



Environmental Sustainability Policy

Reference Number:	5.5
Type:	Council
Category:	Environment & Open Space
Relevant Community Vision Outcome:	<u>Valuing Nature</u> • Our City is cool, green and filled with life • We work together with our community to protect our environment <u>Our Transforming City</u> • Our City is resilient to the impacts of climate change
Responsible Officer(s):	General Manager City Futures
First Issued/Approved:	April 2008
Minutes Reference:	CoS 2/09/2024, Item 4.7
Last Reviewed:	March 2026
Next Review Due:	March 2028
Applicable Legislation:	Environment Protection Act 1993 South Australian Public Health Act 2011 Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reductions Act 2007
Related Policies:	AdaptWest Climate Change Adaptation Plan (Western Adelaide Region) Risk Management Policy Community Emergency Management Policy
Related Procedures:	Climate Change Response Plan

1. Purpose

At the City of Charles Sturt, we and our community value our local environment and recognise the important role we play in preserving and enhancing it. We are committed to fulfilling our statutory environment responsibilities and ensuring that all operations and activities carried out by and on behalf of the Council, comply with or exceed statutory environmental requirements and the principles reflected in this Policy.

We are committed to protecting, restoring and enhancing the environment for current and future generations. Our decision-making, planning and operations will be guided by the principles of **Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)**, including:

1. Precautionary Principle

We will act to prevent serious or irreversible environmental harm, even where scientific uncertainty exists, ensuring that risks are anticipated and responsibly managed.

2. Inter-generational Equity

We will meet the needs of the present community while safeguarding the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, ensuring long-term environmental health and resilience.

3. Intra-generational Equity

We will promote fair and equitable environmental outcomes within the current generation, ensuring that benefits, burdens and risks are shared justly across our community.

4. Conservation of Biodiversity and Ecological Integrity

We will protect and enhance the diversity, health and functioning of ecosystems, recognising their intrinsic value and their essential role in supporting community wellbeing.

5. Integration of Environmental, Social and Economic Considerations

We will ensure sustainability is embedded across all council decisions by integrating environmental, social, cultural and economic considerations into policy, planning, procurement and operational choices.

6. Continuous Improvement and Innovation

We will pursue innovative solutions, build organisational capability, and embrace new technologies and practices that support climate resilience, resource efficiency and sustainable urban transformation.

Our Environmental Sustainability Policy spells out our key commitments and objectives for preserving and improving our environment. We are committed to establishing an appropriate governance structure and policy framework in order to achieve our objectives on an on-going basis.

2. Scope

The Policy is intended for use by the whole of Council (staff, Council Members, volunteers and contractors), as it sets out our guiding principles for moving towards environmental sustainability.

3. Policy Statement

The City of Charles Sturt declared a climate emergency on 9 December 2019. We completed the objectives of our 'Net Zero: Our Map to Net Zero Corporate Emissions 2020-2025' in 2024.

Council endorsed our Climate Change Response Plan in November 2024, which is our ongoing response to environmental sustainability and managing our climate change risks. This sits alongside the regional 'AdaptWest' climate change adaptation action plan as the two cornerstones of Council's response to that declaration. Those plans and their implementation will drive and inform Council's efforts to address climate change risks and reduce climate change impacts.

This Policy ensures Council monitors these strategies, raises awareness and maintains focus on their implementation.

To assist in the implementation Council will:

Involve our Staff, Contractors and Suppliers

- We will ensure that all employees, volunteers and Council Members are familiar with this Policy and their own responsibilities towards the environment. Relevant aspects of this Policy will be integrated into Council induction sessions and environmental awareness programs and training for employees and Council Members.

- We will work with our contractors and suppliers to help them improve their environmental performance so that, when working for Council, they strive to adopt equivalent environmental standards, and we will reflect this approach in our procurement processes and practices.
- We will ensure climate change factors are reflected across Council's programs and decision making processes.

Engage and Communicate with the Community

- We will involve the local community in decision-making on projects which impact their local environment.
- We will promote a wider understanding of and participation in climate change risk and environmental issues through information, education and consultation so the community is highly aware and actively engaged in climate change initiatives.
- We will promote Council's commitment and efforts to preserve and enhance our environment for the benefit of our community – current and future.

Reduce Councils Risk

- We will develop and implement a robust risk management framework to identify, avoid and reduce climate change and environmental risks caused by, or impacting on, our operations.

Implement Our Environmental Policy

We will ensure that our Policy objectives are pursued effectively by implementing systems that will include:

- Evaluating and tracking progress against the targets set in our Climate Change Response Plan 2024 - 2030
- Implementing 'AdaptWest Climate Change Adaptation Plan (Western Adelaide Region)', as it applies to the City of Charles Sturt
- Undertaking regular reviews and updates to the above plans with a view to continuous improvement.
- Taking a 'whole of Council' approach to addressing the risks of climate change and other environmental issues, ensuring environmental considerations are integrated across Council's plans, strategies, roles and responsibilities.
- Developing and implementing specific environmental objectives linked to aspects of Council activities that have or could have significant impacts on the environment (environmental risks).
- Implementing internal communication and training strategies that promote a greater understanding of and responsibility for this environmental policy amongst Council Members and employees at all levels.
- Implementing external communication and partnership processes that enable stakeholders in the wider community to find out more about Council's environmental performance and work with us to improve the environment for everyone.
- Establishing supplier and contractor policies and procedures that clearly identify the required environmental standards and reflecting the benefit of environmentally sustainable options in procurement policies and practices.

4. Definitions

Key Term – Acronym	Definition
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development