

Southern Grampians Shire



Southern Grampians
SHIRE COUNCIL

Sustainability Strategy 2010-2020

Adopted by Southern Grampians Shire Council in April 2010

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Forewords

It is with great pleasure that I present to the community of Southern Grampians Shire the Council's Sustainability Strategy. This strategic document has been developed thanks to the concerted efforts of a dedicated Steering Committee made up by community members and professionals from many different agencies. It presents a logical and achievable platform for Council and its community to implement actions that can only reduce the environmental footprint of the Shire as a whole. The objectives and targets have been set at realistic levels and the issues covered embrace all sectors of the community, establishing a platform for everyone to support Council in its aims to improve the environmental sustainability of Southern Grampians Shire. The Strategy will only succeed if government agencies and the community work with Council to help implement the extensive number of actions. One of the key recommendations within the Sustainability Strategy is the establishment of a Technical Reference Group made up of partner agency representatives who are integral to the successful implementation of the strategies, objectives and actions listed herein. The broader community's participation has been significant in refining and further developing the good work of the Steering Committee. This community participation will continue as groups are established to assist with the implementation of community initiatives. I very much look forward to its successful implementation.

Don Robertson

Chair
Southern Grampians Shire Council
Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee

The Southern Grampians Shire Council Sustainability Strategy is a key document in guiding Council's actions with regard to implementing its Council Plan objective to pursue environmental sustainability within in the Shire.

It is intrinsically linked to the Council vision to become the most liveable provincial community in Australia. Healthy environments, pleasant and usable public places, quality waterways and effective waste management strategies all contribute to the liveability of a town or region. Protection of our natural assets also contributes to the productivity of our farmlands and to the broader economy in terms of nature based tourism.

The need to work in partnership with key government agencies and the broader community is a cornerstone of the actions in this Strategy which also acknowledges the need for external resources to support Council if it is to achieve its vision and strategic objectives.

I would like to personally thank and congratulate all people involved developing this Strategy and in particular those on the Steering Committee and Council staff. I commend this document to all members of the Southern Grampians community and encourage all to embrace the strategic objectives in support of the Council's vision.

Cr Marcus Rentsch

Mayor
Southern Grampians Shire Council



About this document

Southern Grampians Shire Council Sustainability Strategy.

The Sustainability Strategy is the key strategic document for delivering an environmentally sustainable Southern Grampians Shire. The Strategy aims to provide Southern Grampians Shire with a community-shared vision and a framework for addressing environmental sustainability. The Strategy details how Council will achieve this objective by outlining desired outcomes for the Shire and actions to achieve this. An annual action plan will be developed with projects Council will implement in support of its strategies.

The framework of the Strategy is as follows:

- **Sustainability, agreed definition:**

This strategy has adopted the best-known definition of sustainability developed by the World Commission on Environment and Development ('Brundtland' Commission) 1987. It states that sustainable development is: *"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"*.

- Timeframe: medium-term vision with future directions generated up to 2020.
- Geographical scope: aware of and responsive to regional context, but future directions and actions generated for area and community of Shire of Southern Grampians.
- Sustainability stance/position: Strategy to be an 'environmental sustainability' strategy, i.e. built upon an environmental foundation with an environmental perspective, but with strong and meaningful connection with economic and social spheres.

- Adopted sustainability principles:

- a) precautionary principle
- b) inter-generational equity
- c) integration of economic, social and environmental spheres
- d) maintaining or increasing critical natural and cultural capital

To develop the Strategy, a Steering Committee was established (including elected Council representatives, community and agency leaders in the fields of natural resources, environment and current sustainability issues). Consultation sessions gathered the opinions and ideas from Council staff members, environmental and cultural groups, general community, and relevant agencies. Priorities were revised and a mission for the Strategy was created based on consultation (fig. 1).



Photo: *Kennedia prostrata* (Running postman). Wannon reserve. Elizabeth Fenton

Council Vision for the Shire: “To be Australia’s most liveable Provincial Community”

Mission: “Everyone working co-operatively to develop an environmentally responsible and sustainable Shire: a great place to live, work and visit”

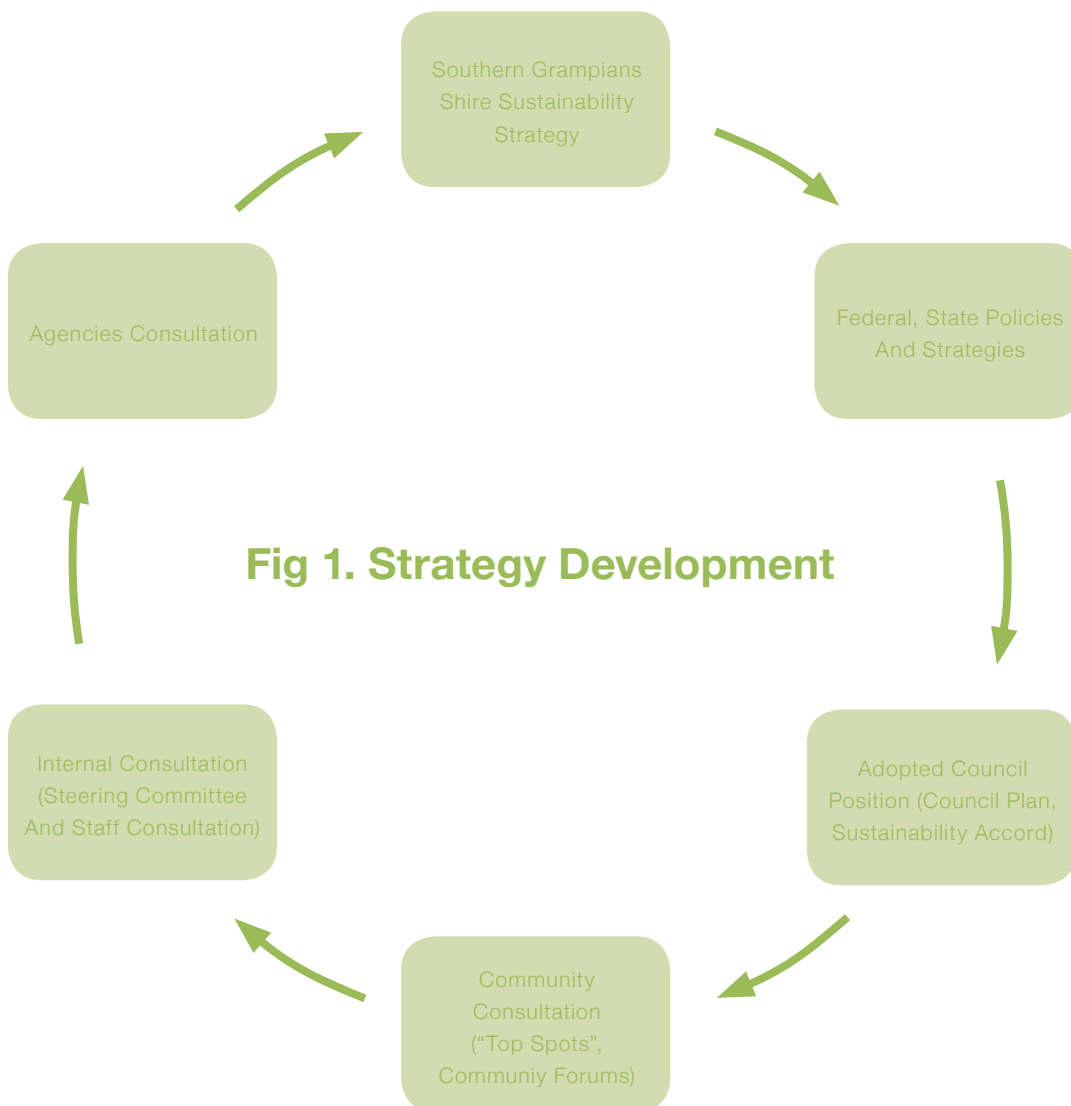


Fig 1. Strategy Development

The Strategy is a whole-of-community Strategy, a plan for Southern Grampians in which Council’s role is as much as catalyst or partner as directly responsible party.

Role of the Strategy and links to other documents and policies

The Sustainability Strategy does not exist in isolation, but sits within a context of related and influencing policies. At the immediate, local scale, the Southern Grampians Shire Council overarching Council Plan, Municipal Strategic Statement and Planning Scheme establish the framework for the Strategy and, along with the Local Environmental Sustainability Priority Statement, help direct the Strategy towards key issues, such as water management and land use change and planning (see Attachment 1).

