and often to take a regional or catchment scale view.

The natural environment, while initially shaped by landscapes, climate and evolution, is increasingly shaped by human population, including tourist visitation, and development pressures. As populations increase, unsustainable modes of resource use that might have served us in the past e.g. taking, using and dumping, can no longer be considered acceptable. As the human impact of development spreads over the landscape, ecosystems lose their ability to adapt and migrate over the land in response to natural disturbance, climate shifts or bush fire, and so become vulnerable to complete collapse.

Our challenge is to work in partnership with the community and other management agencies to bring our environment into a position of balance, of sustainability into the future. We must carefully choose what resources we take, use them sparingly and efficiently, reuse as many times as possible and ultimately recycle the resource. We must protect and enhance our remnant biodiversity and look after the health of our broader ecosystems so that they may sustain the natural resource base on which we depend. The responses listed in this strategy aim to do just that.

Painkalac Creek, looking upstream



Surf Coast Shire Profile

Landscape and Population

Surf Coast Shire is located in the south-west region of Victoria, 21 kilometres south of Geelong and an hour and a half drive from Melbourne. The Shire was proclaimed on 9 March 1994 with the amalgamation of parts of the former municipalities of Barrabool, Winchelsea and South Barwon.

The Shire has an area of 1,560 square kilometres with some 55 kilometres of coastline defining its south-eastern boundary. It shares municipal boundaries with the City of Greater Geelong to the north and east, Golden Plains Shire to the north and the Colac Otway Shire to the west.

The Shire is strongly influenced by physical and topographical features, which impact on urban development and land use management. It is characterised

by a diverse range of environments including rugged coastline, dense native forests, rolling rural plains and important rivers, lakes and wetlands. In the course of time these features have contributed to creating distinctive communities with quite different expectations about how their areas should develop.

The southern part of the Shire is characterised by a linear pattern of coastal townships along the Great Ocean Road including Torquay, Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Moggs Creek and Lorne. With the exception of Torquay, these towns are sited on the coastal edge of the Otway Ranges and are surrounded by substantial tracts of public land comprising heathlands, heathy woodlands and forest, restricting the development of roads and infrastructure. North of the Otways is a large and distinctive rural community including the townships of Winchelsea, Deans Marsh and Moriac. The township of Torquay is the Shire's main business and commercial centre.

There are three distinct Bioregions within the Surf Coast Shire, known as the Otway Ranges Bioregion, Otway Plain Bioregion and Victorian Volcanic Plain Bioregion. These are three of the 28 Bioregions found in the state of Victoria. Each Bioregion identifies different ecological characteristics and underlying environmental features that reflect natural boundaries and relationships between biodiversity assets and natural resource based activities. Bioregions are used primarily Natural Resource Managers to undertake regional scale planning tasks.

See Figure 2



Figure 1 : Shire map

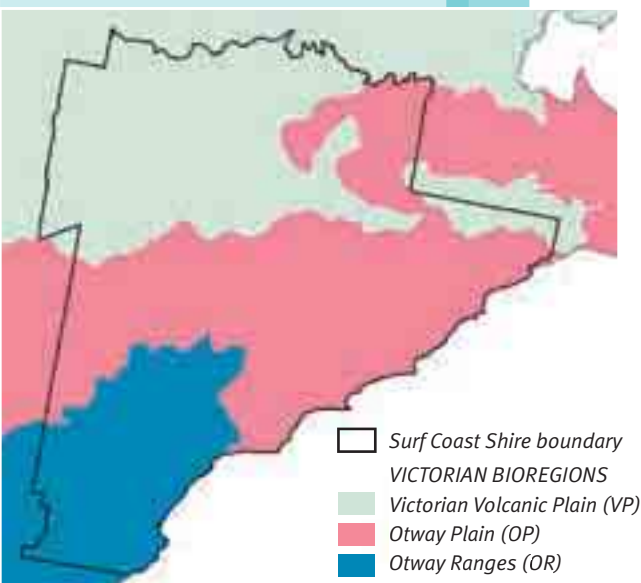


Figure 2 : Bioregions

The Otway Plain Bioregion includes the coastal plains and dunes, the foothills with river valleys and swamps in the lowlands. The ridges seen today mark the positions of different successive shorelines as the ocean has retreated from these areas over time to where it is today. As a result, the upper terrain contains texture contrast soils that support Lowland Forest and Heathy Woodland ecosystems. The dunes are predominantly sandy soils and the floodplains and swamps are earths, pale yellow and grey texture contrast soils that predominantly support Grassy Woodland and Plains Grassy Woodland ecosystems.

The Otway Ranges Bioregion consists of moderate to steep slopes that are deeply dissected blocks of alternating beds of sandstone, siltstone and shales and swampy alluvium in the lowlands. The geology is made up of non-marine deposits covered with a veneer of younger deposits at lower elevations. Brown earths and brown texture contrast soils can be found throughout the bioregion with leached sands in the lowlands. These soils support but are not restricted to various forest types including Cool Temperate Rainforest, Herb Rich Forest, as well as Heathy Woodland, Coastal Dune Scrub, Heathland and Estuarine Wetlands ecosystems.

The Victorian Volcanic Plain Bioregion contains highly significant remnant vegetation communities that are supported by volcanic deposits that form an extensive flat to undulating basaltic landscape. This landscape contains old eruption points, volcanic cones, remnants of old lava flows and stony rises that are complemented by a combination of shallow salt and freshwater lakes.

The soils in this bioregion are variable, including red texture contrast soils on the higher fertile plain that support highly significant Grasslands and Grassy Woodlands.

The intermediate plain containing contrasting soils including yellow acidic earths, along with the grey cracking clays of the lower plains, support a mosaic of Stony Knoll Shrubland, Grassy Woodlands and Grassy Wetlands. The stony rises and stony earths support Herb-rich Woodlands and Foothill Forest ecosystems.

Source : DSE website www.dse.vic.gov.au

Reserve areas including Crown Land Reserves and Council owned and managed areas are scattered across each of these Bioregions. The majority is Crown Land forming the Otway Ranges and the linear coastal strip. These Reserve areas account for slightly less than one-quarter of the total area of the Municipality. Much of the Otway Ranges (that also extend beyond the Shire boundaries) are now part of the Great Otway National Park managed by Parks Victoria. The coastal strip is predominantly managed by the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee and Parks Victoria. The remaining majority of the land within the municipality is freehold title managed as private land. The Surf Coast Shire Council is a relatively small land owner and/or manager, with less than 1% under its ownership and/or management. The multiplicity of land managers can make the delivery of environmental outcomes challenging. However, it also highlights the importance of working in partnership with other agencies.



