

ENVIRONMENT

APPROVALS

POLICY NUMBER	CORP-POL-002	DOC.ID	3567345
CATEGORY	Administrative		
POLICY OWNER	Liveability & Sustainability		
APPROVAL DATE	25 August 2021	RESOLUTION NUMBER	7448

OBJECTIVE

To outline Council's commitment to the protection, preservation and enhancement of our natural assets and environments for future generations, and commitment to the avoidance, minimisation and management of environmental impacts as part of Council's operations and activities.

SCOPE

- The policy applies to Council representatives, employees, contractors, visitors and volunteers.
- The policy applies across all Council lands, facilities and infrastructure assets.

DEFINITIONS

TERM / ACRONYM	MEANING
Council	Isaac Regional Council.
Standard	ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Quality Management Systems.
Ecologically sustainable development	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.
Biodiversity	Biodiversity is the variety of all life forms on earth - the different plants, animals and micro-organisms and the ecosystems of which they are a part of.
Biosecurity	Efforts and actions to prevent, respond to and recover from pests and diseases that threaten the environmental and socioeconomic values of the community.
Ecosystem	A community of living organisms (plants, animals and microbes) within a defined area.
Scenic amenity	A measure of the relative contribution of each place in the landscape to the collective appreciation of open space as viewed from places that are important to the community.
Recycling	The action or process of converting waste into reusable material.
Closed water cycle	The closed cycle of freshwater replenishment involving the evaporation of surface waters from waterways and bodies, condensation of water vapour into clouds, and precipitation of water in the form of rain, hail or snow in catchment areas.

POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to the incorporation, adoption and implementation of environmentally sustainable policies and practices into its strategic and corporate planning, as well as its operational, regulatory and capital delivery activities.

Council aspires to deliver fit-for-purpose and regionally relevant policies, programs and initiatives that seek to avoid, minimise and mitigate Council's natural environment impacts in the context of broader regional and national conversations around balanced and responsible approaches to current and future energy mix, carbon emissions reduction and economic sustainability.

Key policy principles:

- The Isaac Region's natural assets, biodiversity values and ecological services are identified, protected, managed and enhanced to improve their resilience to the impacts of Council's activities, development and climate variability
- Council's actions and activities prioritise the sustainable management of ecosystems and natural resources, ensuring their cultural, social, economic and environmental services and values are protected
- Council recognises and values areas of ecological significance and natural scenic amenity for their enhancements to both the environmental sustainability and liveability of the Isaac Region
- Council supports development and implementation of sustainable waste management, recycling and circular economy initiatives and practices
- Council's management of water resources as a finite natural asset are done so striving for a closed water cycle system
- The health, quality and values of coastal, surface, ground waters and wetlands are protected
- Council prioritises the health and wellbeing of communities and natural environments through effective management of air quality, odour, noise and biosecurity risks
- Council supports broader investigation into matters of regional sustainability and resilience to ensure the Isaac Region is positioned strongly to face future challenges and harness future opportunities in the best interests of its local communities and economies
- Council promotes environmentally sustainable practices in Isaac Region communities
- Council proactively engages on a local, regional, state and Commonwealth level on matters of environmental and resource management importance

Council actions to deliver on policy principles

- Development of an action plan to guide implementation, communication and education on the policy to internal and external stakeholders
- Provision of adequate resources to deliver on the policy principles and implementation actions

- As a minimum benchmark, achievement of compliance with relevant state and federal legislation, policies and standards, and adoption of a regular review and monitoring program to ensure ongoing compliance
- Investment in education and training for Council work units to improve understanding and compliance with legislative requirements, policies and standards
- Fostering of positive working relationships with key stakeholders and groups responsible for leading action on environmental and resource management sustainability
- Facilitation of education opportunities with the community, businesses and regional stakeholders to improve adoption of environmentally sustainable practices
- Adoption of detailed reporting and documentation practices to prevent, manage and monitor environmental incidents and environmental hazard avoidance
- Consideration of environmental impacts and implications in Council decision making

Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities related to delivery of the policy

STAKEHOLDER	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY
COUNCILLORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support executive and organisational implementation of policy • Lead external advocacy on environmental sustainability matters • Incorporate environmental considerations in strategic decision making
ELT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion cultural change within each directorate to understand and adopt best practice environmental management measures • Incorporate environmental considerations in strategic decision making • Ownership of directorate reporting standards and processes tailored to individual departments and business units
MLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take ownership of policy implementation and monitoring activities within departments • Incorporate environmental considerations in operational decision making

STAKEHOLDER	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show leadership and support innovation in achieving best practice implementation
COUNCIL OFFICERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take responsibility for implementation of the policy and monitoring activities within individual work units and teams • Engage in departmental and operational leadership discussions on improvements to environmental performance • Continued implementation of strategies, procedures and guidelines to achieve legislative and quality compliance standards
PLANNING ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support implementation of the policy across Council • Guidance and subject-matter expertise on development of action plans and strategies to drive whole-of-council implementation of the policy • Provide advice to internal and external stakeholders on the policy principles and best practice initiatives for implementation • Assist in development of whole-of-Council reporting and monitoring frameworks for policy compliance

LEGISLATIONS AND RELATED GUIDELINES

- *Biosecurity Act 2014 (Qld.)*
- *Biosecurity Act 2015 (Cwth.)*
- *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995 (Qld.)*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld.)*
- *Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwth.)*
- *Forestry Act 1959 (Qld.)*
- *Local Government Act 2009 (Qld.)*
- *Planning Act 2016 (Qld.)*
- *Economic Development Act 2012 (Qld.)*

- *Nature Conservation Act 1992 (Cwth.)*
- *Vegetation Management Act 1999 (Qld.)*
- *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 (Qld.)*
- *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 (Qld.)*
- National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (1992)
- Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Regional Plan 2021-2031
- State Planning Policy July 2017

REFERENCES

ID	NAME
NA	Isaac Regional Council's Community Strategic Plan
NA	Isaac Regional Council's Corporate Plan
CORP-POL-018	Environmental Policy Statement