At the regional scale, the detailed natural resource management policy work of the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GH CMA) identifies the condition of the regional environment, major threats and assets, and proposed actions.

At the State level, the most important policies are “Our Common Future” (2005) which sets out draft goals and strategic themes and issues for sustainability in Victoria, and “Land and Biodiversity at a Time of Climate Change” (2008). The “Victorian Climate Change Green Paper” outlines in detail the risks facing our State and the likely impacts of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS), and also proposes ways Victoria can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to the impacts of climate change and become a leading low carbon economy.

At the national level, the “National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality” (2000) is as relevant now as it was at the start of the decade, and more recent reports and guidelines have sharpened the focus on vital climate change issues, including “Garnaut Climate Change Review” (2008) and “Climate Change Adaptation Actions for Local Government” (2007).



Photo: Eastern grey kangaroos, Wannon reserve, Elizabeth Fenton

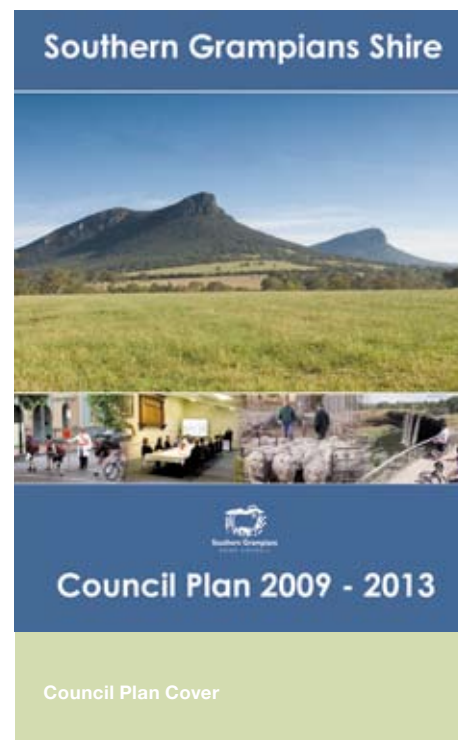
Southern Grampians Shire Council Plan

Southern Grampians Shire Council Plan 2009-2013 vision is for the Southern Grampians Shire to be Australia's Most Liveable Provincial Community.

To achieve this vision, Southern Grampians Shire Council has developed the following objectives:

- Provide the people of the Southern Grampians Shire with the highest standards of good governance.
- Plan for and foster economic growth and prosperity.
- Ensure a wide range of quality services are available to our community.
- Help communities in our Shire feel strong and safe.
- Pursue environmental sustainability in our Shire.

The Sustainability Strategy is intrinsically linked to the Southern Grampians Shire Council Plan, the guiding document to support the achievement of those objectives.



Council commitment

Southern Grampians Shire Council is committed to be the lead organisation within the Southern Grampians municipal area.

Values	Goals and overarching actions
Leadership	Council will lead by example, will guarantee the appropriate governance mechanisms, will share knowledge and will encourage staff advancement and better understanding of sustainability management. Council will provide or actively seek to source resources for the implementation of the actions identified in the plan.
Balanced decisions	Management decisions will take proper account of the range of environmental, social and economic benefits, values and costs.
Community inclusiveness and engagement	Council will ensure the appropriate communication and engagement mechanisms are in place, regular progress reports will be provided. Council will recognise community initiatives and achievements.
Priority-Based implementation	Management actions are to be undertaken according to priorities that are based on the best available science and information - and relevant experience - as well as on assessment of the relevant cost-effectiveness of various options.
Partnerships	Council will actively seek to establish partnerships between all levels of government and the community, including Aboriginal community, industry, landholders and individuals, with agreed roles and responsibilities.
Accountability, transparency, self improvement	Monitoring and evaluation will involve annual reviews.
Integrated Management Ecosystem Approach	Management should be based on an understanding of the relationship between natural resources and the ecosystems they support, and upon careful monitoring of change over time.
We all benefit, we are all responsible	All members of the Southern Grampians community receive benefits from the use, development and conservation of natural resources; they share responsibility for managing natural resources sustainably. The pursuit of intergenerational equity is a moral responsibility for all.



Local Government's Role in Sustainable Development

Local Governments play a vital role in fostering sustainable development. Local Government has many roles including advocate, partner, employer, assets manager, decision maker, consumer and providing works on the ground. The policies, programs and practices they adopt and promote can increase the conservation and efficient use of energy, water, native habitats and other environmental resources. These steps will often reduce costs and can also help local businesses reduce costs, generate new business opportunities, create jobs and increase economic competitiveness. Almost as a side benefit, quality-of-life will improve.

The Local Government Act 1989, Section 3C, states that *"it is the role of the Council to provide governance and leadership for the local community through advocacy, decision making and action. The primary objective of a Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions."*

The Act also states that *"Council must have regard to the following facilitating objectives:*

- *to promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district;*
- *to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community;*
- *to promote appropriate business and employment opportunities; and*
- *to ensure transparency and accountability in Council decision making."*

Council is also bound by Federal and State Government policies shaping planning and management.

Council's legal responsibilities, with respect to the environment, are outlined within 44 Acts. Some of the most relevant legislation for environmental sustainability for Council includes:

- The Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999
- The Catchment and Land Protection Act, 1994
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, 1988
- The Planning and Environment Act, 1987
- The Environment Protection Authority Act, 1970
- The Crown Land (Reserves) Act, 1978
- The Water Act, 1989
- Country Fire Authority Regulations, 2004
- Conservation, Forests and Lands Act, 1987

Working within our Organisation



Balmoral

Working towards a common aim will require appropriate internal structures and policies to be in place across Southern Grampians Shire Council.

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) - and Sustainability Victoria- have assisted Southern Grampians Shire Council to develop a Sustainability Integration Plan. This project will guide development of the most appropriate strategies to embed sustainability across all of Council's operation.

As a result of this project, key short-term actions to be implemented internally across the organisation are:

I. Sustainability assessment criteria to be embedded into all Council decisions through

- a. Capital Works Program
- b. Annual Works Programs
- c. Procurement Policy (for example., tender specification and selection criteria for service providers)
- d. Long term financial planning
- e. Adoption of ECO-Buy as the preferred Green Procurement Policy
- f. Motor Vehicle Policy review and update

II. Staff Duty Statement and Performance Evaluation to incorporate sustainability criteria.

III. Evaluation of implementing Environmental Management Systems and indicators models (such as, Global Reporting Initiative or Deakin Model) as the preferred sustainability reporting mechanisms

In the medium to long-term, the Sustainability Strategy will be achieved primarily by:

- Ensuring that decisions made for any Council initiative reflect the mission of the Sustainability Strategy to achieve a more sustainable Southern Grampians.
- Applying the "Triple Bottom Line (TBL) sustainability assessment model" (evaluation of economic, social and environmental factors) to specific planning tasks, projects and capital works decision making processes.
- Increasing or re-prioritising capital resources to enable replacement and new investments in more environmentally sustainable infrastructure.
- Increasing the resources available to implement strategies and actions arising from the Sustainability Strategy.
- The development of more detailed plans and collection of more information when required. In some instances, there is currently insufficient baseline information to set consistent targets and indicators. Specific benchmarks and targets can only be set after more detailed data is available.
- Improved information management, community engagement and education strategies to ensure Council is reaching and hearing the community.
- Fostering and formalising working relationships with key stakeholders and partners.

The Value of Working with Our Partners

Council has a wide and extensive range of responsibilities and provides multiple functions to the community. Council also shares responsibilities with a number of other State government and private agencies towards the achievement of Council's sustainability objectives.

Council is committed to work closely in partnership with different State and Federal agencies and community groups. These State and Federal agencies have core responsibilities for sustainability under relevant legislation.

Understanding that we all have a role to play in curbing our environmental impact is the first step to changing the way we conduct ourselves within our environment. Council has an important role in engaging and working with Southern Grampians residents, businesses, neighbouring Shires and visitors to build this awareness and to move toward environmental sustainability. Southern Grampians Shire Council will encourage partners, industry, businesses, community groups and individuals to respond collectively by reducing our everyday

impacts and to secure the future for the generations to come. Council will also aim to strengthen existing working agreements with Government agencies to achieve the Strategy objectives in a collaborative manner.

