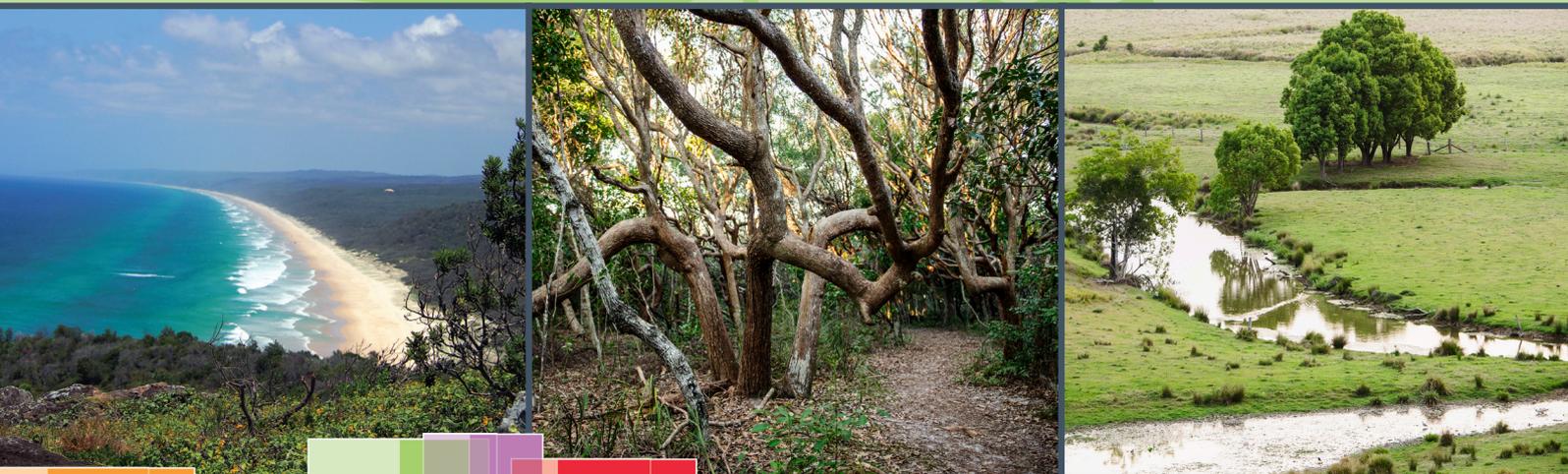


Environment Strategy

June 2018-2023



Foreword

The Gympie region is abundant with natural assets such as the Mary River, Wide Bay Creek, coastal beaches, forested mountains and beautiful reserves. Gympie Regional Council is committed to ensuring our region is protected and sustained through responsible environmental management.

To do this effectively, Council has identified the need for an Environmental Strategy which highlights the unique needs of our catchment, and provides a framework within which we will act to conserve and enhance our natural environment, reduce our ecological footprint and minimise our greenhouse gas emissions.

The Gympie region is predicted to be one of the fastest growing populations in the Wide Bay area; with an expected population growth of 15,000 over the next 20 years. As such, it is important to consider how the environment will be best supported as the community expands.

This document considers the priorities unique to this region for our environment to continue to thrive; including energy efficiencies and renewable energy sources, biodiversity, water quality, awareness in the community and education opportunities for landholders.

The Gympie Regional Council Environment Strategy 2018-2023 will guide both Council and community in making the most of what nature has to offer us, and ensure its preservation for generations to come.

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Introduction

Background

In 2011, Council adopted the Gympie Regional Council Environment Strategy 2012-2017. The 2012 Strategy built on the earlier environmental management plans and programs undertaken by former Councils prior to amalgamation in 2008. A major focus of the 2012 Strategy was improving the integration of environmental management within and throughout Council's operations. Almost all of the 106 actions have now been completed or are underway and reflect a major achievement in addressing sound environmental management in the region. Significantly, many of the outcomes are evident in the improvements achieved in the way in which Council operations are carried out.

This work, along with a range of other ongoing Council initiatives related to improving Council's practices, has provided a solid foundation for the Environment Strategy 2018-2023 to build on.

The Environment Strategy 2018-2023 has been developed through extensive consultation. Of particular assistance were a range of workshops and one-on-one discussions with community environmental (natural resource management) groups and officers from relevant agencies. Residents also had the opportunity to provide input into the Strategy during a period of public consultation. A total of 18 submissions were received in response and this feedback has been considered and adjustments have been made to the draft Strategy where appropriate.

Purpose of the strategy

The purpose of the Environment Strategy 2018-2023 is to guide Council and community action in responsible environmental management, sustainability and stewardship of the Gympie region to ensure that our region is preserved for future generations. Like many regions in Australia, our region is currently facing the pressure of growth and improvements to our lifestyle. One of our biggest challenges is to ensure that the natural environment is considered in all of the decisions we make.

Whether big or small, these decisions can have an impact on us, as our future is linked to the health and quality of our natural environment. We need to ensure that we have the balance right between growth, development and environmental sustainability across the Gympie region.

The Environment Strategy will also guide Council operational activities, policy development and Environment Levy allocation to:

- achieve the environmental outcomes outlined in the Gympie Regional Council Corporate Plan
- respond to Council's legal obligations (as outlined in Appendix 1)
- address regional environmental priorities.



Vision

“ The environment of the Gympie region is conserved and enhanced through responsible management and action by Council, the community and State Government agencies working together to address current and future environmental challenges. ”

Strategy outcomes

The Environment Strategy will seek to achieve the following four outcomes:

- Council's operations incorporate leading environmental practices
- biodiversity is conserved and enhanced and water quality is improved
- greenhouse gas emissions are minimised and our region is resilient to climate change
- community partnerships support a thriving environment.

Council's operations incorporate leading environmental practices

Council has undertaken a wide range of actions in recent years to reduce the impact of its operations on the region's environment.

This is an ongoing focus for Council as it works to ensure that Council activities meet legislative environmental obligations and community expectations and can showcase to the community leading environmental management practices and sustainable technologies.

Continuing action will ensure that short term operational impacts from construction and maintenance activities, for example, are reduced and that whole of life environmental impacts from the operation of Council facilities are considered and addressed.

Biodiversity is conserved and enhanced and water quality is improved

Biodiversity and water quality underpin many lifestyle and economic opportunities in the region. Land owners and land management agencies play a key role in the sustainable use of land and managing the impact of land use on water quality in the region's waterways.

Promoting the health of our natural environment is important not just for lifestyle and economic reasons but also to preserve our unique and iconic native plants and animals and their habitats for future generations.

Actions that seek to sustain biodiversity and water quality will have multiple short and long term benefits for the region.

Greenhouse gas emissions are minimised and our region is resilient to a changing climate

Responding to climate change requires action at a global, national and a local level.

Local action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions makes a contribution to minimising the risk of severe global warming in the future.

Many communities are planning and acting to respond to the influences that climate change is anticipated to have on the local environment, assets and property arising from changes to the frequency or severity of natural hazards. This 'adaptation' action will ensure that the community is prepared and resilient to these changes.

Community partnerships support a thriving environment

Council, State Government agencies, residents, business and industry all play a part in managing the region's environment.

Working together to achieve agreed environmental priorities for the region will make the best use of finite resources and will avoid duplication of effort or missed opportunities.

Coordination and access to information, networks and resources that can support on ground environmentally sustainable action are an important means to assist partners to play their part in managing the region's environment.

Effective partnerships model

The following shows how effective partnerships and action across the region will lead to improved environmental outcomes.



The environment of the Gympie region

From Imbil to Inskip Point, Tansey to Tin Can Bay, the Gympie region boasts a wide variety of environmental treasures.

Our region is home to over 3600 species of native plants and animals some of which aren't found outside the catchments of the Burnett and Mary rivers.

