

# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2022-2032



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## 2. MAYOR'S MESSAGE

As Mayor of East Gippsland Shire Council, I am delighted to present the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2032.

East Gippsland is a large and vibrant shire in a magnificent natural setting, home to proud communities that embrace hard work, responsibility and new ideas.

Our communities have long placed a high value on the environment, consistently identifying climate change and the environment as leading issues of concern. Our bushland, wildlife, mountains and rivers form part of who we are.

Within our communities, our traditional custodians, the Gunaikurnai, Monero and Bidjil people, have a deep and abiding connection with Country and play an active role in natural resource management. We seek to strengthen our partnership with these traditional owners.

Development choices, waste issues, weed control, water quality and climate change are recognised as key issues that impact our natural environment.

Happily, solutions to our environmental problems exist and reducing the impacts of land-use practices on habitat and heading down the path to net-zero offer many benefits.

By continuing to implement improved sustainable management practices we recognise and value our environment as a productive asset that contributes to our wellbeing. A focus on sustainability can slow environmental degradation, ensure development is appropriate and respond to a changing climate.

Sustainable management offers improved community wellbeing, more prosperous businesses, and a healthy natural environment.

This Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2032 outlines the environmental objectives that Council will strive to achieve over the next decade. It will guide our work and address the environmental and sustainability challenges most prevalent in our shire.

This strategy will direct work already set out in existing policies, management plans, strategies and action plans related to the environment.

Our primary goals are to enhance Gippsland's natural environment and see our region recognised as a leader in regional climate change mitigation and adaptation. But we can't do it alone.

This strategy has been built on consultation and, going forward, it will be about collaboration and shared ownership. Council recognises the role we all play in maintaining our valued natural areas for the current community and for future generations.

This strategy is about how all East Gippslanders live and work, so I hope you will join us as we work towards our 2032 goals. Your support and participation will be key to our success.

**- Councillor Mark Reeves, Mayor, East Gippsland Shire Council**



### 3. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

East Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land, the Gunaikurnai, Monero and Bidawel people and their enduring relationship with country. Council aspires to strengthen our partnerships and supports Aboriginal participation in management processes for land and natural resources. We recognise Australia's rich cultural heritage and aim to encourage integrated decision making now and in the future.



## 4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2032 is Council's key environmental policy document, guiding work across Council to achieve objectives for climate change, biodiversity, land and water management and resource efficiency.

This Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2032 outlines East Gippsland Shire Council's role in maintaining, protecting and enhancing the region's natural environment. The decade-long Strategy provides a framework for a sustainable future within Council's Circle of Control, Influence and Concern.

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2032 builds on the East Gippsland Community Vision 2040 and sets the following aspiration:

**By 2032 sustainable behaviour and decision making will be embedded into all aspects of how East Gippslanders live and work. East Gippsland's natural environment will be enhanced, connected and resilient and East Gippsland will be recognised as a leader in regional climate change mitigation and adaptation.**

The objectives for each of the key themes are supported by high-level targets designed to work toward the East Gippsland Community Vision 2040 and demonstrate the strategic direction and contribution of Council. Implementation requires collaboration and shared ownership.

Council has used evidence-based decision making and listened to community feedback to develop this Strategy. A multi-step process has been undertaken to refine the strategic direction and engagement with internal staff to develop a framework to measure impact.

Building on the previous two Environmental Sustainability Strategies (2008-2013 and 2014-2017), this Strategy provides practical initiatives that will continue to deliver Council's primary environment and sustainability commitments.

The Strategy has been written to address those environmental and sustainability challenges most prevalent across the municipality. It also demonstrates alignment with the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs).

Fundamentally, the Strategy is built around achieving seven central goals. The following goals have been ranked by the community in order of importance:

1. Conservation of the natural environment and biodiversity.
2. Sustainable management of natural resources (includes climate mitigation).
3. Community participation in the climate response.
4. Respect and alignment with the rights of Traditional Owner Groups.
5. Environmental sustainability supports sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities.
6. Growth in the circular economy.
7. Community resilience to respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters.

Each goal is further defined by several targets that will help us to move towards delivering on the vision. Progress in delivering on the strategic outcomes will be reported to both the Council and the community periodically. Action Plans will be developed to ensure these high-level goals lead to measurable action.

## 5. INTRODUCTION

East Gippsland Shire Council recognises the importance of our natural environment to people living in and visiting East Gippsland. The natural environment contributes to our health and wellbeing, amenity, maintenance of biodiversity, and tourism, and underpins economic activity. Through proactive planning, relevant design work and strong advocacy, we want to ensure East Gippsland's natural and built environment is sustainable and maintains its ability to meet community needs now and in the future.

The community place a very high value on our natural environment, and it is consistently identified as the number one value for living and visiting East Gippsland. The community have also listed climate change as the top issue of concern for the coming years (from the Community Survey for the development of the Council Plan 2021-2025).

The environment is a critical social and economic asset. Our natural assets include our biodiversity but also clean air, water and fertile soils. They support our economic systems and way of life through the provision of primary products and lived experiences. They also provide services that allow us to exist.

Presently the environment is at risk from overdevelopment and climate change, degrading our natural environment both locally and globally. Managing this risk, however, does not have to be a zero-sum game. The principles of sustainable management allow us to recognise and value the natural environment as a productive asset that contributes to our overall wellbeing. There is no path to net-zero emissions without including nature and many of the solutions already exist and have multiple benefits.

The latest Victorian Climate Projections 2019 by CSIRO are now at the finest scale they've been (5km by 5km) and allow for local projections from a range of variables such as average and extreme temperature and rainfall out to 2090.

East Gippsland faces several varying climate risks including:

- » more days of extreme heat
- » harsher bushfires
- » sea level rise combined with storm surges causing inundation, flooding and other impacts
- » more frequent and intense heavy rainfalls (including hailstorms) causing flooding
- » drought periods more common

As the impact of a changing climate emerges, the need for us individually and collectively to focus on the sustainability of our environment is desperately needed right now.

(Source: Snapshot Climate)



MORE DAYS OF  
EXTREME HEAT



HARSHER FIRE  
WEATHER



RISING SEA  
LEVEL



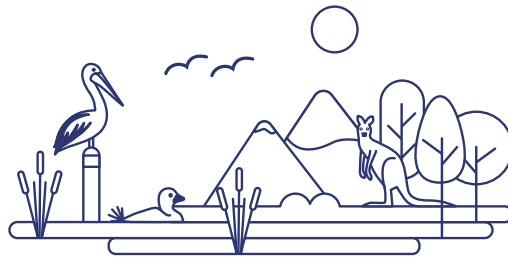
LESS RAINFALL



MORE FREQUENT  
AND INTENSE HEAVY  
DOWNPOURS

## Summary

# Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2032



### Our aspirations drive the focus:

“By 2032, sustainable behaviour and decision making will be embedded into all aspects of how East Gippslanders live and work. East Gippsland’s natural environment will be enhanced, connected and resilient, and East Gippsland will be recognised as a leader in regional climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

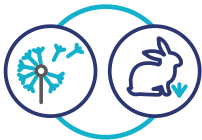
### Over the next ten years, we are committed to:



» Managing and mitigating the impact of climate change.



» Achieving sustainable resource management.



» Facilitating living and working within the capacity of the local environment.

### Our goals over the next ten years are:

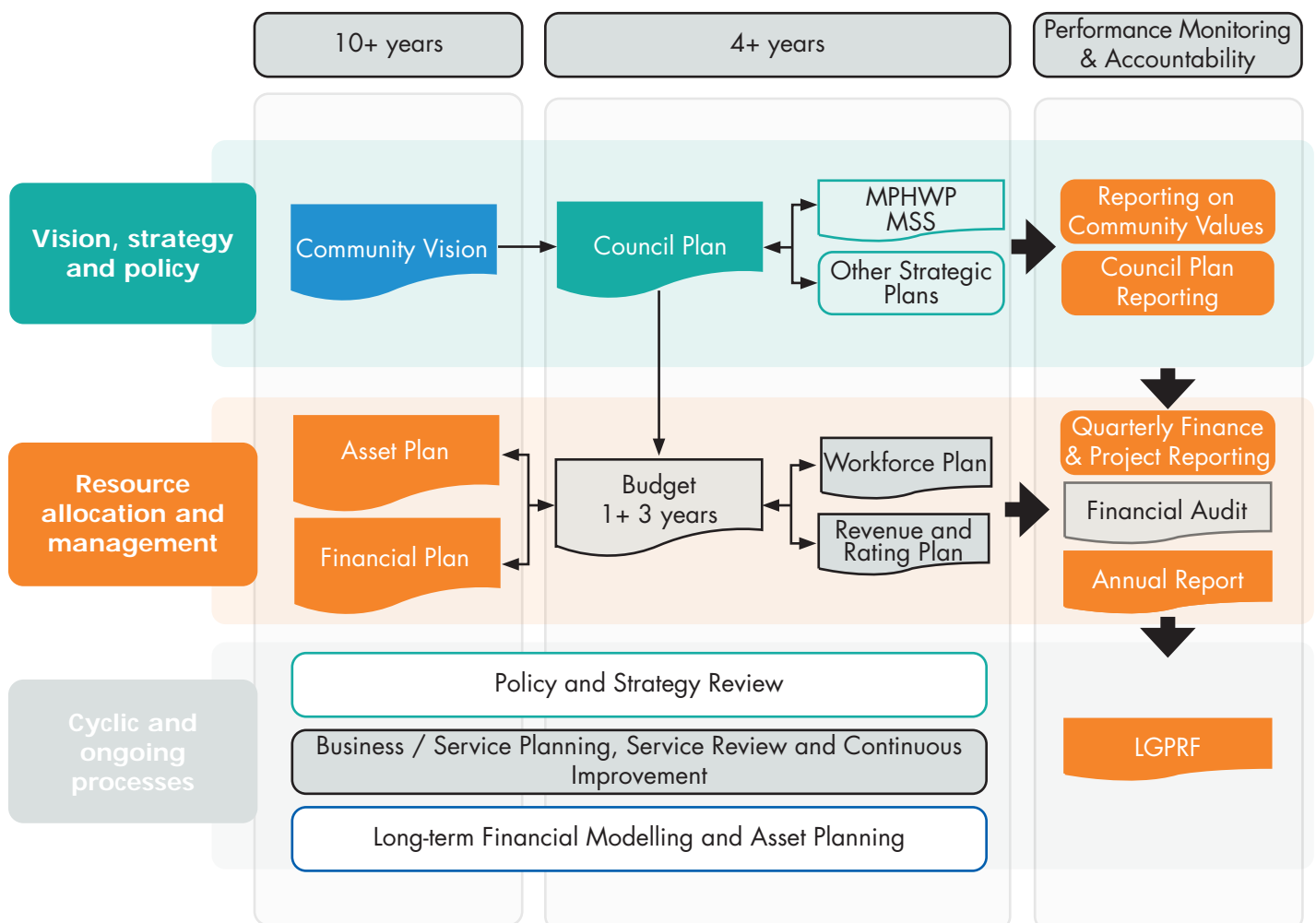
1. Conservation of the natural environment and biodiversity.
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3. Community participation in the climate response.
4. Respect and alignment with the rights of the Traditional Owner Groups.
5. Environmental sustainability supports sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities.
6. Growth in the circular economy.
7. Community resilience to respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters.

## 6. THE BIG PICTURE

### How our plans come together

Council is empowered to act in the area of environmental sustainability through a combination of community expectation and legislative and regulatory responsibilities.

The work that Council has undertaken to develop a range of complementary and interconnected plans is explained through our organisation's Integrated Planning Framework below:



Terminology: MPHWP: Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

MSS: Municipal Strategic Statement

LGPRF: Local Government Performance Reporting Framework



A close-up photograph of a forest floor. In the foreground, a white, five-petaled flower with a light brown center is in focus. Behind it, a green, round fruit, possibly a fig, is partially visible. The ground is covered with dry leaves, twigs, and some green moss.

## 6.1 Community Vision 2040

In 2021 Council engaged with the community in a process to better understand what the residents' vision for the shire was. This led to the following long-term Community Vision for East Gippsland to drive Council's planning and delivery efforts:

In 2040 our people, place, environment, and economy will be connected, in balance and resilient. Our unique and diverse communities will be accessible, inclusive, well connected and safe. We will value and care for each other and our natural environment. Our economy will support existing and emerging industries by being agile, innovative, and sustainable.