The value of engaging with the community



Footbridge Grange Burn. Top spots competition. Talitha Pendergast

Southern Grampians Shire acknowledges the benefits for successful engagement for government and stakeholders

- Community input can improve quality of policy being developed, making it more relevant and practical.
- Communities are enabled to identify priorities for themselves.
- Engagement can foster a sense of belonging by working together on behalf of the community.
- There may be more ownership of solutions to current problems or future plans so that the community shares the decision making.
- Council demonstrates good governance and contributes to the enhancement of human and social capitals.

This strategy was prepared with participation of community members and agency representatives.

Community engagement in developing the Strategy will foster a sense of ownership of the Strategy's objectives and actions.

Community participation in the development of the Strategy

The purpose of the consultation was to: “engage the community to further develop a sustainability strategy that responds appropriately to environmental, economic and community aspirations, and facilitates appropriate revenue generating opportunities within the Shire”.

A total of 87 community and staff members attended the forums and the findings were then collated, presented, refined and prioritised at an agency forum. Public feedback was possible at all stages and 18 written submissions were received.

This community engagement process identified the issues as seen by those participating, community and staff, as well as the options for actions and priority of actions as deliberated in a collaborative manner by agency representatives. Those have been incorporated into the Strategy.

The report for Community Consultation for the Southern Grampians Shire Council Sustainability Strategy, captures the community’s ideas and has been used to provide input into the development of the Southern Grampians Shire Council Sustainability Strategy. This report is available from Council’s website.

The Themes

The following themes were derived from the Sustainability Strategy Discussion Paper and were used as a basis for community discussion:

- **Land** (including biodiversity, pest plants and animals, soil health, salinity, sustainable agriculture and land use change).
- **Water** (including water availability/ security, stormwater, water quality, waterway health, water conservation).
- **Waste** (including resource use, ‘reduce, re-use, recycle’, landfill, composting).
- **Liveability** (including economic prosperity and employment; social well-being, access to health, education and aged care facilities, telecommunication and transport services, governance, aesthetically pleasing and being a safe and good place to live or visit).
- **Climate** (including energy efficiency, alternative energy sources, emissions management, use of fossil fuels and adaptation to climate change).

The community identified the issues surrounding these themes, determined actions and then voted on the priorities of those actions.

Top Spots

Top Spots was a community engagement program designed to publicise and involve people in the Strategy. It intended to find out what the community sees as the key assets of the region. It was deliberately designed to appeal to a wide cross-section of the community and to be accessible to all (mobile phone pictures of the ‘top spots’ in the Shire was the preferred method of entry). In response, over 100 entries were received.



Our own backyard: Municipal Context

Southern Grampians at glance

With a population of over 17,000 Southern Grampians covers an area of 6,652 square kilometres. Hamilton is the main retail and service centre supported by the smaller towns of Balmoral, Branxholme, Byaduk, Cavendish, Coleraine, Dunkeld, Glenthompson, Penshurst and Tarrington. Major industries include agriculture, mineral sands processing, timber plantation, retail, manufacturing, health, education, tourism and research and development.

The Southern Grampians Shire contains an outstanding array of heritage features, of both European and Aboriginal origin. The early European settlement of the area has provided the Shire a collection of heritage buildings of local, State and National significance. Aboriginal Heritage is also represented in the Shire, most predominantly in the Grampians and Lake Condah area. As well as being significant to the Shire for providing an insight and understanding into the past of the region, these heritage assets have economic benefit to the Shire for their attraction to tourists.

Southern Grampians Natural Assets

The natural environment of the Shire consists of outstanding features such as the Grampians, the Glenelg and Wannon Rivers, ancient geological forms and mountain peaks, and fertile farming land interspersed with magnificent red gums and diverse grasslands that define the landscape values of the area.

The Shire contains three main land systems: the Dundas Tablelands, Victorian Volcanic Plains and the Grampians. The Dundas Tablelands are comprised of deeply weathered granite, which have formed a laterised plateau surface that has been deeply dissected. The plateau surface is gently to moderately undulating. Valleys are relatively deep and steep sided. Soils are mainly red and brown duplex profiles. A large number of lakes and wetlands have developed in this area. The dominant landform of the Basalt Plains is a rolling landscape formed by relatively recent lava flows covering pre-existing dissected plains of sedimentary origin.

The volcanic peaks and landscape features, listed as a significant geopark by UNESCO, are major elements in the Shire and form part of a major geological feature of western Victoria. Their protection and management is important for scientific, cultural, community and tourist-recreational purposes.

The natural resource base of the Shire is significant as the foundation to agriculture. The natural environment is also significant to the Shire for the attraction it provides to tourists. Natural features such as the Grampians bring domestic and international visitors to

the Shire. Without these quality soils and water the Shire would not have its economic base in its current form. As a result of the drier climate and economic drivers, there have been changes to the farming land uses that need to be monitored for the effect on the environment.

Given the large amount of native vegetation that has been lost in the Shire, protection of the areas of remnant vegetation is a high priority for its contribution to biodiversity and habitat provision. The Glenelg catchment has approximately 28% of its original native vegetation cover and the Hopkins catchment has only 3%. On a State-wide scale the extent of woodlands is limited, fragmented and extremely depleted. Perennial native grassland communities are extremely limited.

Photo: *Glossodia major* (Wax lily Orchid),
Wannon reserve. Elizabeth Fenton.



The Red Gum swamp community and Basalt Plains grassland community are listed as threatened ecological communities under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1989). The Plains Grasslands and Volcanic Eucalypt Grassy Woodlands are protected by the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999).

In contrast, forests and heathlands are reasonably well preserved. The Grampians support a diverse range of native vegetation, dominated by dry eucalypt forests and woodlands.

Many remaining stands of native vegetation exist on roadsides.

The dramatic loss of vegetation cover in the area is reflected in the significant number of very rare or threatened species. The roadsides provide effective habitat links that support biodiversity retention and need to be managed in the context of a drier climate and the threats of weeds and fire.

The condition of this natural resource base is declining due to such threats as salinity, water quality decline, erosion, land management practices, pest plants and animals and loss of native vegetation.

The Eastern Barred Bandicoot is one of Victoria's most endangered animals; the species is listed as a threatened species under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1989). Formerly widespread across the basalt plains of western Victoria, it has suffered a greater than 99% reduction in range and abundance.

The Rocklands Reservoir is the main water storage facility in the Shire. The Glenelg River is the second longest river in Victoria and forms part of the northern boundary of the municipality. Protection of the quality of this water supply is significant to both the urban residents and the agricultural communities. The annual average rainfall is 612.5mm.

The Wannon River, Nigretta Falls and the Wannon Falls are some of the Shire's outstanding landscape features and a major tourist attraction. The Shire contains extensive ground water resources in deep and shallow aquifers. Ground water quality is generally good and it is used for stock and domestic supplies. Ground water quality tends to decrease toward the central north of the Shire, where it is saline. The extended drought raises potential challenges with regard to the quality and quantity of water in the aquifers. Extensive drainage programs have reduced wetland areas, which once provided habitat for a range of flora and fauna.

Identifying Key Directions and Management Objectives

Methodology

The prioritization of key directions for the Strategy was developed with an “adapted triangulation methodological approach” (in Social Sciences, the method of triangulation social sciences, involves the combined use of two or more research methods with the aim of convergent validity) The following are the methodological components:

» **Review of existing priorities and policies:** the most directly relevant policy is the Local Environmental Sustainability Priority Statement (2007).

The Municipal Strategic Statement (2005) calls for the diversification of the Shire’s economic base, the protection and promotion of environmental heritage, sustainable management of the Shire’s natural resources and environmental assets, and the improvement of water quality, supply and the condition of the Shire’s rivers and streams (including environmental flows).

The Shire’s Sustainable Water Use Plan (2006) provides detailed background information and future directions for Council’s future water use and it is consistent with the Victorian Government’s 2004 “White paper”. Among the main objectives this plan includes the following objectives for Council: objectives and targets for water conservation and details a series of actions for water conservation based on the waste management hierarchy (“reduce, re-use and recycle”).