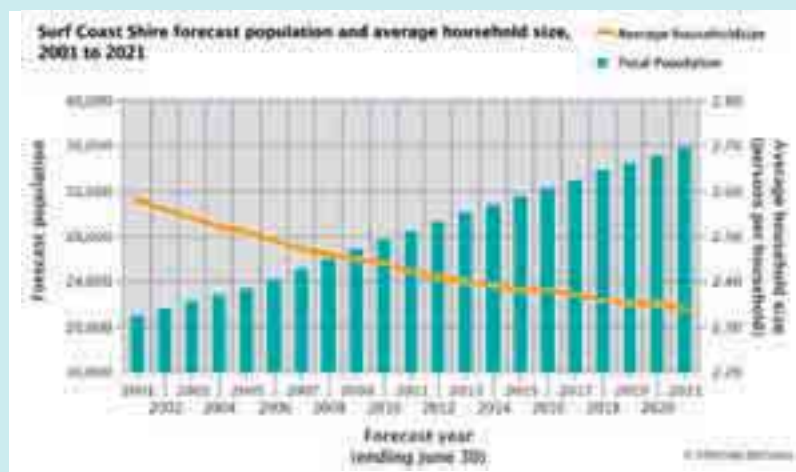
Figure 3: Map of Surf Coast Shire showing areas of Crown Land in green

The Shire acknowledges its unique geographical location and the strengths of its regional position. These include proximity to major road and rail networks, the Port of Geelong and Avalon Airport. Iconic sites such as Bells Beach Surfing Recreational Reserve, the Great Ocean Road, the Great Otway National Park as well as beautiful coastal and hinterland areas attract tourists and residents alike.

Surf Coast Shire's population has grown rapidly in recent years. Between the years 2002 and 2022, the Shire's population is predicted to increase by about 15,000 people, of which approximately 10,000 will reside in Torquay, effectively doubling Torquay's size in that time.

The predicted population growth pattern for Surf Coast Shire is summarised in the chart to the right. While population is shown to increase, the number of people per household is decreasing, as indicated by the yellow line. Both the absolute increase in population as well as the downward trend in house occupation rates places increased pressure on all aspects of the environment, but provides particular challenges in the areas of resource efficiency and biodiversity management.

Further information on Surf Coast Shire's population trends can be accessed on <http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/commprofiles.htm?p9>



Purpose and Layout of this Strategy

This Environmental Management Strategy for Surf Coast Shire aims to build on achievements made under the Surf Coast Shire Environment and Conservation Plan (1998). The Surf Coast Shire Environment and Conservation Plan (1998) was the template for the Shire's environmental management programs throughout the late 1990's and the early part of this millennium (see "Learning From the Past – A Review of the Surf Coast Shire Environment & Conservation Plan (1998)"). This new strategy differs from the 1998 Plan in that it is focused solely on strategic level aims and responses. The action level detail that was previously combined with strategic content in the 1998 Plan will instead be held in an annual plan written each year to implement this strategy. It is envisaged that this strategic level document will stay current and set the direction for the next 5 to 10 years, with the yearly implementation plan allowing a flexible response from year to year.

The guiding principle of this new Strategy is to protect, manage and enhance the local environment while making a contribution to regional, state and national environmental objectives.

This guiding principle is articulated through the development of one or more responses (actions) to each environmental management issue pertinent to the activities of Council. The issues and responses are set out under the following management categories.

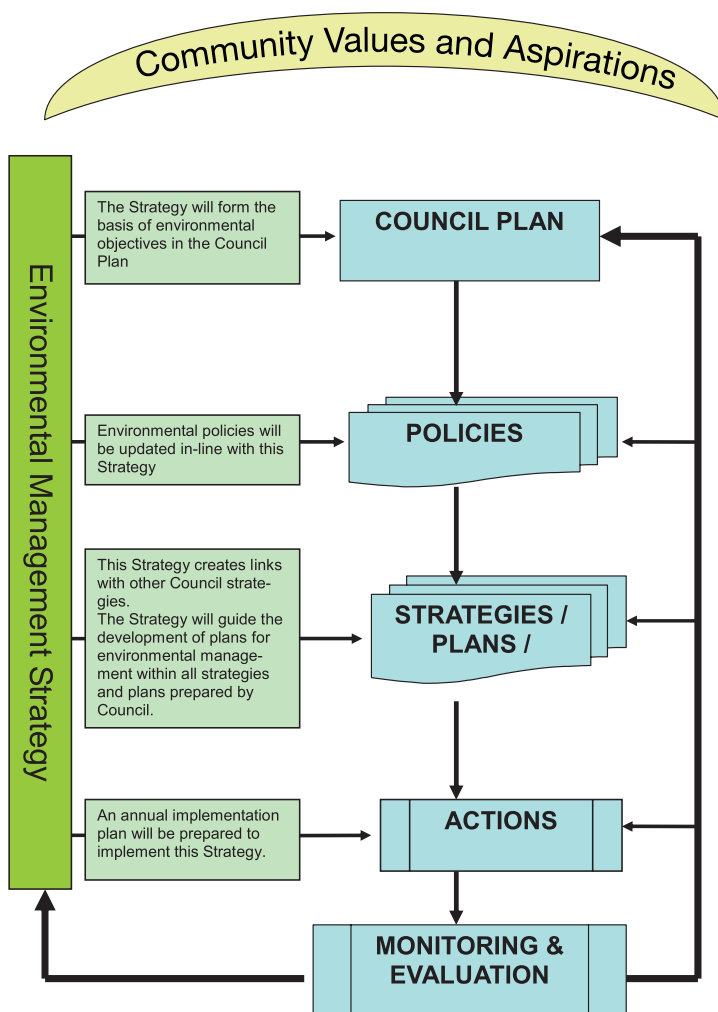
1. *Balanced Decision Making*
2. *Environmental Education*
3. *Biodiversity*
4. *Pest Plants and Animals*
5. *The Coastline*
6. *Waterways, Lakes and Wetlands*
7. *Resource Efficiency*
8. *Targets and Transparency*



Surf Coast - Great Otway National Park, Point Addis Marine National Park and Bells Beach

How will the Strategy be implemented?

This Strategy is an organisation-wide document that relates to the operation of all business units within Council. Business units and Councillors alike will use this document throughout Council's decision making and planning cycle, as indicated below. It is also anticipated that community groups and partner organisations will take note of Council's priorities when setting their own objectives.



Each year, Council will prepare an implementation plan for this Environmental Management Strategy. Ideas for actions to be included in the implementation plan will come from specialist staff combined with input from the broader community and Council's Environment Advisory Committee (ENVAC).

Continual input from the community into implementing this Strategy will be obtained through Council's Community Engagement processes. Council is committed to engaging with communities through a number of mechanisms including speaking with existing local groups and clubs, and establishing local advisory panels that can put forward ideas on how Council can meet local needs.

The first step in relation to this Strategy will involve visits to townships by staff from Council's Environment and Open Space Planning Department. During these visits, staff will meet specifically with local environment groups as well as setting up a display where residents and visitors can discuss their ideas for environment programs directly with staff.

It is also envisaged that ongoing contact with local communities will be achieved as part of the implementation of environmental activities within the Shire.

Figure 4: How the Environmental Management Strategy will be used in Council decision making

National, Regional, State & Local Context of Environmental Management

In addition to local issues raised by members of the community, there are a number of drivers of environmental management within Surf Coast Shire. These drivers come from national, state, and regional priorities set by the Commonwealth, the Victorian Government, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and the Western Coastal Board.

For example, a current priority within all levels of government is water conservation and quality. As such, the Australian and Victorian Governments have developed policies and programs that are delivered partly through Local Government, and therefore significantly influence the activities of Council.

Figure 5 below summarises further examples of the policies, legislation and strategies that influence environmental management priorities in Surf Coast Shire.