Our Community Vision 2040 expresses the aspirations, values and priorities of the East Gippsland community. It emphasises the importance of people, the environment and the economy to East Gippsland.

## 6.2 Environmental Strategy Aspiration

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy's aspiration and focus are drawn from the community vision work undertaken. This aspiration will contribute to the Community Vision 2040:

By 2032 sustainable behaviour and decision making will be embedded into all aspects of how East Gippslanders live and work. East Gippsland's natural environment will be enhanced, connected and resilient and East Gippsland will be recognised as a leader in regional climate change mitigation and adaptation.



## 6.3 How the strategic plans fit together

In developing this Strategy, we have drawn heavily from the community engagement undertaken to inform the Council Plan 2021-2025, the Community Vision 2040, Place Plans and Community Recovery Committee plans.

East Gippsland Shire Council has three key strategies themed around the triple bottom line principles of sustainable development:

1. Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2032 – 10-year horizon
2. Economic Development Strategy – 10-year horizon
3. Health and Wellbeing Strategy – 4-year horizon

These strategies are community-facing and set Council's strategic direction for a diverse range of services and support the work of external agencies and our community.

The interdependence between these three strategies is recognised: they are important tools for delivering the Community Vision:

While there may be some similarities between the goals of these three strategies, the actions and measures will be tailored to the sustainable development theme addressed by each. These strategies have been developed to ensure they complement each other.

Each goal has a number of strategies and targets that sit behind it. Recognising this is a high-level Strategy, four-year action plans will be developed to guide implementation. Implementation is discussed further in Section 8 of this document.

### Community Vision Values

During the consultation on their Community Vision 2040, the following values were identified by the East Gippsland community:

- » natural wilderness
- » connection to country
- » reservoir of biodiversity

### Community Vision Priorities

The following priorities were identified by the community:

- » threat from climate change
- » stopping environmental degradation
- » development must be appropriate



## 6.4 Regulation and Policy Framework

In addition to the Community Vision 2040, this strategy has been informed by a broad range of national, state and local government legislation, policies, plans and strategies.

Key pieces of legislation that need to be considered at this time include the following:

- » *Local Government Act 2020* (Victoria)
- » *Climate Change Act 2017* (Victoria)
- » *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Victoria)
- » Codes of Practice and Duty of Care obligations
- » State of the Environment Reporting (overseen by the Victorian Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability including the State of the Environment Update Report 2021 post-2019/20 bushfires, with the next report planned for 2023 and beyond).
- » Regional Catchment Management Strategy
- » Gippsland Lakes Ramsar wetlands (listed in 1982) are of international importance listed under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. (This Ramsar site consists of a series of lakes and fringing wetlands and is the largest estuarine lagoon system in Australia and are important for waterbirds, including migratory shorebirds, fish such as Black Bream *Acanthopagrus butcheri* and threatened species such as the nationally vulnerable Growling Grass Frog *Litoria raniformis*).
- » East Gippsland Shire Planning Scheme (such as section 21.04 Environmental and Landscape Values).





## 6.5 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set global 2030 targets for all countries that aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

In September 2015, Australia was one of 193 countries to commit to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). All stakeholders,

including governments, civil society and the private sector, are expected to contribute to the realisation of these goals.

There are 17 goals, and each of the outcomes of this Strategy identifies the SDGs they contribute to. These SDGs are recognised in the East Gippsland Community Vision 2040. The 17 goals are:

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## 6.6 Responding to Community Feedback

East Gippsland is a large and vibrant region in a beautiful natural setting. The community place a high value on East Gippsland's landscapes and environment. 'Natural beauty' was mentioned as the top value by residents living in East Gippsland and was identified from the 608 responses as part of the community consultation for the development of the Council Plan 2021-2025, the Community Vision 2040, and work from the Community Recovery Committees and Place Plans.

The following environmental values were identified as part of the Community Vision 2040:

- » The ecological diversity and beauty of East Gippsland make us unique.
- » The Traditional Owners' connection with 'country' and awareness of natural rhythms
- » An outstanding reservoir of biodiversity in temperate Australia.
- » Our rare places of relative wilderness and pristine waterways, our heritage rivers, and internationally recognised alpine and coastal wilderness landscapes.
- » Extensive areas of forests and natural areas can provide biodiversity room to adapt to changes in climate and increased natural events.
- » East Gippsland's weather and its distinct seasons.

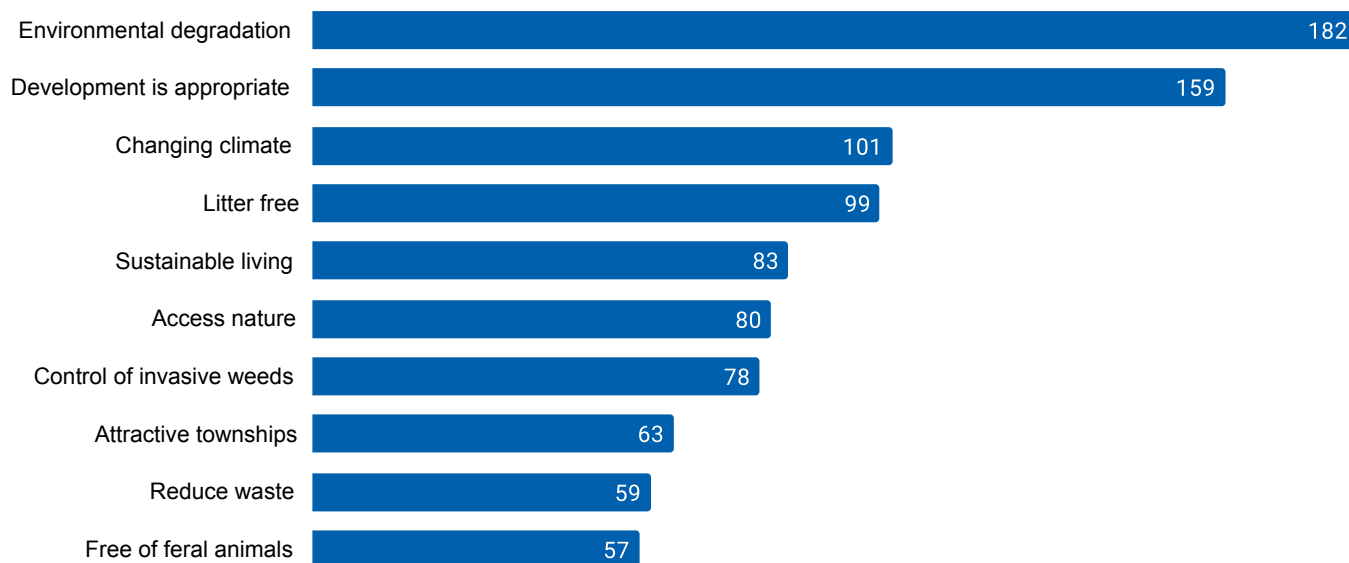
We've also heard climate change is of most concern. Of the 338 responses to the community survey for the Council Plan 2021-25, climate change is the challenge identified most by the community. When specifically asked what is most important for a healthy natural environment in East Gippsland, the top answers were:

1. A focus on stopping environmental degradation.
2. Ensure development is appropriate to conserve our environmentally sensitive landscapes for future generations.
3. Design and maintain landscapes and infrastructure appropriate for a changing climate.



## Please select the top three things you think are important to the healthy natural environment for East Gippsland?

(Community Survey answers to question 23 for Council Plan 2021-2025)



### Community Survey 2021, Healthy Environment Results

In the recent Local Government community satisfaction survey for 2021, East Gippsland Shire Council scored below average for environmental sustainability compared with both the State and Large Rural Council categories. The aim is to meet or exceed the community satisfaction scores for our peer Councils in the Large Rural category.

The draft Strategy was taken to the community for feedback between January and March 2022. There were over 55 respondents to the survey and detailed written submissions from individuals and community groups representing 150 members.

The community ranked the following goals in order of importance:

1. Conservation of the natural environment and biodiversity.
2. Sustainable management of natural resources (includes climate mitigation).
3. Community participation in the climate response.

4. Respect and alignment with the rights of Traditional Owner Groups.
5. Environmental sustainability supports sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities.
6. Growth in the circular economy.
7. Community resilience to respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters.

The issues raised were categorised into the themes of the urgency to act on climate change; the biodiversity crisis given the bushfires of 2019/20 (combined with Australia's very high extinction rate) and the need for strong land-use planning; and the opportunities for co-benefits when the lens of sustainability is applied - such as improved health and wellbeing outcomes, more prosperous businesses, safer communities and a healthy natural environment.



## 6.7 Circles of Control, Influence and Concern

East Gippsland Shire Council is responsible for many activities that impact our environment and enable the adoption of sustainable practices. Not all activities can be controlled by Council and the community also have a responsibility to support actions that contribute to the delivery of the Community Vision 2040.

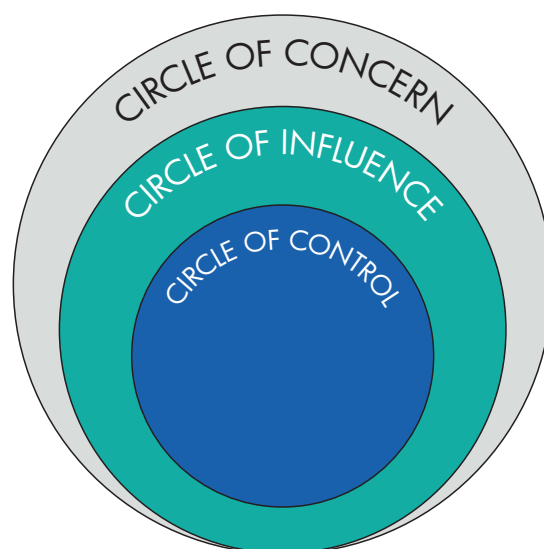
The figure identifies this logic, recognising Circles of Control, Influence and Concern. Some Council activities can be clearly recognised within the Council's **Circle of Control**.

These include the following examples:

- » Waste and recycling services.
- » Council-generated greenhouse gas emissions.
- » Construction and maintenance of infrastructure such as roads and bridges.
- » Management of Council-owned/controlled land.
- » Administering the East Gippsland Planning Scheme and enforcing state and local laws.

The **Circle of Influence** recognises that Council plays a key leadership and advocacy role for the people of East Gippsland. This includes within and between communities and regional stakeholders. Where Council can influence environmental and sustainability outcomes for the shire, then it has a responsibility to do so.

Examples include negotiating with developers about the types of services within a land development or presenting a local perspective on administrative, policy and statutory proposals from the State and Federal Governments.



The **Circle of Concern** includes those things that Council cannot control or influence, for example, total global greenhouse gas emissions. Council has an enduring obligation to understand how the Circle of Concern may impact the delivery of the Strategy.

Achieving the Strategy's vision is emphasised in the response to those drivers, trends, challenges and opportunities that Council can control and influence. Understanding the difference is critical to the efficient delivery of services.

The community also has a role in delivering on the Community Vision and the outcomes sought from this Strategy.

This could include but is not limited to:

- » Reduce our waste in landfill and support the circular economy.
- » Reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.
- » Provide habitat for native flora and fauna.
- » Supporting organisations that adopt Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles within the way they operate within our community.
- » Participate in citizen science initiatives that teach us about our local environments while adding to our collective knowledge.

Sharing responsibilities and working together to implement the Strategy, contributes to the United Nations Sustainability Development Goal 17, Partnerships for the Goals.

## Underlying principles

Enablers or principles help define how we intend to work to deliver on the Strategy's outcomes. Underpinning our success will be an emphasis on:

### **Driving behaviour change**

Changing behaviour will need to occur across both Council and the Community. Delivery of the Strategy's outcomes will mean that all of us will need to do things differently.

### **Ensuring capacity building**

Delivering on the Strategy's initiatives will require capacity building across individuals, organisations and institutions. Providing education and training increases awareness of the opportunities and challenges inherent in delivering on the Strategy. Applying this knowledge builds our skills and capability.