More guidance is provided at the regional, State levels, with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GH CMA) and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), amongst others, providing substantial policy context and recommendations of priority issues and actions. This is added to at the national level by reports such as “The Garnaut Climate Change Review (2008)” and “National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (2000)”.

IMPORTANCE ↑	High importance	High importance	High importance
	PRIORITY 5-8	PRIORITY 2-4	PRIORITY 1
	Low feasibility	Medium feasibility	High feasibility
	Medium importance	Medium importance	Medium importance
	PRIORITY 8-10	PRIORITY 2-4	PRIORITY 2-4
	Low feasibility	Medium feasibility	High feasibility
	Low importance	Low importance	Low importance
	Low feasibility	Low feasibility	Low feasibility
	FEASIBILITY →		

Fig. 2 Prioritization Matrix

- **Data collection:** All available information on the state of the Shire's, or in the absence of Shire data, the region's resources, was collected. This large body of data was then refined in reference to existing priorities and plans and in consultation with the Steering Committee.
- **Themes:** Five key sustainability themes were identified by the Steering Committee. The themes help to clearly identify and prioritise issues and a method of organising objectives. The initial themes include Land, Water, Waste, Income and Community. The themes were modified to better reflect the Council Plan's vision and now includes Land, Water, Waste, Liveability and Climate Change.
- **Ranking priorities and objectives by Steering Committee:** The medium and high priority issues were reviewed by the Steering Committee in reference to their extent, condition, trend, significance and value. These scores were an average of those recorded by Steering Committee members.
- **Community consultation to refine the process:** An extended community consultation process helped inform community priorities and matters for Council and its partners to consider and implement. This stage of the process included consultation with Council staff, community members and agencies, further complementing "Top spots, the locations" and Steering Committee working groups findings.
- **Prioritization:** A prioritization matrix was used to determine overall priorities (see figure 2.). The criteria, utilized in this prioritization matrix were:

 - **Importance:** from the point of view of stakeholders (community, agencies and staff priorities triangulated with existing strategies and relevant plans at a regional and state level including existing plans)
 - **Feasibility:** how realistic is that we can resolve the problem?

Strategic Directions: Sustainability Priorities for Southern Grampians Shire and Management Objectives

This section outlines the key sustainability priorities for Southern Grampians Shire and includes the following criteria (also provided in all the tables):

- 26 Objectives and 104 strategic actions *
- Council department's responsibility
- Partners
- Timeframes
- Project priority
- Resource implication

*: Some intermediate actions will be required to support strategic action, but their details will be covered in an annual work plan.

Partners

The cooperation from the following agencies is integral to the success of the Strategy. Council will work directly or indirectly with these partners:

- Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, (DEWHA)
- Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE)
- The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
- Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
- Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GH CMA)
- Wannon Water (WW)
- Southern Rural Water (SRW)
- Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF)
- Parks Victoria (Parks Vic)
- Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Local Brigades

- Victoria Roads (Vic Roads)
- South West Sustainability Partnership (SWSP)
- South West Regional Waste Management Group (RWMG).
Trading Name:
Waste REDUCTION Group
- Educational and research institutions such as, South West TAFE and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)
- Non regulatory agencies such as Trust for Nature, Victorian Volcanic Plains Conservation Management Network
- Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs)
- Landcare and community groups (e.g. environmental and care groups)
- Progress and Business Associations
- Greenhouse Gas Alliance (GGA)
- Natural Assets Alliance (NAA)
- Primary Care Partnership (PCP)
- Western District Health Services (WDHS)
- State Emergency Services (SES)
- Hamilton Regional Business Association (HRBA)
- Conservation Management Network (CMN)
- Regional Development Victoria (RDV)
- Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD)

Timeframes

The following timeframes are identified:

S: short term (1 year)

M: medium term (2-4 years)

L: long term (5 years or more)

Resource Implications

While some actions will not require additional resources, other require greater financial investment; priorities should be evaluated concurrently with annual budgets. A guiding colour coded reference guide has been developed as follows:

● Red:

external alternative resources required

● Amber:

medium level of resources required, budget implications yet to be identified

● Green:

existing resources are sufficient

1. Land (including natural resource and ecosystems resilience)

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

1. Community capacity and engagement to help community better understand land related issues
2. Land use planning reflecting appropriate level of stewardship for the environment
3. Protection and enhancement of remnant systems and habitat
4. Invasive species management

Human settlement has benefited from abundant and rich land resources including water, soil and biodiversity. This has placed stress on the system, for example, the current extent of native vegetation cleared surpasses the 85%.

Most remnant habitat occurs in major conservation reserves such as the Grampians, with remnant grassland often confined to roadsides, or, as with the red gum woodlands, scattered across broad acre grazing land. The land resource can be expected to be placed under increasing pressure in future as agricultural activity intensifies.

According to the Flora Information System and Victorian Fauna Database, in Southern Grampians there are:

- 71 species of threatened fauna (including 40 listed by the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988)
- 74 species listed as threatened flora (with 24 species listed in the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988)
- 29 native species listed as priority species. These include broilgas, red-tailed cockatoo, striped legless lizard and eastern barred bandicoot
- The Natural Temperate grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plains-once covering 40% of the Shire-is listed as a Nationally Threatened Community and it is critically endangered.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

- Roadside Vegetation Management Plan
- Active community participation in conservation /environmental activities supported by Glenelg Hopkins CMA
- Creation of Shire Futures Directorate to address future planning implications for land use change

KEY CHALLENGES

- Soil decline, increasing dry land salinity
- Addressing the urban/rural pressures on natural environment within the current local planning schemes
- Further developing the community understanding of biodiversity values (including endangered ecological communities) in the context of a predominantly cleared landscape
- Appropriately manage the built environment

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Promote community educational programs on appreciation of natural environment in conjunction with Glenelg Hopkins CMA
- Collaborate with Glenelg Hopkins CMA for salinity management capacity building within Council

- Prioritize revegetation programs in salinity hazards areas to improve both salinity and biodiversity outcomes

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES AND TARGETS

- Implementation of weed control programs on roadsides
- Training for relevant Council staff in weed identification and management completed
- Training for relevant Council staff in weed hygiene completed
- Protocol for works on roadside developed and adopted
- Invasive species mapping for high priority vegetation roadsides
- Weed enforcement protocols developed, resource allocation for a weed gazetted officer or environmental control officer
- Formal agreements/memoranda of understanding developed for information sharing developed between Council and other agencies (e.g. DPI, GH CMA, DSE)

1. Land

Priority	Action	Key responsible Council departments	Partner agencies	Timeframe	Resources implication
1. Community Capacity and Engagement to Help Community Better Understand Land Related Issues					
1	1.1 Collaborate with all relevant agencies for capacity building initiatives within Council (e.g., land/biodiversity/invasive species best practice management)	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, DPI, DSE, CMN	Ongoing	
1	1.2 Support partnership projects which enhance local biodiversity, conservation of land/soil/water resources and promote recreation activities in local communities	Sustainability, Shire Futures, Infrastructure	GH CMA, DPI, DSE	Ongoing	
1	1.3 Support partnership projects looking to educate the community about soil health and best practice soil management	Sustainability, Shire Futures, Communications	GH CMA, DPI, DSE	Ongoing	
1	1.4 Support partnership projects looking to educate the community about biodiversity and threatened species on reserves and private land	Sustainability, Shire Futures, Planning Communications	GH CMA, DPI, DSE, CMN	Ongoing	
2-4	1.5 Promote community educational programs on appreciation of natural environment and the role of its different elements (e.g. soil health, biodiversity, etc)	Sustainability, Shire Futures, Communications	GH CMA, DPI, DSE, Landcare groups	Ongoing	
2. Land Use Planning Reflecting Appropriate Level of Stewardship for the Environment					
1	2.1 Council to review the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme to ensure it guides the appropriate location of urban development (including land use and land capability analysis)	Planning	DSE, DPCD, GH CMA	S-M	
1	2.2 Southern Grampians Planning Scheme to incorporate relevant environmental layers (e.g. salinity, vegetation, etc.)	Planning	DPCD, GH CMA, DPI, DSE	S-M	
1	2.3 Council to train key and relevant staff in plan invasive species identification and management	Sustainability, Infrastructure	DPI, DPCD, GH CMA, DSE	S-M	
1	2.4 Council to evaluate resources/staff allocation to ensure the effective provision of environmental control/planning and environmental educational services to the community	Executive Management Team		S-M	
1	2.5 Council to support expert agency efforts to better understand agricultural capability and its relationship with other values (e.g. biodiversity, economic markets, etc)	Sustainability, Planning	SES, VFF, Landcare, GH CMA, DSE, DPI	M-L	
3. Protection and Enhancement of Remnant Systems and Habitat					
1	3.1 Roadside management vegetation: Council to train relevant staff involved in Roadside Management in vegetation management	Sustainability, Infrastructure	DPI, DSE	S-M	
1	3.2 Council to adopt appropriate protocols for works on roadsides and/or sensitive areas within reserves	Sustainability, Infrastructure	DPI, DSE	S	
4. Invasive Species Management					
1	4.1 Council to map weed distribution on high priority vegetation areas (roadside and reserves)	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, DPI	S-M	
1	4.2 Council to lead by example by implementing community education programs about weed management roles and responsibilities	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, DPI, CFA, Vic Roads, VFF, CNN	Ongoing	
1	4.3 Council to promote existing invasive species management and best practice management programs among the community	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, DPI	Ongoing	
1	4.4 Council to work cooperatively with neighbouring Councils in the management of new incursions on roadsides	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, DPI, Other Councils	Ongoing	
2-4	4.5 Council to support the development of weed control programs in conjunction with other agencies and community groups	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, DPI	Ongoing	
2-4	4.6 Council to look at increasing the enforcement role to support weed management on private land	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, DPI	Ongoing	