The abundance of wildlife is due to our region being in an area where northern tropical and southern temperate native species overlap. The significance of our environmental assets has been recognised internationally through the designation by UNESCO of the Great Sandy Biosphere Reserve which incorporates a large proportion of our region.

Our coastal wetland environments are recognised under international treaties as habitat for migratory birds; and the Burnett and Mary rivers and their tributaries flow to World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef waters.

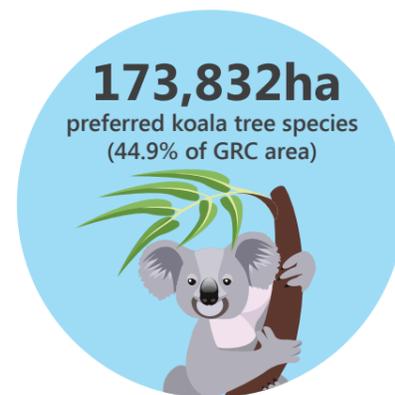
Our region's bushlands provide important habitat for the iconic Koala and wild Macadamia trees which are recognised under Queensland and Australian conservation legislation as a vulnerable species.

Our rivers and streams are home to truly unique aquatic species such as the endangered Mary River Cod, the Mary River Turtle and the vulnerable Australian Lungfish.

Our coastal foreshores provide important nesting habitat for the endangered marine Loggerhead Turtle.

But it's not just our amazing flora and fauna that make our environment so important. The landscapes and natural features of the region are culturally important to the residents of our region and in particular to our indigenous communities. They help to define how and why we live in our region and they set us apart from everywhere else.

Our region's environment is an asset and a drawcard that is worthy of our efforts to protect and manage it now and for the future.



Lifestyle and prosperity

Our region's environment is the setting for many activities that enrich our lifestyles, sustain our economy and attract visitors from near and far.

A key reason why we live here is because of the liveability of our region. Lifestyle and liveability in our region is linked to our desirable climate and accessibility to open spaces, the coast, waterways, bushland and diverse landscapes.

The quality and diversity of our environment and landscapes is therefore critical in underpinning liveability.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing; some of the region's most significant economic industry sectors are underpinned by a healthy environment. Management of invasive plants and animals, protection of productive soils and pastures and protection of waterway health are all key factors that influence the productivity of these industries.



Environmental Priorities Network

The Environmental Priorities Network has been created to emphasise areas of the region where Council will focus its expenditure of the Environment Levy to achieve conservation outcomes to help enhance and conserve the natural environment.

The Environmental Priorities Network has been created using:

- core areas of bushland providing habitat for a range of important species (for example, Koalas)
- biodiversity corridors linking core habitat areas
- major waterways and wetlands
- areas suitable for rehabilitation and restoration
- local knowledge via one on one meetings with local natural resource management groups and members of the public.

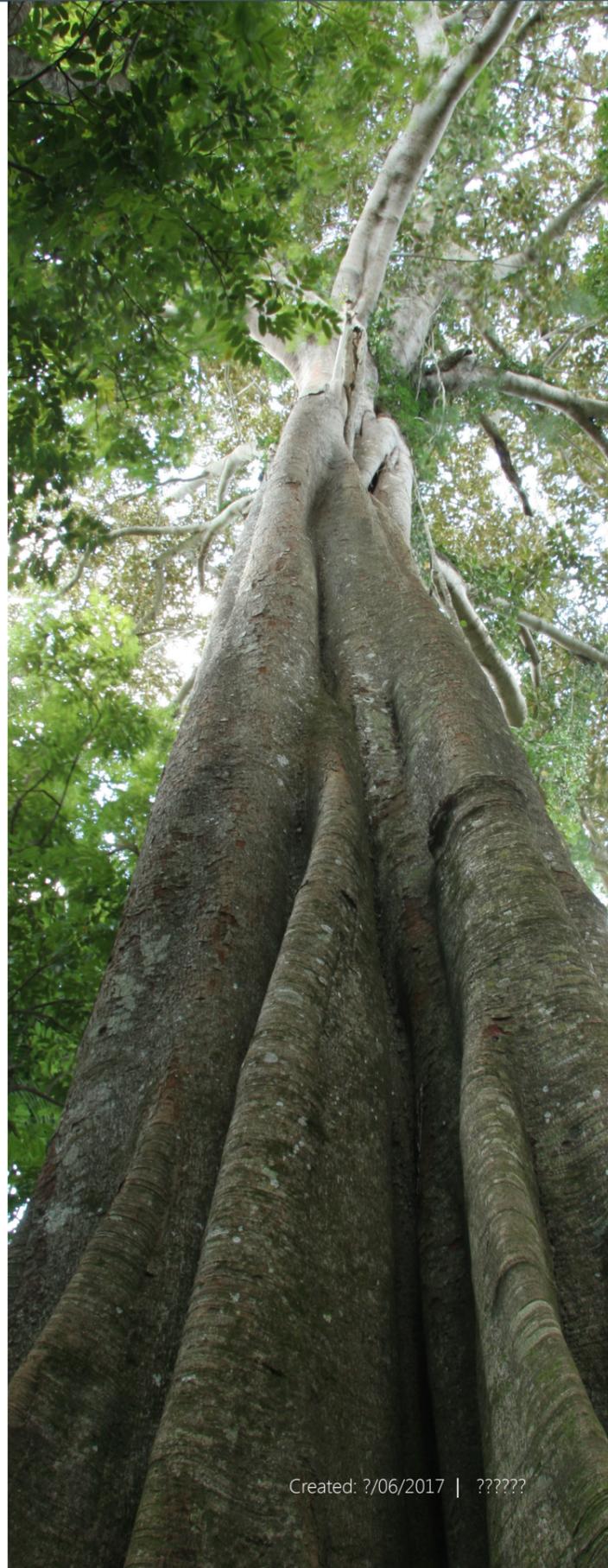
From this network a map has been created that will be the instrument used to guide the implementation of a range of conservation initiatives and actions in the Environment Strategy.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- the location of offsets and land acquisition sites
- the target areas for voluntary conservation programs
- invasive plant and animal control programs to protect biodiversity, local priority species and threatened species
- priority protection and enhancement/restoration works on Council land assets
- planning scheme development provisions.