### **Collaborating with key partners**

Council cannot control all aspects of the Strategy's outcomes. Collaboration will need

to occur with other governments (local, state and federal), Traditional Owners, user groups, business, community groups and research institutions.

### **Accountability and ownership**

This can be achieved through implementing Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework. Open reporting along with clear mandates from Council and the CEO allows for community review of the Strategy's performance.

### **Decision making**

Embedding the Strategy's outcomes into decision-making processes within Council will require that consideration be given to these initiatives. Having clear and purposeful Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) will help make better decisions that support the delivery of the Strategy.

## 6.8 Goal 1 - Conservation of the natural environment & biodiversity

Most of the land in East Gippsland is in public ownership, almost 80 per cent of its area (16,578km<sup>2</sup>) is crown land inclusive of 39 per cent National Parks (6,474km<sup>2</sup>) with the remaining State forests, parks and reserves. This large area of public land ownership has protected key habitats and species from the impacts of development, resulting in the region being biologically diverse, particularly in the north and east of the shire.

Between 2014 to 2019, East Gippsland's biodiversity was severely impacted by drought (which also impacted farmers, the broader business community and our rural communities). Then the Black Summer bushfires burnt more than 50 per cent of our shire. The extent of the biodiversity loss is not fully understood; more than 870,000 hectares burnt in the region, with 59 per cent at high or very high severity.

Settlement of East Gippsland is substantially in the west of the region as road, rail and shipping links were established with Melbourne. Agricultural settlement is mostly located along the river valleys and plateaus where land was accessible and of a higher quality ([Victorian Resources Online](#)).

Land-use change, where it has occurred, can be attributed to:

- » the modification of vegetation cover
- » timber production
- » mining and quarrying
- » modification of waterways to supply water for domestic and industrial purposes
- » application of fertilisers, herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals
- » road construction, maintenance and use
- » various forms of recreation, i.e., open space
- » industrial, urban and rural residential

development

- » increased frequency of landscape fires
- » increased frequency of drought

The dominance of freehold land along sections of the Mitchell and Tambo Rivers and the Gippsland Lakes has seen the development of agriculture and horticulture (both dryland and irrigated), urban/industrial and plantations in those locations.

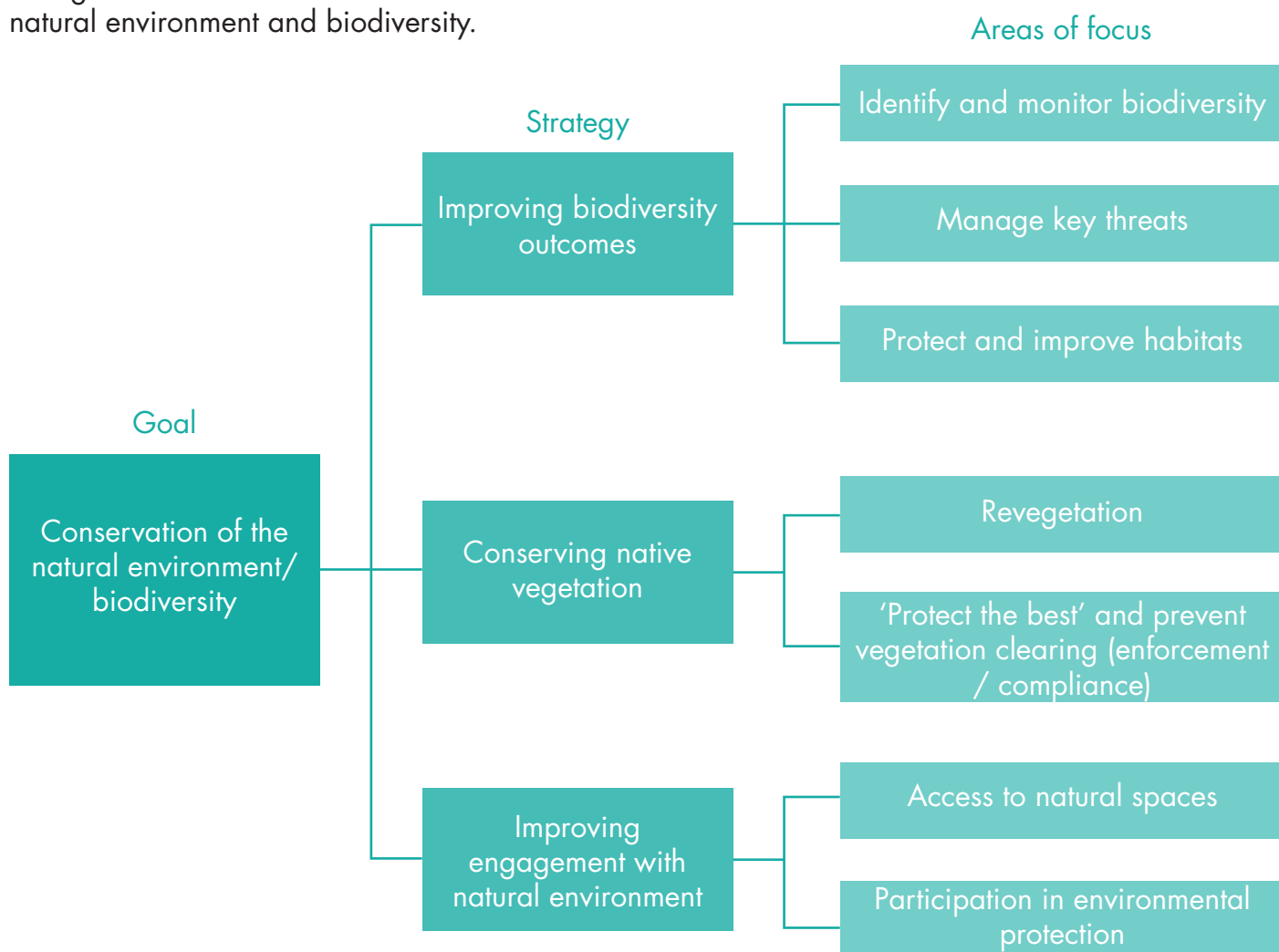
Managing and protecting the region's biodiversity is a key issue and influences regional planning and is identified in the Municipal Strategic Statement.

Conservation of the natural environment refers to the protection of the natural elements of the environment where we live. More specifically, the success of this Goal looks at:

- » All reserves, parks and gardens and waterways over which Council has management responsibility.
- » Growth of biodiversity and conservation of at-risk species.
- » Protection of natural areas and wildlife habitats, including native vegetation.
- » The extent to which the community fully engages with the environment.



The figure below suggests some of the drivers of change that can influence the conservation of natural environment and biodiversity.



## How could Council influence this outcome?

East Gippsland's biodiversity can be protected through the provision of habitat on Council and private land. Working with private landowners, or on land that Council directly manages, on sites where Council could act to reduce the impacts of land-use practices on habitat and biodiversity loss and aim to reduce fragmentation. Council can:

- » With partners, determine the extent and baseline via an audit, of both the quality and quantity of Council and private land

that is currently maintaining key habitats, providing ecosystem services and supporting biodiversity. For example, roadside vegetation or remnant stands of vegetation on private land with a focus on recovery from the major bushfires.

- » Review and update planning overlays, for example, Environmental Significance Overlay, with a lens to improve connectivity for key habitats.

- » Enforce community laws relating to significant illegal clearing of land and weed management.
  - » Investigate the role of Native Vegetation Precinct Plans and Property Vegetation Plans in future developments, as well as include conservation reserves as per the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
  - » Identify critical habitats across the shire on Council-managed and private land and prioritise the protection of these areas of existing habitat and/or habitat restoration activities, particularly those under the most pressure from land-use change (i.e. in the west of the region where clearing for agriculture has been most prevalent and significant remnant vegetation is less common e.g. on the Red Gum Plains).
  - » Collaborate with NGOs that are committed to preserving native habitat on private land to qualify the extent of land protected, and work with them to develop new ways to increase habitat protection and restoration for example, investigating incentives via rate rebates for biodiversity outcomes with the Trust for Nature (TFN) Conservation Covenant Program.
  - » Work with partner agencies to audit vegetation offsets associated with development work by both the public and private sectors to ensure the protection and enhancement of remnant vegetation post-development.
  - » Update the Roadside Vegetation Strategy 2012 and the Infrastructure Design Manual to support environmental outcomes.
  - » Complete the Encroachment Policy to guide compliance, enforcement and prosecution for native vegetation removal on public land incrementally.
  - » Develop and provide regular environmental training for field officers.
  - » Plant locally native species.
  - » Develop internal processes to ensure project developments with a land-use impact have a pre-requisite to complete an environmental analysis prior to planning.
  - » Investigate and develop an Environmental Management Plan to guide internal operational works.
  - » Implement the Biodiversity section (21.04) of the East Gippsland Planning Scheme which recognises that '*Council has an important custodial role in relation to East Gippsland's unique biodiversity and large tracts of intact native vegetation.*'
- There are many things the community can do to support this strategic Goal including the following:
- » Join and support local NGOs committed to enhancing biodiversity outcomes.
  - » Report to Council the clearing of native vegetation where it occurs.
  - » Plant locally indigenous native plant species in gardens to support flora and fauna, including birds and insects, and actively manage weeds and pests.
  - » Work to reclaim derelict land with revegetation works on both public and private land.
  - » Protect significant stands of remnant vegetation with title covenants by Trust for Nature.
  - » Implement the Victorian and Australian government biodiversity priorities (for example, those contained in the regional catchment management strategies, Threatened Species Action Plan, etc.) where relevant to East Gippsland.

## How will we measure success?

Strategy	Target	Council Role
Improved biodiversity outcomes will be supported across the shire	Reduce the decline in biodiversity loss	Influence
Native vegetation conservation will be supported across the shire	Increase in the quantity and quality of vulnerable land, habitat and biodiversity on council and private land	Influence
	Illegal clearing of significant native vegetation will be enforced	
Engagement with the natural environment will support appreciation and enhancement of these values	By 2032 the community are more engaged in conservation efforts and have a greater awareness of our ecological values	Influence
Support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy to build the resilience of communities to manage and respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters	By 2032 community appreciation of the natural environment measures will have all increased	Influence
Support the actions of the Economic Development Strategy to support the business community to build the resilience and adjust to increasing climate risk and natural disasters	To be determined within the referenced strategies	

As a community-facing strategy, not all actions and responsibility for environmental conservation sits with Council. Council will therefore work with a range of agencies, groups, and individuals to implement this Goal and strive to achieve these targets.



## How does this support the broader strategic commitments?

Delivering on this Goal will also support delivery of other goals:

- » Goal 4 – Respect and alignment with the rights of the Traditional Owner Groups.
- » Goal 7 – Community resilience to respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters  
The resilience of communities to manage and respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters is reflected in relevant strategies and practices.



This Goal is also aligned with the United Nations SDGs numbers 14 (Life Below Water) and 15 (Life on Land).



## 6.9 Goal 2 - Sustainable management of natural resources

The sustainable management of natural resources refers to more efficient use of water, energy, fuel for transport, and sustainable use of land, soil and raw materials to support agriculture and industry across the public and private sectors.

East Gippsland is recognised as an important agricultural district of state and national importance. Both socially and economically, East Gippsland recognises itself as a region that produces high-quality produce or 'food and fibre'.