2. Water (including water availability/security and waterways health)

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

5. Water conservation
6. Water quality
7. Behavioral change and capacity building
8. Increased re-use of stormwater
9. Sewerage/grey water treatment
10. Enhancement of significant waterways and wetlands

Much of the region's wealth has been built around abundant and regular water supply. The resource is under increasing stress due to reduced rain fall and runoff, land use changes, nutrients overload, salinity problems, algal blooms and the draining of wetlands. Means to improve the situation include increased extraction of groundwater, increased provision and use of recycled water, filtering of stormwater and the restoration of wetlands, fencing and other streamside works, the application of water restrictions and the provision of community use and environmental flows from water savings through the piping of irrigation systems to the Shire's north.

Wannon Water is constructing a pipeline to connect Hamilton to the Rocklands Reservoir in the Grampians. The 52km pipeline will supply up to 2,000 ML per year of water (purchased from Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water) to overcome water restrictions and provide for future growth.

Water for Hamilton is obtained from the western slopes of the Victorian range in the southern part of the Grampians National Park. Water is diverted from eight small streams. During extended dry periods, two bores (Bullawin and Headwork) are operated.

Household water use varies from 298L per person per day in Hamilton to 220L per person per day in Coleraine (2005-06 figures).

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

- Southern Grampians Sustainable Water Plan
- Hamilton-Grampians Pipeline
- Coleraine-Casterton Pipeline, completed 2009
- Hamilton Stormwater Management Plan
- Blue-green Algae Bloom Response Plan
- Lake Hamilton Management Plan
- Area improvement Program Water Quality in the Grange Burn Catchment
- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan
- Hamilton wetlands provide filtration for 70% of Hamilton Stormwater
- Re-use of Wannon Water reclaimed water is estimated at nearly 40ML per year (for irrigation and road works up to 5.7ML per year , Mitchell Park Oval uses 3.1 ML, Kennedy Oval 1.8ML and Irrigation at Livestock Exchange is estimated to be 25 to 30 ML)

KEY CHALLENGES

- Ensuring water balance at catchment level
- Provision of adequate drinking water supply for communities
- Adapting to the requirements of a changing climate

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Engaging with community to foster behavioral change towards water conservation and aquatic ecosystems enhancement and protection
- Significant opportunities for Stormwater re- use, water harvesting and re-use initiatives
- Water cycle planning (environmental flows)

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES AND TARGETS

- Number of prioritised actions identified under the Sustainable Water Use Action Plan prioritised and completed
- Number of actions identified under Water Audits for main four facilities of Council prioritised and completed
- Sustainable Water Use Plan and Domestic Waste Water Management Plan reviewed and updated
- Progress towards Council's goal of reducing water consumption in all Council operations by 10% by 2012 compared to 2004-2009 data (Sustainable Water Use Plan)
- Progress towards rainwater capture for Council four main facilities: number of rainwater tanks and volume of water collected (compared to 2008-2009 levels from Water Audits).
- Progress towards promoting use of rainwater tanks in new developments (target: 10% increase compared to 2008-2009 levels)

2. Water

Priority	Action	Responsible Council Departments	Partner Agencies	Timeframe	Resources implication
5. Water Conservation					
1	5.1 Council to effectively implement all actions under the Sustainable Water Use Plan and Water Audits (four major facilities)	Sustainability, Assets Maintenance, Infrastructure, Whole of Council	WW	M	
1	5.2 Diversion/use decrease for all Council operations. 10% reduction water use by 2012 and 20% by 2017 (as per Sustainable Water Use Plan equivalent to 6.2 ML/a and 12.4 ML/a respectively)	Sustainability Assets Maintenance, Infrastructure Whole of Council	WW, SRW	S-M	
1	5.3 Develop guidelines for reducing water consumption in new and existing Council buildings or facilities	Sustainability, Assets Maintenance	WW	S	
1	5.4 Council to increase use of reclaimed water from 40MI to 50MI by 2012	Sustainability, Assets Maintenance, Infrastructure	WW	S-M	
1	5.5 Promotion of water saving initiatives and re use among community	Sustainability	WW	S-M	
1	5.6 Support Glenelg Hopkins CMA initiatives to raise awareness and education about importance of environmental flows	Sustainability	GH CMA	Ongoing	
2-4	5.7 Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles incorporated into Council's Infrastructure standards and into the Southern Grampians Planning Scheme	Planning, Infrastructure	WW	S-M	
2-4	5.8 Consider more water storage by developing a Sustainable Water Management Plan for each town including stormwater and grey water.	Sustainability, Planning, Infrastructure, Env. Health	Progress Associations, WW	M	
6. Water Quality					
1	6.1 Nutrients and turbidity levels managed according to ANZ standards in Council managed waterways (e.g. Lake Hamilton, Grange Burn)	Env. Health, Sustainability	GH CMA, EPA	S-M	
1	6.2 Identify sources of waste water pollution into significant waterways, develop plan to address the environmental impacts	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Env. Health	EPA, GH CMA	Ongoing	
1	6.3 Algal blooms monitored and controlled. Response Management Plans implemented (including Lake Hamilton Management Plan and Grange Burn Catchment Management Plan)	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Env. Health	EPA	Ongoing	
7. Behavioral Change and Capacity Building					
1	7.1 Council to demonstrate leadership by effectively implementing water saving initiatives in its own buildings (e.g., rainwater capture), in accordance with energy and water audits and management plans	Sustainability	WW	Ongoing	
1	7.2 Influence and promote the community's use of alternative supplies including recycling, grey water, re use and water tanks to reduce potable water consumption	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Planning, Env. Health Communications	GH CMA, WW	Ongoing	
2-4	7.3 Promotion of existing and upcoming information on rebates for rainwater tank and water recycling systems	Sustainability, Planning, Communications	WW	Ongoing	
2-4	7.4 Develop water saving educational programs (such as "Adopt a Wetland" or "Water Wise Gardens") for schools and community groups.	Sustainability	GH CMA, WW	Ongoing	
8. Increased Re-use of Stormwater					
1	8.1 Council to evaluate options to re-use stormwater in its own operations	Sustainability, Infrastructure,	GH CMA, WW, DSE	Ongoing	
1	8.2 Council to ensure all new developments to comply with best practice for re-use of stormwater	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Planning	WW	Ongoing	
9. Sewerage/Grey Water Management					
1	9.1 Council to develop a Sewerage Strategy for townships and Hamilton	Planning, Infrastructure	WW	S-M	
1	9.2 Council to continue to provide information about grey water best practice management to all Shire residents	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Planning, Env. Health	GH CMA, WW, EPA, DSE	Ongoing	
1	9.3 Conduct feasibility studies for towns with no reticulated water supply or reticulated sewerage (including Branxholme, Balmoral, Cavendish, Glenthompson and Tarrington)	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Planning, Env. Health	WW	S-M	
1	9.4 Review and update the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Planning, Env. Health	WW	S-M	
10. Enhancement of Significant Waterways and Wetlands					
1	10.1 Council to support Glenelg Hopkins CMA -and other relevant agencies and community groups- efforts to improve waterways and wetlands condition and extent	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, Landcare groups	Ongoing	
1	10.2 Council to prioritise maintenance of existing wetlands	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Parks and Gardens	GH CMA, WW	Ongoing	