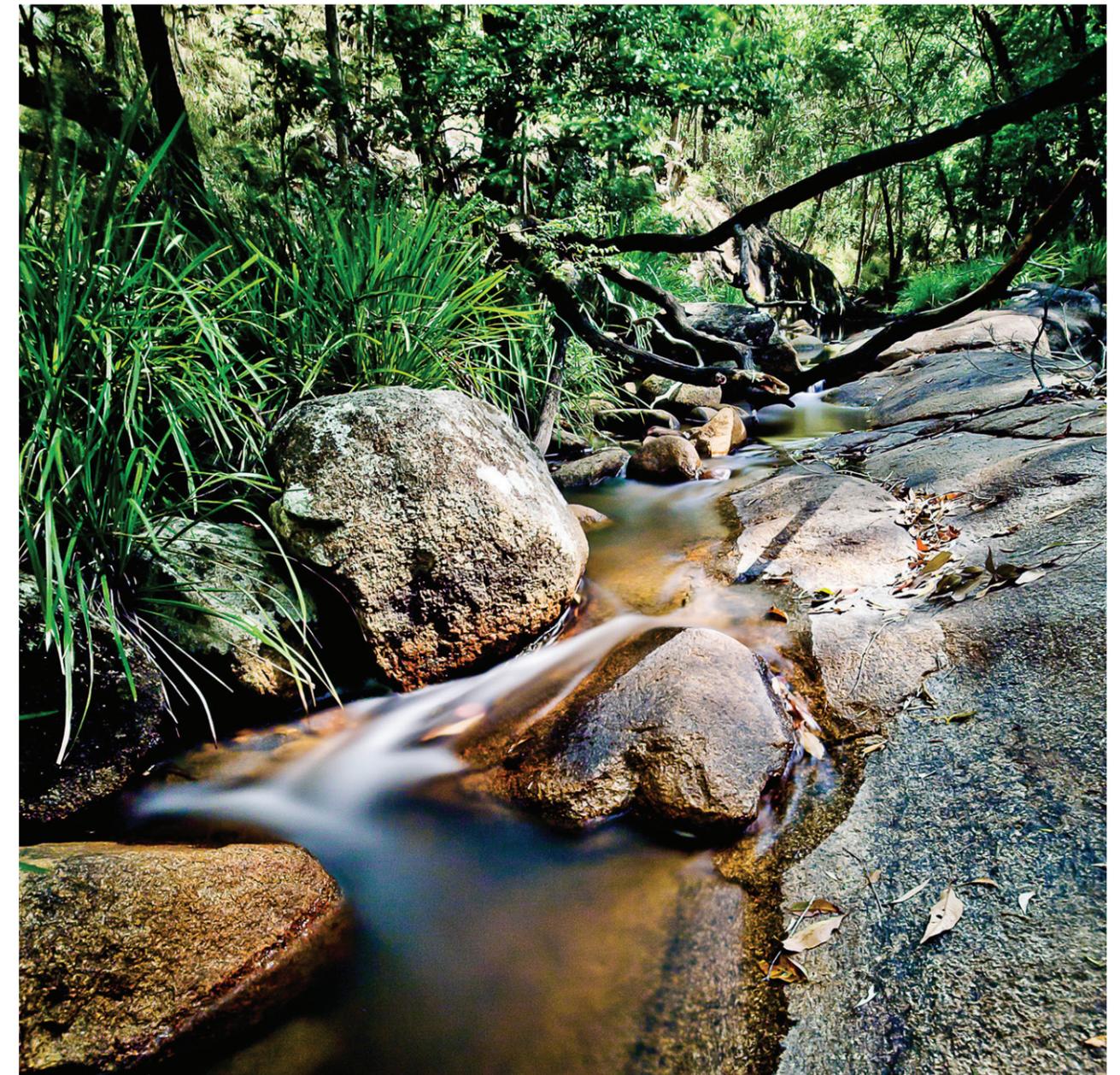
Management action outside or adjacent to these areas is also expected where that action addresses a threatening process such as bushfire management or the management of invasive plants and animals (invasive plant and animal management will be directed in accordance with the Biosecurity Plan).

Please refer to Attachment 1: Environmental Priorities Network Map.



Key challenges and priorities for the Gympie Region environment

Whilst we have an enviable environment in our region, a range of challenges and priorities exist which require effort and collaboration to address. If we are to have a healthy environment in the future we need to continue to work to address the challenges that confront our region. Some of the key challenges we face are discussed below.



Priority: Biodiversity and habitat protection

Our region's flora and fauna require habitats that are intact and connected to core habitat areas.

We need to work together to retain important native bushlands, compensate losses when they are unavoidable, restore areas where habitats need to be improved or better connected, and to actively manage invasive plants and animals and wildfire risks. Active management of our natural areas will ensure that our important flora and fauna species will continue to thrive in our region.

Balancing the needs of productive rural lands and habitats for flora and fauna is an important consideration in our region where forestry and agriculture plays such an important economic role. Properly considered programs that recognise these needs and achieve outcomes which benefit both are the key to achieving the right balance.

Challenges

- Impacts from development and growth (loss, destruction and fragmentation of habitat).
- Impacts from invasive plants and animals.
- Impacts from wildfires.
- Impacts from agriculture and forestry, particularly on drinking water catchments such as Kandanga and Amamoor.
- Appropriate education and awareness.
- Appropriate resources.
- Changing existing culture and mindsets.
- Ageing infrastructure.



How we are working together to address the challenges

- Maintaining and improving the quality and level of protection of native vegetation using the Environmental Priorities Network map to focus investment.
- Ensuring new development preserves native vegetation, wildlife habitats, wetlands, waterways and coastal environments and offsets the loss of native vegetation in other areas of the region where clearing is unavoidable.
- Managing the threat of pests and wildfires on our natural environment including monitoring and responding to new and emerging pest threats on a risk basis.
- Initiating programs that support landowners to undertake actions to protect biodiversity.
- Promoting the use of non-invasive and native plants in Council plantings throughout the region.
- Integrating environmental management considerations into all Council's key strategic documents and governance arrangements to embed environmental management action into ongoing Council operations.
- Raising staff awareness and providing training for key operational staff to improve staff awareness of how their activities can contribute to improved environmental management outcomes.
- Responsible and sustainable management of our regulated facilities and related infrastructure.
- Enhancing the planning scheme to improve environment outcomes through new development.
- Developing management plans for environmental reserves to guide their management.
- Providing adequate resources to implement this strategy and associated plans and strategies.

- Continuing to identify and obtain funding from a range of government and industry sources to leverage the investment of Council and community funds in environmental management.
- Supporting and promoting the Great Sandy Biosphere in collaboration with community, government and business partners.
- Sharing information and knowledge on environmental management to assist residents and the community to take informed environmental action.
- Working with government agencies, community groups, residents and property owners to share resources to implement integrated environmental management actions.
- Collaboration with the region's peak NRM groups to assist in reducing duplication of action and focusing effort on addressing priorities.

Partners

- Landowners
- Local NRM community groups
- Government agencies
- Neighbouring councils.

Priority: Adapting to a changing climate and natural hazard management

Scientific projections tell us that over the course of this century, the climate of our region and the world will change. The Burnett Mary Regional Group, the primary natural resource management group in our region, has recently undertaken research with key scientific organisations in Australia into how these changes will impact on our region.

Key changes will be:

- more very hot days
- storm and wind events
- more intense, less frequent rain fall events
- increased sea levels at the coast.

These changes will result in the potential for increased flooding events, increased risk of bushfire, flora and fauna habitat changes and coastal erosion and inundation.

Planning and taking progressive action as our understanding of how the implications will impact on our region improves will help us to adapt to these changes.

Many communities in Australia and internationally are taking steps to respond to these anticipated changes. Through collaboration to build our knowledge, plan and take action, progressive adaptation overtime will respond to these changes.

This 'adaptation' action will ensure that the region is prepared and resilient to these changes.



Challenges

- Lack of knowledge and data.
- Changing existing culture and mindsets.
- Appropriate resources.
- Understanding the impacts on infrastructure and assets.
- Potential for loss of infrastructure and assets.
- The uncertainty of how climate change will modify the natural environment.

How we are working together to address the challenges

- Integrating projected climate change information into Council land use, asset, biosecurity, natural hazards and local disaster management planning.
- Undertaking coastal, flooding and bushfire hazard assessments to understand the risks that are posed to the community by existing and future coastal, flooding and bushfire hazards.
- Preparing adaptation strategies to guide the region's resilience to climate change impacts.

Partners

- Landowners
- Local NRM community groups
- Government agencies
- Neighbouring councils.

Priority: Improving land management practices that influence water quality and waterway health

Urban and rural land management practices can have a significant impact on the quality of water in our waterways. Increased nutrient and sediment loads entering our waterways from sewage effluent, urban stormwater, land clearing, streambank erosion and runoff from urban and rural lands have an impact on the health of our waterways. Unregulated water extraction from our waterways can have a cumulative impact on the volume of water flows in our waterways.

Healthy waterways are important for providing the habitat for our unique wildlife species, clean water for urban and rural use and clean environments for productive fisheries, tourism and recreational activities. The flows from our waterways make their way eventually to southern Great Barrier Reef waters and internationally recognised coastal wetland areas and so the quality of water from our rivers and streams has an impact downstream on these important areas. Addressing land management practices that can impact on water quality in our waterways is an important focus for many landowners, community groups and government agencies within the Burnett and Mary rivers and the coastal catchments.