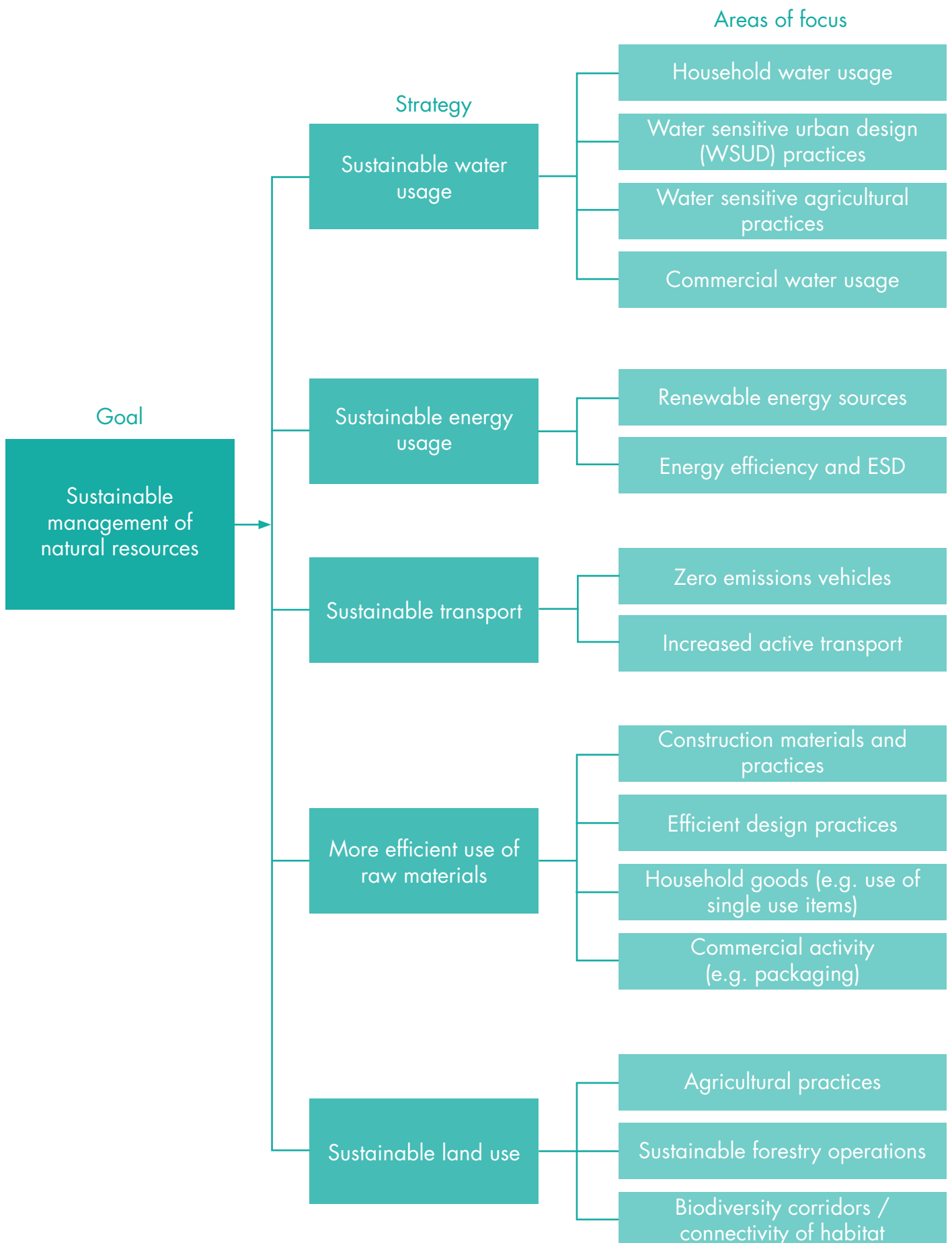
The region's townships capture their social identity from a long history of primary production and economic prosperity such as:

- » Orbost and Swifts Creek as centres that support forest industries.
- » The Snowy River District and particularly Orbost support a dairy industry.
- » Lindenow and Wairewa support horticultural industries.
- » Omeo, Benambra, Swifts Creek, Ensay, Tambo Valley, Bairnsdale and surrounds, and the far east support dryland (beef and sheep) grazing.
- » Lakes Entrance and Mallacoota support fishing and abalone industries.

The importance of the primary production sector is clearly reflected in its significant contribution to the regional economy and is reliant on our natural resources. In 2019, agriculture, forestry and fisheries contributed directly to 13% of economic output and provided 10% of total employment. Value-adding manufacturing is closely linked to primary production through industries like sawmilling and food processing (Source: REMPLAN).

Achieving this goal will depend on more sustainable practices around water usage, energy, transport and land use as well as more efficient use of raw materials overall. Many technologies for sustainable water, energy and transport already exist or are rapidly emerging.

Underpinning these are the strong linkages required to align with Goal 4, to involve Traditional Owners in decision-making. Council aspires to strengthen partnerships to support Aboriginal participation in management processes for land and natural resources.





## How could Council influence this outcome?

Council can drive more sustainable management of natural resources through its own operations and by encouraging more sustainable practices among other parts of the East Gippsland community.

Council will audit organisational greenhouse gas emissions to establish benchmarks for their elimination from Council operations. This could also include the broader community.

Over the next ten years, Council will work towards this Goal through strategic initiatives related to:

- » Strengthening partnerships with Traditional Owners.
- » Support our agricultural sector to adapt.
- » Adopting renewable and energy-efficient technologies.
- » Promoting sustainable land use development.
- » Improving waste and resource management.

The East Gippsland Planning Scheme will be key to achieving this outcome, as it recognises and seeks to protect agricultural land uses including productive farmland and irrigation assets. Managing the development of rural land through the Planning Scheme brings together the range of challenges of sustainable land use. The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) sets a local policy direction that requires support for agricultural production whilst also ensuring the ongoing provision of natural resource services including clean water, biodiversity/habitat provision and climate change mitigation.

A clear Planning Scheme position is that land use must be aligned with the capability of that land.

To ensure future agricultural productivity and prosperity continues into the future, the socioeconomic role of agriculture as a lifestyle must be preserved. To do this East Gippsland Shire Council is obligated to ensure future agricultural activity is enhanced and not compromised through land-use decisions made today.

The Council is one of several custodians responsible for the future provision of landscape services including the quality of water, soil condition and the provision of habitat for biodiversity purposes. These landscape services are also essential and support the resilient productivity systems needed to counter future known challenges.

## How will we measure success?

Strategy	Target	Council Role
East Gippsland will use water sustainably	Water use supports necessary environmental flow and best practice measures	Influence
	Council invests in stormwater assets using water sensitive urban design (WSUD) and Integrated Water Management (IWM) principles	Control
East Gippsland will use energy more sustainably	East Gippsland Shire Council's greenhouse gas emissions from energy use (electricity and gas) are reduced by 100%	Control
	All electricity used in council operations is from 100% renewable sources	Control
East Gippsland will use sustainable transport in preference to fossil fuels	Greenhouse gas emissions from light vehicle fleet transport will decrease by 50% (Council fleet and community)	Control
	Increased active transport opportunities (e.g. cycling infrastructure, shared pathways)	Control
	All service towns and prominent localities have access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure	Control
East Gippsland will use its raw materials sustainably	See Growth in the Circular Economy targets	Influence
East Gippsland will use land sustainably	New and existing landuse development incorporates Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) principles See Respect and Alignment with Traditional Owner targets	Influence

As a community-facing strategy, not all actions and responsibility for natural resource management sit with Council. Council will therefore work with a range of agencies, groups, and individuals to implement this Goal and strive to achieve these targets.

## How does this support the broader strategic commitments?

This Goal compliments several other Strategy Goals including:

- » Goal 1 – Conservation of the natural environment and biodiversity.
- » Goal 3 – Community participation in climate response – through fewer greenhouse gases from energy, transport and land use and more efficient use of resources which might become scarce as a result of climate change.
- » Goal 6 - Growth in the circular economy.

This Goal is also aligned with the United Nations SDGs numbers 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).





## 6.10 Goal 3 - Community participation in the climate response

Climate change mitigation is often interpreted as a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. It is an important element and linked to many of the other outcomes.

This Goal focuses specifically on the extent to which the whole community (local businesses, community organisations, individuals, and Traditional Owners) undertake and participate in the climate response. This includes considering their awareness, the tools they need for action, and the level of ownership and leadership they demonstrate to drive change.

As the impact of a changing climate emerges, the need for us individually and collectively to focus on the sustainability of our environment is desperately needed right now.

Our response to this need for action must be to focus on the opportunities that this new environment offers. For example, Environmental sustainable design (ESD) presents opportunities for building owners to reduce the risk profile of their assets, lower operating costs through energy and water efficiencies over the life of their investment all whilst providing an environmental dividend through the use of recycled and repurposed building materials. Overall, the opportunities for the community to adapt to climate change present a range of opportunities including new investment, industries and jobs along with improved health and wellbeing outcomes.



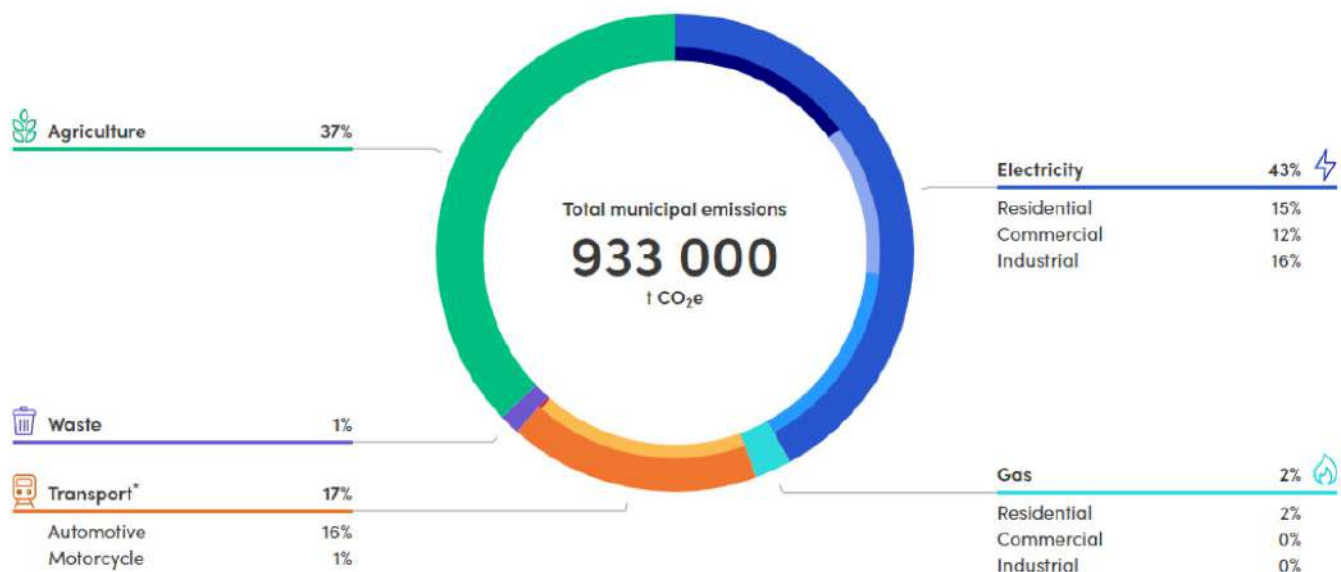
## How could Council influence this outcome?

Understanding the impact of climate change on East Gippsland is complicated. Ultimately the future is unknown; what we do know is that science tells us our future climate will be hotter and drier with more common extreme weather events. The implications for the community are that the future is more uncertain with increased risks. Refer to Goal 7.

Council has been working with other organisations to help us better understand how we can work with the community to increase

community awareness and what actions can be undertaken to reduce their emissions. (For example, the [Building Resilience booklet](#) and the [Smart Living guide](#) can be accessed from Council services centres and libraries, or downloaded from the website).

The 2019 Snapshot Climate community emissions profile for the East Gippsland municipality can be used to inform where efforts for emissions reductions can be made:



Source: [snapshotclimate.com.au](https://snapshotclimate.com.au)

Many solutions exist and are outlined by organisations such as:

- » ClimateWorks
- » Beyond Zero Emissions
- » CSIRO
- » Cities Power Partnership
- » Sustainability Victoria
- » Project Drawdown

## Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)

As buildings account for 38% of emissions there is a clear role for future developments to include principles of Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD). (Source: UNEP 16 Dec 2020). ESD is the principle of designing and constructing buildings that are beneficial to both the environment and the people who live in them and is now being included in planning schemes across Victoria, with the concept gaining traction as the benefits are realised by developers and property owners.

The benefits include:

- » Reduced energy running costs as less gas and electricity are required by using renewable energies and designing buildings to better regulate temperature.
- » Reduced water usage through water capture and storage, and use of recycled water.
- » Improved ventilation.
- » Increased use of natural lighting.
- » Reduced waste during construction via the use of recycled materials.
- » Reduced waste generated over the life of the building by including recycle and reuse principles into the building operation, for example composting food waste.
- » Reduced operating/maintenance costs over the life of the building.
- » Increased resale value as new buyers recognise savings to their cost of living.