3. Waste (minimisation and re-use)

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

11. Establish a waste management plan for Council consistent with the objectives of the sustainability strategy and other plans
12. Community awareness raising and education
13. Upgrade of the Shire's Recycling facilities and specialised waste services
14. Reduced levels of household, commercial and industrial waste going to landfill
15. Increased level of green/organic waste diversion from landfill

The Victorian Towards Zero Waste Strategy (launched in 2004) sets four state-wide targets for waste reduction:

- 1.5 MT reduction in solid waste generated
- 75% by weight of solid waste recovered for re-use, recycling and/or energy generation
- Sectoral recovery rates achieved: Municipal solid waste (65%), commercial and industrial waste (80%), construction and demolition waste (80%)
- A 25% improvement in littering behaviors from 2003 levels. A kerbside audit conducted by Waste Management Group found that the removal of recyclables (i.e. commingled recyclables, green waste, food organics) from the waste stream has a significant potential for cost saving/shifting plus possible environmental benefits.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

- Adoption of programs like Waste Wise, Southern Grampians is committed to accreditation. Current certified organisations: Hamilton, Coleraine and Penshurst hospitals, residential service
- ECO-Buy incorporated into Procurement policy
- Adoption of Towards Zero Waste as the guiding strategic direction for Council
- Kerbside waste audit (Waste REDUCTION Group)

- Recycling audit (Waste REDUCTION Group)
- Energy audit for four major Council facilities and carbon footprint (2009).
- Litter prevention program
- Public place recycling facilities at HILAC and Lake Hamilton
- Council is a member of the Waste REDUCTION Group and has adopted the South Western Regional Waste Management Plan

KEY CHALLENGES

- Transport of recyclables is cost-prohibitive
- Reduce waste volume going to landfill
- Potential increased in construction and demolition waste
- Capturing resource re-use with limited technologies in place at rural landfills
- Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) will involve a higher cost in levies and charges
- Behaviour change among community and Council staff

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Organic waste recycling and composting
- Implementation of re-use shops
- Conversion of landfill-generated methane to power
- Develop re-use programs for specific waste streams such as construction and demolition streams

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES AND TARGETS

- 15% increase Volume of waste diverted from landfill compared to 2008-2009 levels (Kerbside audit).
- 10% increase Volume of recycled material recovered compared to 2008-2009 levels
- Achieve Sustainability Victoria Best Practice levels of waste management
- Household garbage decreased from 356 kg/yr to 324 kg/year (regional average) by 2015
- Household recycling increased from 229 kg/yr to 279 kg/year (regional average) by 2015
- Organics collected increased from 0 kg/yr to at least 50% of 279 kg/year (regional average) by 2015

3. Waste

Priority	Action	Responsible Council Departments	Partner Agencies	Timeframe	Resources implication
11. Establish a Waste Management Plan for Council Consistent with the Objectives Of The Sustainability Strategy and Other Plans					
1	11.1 Minimise waste from Council buildings and facilities including parks, gardens and public utilities and recreation reserves	Sustainability, Whole of Council	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
1	11.2 Develop litter reduction strategies for the whole of Southern Grampians Shire	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION group	S-M	
2-4	11.3 Actively implement ECO-Buy, the Local Government preferred green purchasing program for increased purchasing of environmentally preferable products	Sustainability, Whole of Council	ECO-Buy	Ongoing	
12. Community Awareness Raising and Education					
1	12.1 Council to liaise with community, local schools, sports organisations and implement an educational behavioural change program focused on appropriate waste management and recycling	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	Ongoing	
1	12.2 Improve kerbside collection service by implementing Community education to minimise waste	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	Ongoing	
2-4	12.3 Council to liaise with local businesses to achieve plastic bag free status (as per South Australian model)	Sustainability, Economic Development	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
2-4	12.4 Encourage and support business to join sustainable business initiatives to reduce the impact of waste and chemicals in their day to day operations	Sustainability, Economic Development	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
13. Upgrade of the Shire's Recycling Facilities and Specialised Waste Services					
1	13.1 Enhance recycling opportunities at all waste transfer stations and undertake recycling collection programs such e-waste, fluorescent and HID lamps	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
1	13.2 Investigate the viability of introducing a material recovery facility for either the Southern Grampians Shire or a facility for the whole SW region	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	M-L	
2-4	13.3 Council to evaluate a "tip shop facility" (re-use shop) at Southern Grampians Transfer stations	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
2-4	13.4 Introduce more "Public Place recycling facilities" at key locations (currently at Lake Hamilton and HILAC)	Sustainability Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
2-4	13.5 Continue to identify litter hot spots and install cigarette butts bins in CBD area	Sustainability, Infrastructure, Env. Health	Waste REDUCTION Group	Ongoing	
2-4	13.6 Investigate alternatives for conversion of waste into energy (e.g. methane capture, Biochar, etc)	Sustainability, Infrastructure	GH CMA, WW, Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
14. Reduced Levels of Household, Commercial and Industrial Waste Going to Landfill					
1	14.1 Commercial and demolition waste recycled in line with Victoria's Towards Zero Waste Strategy	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group, EPA	M-L	
1	14.2 Recycling and kerbside recollection audits	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	Ongoing	
15. Increased Level of Green/organic Waste Diversion from Landfill					
1	15.1 Implement and educational program regarding re-use of organic waste	Sustainability	Waste REDUCTION Group	Ongoing	
1	15.2 Investigate the viability of introducing a green/organics waste collection service in addition to the current 2 bin waste and recycling service	Sustainability, Economic Development, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
1	15.3 Evaluate the adoption of a rebate to provide community members with a compost bin to reduce organic waste going to landfill	Sustainability, Economic Development	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
2-4	15.4 Council to liaise with schools and community and provide support for establishment of worm farms as a measure to encourage residents to reduce the amount of green waste to landfill	Sustainability, Economic Development	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	
2-4	15.5 Evaluate possible business opportunities from re-utilising green waste	Sustainability, Economic Development	Waste REDUCTION Group	S-M	

4. Liveability (including economic prosperity, access to services and governance)

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

16. Diversity in employment and opportunities for younger people
17. Community capacity and engagement
18. Good Governance processes supporting sustainability adoption within Council
19. Support to vulnerable populations
20. Well-being and liveability
21. Prosperous tourism and business activities
22. Sustained agricultural production

The local community displays many strengths, most noticeable in engaging with local issues, well-being and population stability. Well-being can be attributed in part to the many high quality locations in which residents can interact with their natural environment. Employment diversity, education and ageing population are areas of concern. The south and south west of the Shire have been identified as vulnerable and require special attention.

Southern Grampians has a relatively high level of citizen engagement in Victoria (67% compared to 54% average in Victoria).