Challenges

- Impacts from development.
- Impacts from Council works.
- Impacts from agriculture, mining, industry, housing and tourism.
- Unregulated water extraction.
- Effluent discharge to waterways.

How we are working together to address the challenges

- Maintaining and improving the quality and level of protection of our waterways using the Environmental Priorities Network map to focus investment.
- Ensuring new developments put measures in place to protect wetlands, waterways and coastal environments.
- Ensuring all works adjacent to waterways include the use of sediment and erosion control devices.
- Initiating programs that support landowners to undertake actions to and improve water quality.
- Enhancing the planning scheme to improve water quality outcomes through new development.
- Meeting environmental authority requirements.

Partners

- Landowners
- Local NRM community groups.
- Government agencies.

Priority: Energy efficiency and the addition of renewable energy

The use of fossil fuels for the generation of fuel and electricity is one of the largest hidden environmental issues in direct association with the daily operation of Council. Investigating and investing in energy efficiency measures and renewable energy will have a beneficial impact for both the environment and on Council's operating costs in the long-term.

At the State and National level, Governments are continuing to consider policy and legislation associated with mitigating climate change related carbon emissions. The purpose is to reduce the amount of these gases that are released to the atmosphere which are understood to be contributing to the increase in global temperatures.

Connecting and working with the community by providing information and know how will help homes and businesses in the region take up new technology that will deliver environmental and financial benefits.

Council has begun to take energy efficiency actions and uses renewable energy on some Council buildings. Similarly, many homes and businesses in the region are taking this action on an individual basis. Leading by example through continued action and adaptation will help to reduce the impact of carbon emissions on the environment in addition to reducing overall energy costs.

Challenges

- Lack of knowledge and data.
- Changing existing culture and mindsets.
- Appropriate resources.
- Incorporating changing technologies into existing and future Council infrastructure.



How we are working together to address the challenges

- Preparing a benchmark assessment of Council's greenhouse gas emissions.
- Sharing information on strategies to reduce household and business greenhouse gas emissions.
- Undertaking an audit of Council facilities to prioritise retro-fitting energy efficient and greenhouse gas emission reduction initiatives.
- Investigating the opportunities for renewable energy facilities to be established in the region.
- Managing the region's waste stream to reduce greenhouse gas emissions including the installation of landfill gas management systems where feasible.
- Integrating sustainability considerations into all Council's key strategic documents and governance arrangements to embed environmental action into ongoing Council operations.
- Reviewing Council operations and assets to identify opportunities for energy, water and waste efficiency.
- Investigating a minimum Green Star rating for all new Council and community buildings and facilities to reduce construction and whole of life operating costs and impacts.
- Increasing the use of solar or energy efficient lighting and sustainable products in parks and community facilities wherever possible.
- Connecting business and industry with information and partners that can stimulate the expansion of environmental industries in the region and support environmentally sustainable businesses.

Partners

- Community
- Energy providers
- State Government

Strategy directions

Principles

The following principles underpin the strategy and its implementation. These principles will support decision making that influences the management of the region's environment.

Council leads by example

Council's operations have the potential to impact on environmental values. Council is committed to reducing or offsetting the impact of its operations on the environment and showing leadership in the community and the region for environmental stewardship.

Policies, plans and decision making arrangements will ensure Council responds to new and existing priorities and allocates resources to mitigate environmental impacts and improve the condition of the region's environment.

Council will be proactive in addressing environmental needs and priorities confronting the region and will encourage that proactivity amongst its partners and the community.

Sound environmental management underpins long term regional prosperity

The contribution that a healthy regional environment makes to social and economic prosperity and the long term competitive advantage of the region is recognised. A healthy environment underpins:

- thriving regional nature-based recreation and sustainable tourism industries
- sustainable forestry, agriculture, fishing and other industries
- diverse, accessible and attractive recreational opportunities, lifestyles and cultural life
- the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

Council's role in environmental management supports the region's long term prosperity by ensuring all planning and design processes support and respect environmental priorities.

Environmental management effort responds to current priorities and future challenges

Current management challenges and priorities for the region's environment are discussed on pages 7–15.

The nature of these challenges will change over time both as ongoing management effort is successful and as the environment changes. Monitoring and scanning activity will identify new and emerging challenges and inform our responses.

In responding to the challenges, community and Council understanding of the priorities is vital in ensuring finite resources are proactively directed to addressing areas of greatest need. The Environmental Priorities Network map (Appendix 1) will assist in directing where on ground action can be most effective.

Coordination of internal and external action delivers efficient and effective management

Council is one of a number of active environmental managers in the region with State Government agencies, community based NRM groups, residents, private landholders and businesses.

Council has a key role in providing support, direction and coordination of these partners to achieve improved environmental management outcomes in the region.

Coordination of the activity of environmental management 'partners' reduces duplication of effort and enables resources to be applied to priority activities efficiently and effectively. State Government agencies are a major land holder in the region and play an important role in environmental management. State government involvement in leading and collaborating in action is vitally important.

Peak NRM groups play an important coordinating role for community based environmental management activities. Council recognises and supports community action to maintain, improve and sustain our region's environment.

Strategy implementation

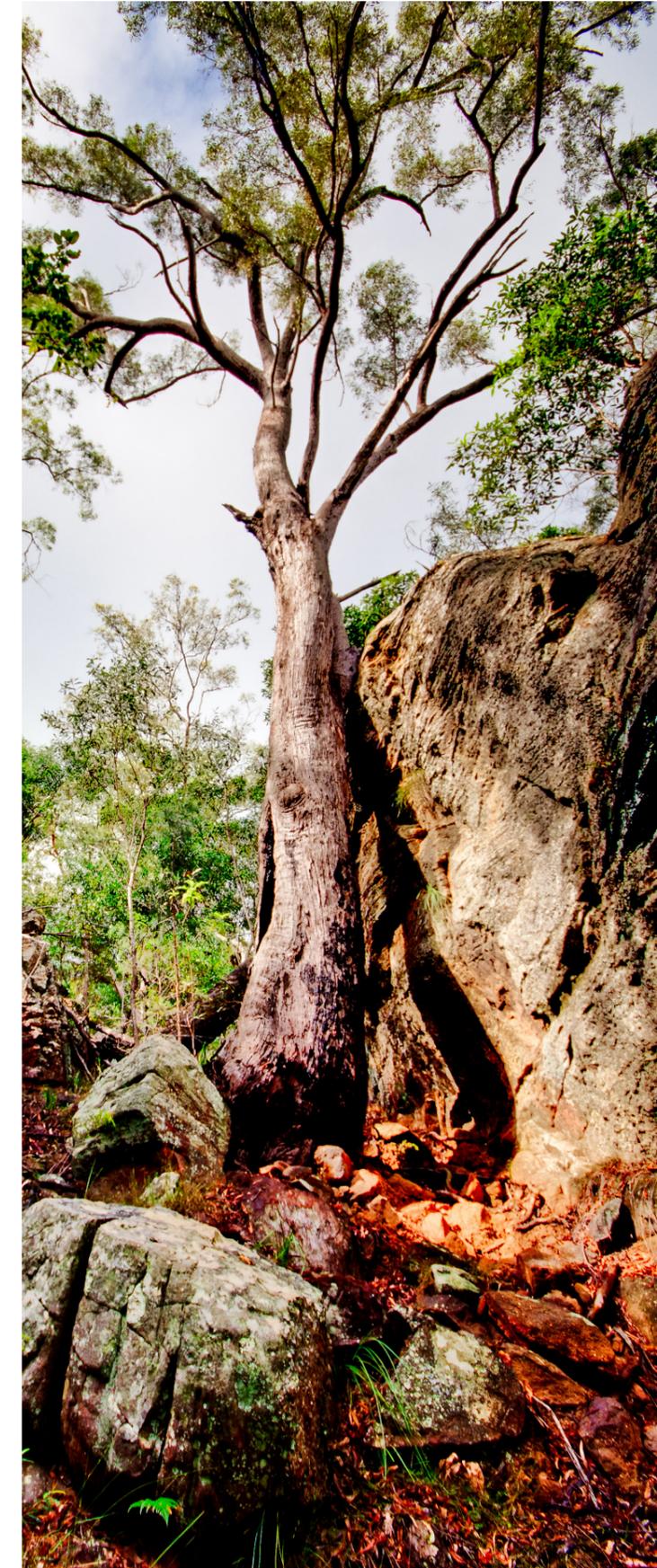
Implementation of the Environment Strategy 2018-2023 will be supported by a number of partnership, governance, monitoring and reporting arrangements.