National Legislation, Policies, Strategies and Programs

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- National Greenhouse Strategy
- National Water Initiative
- Cities for Climate Protection Program
- Threatened Species Management Plans
- National Sea Change Task Force
- National Parks Act 1975

Victorian Legislation, Policies, Strategies and Programs

- Victorian Greenhouse Strategy
- Our Water Our Future
- Victoria's Native Vegetation: A Framework for Action
- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Planning & Environment Act 1987
- Victorian Coastal Strategy
- Victorian Weed Strategy
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Towards Zero Waste Strategy

Regional Plans and Strategies

- Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy
- Corangamite Region River Health Strategy
- Central West Victorian Regional Coastal Action Plan
- Central West Estuaries Coastal Action Plan
- Great Ocean Road Region Strategy
- G21 Strategic Plan
- Corangamite Native Vegetation Plan 2003-08

Council Plan. Shire Policies, Strategies & Management Plans.

- Surf Coast Shire: Planning Scheme
- Council Plan
- Your Visions Community Plan
- Local Greenhouse Action Plan
- Pathways Strategy
- Pest Plant and Animal Action Plan
- Rural Roadside Management Strategy
- Solid Waste Management Plan
- Various Reserve Master Plans and Management Plans

Figure 5: National, State, Regional and Local influences on environmental management in Surf Coast Shire

Where did the ideas come from for this Strategy?

Information considered in the preparation of this Strategy includes:

- *Public consultation and research undertaken in preparation and implementation of the Surf Coast Shire Environment Conservation Plan (1998).*
- *Information gathered from community workshops held in 2003 across the Shire in preparation of Your Visions, the document that underpins the Shire's Community Plan.*
- *A detailed review of documents that apply to environmental management in Surf Coast Shire over approximately the last 10 years. A summary of the data collected is shown in Table 1.*
- *Advice from Council's Environment Advisory Committee (ENVAC) and other advisory committees. The main issues raised include pest plants and animals, protection of environmental values through balanced decision making and the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme, estuary management, community engagement and community participation in environmental programs.*
- *Expertise and knowledge of Council, Council staff and Officers from other public authorities.*

Information obtained through these sources is considered a good basis for objectives in this Strategy, but it recognised that the ideas need to be tested through further and ongoing community engagement. This will be achieved through implementation of Council's Community Engagement Framework, as detailed earlier in this document.

TABLE 1
Summary of environmental issues raised through previous community consultation processes

| Category of Environmental Issue | Frequency of Occurrence | Notes on Category |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| Biodiversity - general | 86 | Includes general biodiversity issues such as habitat quality, revegetation, biolinks, etc. Aquatic biodiversity and terrestrial biodiversity have separate categories. |
| Waterways | 53 | Includes water quality and hydrology only. Aquatic biodiversity has its own category. (quality, hydrology) |
| Landscape amenity | 41 | Relates specifically to landscape values, land use planning and amenity. |
| Land management | 33 | Agricultural issues and physical land management issues are included. (erosion, salinity, etc) |
| Pest Plants & Animals | 23 | Includes all pest plants and animals issues. |
| Coast management | 21 | Includes management issues associated with beaches, dunes, marine environments, etc. |
| Biodiversity - aquatic | 13 | Specifically relates to aquatic biodiversity. |
| Greenhouse | 12 | Relates to greenhouse gas emissions, abatement and monitoring. |
| Resource conservation | 8 | Relates to general issues associated with conserving water and energy. (other than specific greenhouse issues) |
| General environmental | 7 | Makes broad reference to sustainable environmental management practices and issues, which are not specific to any category. |
| Waste | 7 | Specific solid waste management issues. |
| Biodiversity - terrestrial | 6 | Specifically relates to terrestrial biodiversity. |
| Air Quality (other than greenhouse. Eg, odour) | 4 | Includes only issues associated with odour and chemical air emissions. |
| Biodiversity - fire | 4 | Specific issues concerning fire management and its relationship with biodiversity. |
| Research | 2 | General environmental research. |
| Culture & Heritage | 1 | Most culture and heritage issues are documented within non-environmental documents. Review of these documents was outside the scope of the review. |

Learning From The Past

A Review of the Surf Coast Shire Environment and Conservation Plan (1998)

The Surf Coast Shire Environmental Conservation Plan (1998) was the template for environmental management programs in the Shire throughout the late 1990's and the early part of this millennium. The Plan was significant in that it sent a clear message to the Surf Coast community that Council was serious about managing environmental resources, and also placed Surf Coast Shire at the forefront of environmental management amongst Victoria's regional Shires.

The Plan is composed not only of catchment and landcare type actions typically seen in municipal environmental management documents of the 1990's, but also considers emerging issues, such as greenhouse gas abatement and water conservation, that until very recently were not part of mainstream thinking.

The main categories of environmental management included in the Plan are:

- *Coastal and Marine Conservation*
- *Catchment and Land Management*
- *Natural and Cultural Heritage*
- *Resource Conservation*
- *Community Involvement*

Numerous actions exist for each category, with most being achieved through the implementation of the Plan. Many of the actions not achieved are a result of changes to responsibilities within levels of Government, where Surf Coast Shire is no longer the responsible authority for that action. For example, in the late 1990's Council played a major role in coastal management, but during the life of the Plan new foreshore committees (now the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee) became the lead authority for coastal management.

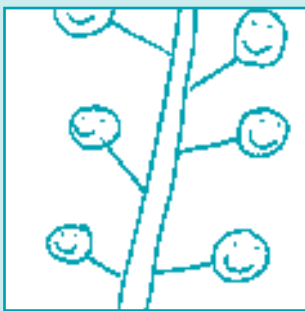
Significant knowledge and experience gained from implementing the Plan will be used when implementing the new Strategy. The main learning's were:

1. *Stakeholder participation in environment programs is the best form of environmental education. Providing information alone generally fails to provide people or groups with the capacity to undertake behaviour change.*
2. *The most successful environmental management programs are those based on ideas driven from groups or individuals within the community. 'Imposing' a program onto a community rarely works.*
3. *Volunteer environment groups are extremely active within Surf Coast Shire. Supporting these groups not only facilitates significant on-ground works, but helps maintain social networks and community pride.*
4. *The Surf Coast community has a high appreciation for the local environment, with many people citing environmental values as central to the character of the municipality.*
5. *Responsibilities for land management in Surf Coast Shire are often extremely complex and difficult to understand. For example, five land managers exist within one square kilometre around the Painkalac Creek estuary. This is often a significant challenge when trying to achieve integrated management.*
6. *Council manages less than 1% of land within the Shire. Therefore, Council must find ways to achieve positive environmental outcomes for the community on land it does not directly manage. The most successful ways have been through the development of strong partnerships with other land managers, through advocacy on issues important to the community, volunteer groups, and via the Planning Scheme through the development approval and strategic planning processes for private and public land.*
7. *Environmental programs are enhanced by promoting ownership and involvement across the organisation of Council, rather than relying on one individual or business unit to solely implement a project. Therefore, information sharing and collaboration between business units will be fundamental to the success of this Strategy.*
8. *Whilst it is important to set targets and actions that are achievable within Council's resource constraints, it is equally important to set goals that may at first seem difficult to achieve. This approach encourages innovation and imagination.*
9. *A great deal can be achieved through developing strong relationships and networks with partner agencies, particularly those that share similar priorities and can provide support and/or opportunities for external funding to help implement Council and community environmental projects. In recent years, SurfCoast Shire has attracted several hundred-thousand dollars of external investment into environmental assets and programs within the municipality.*

A Map for the Future

This section of the Environmental Management Strategy identifies the environmental management issues faced by Council and the responses Council intends to implement.