The central and eastern 60% of the Shire has been mapped as a transition landscape, with rapid land use change and decline in small towns, decreasing number and increasing average age for farmers.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

- The Council Plan is committed to address most of these issues to ensure SGSC becomes the most liveable provincial shire in Australia
- New Directorate of Shire Futures to integrate planning and policy development
- Public Health and Well-being Plan has been completed

KEY CHALLENGES

- Maintain or improve subjective well-being scores in a climate of uncertainty (climate change)
- Provision of services (particularly in extreme weather conditions)
- Adequate planning policies and instruments to address socio-demographic changes and their interaction with land uses

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve governance
- Improve community capacity and engagement
- Adaptive planning in low carbon emissions
- Skills diversification (e.g. Green Jobs)
- Attraction of sustainable (green) industries

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES AND TARGETS

- Community Engagement Policy developed
- Structure Plan for CBD developed
- Subjective Well-being score (aggregate score for Southern Grampians maintained or increased in the medium to long term).
- Community satisfaction survey delivered on a regular basis

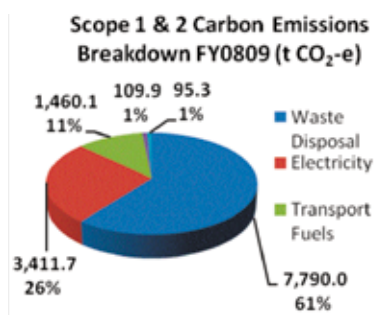
4. Liveability

Priority	Action	Key Responsible Council Department	Partner Agencies	Timeframe	Resources Implication
16. Diversity in Employment and Opportunities for Younger People					
1	16.1 Development of partnerships with educational providers to ensure more options are offered to youth	Shire Futures, Economic Development, Community Services	RMIT, SW TAFE,	S-M	
1	16.2 Active involvement on State and Federal government programs to diversify work force, specifically green jobs	Economic Development, Community Services	All, RDV	S-M	
2-4	16.3 Increase the level of engagement with young people and develop a Youth Pathways Program	Shire Futures, Community Services	RMIT, SW TAFE	S-M	
17. Community Capacity and Engagement					
1	17.1 Development of a Community Engagement Policy for Southern Grampians Shire	Community Services		S-M	
1	17.2 Support activities of 'environment' and related groups	Sustainability	GH CMA, DPI	Ongoing	
2-4	17.3 Encourage a range of community events and activities to engage youth and bridge the generational gap (e.g. "Kids shed", mentoring initiatives, entertainment events, etc)	Community Services	GH CMA, DPI, PCP	Ongoing	
2-4	17.4 Assist community to explore and implement replicable elements of Transition Towns (self sufficient living, community gardens, etc)	Sustainability, Shire Futures, Community Services, Economic Development	MAV, GGA, NAA	S-M	
18. Good Governance Processes Supporting Sustainability Adoption within Council					
1	18.1 Development of an overarching Sustainability Policy for Council	Sustainability		S	
1	18.2 Sustainability assessment criteria to be embedded into all Council decisions through Capital Works Program, Annual Works Programs, Procurement Policy, Adoption of ECO-Buy as the preferred Green Procurement Policy, Motor Vehicle Policy review and update	Sustainability, Council Working Groups	ECO-Buy, MAV, Greenfleet	S	
1	18.3 Evaluation of implementing Environmental Management Systems and indicators models (e.g. Global Reporting Initiative or Deakin University Model) as the preferred sustainability reporting mechanism	Sustainability	SWSP	S	
1	18.4 Council to assess required budget allocations to support implementation of sustainable programs	Whole of Council		S-M	
2-4	18.5 Staff Duty Statement and Performance Evaluation to incorporate sustainability criteria into all Position Descriptions within Council	Sustainability, Human Resources, Continuous Improvement	MAV	S-M	
2-4	18.6 Long term financial planning applying triple bottom line thinking and actions to specific planning tasks, projects and capital works decision making processes	Corporate Services, Sustainability, Whole of Council	MAV	S-M	
19. Support to Vulnerable Populations					
1	19.1 Investigate alternatives to support most vulnerable communities across Southern Grampians to adapt to the new carbon economies	Community Services, Economic Development	PCP, Progress Associations	Ongoing	
1	19.2 Ensure that council policies and strategies address specific issues related to vulnerable populations	Community Services, Economic Development, Community Services	PCP	Ongoing	
1	19.3 Ensure the provision of services for disadvantaged and vulnerable populations	Community Services, Economic Development	PCP, Progress Associations	Ongoing	
20. Well-being and Liveability					
1	20.1 Develop a Transport Strategy including investigations in to share use of existing services, promoting walking and cycling	Shire Futures, Planning, Leisure Services , Infrastructure	PCP, WDHS	S-M	
1	20.2 Ensure CBD Structure Plan provides for increased use of alternative transport like bikes and walking	Shire Futures, Planning, Infrastructure	PCP, DPCD	S	
2-4	20.3 Council to ensure protection and enhancement of key natural environment areas (e.g. reserves), for recreational and cultural use	Shire Futures Planning, Infrastructure	DSE, Parks VIC	Ongoing	
2-4	20.4 Council to continue to support and advocate for multiple cultural and artistic events for the Shire	Economic Development, Community Services	PCP	Ongoing	
21. Prosperous Tourism and Business Activities					
1	21.1 Support innovative initiatives and emerging business initiatives	Economic Development	HRBA	Ongoing	
2-4	21.2 Develop the concept of improving allied facilities (e.g., age care, community transport, etc.) and encourage education and employment in this growing industry	Community Services, Economic Development	PCP, WDHS	M-L	
22. Sustained Agricultural Production					
2-4	22.1 Council to advocate and support the value of agricultural activities in the Shire, increased production capacity and to help transition to low carbon economies	Shire Futures, Planning, Sustainability, Economic Development	VFF	Ongoing	

5. Climate change (adaptation to climate change, emissions management)

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

23. Reduction and offset of carbon emissions for Southern Grampians Shire Council buildings, operations and the public realm
24. Carbon Footprint and Emissions Management Plan for Southern Grampians Shire Council linked to energy audits recommendations
25. Increased use of clean energy options
26. Community capacity building and education



Scope 1 and 2 Carbon Emissions.
Southern Grampians Shire Council Carbon Footprint 2008-2009

The relatively stable and equable climate of the region has enabled the development of a prosperous agricultural base and associated industries and communities. Recent and projected changes to temperature and rainfall suggest an increase in extreme weather events; such an effect would be pervasive across local land management practices. The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) will drive energy efficiency, renewable energy generation and low carbon production.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

- Council commitment to emissions review, reduction consolidated in Council Plan 2009-2013
- Council appointed a full time Sustainability Coordinator
- Council completed energy audits for four major Council facilities
- Council completed a carbon footprint for all operations
- Wind farms: 56 turbines of approximately 100MW capacity currently approved within Southern Grampians

KEY CHALLENGES

- Adapting to the effects of climate change
- Behavioural change in communities, promote consumers shift
- Managing the growing demand for energy and rising energy costs

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Incorporation of energy efficiency measures to reduce Council's energy use cost as well as green house gas emissions
- Generation of green power
- Energy efficient renewable energy generation
- New jobs creation (Green collar jobs)

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES AND TARGETS

- Number of recommended building retrofitting actions completed under energy audits (2009). Target: three priority actions per year
- Reduction of volume waste going to landfill by 20% (indicative: volumes from 2008-2009)
- Number of public educational initiatives run by Council and or community groups and waste reduction group at least 3 per year
- Green power purchased by Council: 20% first year (2011), reviewed annually

5. Climate change

Priority	Action	Key Responsible Council Departments	Partner Agencies	Timeframe	Resources Implication
23. Reduction and Offset of Council Carbon Emissions for Southern Grampians Shire Council					
1	23.1 Energy audits conducted for four main Council facilities in Hamilton	Sustainability		S	●
1	23.2 Energy audits conducted for extra four Council facilities (across the Shire)	Sustainability		S-M	●
1	23.3 Carbon footprint for all of Council facilities (including waste, vehicle fleet, energy usage)	Sustainability		S	●
1	23.4 Council to play a leadership role in considering fuel efficient council vehicles (solar, LPG, hybrid diesel) and education on efficient driving	Sustainability, Fleet Manager, Council-wide Sustainability Working Group, Organisational Development	MAV	S-M	●
1	23.5 Council to continue to support activities of the Council Sustainability Working Group	Sustainability, Executive Management Team		Ongoing	●
2-4	23.6 Climate related risk assessment for Council infrastructure	Sustainability, Risk Management, Assets Maintenance	MAV	S-M	●
2-4	23.7 Council to encourage the use of bikes among employees	Sustainability, Council-wide Sustainability Working Group Executive Management Team		S-M	●
24. Carbon Footprint and Emissions Management Plan for Southern Grampians Shire Council					
1	24.1 Council to show leadership developing and implementing a Carbon Emissions Management Plan for Council operations utilising a carbon footprint as baseline	Sustainability, Council-wide Sustainability Working Group, Executive Management Team	GGA	S-M	●
1	24.2 Greater provision of infrastructure supporting alternative means of transport (cycle paths, shared pedestrian /bike path) for the whole of Southern Grampians	Shire Futures, Community Services, Infrastructure, Planning	PCP	S-M	●
25. Increased Use of Renewable or Less Polluting Energy Sources					
1	25.1 Increased amount of electricity and fuel sourced from renewable sources for Council operations (green power) and in accordance with a Carbon Emissions Management Plan	Sustainability, Corporate Services	GGA, NAA, SWSP	S-M	●
1	25.2 Awareness among industry /business groups regarding use of renewable sources of electricity/fuel	Sustainability, Shire Futures, Economic Development	GGA, NAA SWSP	S-M	●
1	25.3 Council to support and encourage possibility of biofuel production	Sustainability, Shire Futures, Economic Development	GGA, NAA SWSP,VFF	Ongoing	●
1	25.4 Council to participate in regional efforts to investigate alternative energy sources	Sustainability, Economic Development Infrastructure	GGA, NAA, SWS, GH CMA	S-M	●
26. Community Education and Engagement					
1	26.1 Support partnership projects which improve opportunities for council, farms and local business to better understand carbon emissions management and offsetting	Sustainability Economic Development	VFF, Landcare	Ongoing	●
1	26.2 Council to take a stronger role promoting the use of alternative sources of energy and informing community about existing initiatives and funding opportunities	Sustainability	GGA, NAA SWSP, GH CMA	Ongoing	●
1	26.3 Council to show leadership educating the community about the relevance of appropriate waste management in relation to emissions	Sustainability, Infrastructure	Waste REDUCTION Group	Ongoing	●
1	26.4 Develop an educational program about food security and self-sufficiency	Sustainability, Community Services	GGA, PCP	S-M	●
1	26.5 Council to help communities better understand the implication of a Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) and an Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)	Sustainability, Communications	GGA, SWSP, PCP	S_M	●
2-4	26.6 Council to support community-driven and emerging initiatives related to adaption to climate change (e.g. Transition Towns)	Sustainability	GGA, PCP, SWSP	S-M	●
2-4	26.7 Council to ensure the Planning Scheme and building guidelines help to better address climate change issues	Shire Futures, Planning	DPCD	S-M	●