Council will support the implementation of the strategy by the establishment of a series of ongoing **coordination and collaboration arrangements** including:

- a GRC officers' implementation group which will meet on a quarterly basis to oversee the implementation of the strategy. This group will assist with the development of progress reporting and in identifying opportunities for updating the Part C Action Plan on an annual basis to feed into Council's annual budgeting process
- the facilitation of a half yearly forum between the GRC officers, local NRM community groups and relevant regional State Government agency staff to discuss current and emerging issues and to collaborate on management action.

Monitoring of strategy progress against our achievements in addressing the priorities for the region will be reported to Council annually as part of the annual reporting cycle. The establishment of a stand-alone community Environment Levy Annual Report will be developed as a way of providing a 'user friendly' report card on levy expenditure.

Resourcing to implement the strategy will be monitored by Council on an annual basis with resources allocated each year as part of the annual Council budget process.



Action plan

Action	Performance indicator	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost	Funding source
1. Council's operations incorporate leading environmental management practices					
1.1 Commence development of an Environmental Management System to support coordinated and integrated environmental management in Council's operations.	Risk register created for environmental aspects. Environmental Management System developed.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time and to be determined	Rates revenue
1.2 Progressively rehabilitate all existing Council landfill sites in the region. ¹	Rehabilitation works completed as scheduled in the budget year to year.	Infrastructure Services	On-going	As allocated by the budget	Waste Management Revenue
1.3 Prepare and implement a Council staff Induction, Environmental Awareness and Training Program designed to build increasing awareness of strategies to reduce environmental impacts from Council operations, including specialist training for Council operational staff.	All staff trained. Refresher courses offered annually. New starts trained.	Planning and Development	On-going	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.4 Roll out completed project management framework with staff announcements and formation of council-wide project management practice group.	Project management framework delivered to Council staff.	Infrastructure Services	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.5 Investigate the options to build the specialist rehabilitation and natural area management capability of Council's operational workforce to enhance the management of environmentally significant properties in Council ownership or control.	Investigations undertaken and a report prepared for Council.	Planning and Development	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.6 Review Council's procurement policies and procedures to ensure goods and services supplied to Council are environmentally sustainable and suppliers are environmentally responsible.	Policies and procedures reviewed and recommendations made.	Corporate and Community Services	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.7 Investigate options for increased effluent reuse from the region's sewage.	Effluent reuse options investigated.	Water Business Unit	Medium priority (3-5 years)	To be determined	Sewerage Revenue
1.8 Investigate options for the offsetting of nutrients from Council's sewage treatment plant outflows to waterways.	Offsetting options investigated.	Water Business Unit	Medium priority (3-5 years)	To be determined	Sewerage and Waste Revenue
1.9 Investigate options for the reuse of bio solids from the region's sewage treatment plants including the potential for composting with the region's greenwaste stream.	Reuse options of bio solids from the region's sewage treatment plants investigated.	Water Business Unit working with Waste Services Branch	Low priority (5+ years)	To be determined	Sewerage and Waste Revenue
1.10 Council's Strategic Land Audit incorporates robust environmental assessment to ensure Council's use and management of its land are appropriate and environmentally sensitive.	Environmental matters considered in Strategic Land Audit and Environmental Planning involved in discussions regarding the strategic management of Council properties.	Corporate and Community Services	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.11 Implement an environmental offsets program for Council operations.	Environmental Offset Policy and Procedure created. All Council capital and maintenance works that result in unavoidable clearing of native vegetation providing habitat for native fauna, will be offset in appropriate offset receiving sites in the region by 2019. Numbers of hectares rehabilitated by Council projects.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	\$50,000 per annum	Environment Levy

¹Alternate waste management arrangements are addressed in the Waste Management Strategy

Action	Performance indicator	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost	Funding source
1.12 Develop an environmental offsets framework for significant residual impacts on regional priority environmental matters for inclusion in Planning Scheme.	Environmental Offsets Policy approved by Council and State Government and incorporated in Planning Scheme amendments.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.13 Develop (and implement) Water Sensitive Design Guidelines and a user-friendly Stormwater Management Framework for developers and the construction industry in the Gympie Region, including Council.	Targets set to determine the quality of stormwater. Water Sensitive Design Guidelines and Stormwater Management Framework developed.	Planning and Development and Infrastructure Services	Medium priority (3-5 years)	\$50,000	Environment Levy
1.14 Undertake a review to identify and prioritise environmentally significant properties in Council ownership or control.	Parcels identified that are environmentally significant, potential offset receiving sites and have the potential for conservation agreements.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.15 Prepare Environmental Management Plans for environmentally significant properties including detailed flora and fauna assessments, fire management and invasive plant and animal management.	Environmental Management Plans prepared for selected properties. Plans utilised to manage the selected property.	Planning and Development, Infrastructure Services Corporate and Community Services and Water Business Unit	High priority (1-3 years)	\$20,000 per plan	Environment Levy
1.16 Implementation of the Cooloola Coastal Reserves and Foreshore Management Plan.	Cooloola Coastal Reserves and Foreshore Management Plan implemented.	Planning and Development and Infrastructure Services	On-going	To be determined and \$10,000 per annum	Rates revenue and Environment Levy
1.17 Draft a Corporate Sustainability Strategy.	Report prepared and presented to the Executive Team. Work commenced on a Corporate Sustainability Strategy if supported by the Executive Team.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	\$80,000	Environment Levy
1.18 Investigate the options for improved Spotter Catcher arrangements.	Spotter catcher policy and procedure created and implemented for Council works. Spotter Catcher requirements identified as a requirement of development in accordance with the Planning Scheme.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.19 Council implements the Wood Encouragement Policy.	One information session and field trip organised in conjunction with Timber Queensland, local timber industry and stakeholders to provide information and education about best practice in the use of timber in construction projects. Promotion of Wood Encouragement Policy through online and print media.	Corporate and Community Services	On-going	To be determined, \$2000 and to be determined	Rates revenue, Environment Levy and State Government funding
1.20 Implement recycling in all Council buildings.	Recycling implemented in all Council buildings.	Infrastructure Services	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Absorbed in existing operational expenses	Rates revenue
1.21 Implement public place recycling in CBD areas, parks and community facilities.	Appropriate facilities provided to undertake recycling in CBD areas, parks and community facilities.	Infrastructure Services	High priority (1-3 years)	To be determined	Rates revenue
1.22 Develop Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Strategy for Kilkivan, Goomeri and Imbil and conduct recycled water risk assessments for all STPs.	Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Strategy for Kilkivan, Goomeri and Imbil developed for Goomeri and Imbil. Recycled water risk assessments for all STPs conducted.	Water Business Unit	High priority (1-3 years)	\$150,000	Sewerage revenue