Council can send clear signals to developers and builders about expectations when it comes to designing and constructing new building stock in East Gippsland.

Council can also actively engage the community and inform all residents about the benefits of ESD. Informing the public will help drive demand and lift expectations for those constructing or upgrading a building.

## What can the community do?

The community can also adopt climate resilience measures in the way they live. This might include, for example, developing guidelines for sports during extreme weather events like heatwaves and drought. Other measures could include investing in sustainability measures that increase energy efficiency, better regulate temperature in community, residential or commercial buildings or capturing water for reuse. Community climate adaptation measures should be reflected in specific community plans.

The community can also demand ESD principles be included in any new construction they may be involved in.

Learning about the benefits and the cost savings achievable over the life of a building will deliver long-term advantages to residents and industry, improving both environmental and financial outcomes.

The building industry can investigate opportunities to recommend ESD principles to owners who are upgrading, extending or constructing buildings.

Community groups can work alongside local businesses and Council to lead community-based climate action, and local businesses can (and already are) take action to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions through water, waste, energy efficiency and renewable energy.



## How will we measure success?

Strategy	Target	Council Role
Council will undertake a range of organisation-wide actions to reduce its emissions	Council will set a corporate net zero emissions target for 2032	Control
	The proportion of community members who report satisfaction with Council's environmental action will increase	Influence
East Gippsland community members will be encouraged to reduce their environmental footprint and emissions	Support communities to set an emissions target  By 2032 East Gippsland's community emissions will have reduced	Influence
Organisations across the shire will focus on actions to manage and mitigate the impacts of a changing climate		
East Gippsland community members will be encouraged to embrace new businesses and business opportunities that are linked to a changing climate		

As a community-facing strategy, not all actions and responsibility for climate response sits with Council. Council will therefore work with a range of agencies, groups, and individuals to implement this goal and strive to achieve these targets.

## How does this support the broader strategic commitments?

Delivering on this Goal will also support the delivery of other outcomes including:

- » Goal 2 – Sustainable management of natural resources
- » Goal 5 – Sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities
- » Goal 7 – Communities resilient and able to respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters



This Goal is also aligned with the United Nations SDGs numbers 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 13 (Climate Action).

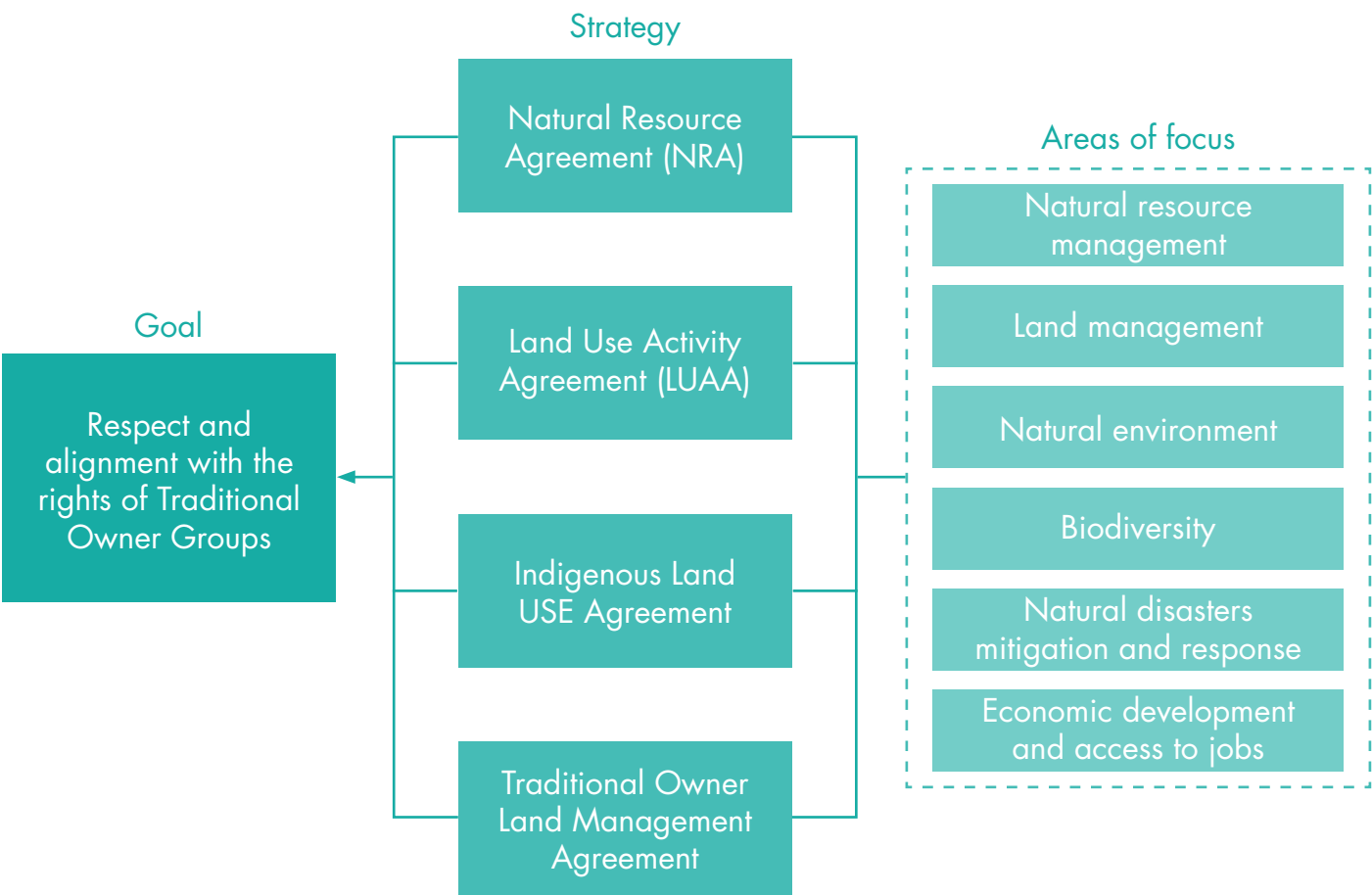


# 6.11 Goal 4 - Respect and alignment with the rights of Traditional Owner Groups

Respect and alignment with the rights of Traditional Owner Groups are interlinked with every other Goal within this Strategy.

Traditional Owners in East Gippsland are important to delivering sustainability outcomes for the community, not just as owners of the land, but as custodians of traditional customs and land management techniques. This Goal

acknowledges the importance of the role of the Traditional Owner Groups in addressing climate change and working towards environmental sustainability, and the need to ensure they are fully embedded in the design and delivery of strategic initiatives. Some of the ways in which these rights can be embedded in Council’s practices are outlined in the figure below.





## How could Council influence this outcome?

Indigenous land and sea ranger programs have been shown to improve environmental and employment outcomes. Locally specific and traditional knowledge has been used in East Gippsland, demonstrating multiple beneficial outcomes with social, cultural, and economic benefits. The opportunity exists for East Gippsland to learn from these programs and develop similar initiatives for our environment and community too.

GLaWAC (Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation) have developed programs to support the connection between the land (Wurruk), waters (Yarnda) and air (Watpootjan). This includes the areas of:

- » Cultural Heritage Protection
- » joint management of ten National Parks and Reserves
- » natural resource management, revegetation, weed control, landscaping, etc.
- » water
- » bushfire recovery
- » cultural fire

It is Council's view that collaboration with Traditional Owners will support both the environmental and sustainability initiatives outlined in this Strategy and the outcomes sought by First Nations peoples.

There are two ways that Council can help support the implementation of this Goal:

1. Employing Traditional Owners in Council operations serves multiple benefits including:
  - » Access to traditional knowledge and beliefs to help build awareness and capacity across Council and the community.
  - » Providing economic opportunities to Indigenous businesses and individuals.
  - » Employing staff that reflects our community.
  - » Improve the way Council interact with Indigenous communities.
  - » A practical example of this Goal was the use of GLaWAC crews to provide landscaping services as part of the installation of the Phillips Lane wetland in 2020.
2. Including Traditional Owners in the decision-making processes that Council can directly influence. Indigenous viewpoints need to be heard when Council and the community are considering controversial land management decisions and when developing strategies and policies.

## How will we measure success?

Strategy	Target	Council Role
Council will work with Traditional Owners to develop and implement relevant Natural Resource Agreements and practices	Traditional Owners are fully involved in decision-making around management and use of natural resources including climate change	Influence
	Relevant agreements between Council and Traditional Owner Groups are in place for the use and management of land under Council management	Influence
	Relevant targets set in collaboration with Traditional Owners are met	Influence
Engage Traditional Owners in Council's environmental management operations	Relevant targets set in collaboration with Traditional Owners are met	Influence

As a community-facing strategy, not all actions and responsibility for working with Traditional Owner Groups sits with Council. Council will therefore work with a range of agencies, groups, and individuals to implement this goal and strive to achieve these targets.

## How does this support the broader strategic commitments?

Respect and alignment with the rights of Traditional Owner Groups are interlinked with every other Goal within this Strategy.

This Goal is also aligned with the United Nations SDGs numbers 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and number 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).



## 6.12 Goal 5 - Environmental sustainability supports sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities

Sustainable economic growth will be considered by the extent to which existing industries become more sustainable, and new 'emerging' industries become feasible, operate at scale and create attractive job opportunities for the community. An important element of the success of this Goal will be the growth of sustainability services to support the existing industries to become more sustainable.

Changing climate, along with changing policies and guidelines, will also create new opportunities for businesses to relocate or develop in East Gippsland.

Council also has an Economic Development Strategy that provides key direction for this goal. Much of the focus of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022 -2032 is to support the work of others both within and external to Council with relevant and reliable data and modelling.

### How could Council influence this outcome?

For Council, developing a more sustainable economy in East Gippsland is about supporting consumers and businesses to make procurement and investment decisions that support this outcome. Opportunities to influence this Goal include:

- » Development of the Rural Land Use Strategy to support agricultural land use and investment.
- » Consideration in Council procurement, for example, the use of recycled material in materials supplied and understanding of the scope of Greenhouse Gas Emissions for contractors employed directly by Council.
- » Enabling new private investment through the introduction of Environmental Upgrade Agreements (EUAs) and/or via Council only investing in organisations that adhere to Environmentally Sustainable Governance (ESG) principles.
- » Council investment in renewable energy technologies and enable community facilities to do the same.
- » Provide the emissions profile information (e.g. from ClimateWorks and Snapshot emissions) to the broader community and industry.



## How will we measure success?

Strategy	Target	Council Role
Industries will be supported to become more sustainable	Targets will be set in partnership with the development of the Economic Development Strategy	Influence
The actions of the Economic Development Strategy to attract and grow businesses with a sustainability focus will be implemented		Influence

As a community-facing strategy, not all actions and responsibility for the Economy and job growth sits with Council. Council will therefore work with a range of agencies, groups, and individuals to implement this goal and strive to achieve these targets.

## How does this support the broader strategic commitments?

Sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities complement all of the other goal areas within this Strategy and should not be viewed as an action that can only be undertaken in isolation.

This Goal is also aligned with the United Nations SDGs numbers 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).



## 6.13 Goal 6 - Growth in the circular economy

The circular economy replaces the traditional make, use, and dispose of philosophy of consumption with the idea of recycling and reuse. In a circular economy, natural resources are kept in circulation to create new economic opportunities and help conserve natural resources, reducing emissions and waste.