Implementation and Monitoring:

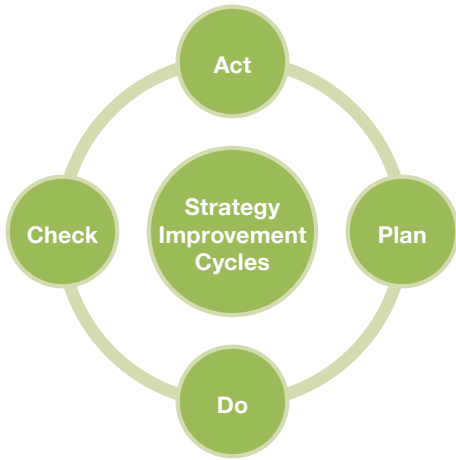


fig. 3 PDCA Cycle

Implementation:

The recommendations for the implementation are relevant to all aspects of Council's management and operations

The structure and process for implementation is to be:

- **Establishment of a Technical Reference Group** made up of partner agency representatives who are integral to the successful implementation of the strategies, objectives and actions listed herein
- **Community groups** are established to assist with the implementation of community initiatives in particular.
- **Sustainability Coordinator:** a full-time coordinator will oversee the Strategy implementation. The role of the coordinator is as much one of facilitation and coordination (a catalyst of sustainability actions across Council and community) as one of direct interaction within relevant Council departments.
- **Yearly work plan:** Sustainability Coordinator and departmental managers will develop a yearly plan listing the eight-ten priority future directions from the Strategy to be addressed that year, necessary actions for implementation and relevant budget details.
- **Detailed annual work plan:** will be developed by all relevant Council departments and approved by Council aligned with budgetary allocations

Reporting system:

Twelve monthly performance reporting is expected as an internal process for Council

A yearly public report including achievements in carbon footprint, green purchasing, climate change initiatives, revegetation program, carbon offsetting, pest and plant control programs

Review:

The objectives under the strategy will be reviewed and updated every four years in alignment with other relevant Council policy.

Quality management: a 'Plan, Do, Check, Act' (PDCA) approach will be used to ensure continuous improvement (fig. 3)

Inclusion of environmental indicators

Wherever possible, measures and indicators proposed for the evaluation component of the strategy, are some in uses elsewhere – for example, for natural resource management reporting at the Federal level. In some instances, data and indicators are more limited, at an earlier stage of testing and development, such as the case of the Deakin University model but have been included as the strategy is a living document that useful measures can be developed in the life of the Strategy.

Appendix 1 - Relevant Policies and Strategies

NATIONAL

- Climate Change Adaptation Actions for Local Government 2007
- National State of the Environment Reporting 2001/2006
- National Framework for NRM Standards and Future Directions 2002
- National Weeds Strategy 1999
- Garnaut Climate Change Review 2008
- Mandatory Renewable Energy Target Overview 2008
- National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality 2000
- National Objectives and Future directions for Biodiversity Conservation 2001/2005

STATE

- Our Common Future: Victoria's Environmental Sustainability Framework 2005
- Land and Biodiversity at a Time of Climate Change - Green Paper 2008
- Energy for Victoria 2002
- Climate Change in Victoria: 2008 summary
- Victorian Local Sustainability Accord 2005
- Victorian River Health Strategy 2002
- Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Framework 2002
- Our Water, Our Future 2004
- Towards Zero Waste Strategy (2005)

REGIONAL

- Wannon Water Sustainability Strategy 2008
- Glenelg Hopkins (GH) CMA strategies and plans: Regional Catchment Strategy (2000), Native Vegetation (2000), River Health (2004), Weed and Rabbit Action Plans (2000), Habitat Network Plan (2007)
- Victorian Volcanic Plain, Dundas and Grampians Biodiversity Action Plans (2003)
- Water and Land Use Change Study (2005)
- Is South West Victoria Sustainable? ,vols. 1-4 (2005)
- Sustainability Assessment in Glenelg Hopkins Catchment (2007)

LOCAL

- Southern Grampians Shire Council Plan 2009-2013
- Municipal Strategic Statement, Planning Scheme (2005-8)
- Sustainable Water Use Plan 2006
- Local Environmental Sustainability Priority Statement (2007)
- Roadside Management Plan (2008)
- South West Regional Waste Management Business Plan (2008-2011)
- Economic Development Strategy (2004)
- Climate Change Adaptation: A Framework for Action (2008)
- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (2006)
- Municipal Fire Prevention Plan (2003)
- Population Health and Well-being (2008)

Appendix 2: Background reading

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)/Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), 2006. Index of Advantage/Disadvantage.
- ABS/Campbell-Wilson, A., 2008. Land Use Change Study Region Report – Western Victoria 1991-2006: Broadacre Cropping.
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- CarbonetiX, 2009. Energy Audits four major facilities, Southern Grampians Shire.
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- DEH, 2001/2006. National State of the Environment Reporting.
- Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA), 2008. Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain – Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.
- DEWHA, 2008. EPBC Act Protected Matters Report – Southern Grampians.
- Department of Industry, Innovation, Science and Research, 2008. Green Car Innovation Fund.
- Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2003. Report of the Inquiry into the 2002-3 Victorian Bushfires.
- Department of Primary Industries (DPI), 2007. Field List of Declared Noxious Weeds – Glenelg Hopkins Catchment.
- DPI, 2008. Hamilton Rainfall last 100 years – website.
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- DSE, 2003. Biodiversity Action Planning – Dundas Bioregion.
- DSE, 2003. Biodiversity Action Planning – Victorian Volcanic Plain Bioregion.
- DSE, 2004. Our water, Our Future: securing our water future together: White Paper.
- DSE/ABARE (vol. 12, no. 1), 2005. Regional Matters: an atlas of regional Victoria.
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- DSE, 2005. Victorian Local Sustainability Accord.
- DSE, 2008. Climate Change in Victoria: 2008 Summary.
- DSE, 2008. Land and Biodiversity at a Time of Climate Change: Green Paper.
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- Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA), 2001. Regional Catchment Strategy.
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- GHCMA, 20004. Rabbit Action Plan.
- GHCMA, 20021. Salinity Plan.
- GHCMA, 20022. River Health Strategy.
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- SGSC, 2006. Planning Scheme.
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- Waste REDUCTION Group (SW), 2007. Waste Wise Ways.
- Waste REDUCTION Group, 2008. South West Regional Waste Management Plan 2008-2012 (Draft).



Southern Grampians Shire Council wishes to pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land and their cultural and spiritual practices



**Victorian Local
Sustainability Accord**



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