Action	Performance indicator	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost	Funding source
1.23 Develop Council wide Sewage Treatment Plant Master Plans and review Receiving Water Management Plans and Recycled Water Irrigation Management Plans.	Council wide Sewage Treatment Plant Master Plans developed. Receiving Water Management Plans and Recycled Water Irrigation Management Plans reviewed.	Water Business Unit	High priority (1-3 years)	\$200,000	Sewerage revenue
1.24 Develop Water Resilience Strategy that will promote alternative water use such as stormwater harvesting and recycled water re-use.	Water Resilience Strategy developed.	Water Business Unit	High priority (1-3 years)	\$300,000	Water revenue and infrastructure charge
1.25 Undertake a study that identifies and prioritises 'pinch points' across the region where native wildlife are at high risk of vehicle collision from crossing roads.	Study completed and report prepared. Report used to inform design of new roads, upgrades and retrofitting of wildlife crossing infrastructure.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	To be determined	Environment Levy
1.26 Collaborate with neighbouring Councils and State Government Agencies who share the catchment, boundaries and responsibilities to ensure environmental mapping (such as the Koala Conservation Management Plan and the Planning Scheme mapping) and vision and outcomes of the Environment Strategy are aligned.	Meetings held with neighbouring Councils and State Government Agencies.	Planning and Development	On-going	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.27 Actively use plant species in public spaces that are consistent with listed performance indicators.	Use of plant species in public spaces meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be native to the local area • increase biodiversity values • be suitable to local conditions • are non-invasive • limited infrastructure conflicts • be consistent with identified themes • character • heritage • amenity • are longer lived • have suitable growth habits. Preference will be given for the use of local native species that improve biodiversity outcomes. These species will be given the highest consideration over other plant species.	Infrastructure Services and Planning and Development	On-going	Staff time	Rates revenue
1.28 Refine the Environmental Assessment process for Council construction and maintenance works and other operational activities to ensure environmental impacts are minimised and legislative responsibilities are met.	Quality environmental outcomes are delivered with each construction and maintenance project including vehicle hygiene.	Planning and Development and Infrastructure Services	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue

Action	Performance indicator	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost	Funding source
2. Biodiversity is conserved and enhanced and water quality is improved					
2.1 Introduce provisions in the Planning Scheme that reduce development impacts on biodiversity, wildlife corridors, waterways and water quality; and update Standard Conditions for development related to biodiversity protection and environmental management.	A review of the regulation of vegetation clearing in the Planning Scheme is undertaken. Planning documents are amended to improve the protection of native vegetation, wildlife habitats, corridors wetlands and waterways in priority areas A review of the relationship between bushfire mitigation and fire management for ecological requirements is undertaken.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	To be determined	Rates revenue
2.2 Introduce storm water quality improvement initiatives in urban areas to improve water quality outcomes in the region's waterways. The assessment of initiatives should consider the whole of life costs and benefits.	Targets identified and prioritised. Storm water quality improvement initiatives introduced.	Infrastructure Services	High priority (1-3 years)	To be determined	Infrastructure Charges and Rates revenue
2.3 Collaborate with the Department of Transport and Main Roads to seek to achieve environmental offsets resulting from the Bruce Highway upgrade are undertaken within strategic rehabilitation areas in the region identified through the Environmental Priorities Network map.	Discussions held with Department of Transport and Main Roads. Offset receiving sites provided and supported by Council where possible. Numbers of hectares rehabilitated by partnership projects.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	State Government project funding
2.4 Research options for reintroducing the Land for Wildlife program in the region that are sustainable in the long term.	Study undertaken and report prepared for Council's consideration.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
2.5 Complete the Gympie Region Biosecurity Plan to provide a framework for the management of the region's invasive plants and animals.	Biosecurity Plan completed, adopted and implemented by Council. The threat of pest plants and animals will be reduced through the management (identification, action and monitoring) of high risk sites and pathways, intensive management in strategic areas and capacity building of stakeholders to ensure best practice management.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
2.6 Education programs to be sourced, developed and implemented to promote knowledge and responsibility in regard to invasive plants, pet animals and livestock	Education programs undertaken.	Planning and Development	On-going	Staff time	Rates revenue
2.7 Environmental weeds will be targeted in and adjacent to the Environmental Priorities Network. Works can be undertaken in Council parks, reserves and road reserves (some of this work will be funded via the Environment Levy).	Environmental weed management undertaken in a strategic, coordinated manner, guided by the Environmental Priorities Network.	Planning and Development Coordinated by the Environmental Planning Section working with Lands Protection, Road Asset Maintenance, Parks Design and Parks Operations and local NRM community groups where required.	On-going	To be determined and \$150,000 per annum from the Environment Levy	Rates revenue and Environment Levy
2.8 Investigate options to limit the creation of additional demand for riparian water rights from residential and rural residential developments.	Options investigated, relevant action taken.	Planning and Development and State Government	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue

Action	Performance indicator	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost	Funding source
2.9 Complete the preparation of the Gympie Region Bushfire Hazard Reduction Plan incorporating the consideration of environmental outcomes in hazard reduction approaches.	Gympie Region Bushfire Hazard Reduction Plan completed.	Infrastructure Services	High priority (1-3 years)	To be determined	Rates revenue
2.10 Investigate land acquisition models for Council land with important environmental values.	Investigations undertaken and a report prepared for Council.	Planning and Development	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue Environment Levy
2.11 Undertake Koala research with Sunshine Coast University to refine Koala management action in the region.	Support provided to the University of the Sunshine Coast.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	\$20,000 per 2017/18 and 2018/19	Environment Levy
2.12 Finalise and implement the Koala Conservation Management Plan, Flying-fox Management Plan and Roadside Environments Policy.	Documents finalised and adopted by Council. Actions in the Koala Conservation Management Plan, Flying-fox Management Plan and Roadside Environments Policy implemented.	Planning and Development	On-going	To be determined during the budgeting process	Environment Levy
2.13 Apply for external funds to undertake projects that support the Environment Strategy or support Priority Local Species.	External funding received to support regional environmental management initiatives across the region.	Planning and Development	On-going	Staff time	External source
2.14 Promotion of Gympie's Priority Local Species.	Multi-media information disseminated. Community engagement activities identified and undertaken.	Planning and Development	On-going	\$30,000	Environment Levy
2.15 All works adjacent to waterways protects waterways from sediment and protects adjacent land from erosion.	Use of erosion and sediment controls is best practice across the region.	Planning and Development and Infrastructure Services	On-going	Staff time	Rates revenue
3. Greenhouse gas emissions are minimised and our region is resilient to climate change					
3.1 Introduce a landfill gas management system at the Bonnick Road landfill site (subject to feasibility) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	Feasibility study undertaken and landfill gas management system installed.	Infrastructure Services	High priority (1-3 years)	\$0	Waste Management Revenue
3.2 Investigate opportunities for offsetting greenhouse gas emissions from Council's fleet and plant (i.e. programs such as Green Fleet).	Offsetting options investigated and implemented where feasible.	Infrastructure Services	High priority (1-3 years)	Staff time	Environment Levy
3.3 Investigate opportunities for the development of renewable energy facilities in the region.	Development of renewable energy facilities encouraged.	Planning and Development	On-going	Staff time	External source
3.4 Preparation of a Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategy with funding from the State Government/LGAQ QCoast 2100 funding program.	Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategy developed and adopted by Council.	Planning and Development	On-going	4 per cent of the grant received and TBA	Environment Levy and State Government funding
3.5 Integrate the consideration of climate change impacts on Council and community assets through Council asset management practices across the Gympie region.	Climate change information added into Council land use, asset, biosecurity, natural hazards and local disaster management planning by 2023.	Infrastructure Services, Planning and Development, Corporate and Community Services and Water Business Unit	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
3.6 Integrate the consideration of changing natural hazards due to climate change in Disaster Management and Recovery Planning.	Climate change considered in Disaster Management and Recovery Planning.	Infrastructure Services	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue

Action	Performance indicator	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost	Funding source
4. Community partnerships support a thriving environment					
4.1 Develop and implement a framework for co-investment focusing on environmental outcomes on private and public lands.	Framework established and implemented.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	To be determined	Environment Levy
4.2 Introduce a new 'Plants for Playspace, Recreation and Pleasure' – annual free tree initiative for the region's schools and sports clubs to support biodiversity enhancements, sediment and erosion control and shade and cooling outcomes on school and sporting club grounds.	New program introduced. Number of tube stock provided.	Planning and Development	High priority (1-3 years)	\$20,000 per annum	Environment Levy
4.3 Continue to provide grants to local NRM community groups undertaking environmental management activities aligned to the Environment Strategy outcomes and within the Environmental Priorities Network.	20 per cent of Environment Levy funds provided to local NRM community Groups for environmental management activities aligned to the Environment Strategy and Environmental Priorities Network.	Planning and Development	On-going	20 per cent of the total Environment Levy	Environment Levy
4.4 Promote and support the implementation of sound environmental management and sustainable practices in business activity throughout the region.	Targeted promotional campaign to encourage businesses in the Gympie region to implement sound environmental management and sustainable practices. Promotional campaign launched in 2018/2019. Delivery of a minimum of 4 workshops and program in clusters according the demographic of businesses participating (e.g. location or industry type).	Corporate and Community Services	On-going	\$5000 per annum	Environment Levy
4.5 Investigate the involvement in and promotion by Council of Product Stewardship schemes to reduce the impact of waste on the environment.	Council participates in product stewardship scheme. Council works towards becoming accredited.	Infrastructure Services	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
4.6 Implement nature based tourism and recreation actions of the Canoe and Kayak Strategy and the Tracks and Trails Plan that integrate management of the natural environment with access to the region's nature based tourism and recreation assets.	Launch points constructed, operated and maintained.	Planning and Development and Infrastructure Services	On-going	To be determined	Rates revenue and external funds
4.7 Work with State Government agencies to discuss the regulatory roles and responsibilities for management of the Mary River and other waterways in the region.	Discussions held with State Government.	Planning and Development	Medium priority (3-5 years)	Staff time	Rates revenue
4.8 Continue to implement community awareness initiatives regarding waste minimisation, recycling and chemical and e-waste management.	On-going community awareness.	Infrastructure Services	On-going	To be determined	Rates revenue

Glossary of terms

Term	Notes
UNESCO Biosphere Reserves	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recognises Biosphere Reserves as areas with ecological systems of significance for diversity conservation, and that provide opportunities to explore sustainable development approaches.
Great Sandy Biosphere Reserve	The Great Sandy Biosphere Reserve was recognised in 2009, and is renowned for its cultural and ecological significance. The reserve contains the Great Sandy Strait (a Ramsar-listed wetland) and Fraser Island (a UNESCO World Heritage site). The reserve incorporates the largest sand island and coastal sand mass in the world.
Gympie Regional Council Environment Levy	Gympie Regional Council has set an Environment Levy on all rateable properties within its jurisdiction. The Environment Levy is used to assist the implementation of actions from endorsed Council plans and strategies that directly link to enhancing and maintaining the natural environment in addition to projects with direct benefits to residents and the natural environment of the Gympie region.
Vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered species	Threatened flora and fauna species (vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered species) are identified under federal (Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999) and state (Nature Conservation Act 1992) legislation. Under federal legislation vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered species are identified based on the extent of the threat to their extinction. Critically endangered species face an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future. Endangered species face a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future. Vulnerable species face a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium term future. The criteria for identifying endangered and vulnerable species under Queensland legislation is outlined in the legislation.
Climate change adaptation and mitigation	Climate change mitigation reduces long term risks and hazards of climate change, while adaptation actions moderate potential damages or consequences of climate change.
NRM	Natural resource management (NRM) involves establishing priorities for investment in a set of coordinated actions that protect and enhance our valuable natural resources (freshwater, soils and biodiversity) and ensure a sustainable balance between resource use and resource conservation (The Burnett Mary Regional Group, 2017).
Regional NRM organisations	Regional natural resource management (NRM) organisations act as delivery agents under the regional stream of the National Landcare Program which supports local environmental and sustainable agriculture projects. There are a total of 56 regional NRM bodies in Australia. The Burnett Mary Regional Group covers the Gympie Regional Council area.



Appendix 1: Gympie Regional Council legal obligations regarding the environment

Legislation	Environmental Element	Purpose of the Act	Obligations
Commonwealth Government Legislation			
<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threatened Flora/Fauna Threatened Ecological Communities Migratory Species World Heritage Areas Wetlands 	Establishes regime for protecting matters of national environmental significance, including assessment and approval requirements for Gympie Regional Council works that may impact on these matters.	<p>Any developments ('actions') that may result in significant impacts on matters of National Environmental Significance should be referred to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment. The Minister determines if the activity it is a controlled action (there will be development constraints placed on the project), not a controlled action, or can be carried out 'in the manner specified'.</p> <p>Matters of national environmental significance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> world heritage properties national heritage places wetlands of international importance (Ramsar wetlands) Threatened species and ecological communities migratory species commonwealth marine areas the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park nuclear actions (including uranium mining) a water resource in relation to coal seam gas development and large coal mining development. <p>Gympie Region supports several threatened species, threatened ecological communities, migratory species and the Great Sandy Ramsar Wetland.</p>
State Government Legislation			
<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	Cultural heritage	<p>The main purpose of this Act is to provide effective recognition, protection and conservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The Act provides for a duty of care for all persons carrying out activities that may harm Aboriginal cultural heritage.</p> <p>Section 23 Statutory Duty of Care</p>	<p>A person has a duty of care to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure the activity does not harm Aboriginal cultural heritage. This duty of care will be deemed to be satisfied if the duty of care guidelines are complied with.</p> <p>In addition, the Act includes the following obligations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a person must not excavate, relocate or take Aboriginal cultural heritage if the person knows or ought to know that it is Aboriginal cultural heritage a person must not have in their possession an object that is Aboriginal cultural heritage if the person knows or ought to know that it is Aboriginal cultural heritage. <p>A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required (under Division 2) if the development requires environmental authority such as an EIS, licence, permit or approval. A CHMP may also be prepared to meet duty of care obligations for major projects. The CHMP must be prepared in accordance with Division 4.</p>