The issues are divided into eight management categories, with each category of issues having one or more over-arching aim. These aims clearly state what Council is striving to achieve through this Strategy. Certain aims may not be achievable in the short term and will therefore require innovation and imagination to ultimately achieve the desired outcome.



1. Balanced Decision Making

Council's aim:

Inspire the Surf Coast Shire community and visitors to take into account environmental considerations as well as economic and social factors in their day-to-day activities.

Be innovative and progressive in the way Council protects, manages and enhances environmental values while promoting economic prosperity, social equity, health and well being.

2. Environmental Awareness and Education

Council's aim:

Ensure Council is a leader through environmentally sustainable practices, and supports and educates Surf Coast residents and visitors to live, work and play in a more sustainable way.

Influence and lobby decision makers and professionals in all sectors of the community whose actions impact on the environment values of the Surf Coast Shire.

3. Biodiversity

Council's aim:

Reverse the current rate of decline in the extent and quality of biodiversity in Surf Coast for it to be enjoyed by current and future generations.



4. Pest Plants and Animals

Council's aim:

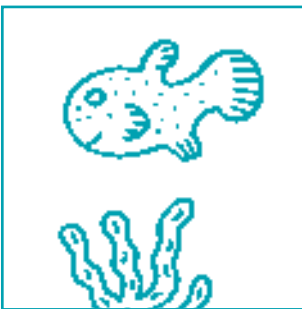
Collaborate with partner agencies to ensure effective management of pest plants and animals within the Shire through ongoing eradication and control programs.



5. The Coastline

Council's aim:

Ensure the coast retains the environmental, cultural and other values which make it an iconic attraction in Australia through Council's planning, management and influence. This will be achieved in conjunction with other local, regional and state authorities.



6. Waterways, Lakes and Wetlands

Council's aim:

Work with the community and partner agencies to protect and enhance the health of waterways, lakes and wetlands in Surf Coast Shire.



7. Resource Efficiency

Council's aim:

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions of Council's activities and offset those which cannot be avoided. Through the strategies developed and lessons learnt, help the community do the same.

Work towards zero wastage of potable water by Council. Through the strategies developed and lessons learnt, help the community do the same.

Work towards extending the planned life of the Anglesea land fill by five years beyond the projected close of 2016 through strategies which aggressively pursue waste avoidance and minimisation and measures which increase recycling, recovery and reuse (of all waste streams including green waste).



8. Targets and Transparency

Council's aim:

Measure and monitor key environmental indicators and set time-limited targets which drive performance and improvement.

Provide regular, transparent and consistent reporting on progress against environmental improvement targets.



I. Balanced Decision Making

Issue 1.1: Community Engagement

Individuals and communities have the right to participate in decisions that affect them, and there is an expectation that Local Government will create mechanisms to allow this to happen.

An engaged community presents a great opportunity for the Shire to actively work with the community and develop a shared understanding of the issues and a collaborative approach to problem solving.

Effective community engagement will ensure that council plans accurately reflect community aspirations, needs and opinions. Surf Coast has a strong commitment to developing community skills and capacities particularly through the Casuarina project and has consulted widely in developing the Community Plan.

Surf Coast Shire is now implementing a Community Engagement Framework that is built upon a foundation of community driven 'Local Area Planning'. In this process, local communities will be supported to generate plans that reflect the values and priorities of local areas.

The community is also continually engaged through participation in environmental programs undertaken by the Shire. Feedback and knowledge gained from participants is extremely important the development of new programs.

Response:

- 1.1.1 Use Council's Community Engagement Framework to seek input from all sectors of the community regarding the implementation and evaluation of this Strategy.
- 1.1.2 Continue to facilitate, support and seek advice from Council's community advisory committee on environmental issues, ENVAC (Environment Advisory Committee).
- 1.1.3 Coordinate and facilitate Implementation Committees for major projects to ensure community groups and individuals have the opportunity for ongoing participation in projects.
- 1.1.4 Document participant feedback and the knowledge gained from implementing environmental programs under this Strategy.



Community Workshop

Council's aim:

Inspire the Surf Coast Shire community and visitors to take into account environmental considerations as well as economic and social factors in their day-to-day activities.

Be innovative and progressive in the way Council protects, manages and enhances environmental values while promoting economic prosperity, social equity, health and well being.

Issue 1.2: ESE (Economic/Social/ Environmental) Decision Making Tools

Local Government has many challenges, with one of biggest being how to balance numerous factors when making decisions on behalf of the community. In a broad sense, every time Council allocates funding, assesses development applications and prioritises work programs, it must do so in the context of financial constraints, community needs, and environmental impacts.

Surf Coast Shire Council has responded to this by making a commitment in the Council Plan to conduct business within a framework that values economic, social and environmental perspectives.

Response:

- 1.2.1 Develop robust decision making processes and tools that protect and enhance the Shire's unique environmental values, whilst promoting economic prosperity, social equity and healthy people. Tools will be specifically developed for prioritising capital works and prioritising rezoning applications for land use planning.
- 1.2.2 Ensure strong links and cross-referencing between Council strategies and management plans.



Friends of Merrans Reserve - working bee.



2. Environmental Awareness and Education

Issue 2.1: Effective behaviour change

Historically, the most prevalent method of encouraging sustainable behaviour has been the provision of information on why and how to change. However, recent research has shown that to achieve behavioural change on a community or household scale, it is not enough simply to provide information.

Based on the work of Doug McKenzie-Mohr and Les Robinson, a more comprehensive approach will now be sought.

In addition to providing a vision as to why behavioural change is important and what change is required, Council seeks to identify barriers to change, and to provide the skills and experiences to make change convenient. Importantly, behavioural change needs to be wrapped up in a sense of community and achievement.

In pursuing this approach, Council seeks to learn from its experiences through a learning action cycle, which will continually improve how we engage and influence the wider community.

Response:

- 2.1.1 Implement environmental programs that provide opportunities for community participation, with the aim of giving people knowledge, skills and experiences of environmental issues. This approach will be adopted in preference to simply providing information about environmental issues.
- 2.1.2 Facilitate a range of environmental education programs each year that provide opportunities for all ages and interests.
- 2.1.3 Prepare and publicise an annual calendar of environmental events.
- 2.1.4 When possible, reward and celebrate with people and groups who have achieved success in maintaining and enhancing the environmental values of the Shire.
- 2.1.5 Support other groups and agencies' environmental awareness projects, including partnering opportunities.
- 2.1.6 Lobby and seek to influence relevant decision makers in all sectors regarding the environmental values of the Surf Coast Shire and their sustainable management.



Agroforestry field day

Stakeholder participation in environment programs is the best form of environmental education

Council's aim:

Ensure Council is a leader through environmentally sustainable practices and supports and educates Surf Coast residents and visitors to live, work and play in a more sustainable way.

Influence and lobby decision makers and professionals in all sectors of the community whose actions impact on the environmental values of the Surf Coast Shire.

Issue 2.2: Informing people of their responsibilities

Surf Coast Shire is a popular place for tourists and new residents alike and has experienced rapid population growth in recent years. Population forecasts indicate that the number of residents will continue to grow in the foreseeable future, particularly in Torquay.

