



Mildura Rural City Council

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Policy

Policy – CP041

Prepared	Reviewed	Approved	Date	Council Minute No.
Manager Community Futures	SMT	Council	February 2021	2021/0028
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Document Owner: Manager Community Futures		Review Frequency: Every five years		

1. The purpose of this policy is

The purpose of this policy is to outline Council's commitment to environmental sustainability and managing climate change through mitigation and adaptation actions.

2. Policy Statement

Council recognises that managing climate change through mitigation and adaptation and supporting the community to adapt are critical responsibilities of local government. Council is committed to demonstrating environmental best practice in its operations, fostering environmentally responsible behaviour in its staff and contractors and using its experience and influence to promote actions towards sustainability and climate resilience in the wider community. Council is committed to achieving net zero emissions for Council operations by no later than 2050.

3. Principles

The achievement of Council's environmental sustainability and climate change objectives requires leadership from Council and collaborative engagement and support from all sectors of the municipality. Council's management, staff and Councillors are committed to:

- Integrating the principles of sustainability and sustainable development into decision making, taking into account both short-term and long-term perspectives.
- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment including controlling new and emerging pest species and supporting habitat linkages.
- Embracing innovative and new technology to develop, promote and implement environmental sustainable solutions.
- Reporting environmental sustainability performance transparently.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation actions including:
 - Minimising car and air travel including by utilising online meeting platforms and efficient route planning.

- Sustainable procurement including the purchase of low carbon footprint and recycled products.
- Considering the waste hierarchy and circular economy when procuring, using and disposing of resources and materials.
- Avoiding unnecessary consumption of goods and natural resources including:
 - Energy and water
 - Single use plastic
 - Paper by utilising digital technology
 - Stationary and other consumables
 - Catering
- Monitoring climate change impacts including changes in rainfall and temperature to inform planning for extreme events such as fire, dust storms and heatwaves, and consider the social, environmental and economic impacts of such events.
- Encouraging and inspiring the community to live sustainable lifestyles and build their resilience to current and future climate change impacts.

Environmental sustainability reporting and targets are detailed in Council's Annual Environmental Sustainability Report. This report considers targets and information from the following plans/strategies, guidelines and policy:

- Municipal Waste Management Plan 2009-2014
- Energy Management Plan 2017-2021
- Invasive Plants and Animals Plan 2020-2024
- Native Vegetation Plan 2020-2024
- Environmental Education Plan 2020-2024
- Wetland Management Guidelines, 2020
- Sustainable Water Use at Mildura Rural City Council, 2020
- Fleet Management Policy OP002

4. Who is responsible for implementing this policy?

Strategic Management Team.

5. Definitions

Circular Economy	An economic system aimed at eliminating waste and the continual use of resources. Circular systems employ reuse, sharing, repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing and recycling to create a closed-loop system, minimising the use of resource inputs and the creation of waste, pollution and carbon emissions.
Climate Change	Long-term shift in local, regional and global climate patterns.
Climate Change Adaptation	Efforts to prepare for the actual or expected changes in the climate in order to minimise harm, act on opportunities or cope with the consequences of climate change.
Climate Change Mitigation	Efforts which reduce Council's greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to a reduction in the rate of long-term climate change.
Carbon Footprint	The amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere by a particular human activity.
Natural Environment	Encompasses all living and non-living things occurring naturally on Earth.
Net Zero Emissions	An overall balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and greenhouse gas emissions taken out of the atmosphere.
Renewable Resources	Any natural resource (such as wood or solar energy) that can be replenished naturally with the passage of time.
Resource Consumption	The consumption of raw materials to sustain our lives.
Sustainable Development	"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Report 1987)
Sustainable Lifestyle	A lifestyle that attempts to reduce an individual's or society's use of the Earth's natural resources.
Sustainable Procurement	Meeting the need for goods, services, utilities and works with a view to maximising sustainable benefits for Council and the wider community.

6. Legislation and other references

6.1 Legislation

For further information related to this policy see:

- *Climate Change Act 2017* (Victoria)

6.2 Documents

This Policy is implemented in conjunction with the following documents:

- Municipal Waste Management Plan 2009-2014
- Energy Management Plan 2017-2021
- Invasive Plants and Animals Plan 2020-2024
- Native Vegetation Plan 2020-2024
- Environmental Education Plan 2020-2024
- Wetland Management Guidelines, 2020
- Sustainable Water Use at Mildura Rural City Council, 2020
- Water and Energy Use Guidelines Buildings and Facilities, 2017
- Water and Energy Use Policy – OP186
- Fleet Management Policy – OP002
- Native Vegetation Policy – CP065
- Procurement of Goods Services and Works Policy – CP083
- Climate Change at Mildura Rural City Council, 2018

6.3 Risk Assessment Reference

Risk Category	✓	Risk Category	✓
Asset Management	✓	Financial Sustainability	
Committees		Human Resource Management	
Compliance – Legal & Regulatory		Leadership & Organisational Culture	✓
Contract Management	✓	Occupational Health & Safety	
Contract Tendering & Procurement	✓	Organisational Risk Management	✓
Corporate Governance		Project Management	✓
Environmental Sustainability	✓	Public Image and Reputation	✓