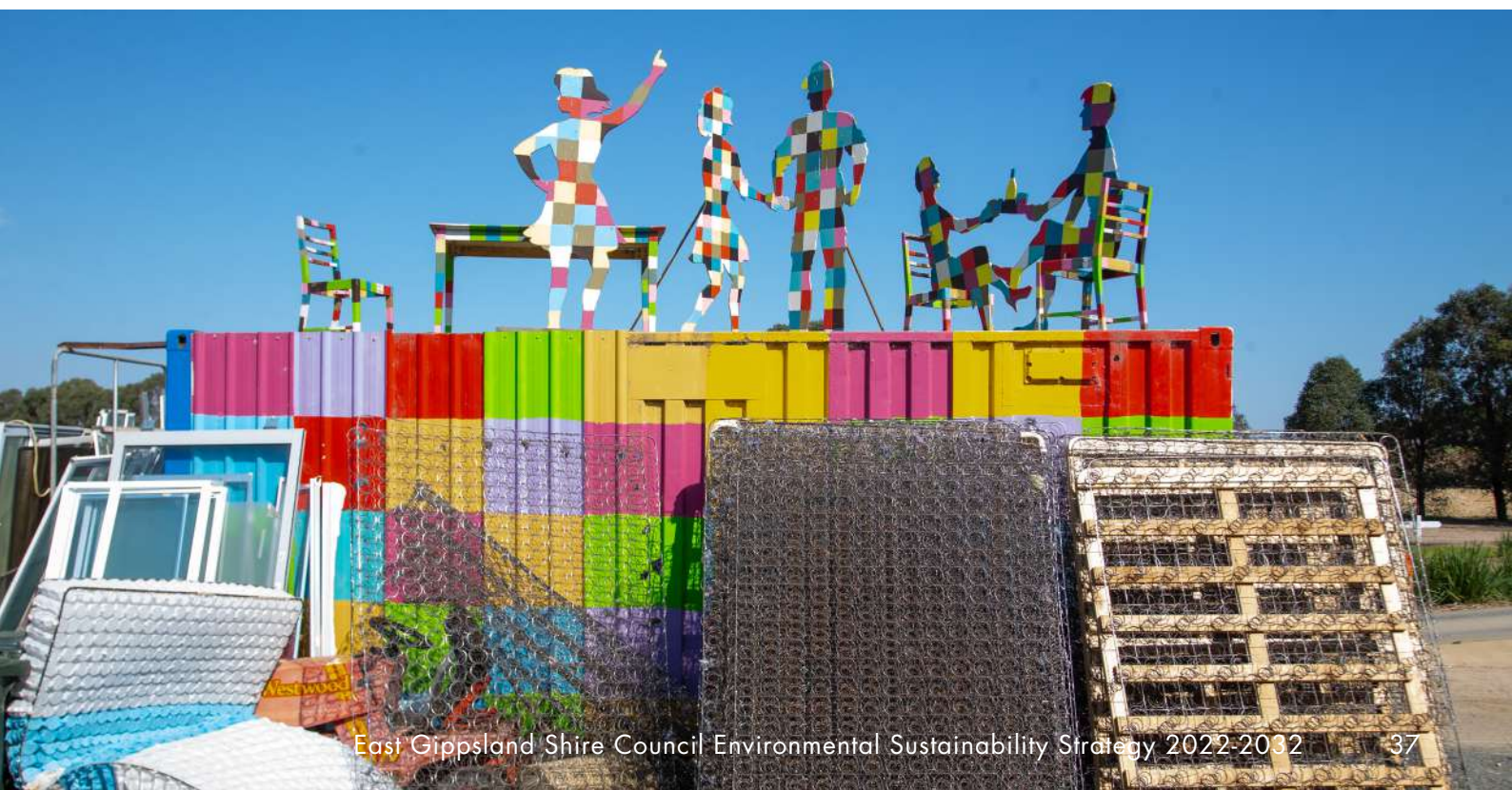
How Council manages its waste services and waste facilities is also of paramount importance to this goal.

In the 2019/20 financial year, 11,975 tonnes of domestic waste and 11,607 tonnes of commercial and industrial waste were deposited in East Gippsland Shire Council's landfills. (Source: Source: Waste Management Action Plan (Draft), 2022 – 2032).

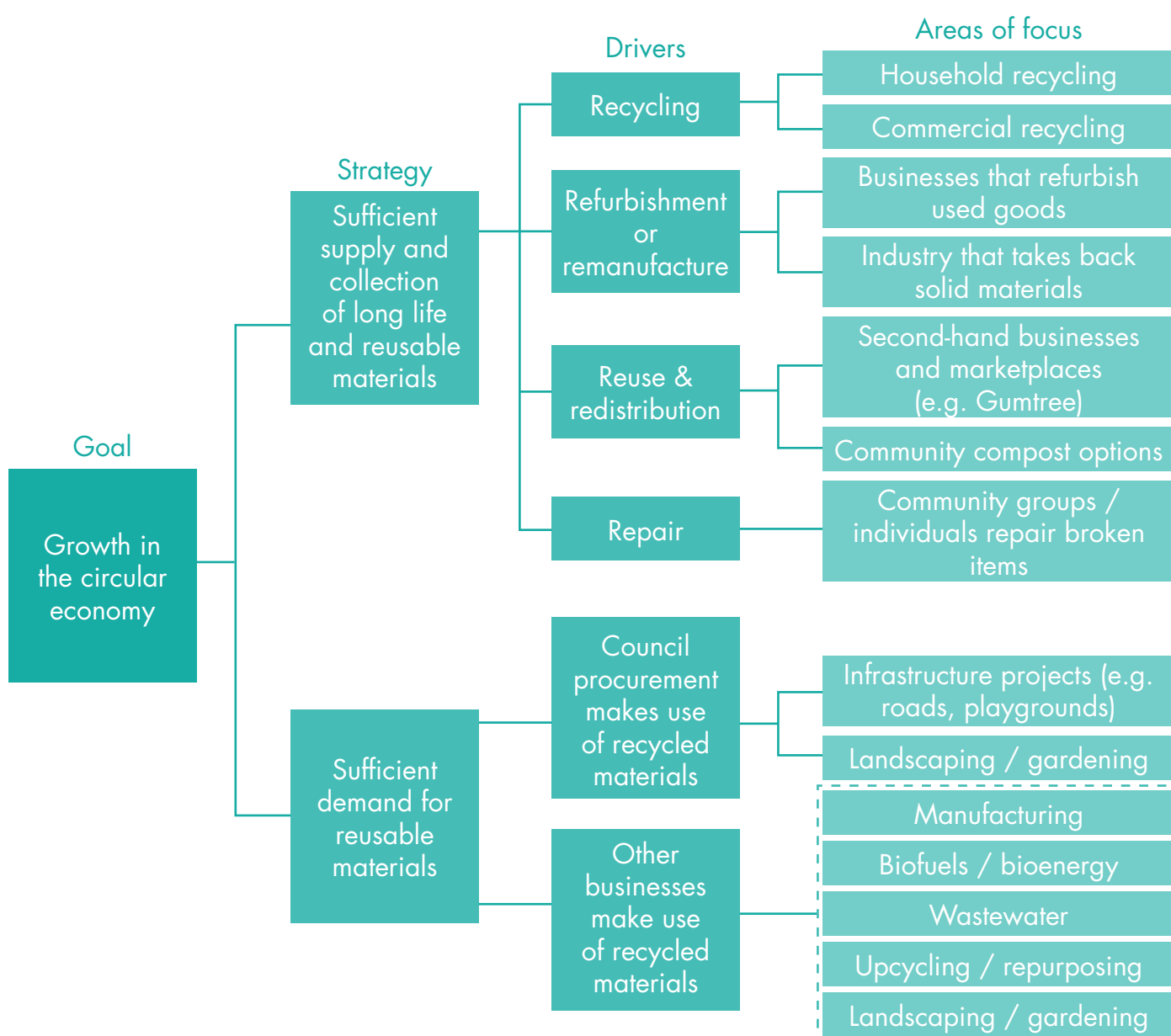
Reducing overall waste is the first step in establishing the circular economy; growing it is based on introducing technologies that will allow for materials and products to be reused or repurposed.

Achieving this Goal will depend on the extent to which there are:

- » enough people taking action to divert waste from landfills (e.g. through recycling)
- » enough companies and organisations interested in collecting those materials – for reuse, repair or repurposing them into something else
- » sufficient demand for recycled/repurposed materials
- » the right infrastructure and appropriate technology to create these products (e.g. facilities to clean and crush glass for roadworks)



The figure shows how growth in the circular economy is driven by both the supply of and demand for reusable materials.





## How could Council influence this outcome?

As part of this Strategy, Council aims to encourage those types of activities which lead to greater participation in the circular economy. Council plays a direct role in growing the circular economy through its recycling programs and in the use of recycled and repurposed materials through its own procurement practices.

Council's management of its own waste facilities and services will also be a major influencer on this outcome.

Over the next ten years, Council will identify additional opportunities to support all parts of the community to take part in the circular economy, with a particular focus on strategic initiatives related to:

- » Improving waste and resource management.
- » Investing in the growth of new and emerging industries.
- » Building the capacity of all industries to become more sustainable.

Council's Waste Management Strategy and Economic Development Strategy both have core roles to play in the achievement of this Goal and will be key to the achievement of this outcome.

## How will we measure success?

Strategy	Target	Council Role
To ensure sufficient supply and collection of lifelong and reusable materials	Facilitate industry co-operation for a transition to a circular economy	Influence
	Growth in the number of businesses participating in the circular economy.	Influence
To generate sufficient demand for reusable materials	Council has embedded re-use of materials in all policies and practices and supports reuse by businesses and the broader community	Influence
	Council procurement will comprise 10% of recycled material	Control
Council's Waste Services and Waste Management Practices will support the circular economy	Volume of waste going to landfill is reduced by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» organic waste to landfill by 90%</li> <li>» textile waste to landfill by 50%</li> <li>» recyclable materials going to landfill by 90%</li> </ul>	Influence
	Greenhouse gas emissions from landfill will be reduced and reported	Control
	Food Organics & Garden Organics (FOGO) will be repurposed to produce organic-based products	Control

As a community-facing strategy, not all actions and responsibility for the circular economy sits with Council. Council will therefore work with a range of agencies, groups and individuals to implement this goal and strive to achieve these targets.

## How does this support the broader strategic commitments?

Growing the circular economy will contribute to the fulfilment of many of the other goals within this Strategy including:

- » Community participation in climate response through a reduction in greenhouse gases from landfills and more sustainable approaches to manufacturing.
- » Sustainable management of natural resources by reducing demand for new raw materials.
- » Supporting economic sustainability and new job growth by contributing new opportunities for employment in sustainable industries.

This Goal is also aligned with the United Nations SDGs numbers 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