Many new residents will come from outside the region and may not be aware of their legal responsibilities in terms of pest plant and feral animal control, native floral and faunal protection, and fire risk management.

Although the onus is on individuals to abide by the law, local government has a role in helping people familiarise themselves with local issues and acceptable land management practices.

Response:

- 2.2.1 Assist new and existing residents to become aware of their responsibilities in relation to pest plant management, pest animal control, native animals, indigenous vegetation and fire risk management. One way to achieve this will be to distribute New Resident Information Kits to all new property owners, which includes information on pest plants, feral animals, native animals, indigenous vegetation and fire risk. Another is to establish Good Neighbour Programs with existing residents.
- 2.2.2 Encourage all residents to participate in local environmental groups and Landcare by continuing to distribute the Surf Coast Shire Environment Directory, which contains contact information for all environmental groups within the Shire.
- 2.2.3 Improve and keep up to date, information on the Surf Coast Shire web site.



World Wetlands Day - Winchelsea Primary School



3. Biodiversity

Issue 3.1: Council owned and/or managed public open space

Council owns or has management responsibility for about 80 open space sites in the municipality, covering approximately 1,000 hectares of land. Most of these sites are small local parks or playgrounds, sporting reserves and conservation ('nature') reserves.

Approximately 30 of the sites are managed primarily for conservation and passive nature based recreation purposes (Nature Reserves), but many more sites have stands of indigenous vegetation situated amongst other facilities, such as sporting ovals. An example of this is Bellbrae Reserve, where active sporting facilities are surrounded by indigenous vegetation that provides habitat for indigenous flora and fauna and enhances local amenity.

Vegetation communities and species of conservation significance have been mapped on most Nature Reserves in the municipality, but the level of detail is not such that the location of all significant species is known. Filling this void is an important objective to help Council plan for appropriate management of biodiversity values in the future.

The most ecologically significant Reserves are those with vegetation types not commonly found in the region. Rice Reserve and a small number of others in the Shire are populated by vegetation so rare it is considered to be of National significance.

Other Reserves are not as ecologically significant, but are extremely significant in terms of local identity. These Reserves provide a unique local community resource and often a place for social interaction and community strengthening. For instance, many volunteer environment groups, such as ANGAIR carry out environmental weeding, regeneration and studies within some of the conservation or Nature Reserves. Such activities are invaluable to the management of biodiversity values on Council land.



Short-beaked Echidna - Tachyglossus aculeatus

Supporting community environment groups not only facilitates significant on-ground works, but helps maintain social networks and community pride

Council's aim:

Reverse the current rate of decline in the extent and quality of biodiversity in Surf Coast for it to be enjoyed by current and future generations.

Response:

- 3.1.1 Integrate the activities of all relevant Council Departments to enable cross-unit planning and management of Council managed land. This will enable continual specialist input from Council's Environment Officers to assist with appropriate management of biodiversity assets. Critical processes that require cross-unit planning are works programming for Reserve maintenance, capital works planning, constructing or upgrading infrastructure, tourism initiatives, small and large scale public events, fire prevention and prescribed burning, assessment of development applications, zoning of land, open space planning and recreation planning.
- 3.1.2 Collect information on biodiversity values present on Council land, such as species of conservation significance, vegetation communities and threatening processes.
- 3.1.3 Make the information on biodiversity values readily available to Shire staff, community groups and other interested parties.
- 3.1.4 Prepare and upgrade Management Plans for all reserves, which address significant biodiversity values and fire management, as appropriate.
- 3.1.5 Work in partnership with and support volunteer community groups, educational organisations, neighbours and other government authorities to manage the biodiversity values on or adjacent to Council land.
- 3.1.6 Control and eradicate (where possible) pest plants, pest animals, diseases and pathogens.
- 3.1.7 Protect and enhance significant species and communities.
- 3.1.8 Control and prevent soil degradation and erosion.
- 3.1.9 Avoid the importation of soils containing weeds, pathogens and/or diseases onto Reserve areas.



Grasstree Park Nature Reserve, Torquay.

- 3.1.10 Provide suitable, safe public access within Reserves, consistent with the protection of natural and cultural heritage features.
- 3.1.11 Utilise indigenous plant species and local provenance seed sources in revegetation and habitat enhancement projects.
- 3.1.12 Incorporate the controlled use of fire to maintain and enhance ecological diversity, where appropriate.
- 3.1.13 Monitor and evaluate the condition of biodiversity values and use the information as the basis for ongoing management practices.



3. Biodiversity

Issue 3.2: Council managed roadsides

The Surf Coast Shire manages 1100kms of road network, stretching across a varied landscape of steep valleys, open plains, foothills and forests. Management of the road network includes management of roadside vegetation which is the linear stretch of grasses, shrubs and trees located between the road shoulder and the adjacent property boundary.

In 1997, 193 rural roadsides were assessed for their plant species and conservation significance. The results of the assessment were detailed in the document “Surf Coast Shire Remnant Roadside Vegetation Report, 1997”. The results of the assessment included:

- *Council manages 513.5kms of high conservation and 345kms of medium conservation roadside vegetation;*
- *The vegetation communities on the roadsides have species of national, state and regional significance;*
- *Roadside vegetation is often the only remaining representation of certain vegetation types in the landscape; and*
- *Roadside vegetation plays an important ecological and aesthetic role in the landscape.*

Since that time, the “Rural Roadside Management Strategy” and “Code of Environmental Practise for Works on Rural Roadsides and other Council Controlled Land” have been prepared and partially implemented. The Strategy provides the strategic direction, objectives and actions relating to roadside vegetation management, while the Code is a technical document designed to inform Best Practice planning and implementation for on-ground works.

Response:

- 3.2.1 Continue to implement the existing Rural Roadside Management Strategy and Code of Environmental Practise for Works on Rural Roadsides and other Council Controlled Land.
- 3.2.2 Develop a communication protocol with other organisations that have a responsibility for or role in roadside management, such as VicRoads and CFA, to ensure actions are coordinated and resources are shared when appropriate.
- 3.2.3 Work in partnership with the Department of Sustainability and Environment to identify and address roadside areas that do not currently have vegetation protection overlays.

*Pink Heath -
Epacris impressa*



Council's aim:

Reverse the current rate of decline in the extent and quality of biodiversity in Surf Coast for it to be enjoyed by current and future generations.

Issue 3.3: Biodiversity on private land

The 1996 report "Environmental Resources of the Surf Coast Shire" identifies 46 sites of environmental significance in the municipality. This report was initially used to guide the application of overlay controls on private land when Council prepared the New Format Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme in 1996.

The Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) and Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO), provide a trigger for the need of a planning permit unless otherwise exempted. The Wildfire Management Overlay (WMO) and Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) also guide the process of vegetation management from a safety perspective. This enables Council and referral agencies, such as the Department of Sustainability and Environment, to be part of the land use and development process to ensure that the use and/or development is consistent with State and local government policy objectives in relation to biodiversity management.

For many years it has been contended that the most successful outcomes in biodiversity conservation on private land are best achieved through a combination of regulation and incentives. Therefore, in addition to the statutory regulations provided the Planning Scheme and other relevant legislation, Council is in an ideal position to deliver incentives and education programs that foster an ethic of conservation and environmental care on private land.