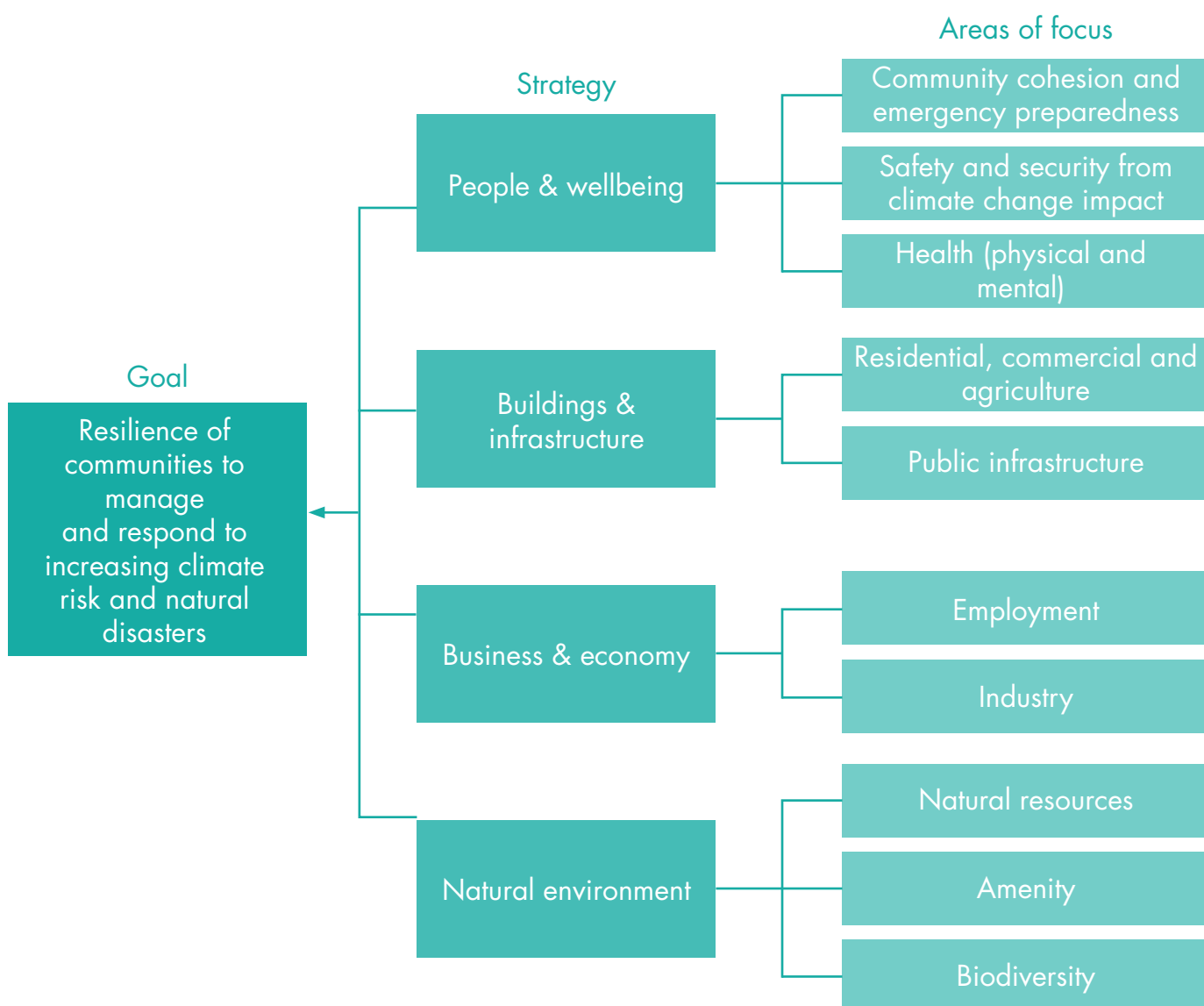




## 6.14 Goal 7 - Community resilience to respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters

Resilience is the ability of communities, their livelihoods and their surrounding natural environment to respond to and bounce back from disruptive or extreme events caused by climate change. More specifically, the resilience of a community can be considered through the lens of the resilience of its people, its buildings and infrastructure, its businesses and the broader economy, and its natural environment.

Given the vulnerability of East Gippsland to climate change and natural disasters, it is important to prepare for climate change now in order to reduce the impacts on our people, infrastructure, economy and natural environment. This will allow our communities and visitors to continue to live, visit and work in East Gippsland into the future. We need to plan today, to live well tomorrow.





## How could Council influence this outcome?

Over the next ten years, Council will continue to identify and support additional opportunities to contribute to this outcome. This will come under the following strategic initiative areas:

- » Improving community emergency preparedness by planning before events happen.
- » Adapting our agriculture sector.
- » Building resilient communities and infrastructure.
- » Promoting sustainable land-use development.
- » Investing in the growth of emerging industries.
- » Building capacity of all industries to become more sustainable.
- » Protecting our natural heritage and biodiversity.

Council will contribute to this Goal by effectively managing natural environments that fall on Council-managed land and improving Council assets to increase resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Economic Development Strategy play core roles in achieving this Goal. While business and community resilience are recognised as being significant from an Environmental Sustainability perspective, it is also recognised that many of the targets and actions belong in other strategies and action plans rather than this Strategy.

To avoid duplication of these actions in this Strategy, the role of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2032 is to recognise the importance of resilience at a goal level and influence the actions and measures of these other strategies.

The role of environmental sustainability is to provide the climate data and modelling that will support businesses and community resilience building.





## How will we measure success?

Strategy	Target	Council Role
Reliable and locally relevant climate modelling are developed to inform agencies and units working with communities and businesses to build climate resilience	Reliable climate modelling exists for East Gippsland by 2023	Control
	Proportion of residential, commercial, public and agricultural infrastructure that is insurable for natural disasters	Influence
	East Gippsland planning scheme reflects existing and future predicted climate risk	Control
	Council has implemented a detailed climate risk analysis to identify the likely impact of extreme weather and climate events on Councils infrastructure assets, and the ability to provide community services. Transition costs and risks are also specified.	Control
The majority of strategies for this goal sit within the Municipal Emergency Management Plan; Health and Wellbeing Strategy; the Economic Development Strategy and Council Plan	Agencies working together. See The majority of strategies for this goal sit within the Municipal Emergency Management Plan; Health and Wellbeing Strategy; the Economic Development Strategy and Council Plan for additional targets.	Influence / Control

As a community-facing strategy, not all actions and responsibility for community resilience sits with Council. Council will therefore work with a range of agencies, groups, and individuals to implement this goal and strive to achieve these targets.



## Victorian Climate Change Projections (VCP19)

Council staff have been working with DELWP and the CSIRO to better understand future climate change projections and climate change variability across the municipality. Climate models and climate projections are created to help us understand what the future might look like. Models are used across a large range of disciplines including economics and medicine. They are also used by governments all around the world as a tool to develop policy, this includes climate change.

As more is learnt about the drivers and impacts of climate change, and computing power has increased, the reliability of climate projections has also improved. The most recent climate projections for Victoria are the *Victorian Climate Projections 2019*.

East Gippsland Shire Council is now using the *Victorian Climate Projections 2019* to explore what climate change might look like under

different greenhouse gas emission scenarios for specific localities across the shire. Climate Projections 2019 can be used to help us to understand local climate variability under different climate change scenarios.

Council can engage directly with communities to explain what current climate models are saying about the future climate in specific localities. This is about creating a process that will inform the community so that they can make decisions about their future. We have also provided this modelling to other statutory authorities including the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (EGCMA) and East Gippsland Water (EGW).

This would be an evidence-based approach to future planning and preparing for climate uncertainty and risk. It also allows us to understand climate change implications on the coast as opposed to the mountains for example.

This information can help us to plan and prepare for East Gippsland's climate in 2050.



## How does this support the broader strategic commitments?

This Goal relates directly to a range of other goals within the strategy including:

- Goal 5 – Community Participation in climate response; and
- Goal 6 – Environmental sustainability supports sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities.

Given the vulnerability of our region to climate change and natural disasters, it is important that we prepare for climate change now in order to

reduce the impacts to our people, infrastructure, economy and natural environment. This will allow our communities and visitors to continue to live, work and play in East Gippsland into the future.

This Goal is also aligned with the United Nations SDGs numbers 1 (No Poverty), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 13 (Climate Action).



## 7. OUR STRATEGY

Goal	1. Conservation of the natural environment & biodiversity	2. Sustainable management of natural resources (climate mitigation)	3. Community participation in climate response	4. Respect and alignment with the rights of Traditional Owner Groups	5. Supports sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities	6. Growth in the Circular Economy	7. Community resilience to increasing climate risk and natural disasters
Strategies	<p>a. Improved biodiversity outcomes will be supported across the shire.</p> <p>b. Native vegetation conservation will be encouraged across the shire.</p> <p>c. Engagement with the natural environment will support appreciation and enhancement of these values.</p> <p>d. Support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy to build the resilience of communities to manage and respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters.</p> <p>e. Support the actions of the Economic Development Strategy to support the business community to build resilience and adjust to increasing climate risk and natural disasters.</p>	<p>a. East Gippsland will use water sustainably.</p> <p>b. East Gippsland will use energy more sustainably.</p> <p>c. East Gippsland will use sustainable transport in preference to fossil fuels.</p> <p>d. East Gippsland will use its raw materials sustainably.</p> <p>e. East Gippsland will use land sustainably.</p>	<p>a. Council will undertake a range of organisation-wide actions to reduce its emissions.</p> <p>b. East Gippsland community members will be supported to reduce their environmental footprint and emissions.</p> <p>c. Encourage organisations across the shire to manage and mitigate the impacts of a changing climate.</p> <p>d. East Gippsland community members will be encouraged to embrace new businesses and business opportunities that are linked to a changing climate.</p>	<p>a. Work with Traditional Owners to develop and implement relevant natural resource agreements and practices.</p> <p>b. Engage Traditional Owners in Council's environmental management operations.</p>	<p>a. Industries will be supported to become more sustainable</p> <p>b. The actions of the Economic Development Strategy to attract and grow businesses with a sustainability focus will be implemented.</p>	<p>a. To ensure sufficient supply and collection of lifelong and reusable materials.</p> <p>b. To generate sufficient demand for reusable materials.</p> <p>c. Council's Waste Services and Waste Management Practices will support the circular economy.</p>	<p>a. Reliable and locally relevant climate modelling is developed to inform agencies and units working with communities and businesses to build climate resilience.</p> <p>b. The majority of strategies for this goal sit within Emergency Management, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; the Economic Development Strategy and the Council Plan.</p>

Goal	1. Conservation of the natural environment & biodiversity	2. Sustainable management of natural resources (climate mitigation)	3. Community participation in climate response	4. Respect and alignment with the rights of Traditional Owner Groups	5. Supports sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities	6. Growth in the Circular Economy	7. Community resilience to increasing climate risk and natural disasters
Targets	<p>1. Reduce the decline in biodiversity loss.</p> <p>2. Increase in the quantity and quality of vulnerable land, habitat and biodiversity on council and private land</p> <p>3. Illegal clearing of significant native vegetation will be enforced.</p> <p>4. By 2032 the community are more engaged in conservation efforts and have an increased awareness of our ecological values.</p> <p>5. By 2032 community appreciation of the natural environment measures will have all increased.</p>	<p>1. Water use supports necessary environmental flow and best practice measures.</p> <p>2. Council invests in stormwater assets using water sensitive urban design (WSUD) and Integrated Water Management (IWM) principles</p> <p>3. East Gippsland's greenhouse gas emissions from energy use (electricity and gas) reduced by 100%.</p> <p>4. Electricity used in council operations is from 100% renewable sources.</p> <p>5. Greenhouse gas emissions from light vehicle fleet transport will decrease from both Council and community by 50%.</p> <p>6. Increased active transport opportunities (e.g. cycling infrastructure, shared pathways).</p> <p>7. All service towns and prominent localities have access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure.</p> <p>8. New and existing land-use development incorporates ESD</p>	<p>1. Council will set a net zero corporate emissions target for 2032.</p> <p>2. The proportion of community members who report satisfaction with Council's environmental action will increase.</p> <p>3. Support communities to set an emissions target.</p> <p>4. By 2032 East Gippsland's community emissions will have reduced.</p>	<p>1. Traditional Owners are fully involved in decision-making around management and use of natural resources including climate change.</p> <p>2. Relevant agreements between Council and Traditional Owner Groups are in place for the use and management of land under council management.</p> <p>3. Relevant targets set in collaboration with Traditional Owners are met.</p>	<p>Targets will be set in partnership with the development of the Economic Development Strategy.</p>	<p>1. The volume of waste going to landfill is reduced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» organic waste to landfill by 90%</li> <li>» textile waste to landfill by 50%</li> <li>» recyclable materials going to landfill by 90%</li> </ul> <p>2. Greenhouse gas emissions from landfills will be reduced and reported.</p> <p>3. Food Organics &amp; Garden Organics (FOGO) will be repurposed to produce organic based products.</p> <p>4. Growth in number of businesses participating in the circular economy</p> <p>5. Council has embedded re-use of materials in all policies and practices and supports reuse by businesses and the broader community.</p> <p>6. Council procurement will comprise 10% of recycled material.</p>	<p>1. Reliable climate modelling exists for East Gippsland by 2023.</p> <p>2. Proportion of residential, commercial, public and agricultural infrastructure that is insurable for natural disasters.</p> <p>3. East Gippsland planning scheme reflects existing and future predicted climate risk.</p> <p>4. Council has implemented a detailed climate risk analysis to identify the likely impact of extreme weather and climate events on Councils infrastructure assets, and the ability to provide community services. Transition costs and risks are also specified.</p> <p>5. Agencies working together - see Health and Wellbeing Strategy; the Economic Development Strategy and the Council Plan for additional targets.</p>



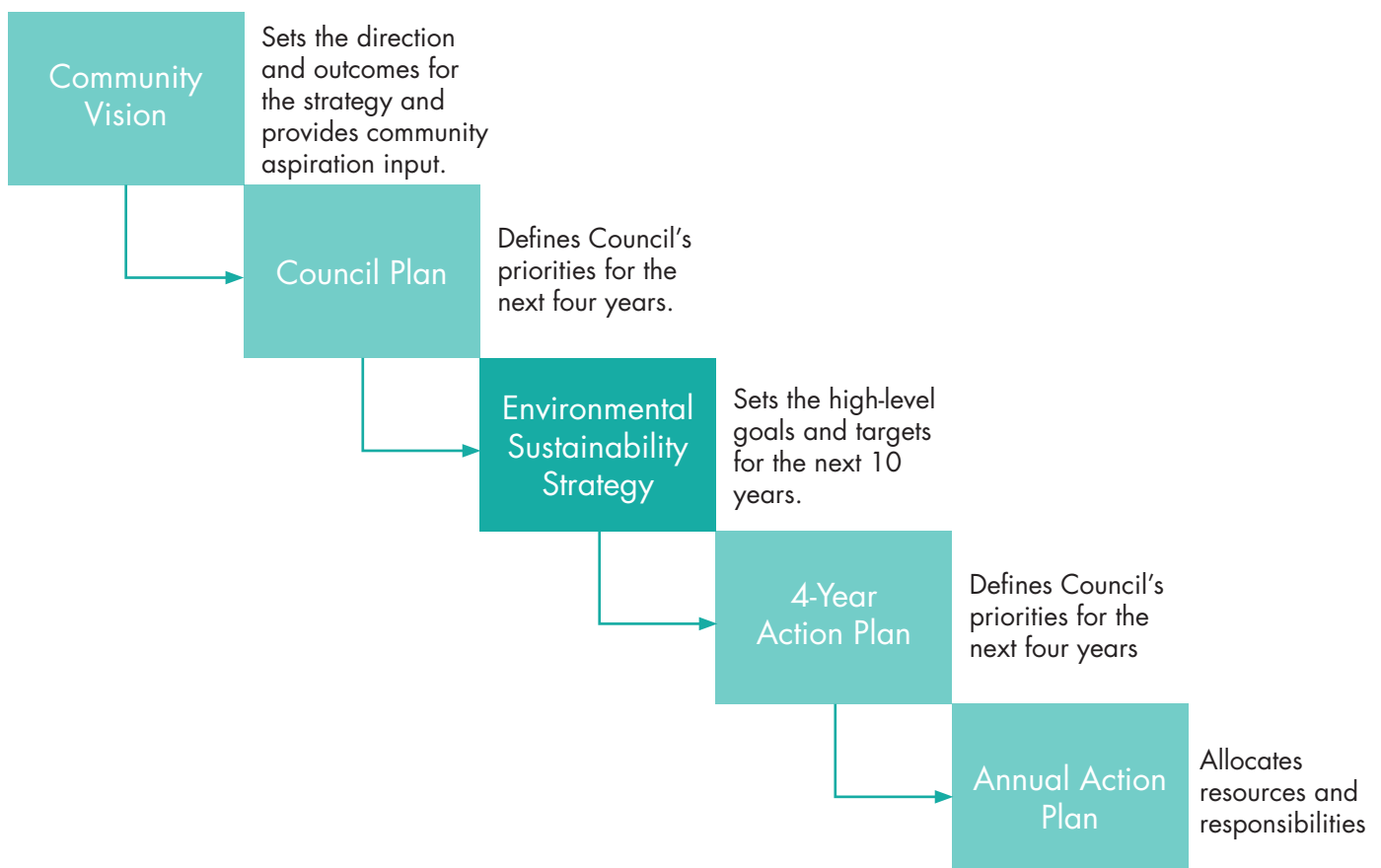
## 8. IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The Strategy provides direction to Council on how the organisation will respond to a changing climate, embed sustainability into our operations, plan and protect our biodiversity and support the community and business to be sustainable.

The relationship between this Strategy and the other parts of Council's integrated planning framework is demonstrated in the diagram below. This also shows how the Strategy will be implemented.

The Strategy is informed by background research, uses evidence-based / best practice solutions, and will result in a detailed action plan for the first four years.

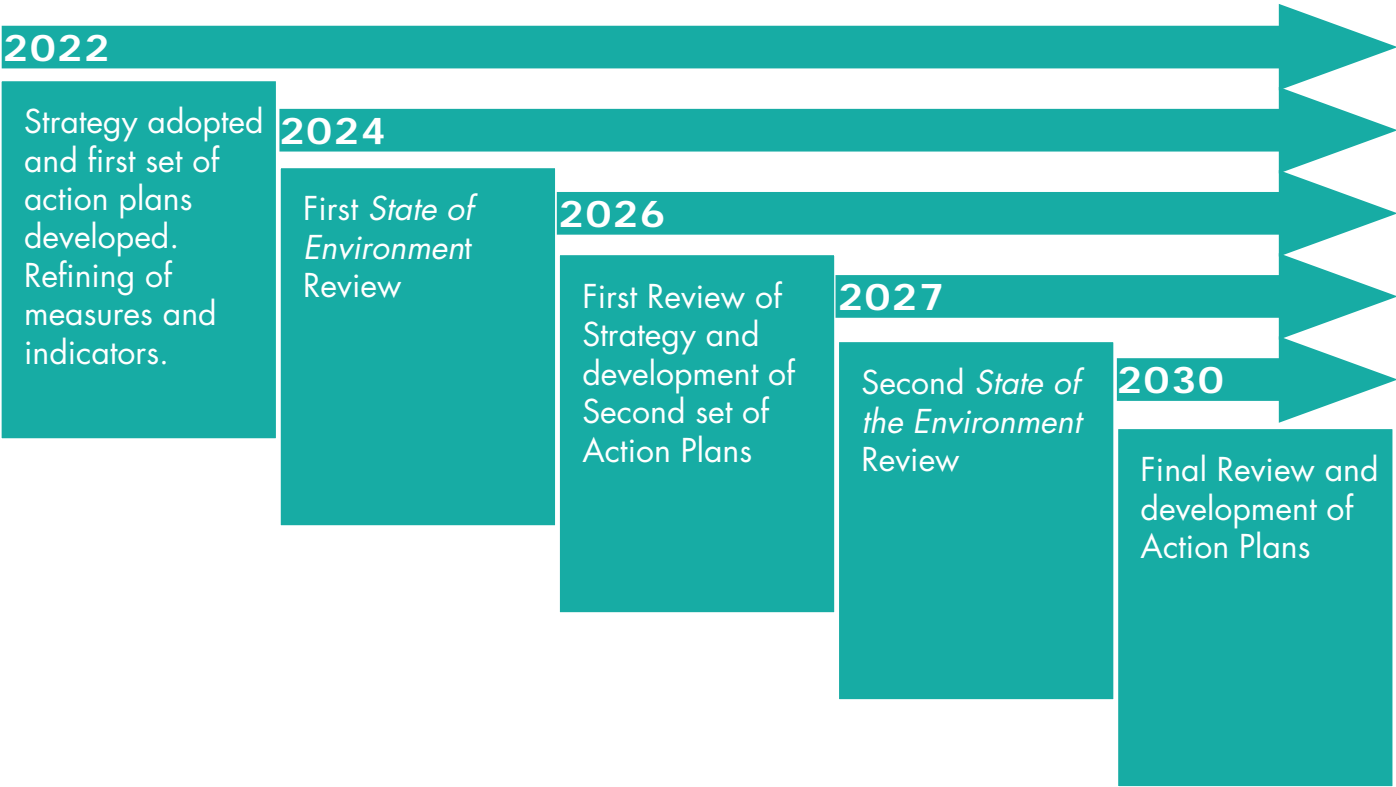
Our actions will be driven through Council and department business planning and guided by our principles for sustainability and resilience.



## 8.1 Timelines

By committing to delivery of a 10-year strategy, it is essential that Council undertake regular reviews and monitoring of delivery against the agreed indicators for each outcome. Monitoring allows for a review of not only Council and community performance and expectations, but also allows us to reprioritise or pivot the Strategy to new or developing circumstances.

Four-year action plans will be developed to support the implementation of the Strategy. These will be scheduled for adoption six months after the adoption of the relevant Council Plan. Major monitoring and development of ‘*State of the Environment*’ reporting will also be undertaken every 4 years - with the first of these due by 2024.



## 8.2 Resourcing

The funding we need to implement the strategic actions for each Goal will be considered in our annual planning and budgeting cycles.

We will actively work with the community and other organisations where it is agreed that the Strategy’s outcomes are mutually beneficial to

other partners. This may include sharing data, project co-delivery, funding, etc.

We will also seek external funding opportunities to further progress our vision, outcomes and strategic actions.

## 8.3 Cross-referencing with other strategies

Recognising the interdependencies of the Strategy and our Economic Development Strategy; the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and some of our enabling plans and policies such as the Asset Management Plan, this Strategy is being carefully cross-referenced against these documents.

This cross-referencing will ensure that:

- » where strategies have similar goals, their actions and targets are complementary rather than repetitive
- » there is no conflict between strategy views
- » targets and measures are appropriately set for each document
- » necessary changes to the strategy can be identified through review, and the priorities and strategies targets re-evaluated and changed as needed

## 8.4 Ongoing communication and engagement

Communication and engagement, particularly sharing the successes and challenges of activities and actions, will be fundamental to the implementation of this Strategy.

Examples of communication tools that will be deployed to enable community engagement and partnership formation include:

- » Community newsletter to inform the public about local Council, environmental and sustainability news.
- » Other Council media including local newsletters, websites, social media posts and print.
- » Councillor Briefings and updates.
- » Surveys to test public opinion about key projects.
- » Use of focus groups to test the direction of the Strategy at inception, 4-year and 10-year reviews.
- » Maintaining a commitment to making information public and accessible.
- » Collaborating with the public sector including the EGCMA, DELWP, DPJR (jobs, precincts and regions) and Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA).
- » Collaborating with the private sector including the waste industry, environmental groups and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs).
- » Media releases around key achievements and major project updates.

## 9. REFERENCES

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# 10. GLOSSARY

TERMS	DEFINITIONS
Adaptation	A process of change through which a species becomes better suited to its environment.
Biodiversity	Biodiversity is the variety of life forms on earth - the plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms, their genes, and the terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems of which they are a part. This diversity exists at different scales: regional diversity, ecosystem diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity. High levels of biodiversity are considered desirable.
Circular economy	A circular economy is based on the principle of eliminating waste and pollution by keeping products and materials in use. In a circular economy, natural resources are kept in circulation to create new economic opportunities and employment. It helps conserve natural resources and reduces emissions and waste.
Climate adaptation	Climate change adaptation is the process of adjusting to current or expected climate change and its effects. It is one of the ways to respond to climate change, along with mitigation and varies from place to place, depending on the sensitivity and vulnerability to environmental impacts.
Climate change	A change in global and regional climate patterns that can be attributed to increased levels of greenhouse gases leading to global warming and more extreme weather.
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
EGCMA	East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
EGW	East Gippsland Water
Environment	The surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal or plants lives and operates.
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) involves designing the built environment to comply with the principles of sustainability. This includes passive solar (maximised by a building's orientation), reducing consumption of non-renewable materials, waste minimisation and creating healthy, productive environments for humans to live and work in.
Greenhouse gases	A gas that contributes to climate change through absorbing heat radiation from the sun. Carbon dioxide, methane, water vapour and nitrous oxide are examples of greenhouse gases.
Habitat	A habitat is an environment that provides all the conditions necessary for a species to survive.
IWM	Integrated Water Management. A collaborative approach to water planning and management that brings together organisations with an interest in all aspects of the water cycle.

# GLOSSARY

TERMS	DEFINITIONS
Landscape capacity	The degree to which a particular characteristic of a landscape can accommodate change without significantly affecting its overall characteristics.
NECMA	Northeast Catchment Management Authority
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
Resilience	The ability of a species or environment to respond and bounce back from disruptive or extreme events.
Recycle	Converting what would otherwise be waste into a reusable product.
Reuse and repair	Diverting items that would otherwise become landfill into other uses.
RSA	Recognition Settlement Agreement (RSA) is an agreement between Traditional Owners and the Crown relating to native title land-use on Crown land.
Stewardship	The responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving.
Strategy	Provides a roadmap that identifies key guiding principles and goals that will inform and prioritise decision making within an organisation.
Sustainability	Focus on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
WGCMA	West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design. Managing urban water movements by mimicking the natural water cycle.

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18 Dowling Street

Buchan Resource Centre -  
6 Centre Road

Cann River Community Centre -  
Princes Highway

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