Issue 3.4: Biodiversity on Crown Land

Approximately 30,000 hectares of public open space exists in the Shire, most of which is on Crown Land managed by organisations other than Council (see table below)

| Manager | Approx. area of open space managed (ha)* |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Parks Victoria | 20,000 |
| DSE | 8,000 |
| Great Ocean Road Coast Committee | 1500 |
| Surf Coast Shire | 1040 |
| *Other Committees of Management | 300 |
| Total | 30,000 |

*Accurate data not available from management committees.
Marine areas excluded.

Response:

- 3.3.1 Review and input new information on areas of biodiversity significance on private and public land within the Shire, into the Planning Scheme, as this information becomes available.
- 3.3.2 Continue to strengthen Local Policies for biodiversity protection in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme to ensure land use development is done in a way that protects, and enhances where possible, biodiversity values.
- 3.3.3 Continue to develop and implement education and awareness programs for private land holders through the Biodiversity Conservation Incentives Program. This includes facilitating field days, farm planning sessions and providing incentives for the protection of biodiversity.
- 3.3.4 Participate in and support regional and catchment programs that protect and enhance biodiversity values on private land. This includes providing administrative, technical and financial support to community environment groups, such as Landcare or the like.
- 3.3.5 Continue to update and make available to the community the Surf Coast Shire Indigenous Planting Guide and encourage residents to plant indigenous species.

Much of the land managed by Parks Victoria is part of the new Great Otway National Park and therefore represents the major conservation resource in the Shire. In this context, an important function of Council is participating in planning and decision making with all Crown Land managers in the Shire.

Response:

- 3.4.1 Foster a cooperative and partnership philosophy in Council's relationship with other Crown Land managers within the municipality. This may include sharing resources and information across tenures and jurisdiction where a clear environmental benefit can be demonstrated.



4. Pest Plants and Animals

Council's aim:

Collaborate with partner agencies to ensure effective management of pest plants and animals within the Shire through ongoing eradication and control programs.

Issue 4.1: Surf Coast Shire Pest Plant and Animal Action Plan

A major threat facing the biodiversity of bushland and productivity of agricultural land in Surf Coast Shire is invasion by pest plants and animals. Significant costs are borne by private and public land managers, industry, local government and statutory authorities to combat this threat. The intangible nature of social and biodiversity impacts make it difficult to quantify the full capital cost of pest plant and animal control.

Geoff Carr of Ecology Australia believes that "As a worldwide phenomenon, weed invasions pose the greatest threat to the existence of flora and fauna and in only a few decades much of the indigenous Surf Coast Shire flora, and its dependent fauna, will be extinct. Weeds don't just displace, they destroy indigenous flora and fauna."

To counter the environmental, economic and social impacts caused in the Shire by pest plants and animals, a Pest Plant and Animal Action Plan was produced in 2002.

The purpose and intention of the Plan was to:

- *Provide a strategic approach to pest plant and animal management in the Surf Coast Shire;*
- *Integrate and form partnerships with community groups and stakeholders who have an interest in pest plant and pest animal management;*
- *Build on the successful components and programs already in place; and*
- *Provide a framework for long term management of pest plants and animals.*

Upon completion of the Plan in 2002, Council established an Implementation Committee consisting of community members, partner agencies and Shire staff. Many of the actions in the Plan have now been implemented, including mapping of weeds across the Shire, supporting groups for on-ground weed removal, preparation of the Surf Coast Shire Environmental Weeds Booklet, and strengthening weed management policies in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme. Despite this, the threat of pest plants and animals remains and more work is required to mitigate their impacts.

Response:

- 4.1.1 *Revise and update the Surf Coast Shire Pest Plant and Animal Action Plan in consultation with the community, partner agencies and other interested organisations.*
- 4.1.2 *Re-establish the Pest Plant and Animal Implementation Committee to drive implementation of the updated Plan.*
- 4.1.3 *Continue to update and distribute the Surf Coast Shire Environmental Weeds Directory.*
- 4.1.4 *Provide financial and other assistance, within budgetary constraints, to groups and community networks that proactively undertake weed management programs on private or Council land.*



Gorse removal beneath native canopy



5. The Coastline

Council's aim:

Ensure the coast retains the environmental, cultural and other values which make it an iconic attraction in Australia through Council's planning, management and influence. This will be achieved in conjunction with other local, regional and state authorities.

Issue 5.1: Coastal management

The dynamic landscapes of the coast feature a variety of landforms such as coves, headlands, steep rugged cliffs, extensive dune systems and offshore reefs. They also feature distinctive coastal ecosystems that harbour a range of complex vegetation communities characterised by specific floral and faunal species capable of surviving the harsh coastal extremes.

Much of the coastline and hinterland is in public ownership, with the major land managers being The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee and Parks Victoria. The only coastal area managed by Surf Coast Shire is Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve, the Painkalac Nature Reserve in Aireys Inlet and open space and conservation areas adjacent to the Anglesea River and estuary.

The Western Coastal Board is responsible for overseeing coastal management and implementing the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002 (VCS). The Department of Sustainability and Environment has an important role in implementing the Coastal Management Act 1995, and also the VCS. The VCS identifies a hierarchy of principles for coastal planning and management that seeks to:

- *Protect significant environmental features;*
- *Ensure sustainable use of natural coastal resources;*
- *Provide direction for the future; and when these principles have been met;*
- *Deliver suitable development on the coast.*

The dynamic nature of the coast can sometimes present a public risk. Planning and management within and adjoining these areas must consider situations where there is a need to limit public and private use by relocating and restricting access, where appropriate. Recreational use must be appropriate and consistent with the sustainable use of the coast to ensure that natural values are protected.



White Faced Heron - Ardea novaehollandiae

Response:

- 5.1.1 Implement the measures for Issue 3.1 in relation to biodiversity management for all coastal land owned and/or managed by Council.
- 5.1.2 Participate in regional planning and decision making in relation to coastal land within Surf Coast Shire. This includes having representation on the Central West Regional Coastal Action Plan Implementation Committee coordinated by the Western Coastal Board.
- 5.1.3 Work in partnership with other coastal land managers in accordance with Response 3.4.1
- 5.1.4 Continue to strengthen Local Policies for coastal management in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme to ensure land development is done in a way that protects and enhances coastal values.
- 5.1.5 Incorporate coastal management issues into Council's environmental education program, consistent with Responses to Issues 2.1 and 2.2 in this Strategy.



5. The Coastline

Council's aim:

Ensure the coast retains the environmental, cultural and other values which make it an iconic attraction in Australia through Council's planning, management and influence. This will be achieved in conjunction with other local, regional and state authorities.

Issue 5.2: Estuaries

An estuary is a semi-enclosed coastal body of water where salt water from the open sea mixes with freshwater draining from the land. Estuaries provide a unique and dynamic habitat for native plants and animals; nursery and breeding sites for aquatic fauna; valuable recreation resources; landscape values; are sites of cultural, scientific and educational significance, and contribute economic value, particularly with respect to fishing and tourism.

Through their recreational and scenic values, as well as their natural functions in regulating water flows, maintaining water quality and providing fish nurseries, estuaries underpin the economic well being of the many coastal towns of the region. Therefore, compromising any estuarine values is likely to have inevitable economic consequences. These could include increased water treatment costs, more serious flooding and associated property damage, erosion and loss of valuable floodplain farmland and fish stocks, reduced aesthetic appeal and associated reduction in tourism, or reduced property values near degraded waterways.

In addition, local marine environments, some of which are now Marine Protected Areas under the National Parks Act such as the Point Danger and Eagle Rock Marine Sanctuaries and Point Addis Marine National Park, receive the waters from adjacent estuaries and are affected by their content and quality.

Surf Coast Shire Council owns or manages small portions of land around most estuaries in Surf Coast Shire, or it manages stormwater infrastructure that drains water from urban areas into estuaries. Many threats to estuaries result from poor land use practices in the catchment. Surf Coast Shire has a duty to responsibly manage the threats and influences on estuarine and marine environments. Coupled with the clear economic, social and environmental benefits of estuaries to the community, Council has an important role in estuarine management.

Response:

- 5.2.1 Continue to lead the investigation and mitigation of pollution sources into estuaries especially the Erskine River estuary at Lorne.
- 5.2.2 Implement the Estuary Management Plans for Anglesea River estuary via the Anglesea Riverbank Master Plan and for Painkalac Creek estuary under the guidance of the Stakeholder Implementation Committee established for the Plan.
- 5.2.3 Work in partnership with EPA Victoria, the Department of Human Services, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, and the Estuary Watch program to monitor and assess the health of estuaries in Surf Coast Shire.
- 5.2.4 Work in partnership with the Western Coastal Board on the Central West Estuaries Coastal Action Plan (CAP) Implementation Committee.
- 5.2.5 Advocate strongly for resources to be allocated to estuaries in Surf Coast Shire when regional priority setting is undertaken by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority.
- 5.2.6 Work with the community and partner agencies to enhance the health of waterways, lakes and wetlands in the Surf Coast Shire.



Painkalac Creek barrier estuary - rivermouth entrance to the sea. Aireys Inlet



6. Waterways, Lakes and Wetlands

Council's aim:

Work with the community and partner agencies to protect and enhance the health of waterways, lakes and wetlands in Surf Coast Shire.

Issue 6.1: Council owned and managed sites; and

Issue 6.2: Waterways through private and Crown Land

All waterways, lakes and wetlands in the Shire form part of the Otway Coast or Barwon Catchments within the larger Corangamite Catchment. Waterways in forested catchments in the Otway Ranges, such as the Saint George River, are generally in better condition than waterways in agricultural and urban areas, such as Thompsons Creek and Spring Creek respectively.

Waterways, lakes and wetlands ultimately connect to estuaries and their receiving marine environments. Management of these areas should not be conducted in isolation.

The Shire manages only small areas of land around waterways, with the main ones being a Reserve alongside the Barwon River at Winchelsea, and small Reserves along Moggs Creek, Painkalac Creek, Anglesea River, Spring Creek, Thompsons Creek and Deep Creek. The majority of land along waterways is managed by private landholders, with the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority generally being responsible for the waterway itself.

Internationally significant lakes and wetlands exist in Surf Coast Shire and provide important habitat for many floral and faunal species, including rare migratory birds. Notable sites include Lake Murdeduke near Winchelsea, and the Karaaf Wetlands, which is part of the Breamlea Flora and Fauna Reserve managed by Parks Victoria.

The most significant threats to waterways, lakes and wetlands are pest plants, feral animals, altered flow regimes, pollution from urbanisation, and the declining extent and quality of native vegetation. These in turn have a flow on effect to estuaries and marine ecosystems.

As with estuaries, Surf Coast Shire has a responsibility to effectively manage these threats on land that it manages and in partnerships elsewhere.



Anglesea River boatsheds and fishing platform

Response:

- 6.1.1 All Responses listed against Issue 3.1 of this Strategy in relation to biodiversity management.
- 6.1.2 Advocate strongly for resources for waterways, lakes and wetlands in Surf Coast Shire when regional priority setting is undertaken by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority.
- 6.1.3 Participate in regional planning and decision making in relation to waterways, lakes and wetlands within Surf Coast Shire through developing close links with the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and other relevant organisations.
- 6.1.4 Provide financial and other assistance, within budgetary constraints, to groups and community networks that proactively manage waterways, lakes and wetlands in the Shire.
- 6.2.1 Participate in and support regional and catchment programs that protect and enhance the values of waterways, lakes and wetlands. This includes providing administrative, technical and financial support to community environment groups, such as Landcare or the like.
- 6.2.2 Continue to strengthen Local Policies for waterway management in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme to ensure land use development is done in a way that protects, and enhances where possible, the values of waterways, lakes and wetlands.
- 6.2.3 Implement response 7.3.6 listed under Issue 7.3, Urban Design and Transport Planning.



7. Resource Efficiency

Issue 7.1: Water conservation

While the demand for urban water for consumption is set to grow, our ability to divert more water from rivers and aquifers (natural underground water storages) is extremely limited. Many rivers have reached or exceeded their limits for providing water for consumption. Meanwhile climate change is likely to reduce water in our catchments.

It is estimated that in 2001 the Surf Coast Shire community consumed approximately 2.5 million kilolitres of water. Surf Coast Shire Council also uses a considerable amount of water for irrigating parks, sporting fields, public gardens and other open spaces, and for other council operations.

As the local planning authority, local government is in a unique position to shape public attitude and behaviour regarding water conservation and to set standards for water conservation in new developments.

Response:

- 7.1.1 Develop and implement a Sustainable Water Use Plan for Council Reserves and buildings. This will include conducting water audits and implementing water conservation measures with the most desirable cost/benefit ratio.
- 7.1.2 Incorporate best practice water conservation measures into new Council facilities.
- 7.1.3 In consultation with Barwon Water, develop a Local Policy in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme that mandates consideration of water conservation measures in new subdivisions and buildings.
- 7.1.4 Incorporate water conservation messages into Council's environmental education program, consistent with Responses to Issues 2.1 and 2.2 in this Strategy.
- 7.1.5 Water conservation measures should include consideration of water use efficiency, waste water re-use, and harvesting of rain and storm water.



Rainwater tank

Council's aim:

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions of Council's activities and offset those which cannot be avoided. Through strategies developed and lessons learnt, help the community do the same.

Work towards zero wastage of potable water by Council. Through the strategies developed and lessons learnt, help the community do the same.

Work towards extending the planned life of the Anglesea land fill by five years beyond the projected close of 2016 through strategies which aggressively pursue waste avoidance and minimisation and measures which increase recycling, recovery and reuse (of all waste streams including green waste).

Issue 7.2: Greenhouse gas abatement

Although Australia only contributes just over 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions, its per capita emissions are the highest in the world. Council recognises that climate change due to an enhanced greenhouse effect produced by fossil fuel consumption is real and significant. Through increased global temperatures and more erratic weather patterns, climate change poses a threat to both our man made assets and also our natural assets such as biodiversity, water supplies and healthy water ways.

One of the most powerful ways to minimise emissions is through action at the local scale, with the idea being that small actions summed together amount to a significant impact.

In support of this approach, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) initiated the Cities for Climate Protection Program (CCP™), which is a greenhouse gas abatement program delivered through Local Government in collaboration with ICLEI, the Australian Greenhouse Office and the Victorian Government. The campaign is run worldwide with regional offices in North America, Africa, Europe, Asia and South America.

Municipalities are the focus of the CCP™ program as it is estimated that Local Government can influence over 50% of greenhouse gas emissions. Through planning schemes, local laws, community programs and management of their own operations, councils can directly influence and in many cases control activities that are the source of greenhouse gases.

Surf Coast joined the program in 2003 and has since made significant energy savings and reductions in greenhouse gas production.

CCP™ membership requires a resolution adopted by Council and a commitment to meet the 5 step Milestone program. The 5 milestones for councils to complete under CCP™ are:

- 1 Establish a base year emissions inventory and forecast for the community and corporate sector.
- 2 Set an emissions reduction goal.
- 3 Develop and adopt a greenhouse reduction strategy – the Local Action Plan.
- 4 Implement the greenhouse action plan.
- 5 Monitor and report on emissions and continued implementation of actions and policies.

Surf Coast has been awarded all 5 milestones and is proceeding with an extension program, CCP Plus.

Response:

- 7.2.1 Continue to implement the Cities for Climate Protection Program, including the implementation of energy conservation and greenhouse gas abatement actions for new and existing Council buildings, as well as implementing environmental education and awareness programs with the local community.
- 7.2.2 Develop a Local Policy in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme that mandates consideration of energy conservation measures in new subdivisions and buildings.
- 7.2.3 Support regional initiatives on greenhouse gas abatement, and lobby decision makers where Surf Coast Shire has little direct control.



Energy efficient light bulb



7. Resource Efficiency

Issue 7.3: Urban Design and Transport Planning

The National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) is a broad policy that sets the scene for changes in direction, and a re-evaluation of priorities, by all levels of government to ensure that all future development is more sustainable. It provides a framework for the preparation of more localised environmental management strategies. The National ESD Strategy sets the challenge to achieve more sustainable use of energy and natural resources in urban areas through integrated urban and transport planning and more efficient sub-division and building design.

With increasing popularity of the Surf Coast region, Council recognises the importance of including sustainable development principles into local planning through the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme.

Response:

- 7.3.1 Promote urban forms which minimise transport requirements, and improve the efficiency of land supply and infrastructure provision.
- 7.3.2 Encourage future development of urban transport systems (pedestrian and vehicular) which provide opportunities to limit the use of fossil fuels.
- 7.3.3 Promote subdivision and road design patterns that provide the greatest potential to utilise energy efficient dwelling design, with provision for and use of public transport modes.
- 7.3.4 Improve the amenity of urban areas through provision of public open space and landscaping sensitive to local character.
- 7.3.5 Develop Local Policies in the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme that mandate consideration of energy and water conservation measures in new subdivisions and buildings (see 7.1.3 and 7.2.2).
- 7.3.6 Apply principles of Water Sensitive Urban Design across development and existing urban precincts to limit quantity, and improve the quality of stormwater entering waterways by limiting impervious surfaces, capturing run-off and allowing bio-filtration to occur.



Council's aim:

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions of Council's activities and offset those which cannot be avoided. Through strategies developed and lessons learnt, help the community do the same.

Work towards zero wastage of potable water by Council. Through the strategies developed and lessons learnt, help the community do the same.

Work towards extending the planned life of the Anglesea land fill by five years beyond the projected close of 2016 through strategies which aggressively pursue waste avoidance and minimisation and measures which increase recycling, recovery and reuse (of all waste streams including green waste).

Issue 7.4: Solid Waste Management

Disposal of solid wastes to land fill is a waste of resources. In 2004/2005, 20,960 tonnes of residual wastes and 23,525 tonnes of clean land fill were disposed of at Anglesea landfill. Tourism has a significant impact on waste generation in the Shire, with the summer holiday period experiencing much higher amounts of garbage generation than in the less popular winter months. In line with Sustainability Victoria's Towards Zero Waste Strategy, Surf Coast Shire strives to minimise disposal of wastes and maximise resource efficiency by following the principles of the waste management hierarchy (right).

Council has prepared a Solid Waste Management Strategy focussing on waste avoidance and minimisation, resource recovery, residual waste disposal, litter prevention and management, data collection and management systems, and monitoring and review.

Surf Coast Shire's objectives and targets for the Solid Waste Management Plan are to:

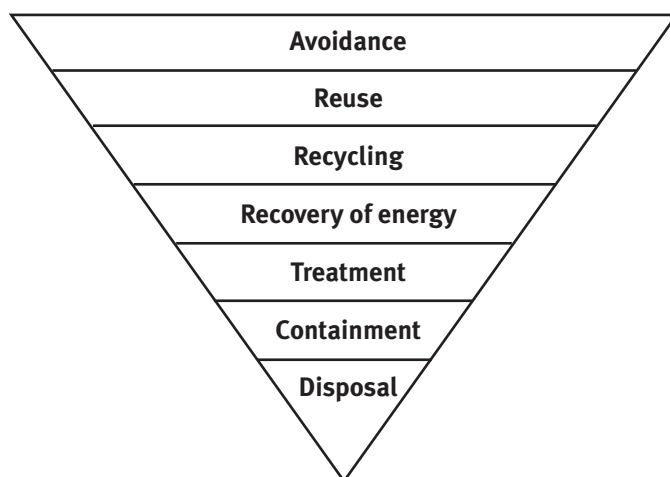
- *Reduce municipal waste generation by 10% by 2014, from the projected 14,751 tonnes in 2013 to 13,276 tonnes in 2013;*
- *Increase resource recovery of Municipal Solid Waste from 44% (2004/2005) to 65% by 2014;*
- *Achieve a 10% litter reduction (roads, commercial, public places, events and schools) by 2008 and 25% reduction by 2014.*

In addition to these targets, Surf Coast Shire has declared that it will strive to extend the planned life of the Anglesea landfill by five years beyond the projected closure in 2016 through strategies which aggressively pursue waste avoidance and minimisation, and through measures that increase recycling, recovery and reuse (of all waste streams including green waste).

Response:

- 7.4.1 Implement Council's Solid Waste Management Plan, and where appropriate, include actions from the Plan in environment programs implemented under this Environment Management Strategy. In particular, education and awareness programs on solid waste management should be included in the environmental education program detailed in this document.

Waste Hierarchy





8. Targets and Transparency

Council's aim:

Measure and monitor key environmental indicators and set time-limited targets which drive performance and improvement.

Provide regular, transparent and consistent reporting on progress against environmental improvement targets.

Issue 8.1: Performance assessment and reporting

The effectiveness of the 'Responses' presented in this Strategy must be assessed to determine their achievements towards improved natural resource condition in Surf Coast Shire. Monitoring and evaluation for this purpose can be used for both program improvement and accountability purposes, and supports better targeting of resources.

It is recognised that the activities of Council are not the only factors that may affect natural resource condition in the municipality. Therefore, program specific measurable indicators must be built into programs to measure the affect of this Strategy. The performance of the programs within this Strategy will in-turn be evaluated against the over-arching aims under each management category.

An annual evaluation report will be a useful way of sharing the lessons learnt and setting priorities for programs of the following year.

Response:

- 8.1.1 Measurable, program specific targets will be included for each program in the Annual Implementation Plan under this Strategy.
- 8.1.2 Program performance, and performance against the over-arching aims of this Strategy, will be evaluated on an annual basis. Results will be used to help prioritise future actions.
- 8.1.3 An annual evaluation report will be prepared detailing performance of this Strategy

Red Ironbark - Eucalyptus tricarpa





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