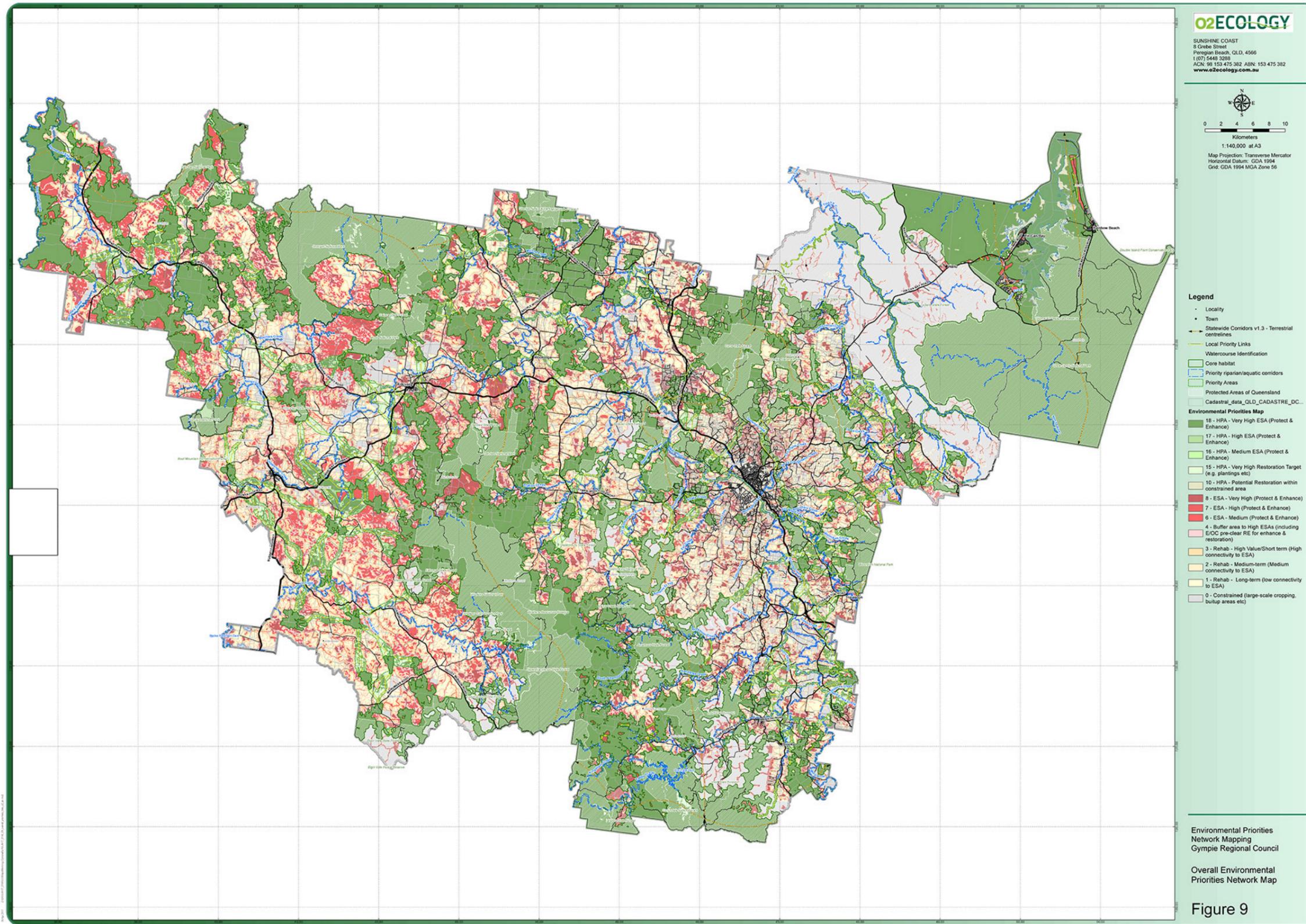
Legislation	Environmental Element	Purpose of the Act	Obligations
<i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pests (animals and plants) • Diseases 	<p>The Act provides comprehensive biosecurity measures to safeguard the economy, agricultural and tourism industries, environment and way of life, from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pests • diseases • contaminants. 	<p>General biosecurity duty makes all persons responsible for ensuring that pests, diseases and contamination are not spread from a source.</p> <p>Council vehicle hygiene, staying on existing tracks and reporting biosecurity matters to Council's Lands Protection team are part of meeting obligations under this Act.</p> <p>Local governments are responsible for ensuring management in their area of invasive plants and animals that are prohibited or restricted matter under a Biosecurity Plan.</p> <p>A local government is able to appoint an authorised person with powers of entry to check compliance with the Act or to take action under a biosecurity program. A range of options exist for local government to promote compliance with the new law.</p>
<i>Coastal Protection and Management Act 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tidal water bodies • Stream banks • Vegetation 	<p>This Act provides for the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and management of the coast, including its resources and biological diversity.</p> <p>It also provides for a coordinated and integrated management and administrative framework for the ecologically sustainable development of the coastal zone.</p>	<p>The Act establishes the Coastal Management District (areas that are considered to need protection or management) and Erosion Prone Areas (covering the land projected to be subject to sea level rise of 0.8m to 2100). Assessable development within these areas triggers State assessment.</p> <p>Approval is required for all works (construction and repair) over tidal areas in the form of a Tidal Works Approval (formerly S 86 approval under former <i>Harbours Act 1955</i>). A Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland (or equivalent) must certify drawings showing construction details.</p>
<i>Environmental Offsets Act 2014</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat for flora and/or fauna • Marine plants • Fish habitat • Protected areas 	<p>This Act provides a framework for a consistent approach to environmental offset requirements for Matters of State and Local Environmental Significance.</p>	<p>Significant residual impacts on Matters of State Environmental Significance may require an environmental offset as part of an approval. MSES relate to the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> (flora, fauna and their habitat), the <i>Vegetation Management Act 1992</i> (Regional Ecosystems) and the <i>Fisheries Act 1994</i> (marine plants, fish habitat).</p>
<i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Soil • Air • Flora and fauna 	<p>The objective of the Act is to protect Queensland's environment while allowing for development that improves quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends (ecologically sustainable development). The Act provides various penalties for offences in relation to activities that harm or may potentially harm the environment.</p> <p>Section 319 General Environmental Duty</p> <p>Section 320 Duty to notify environmental harm</p> <p>Section 436 Unlawful Environmental Harm</p> <p>Section 493 Executive officers must ensure corporation complies with Act</p> <p>Executive officer of a corporation, means</p> <p>(i) a member of the governing body of the corporation; or</p> <p>(ii) concerned with, or takes part in, the corporation's management;</p> <p>whatever the person's position is called and whether or not the person is a director of the corporation.</p>	<p>Establishes regime of environmental values for water, air and noise that provides limits for project discharges and impacts, depending upon the location and nature of the project.</p> <p>Gympie Regional Council authorised to decide on approval and conditions for environmentally relevant activities in accordance with the relevant decision-making criteria.</p> <p>Gympie Regional Council required to prevent and minimise environmental harm and notify where environmental harm takes place.</p> <p>Gympie Regional Council authorised to enforce compliance with environmental authorities.</p>

Legislation	Environmental Element	Purpose of the Act	Obligations
<i>Fisheries Act 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries • Fish habitat areas • Fish habitat including marine plants • Fish movement and waterway barriers 	The main purpose of this Act is to provide for the use, conservation and enhancement of the community's fisheries resources and fish habitats.	<p>Protection of marine plants - A person must not unlawfully:</p> <p>(a) remove, destroy or damage a marine plant; or</p> <p>(b) cause a marine plant to be removed, destroyed or damaged.</p> <p>This includes pruning or trimming mangroves unless necessary for utility maintenance (as below).</p> <p>Protection and conservation of fish habitats –</p> <p>A person must not unlawfully perform or cause to be performed, works or related activity in a declared fish habitat area.</p> <p>Accepted development requirements set out the conditions by which work can be undertaken without approval.</p>
<i>Marine Parks Act 2004</i>	Marine environment	The main purpose of this Act is to provide for conservation of the marine environment.	<p>For any development impacting a Marine Park, an application for a permission to enter or use a zone for a particular purpose must be sought.</p> <p><i>Marine Parks (Great Sandy) Zoning Plan 2017 (Qld)</i> - The purpose of this zoning plan is to provide for the ecologically sustainable use of Moreton Bay Marine Park and to protect its natural, recreational, cultural heritage and amenity values.</p>
<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected areas (e.g. national parks) • Protected flora/fauna • Animal breeding places 	<p>The object of the Act is the conservation of nature achieved by an integrated and comprehensive conservation strategy for the whole of the State that involves, among other things, the following -</p> <p>(a) Gathering of information and community education etc.</p> <p>(b) Dedication and declaration of protected areas</p> <p>(c) Management of protected areas</p> <p>(d) Protection of native wildlife and its habitat</p> <p>(e) Use of protected wildlife and areas to be ecologically sustainable</p> <p>(f) Recognition of interest of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in nature and their cooperative involvement in its conservation; and</p> <p>(g) Cooperative involvement of land-holders.</p>	<p>Any development of new infrastructure that may disturb protected animals, their breeding places, protected plants, or protected areas, is subject to an approval outside of the planning system. Exemptions and approved management plans are possible for some activities that may impact on protected matters.</p> <p>To "take" includes to kill, injure or harm the plant or animal.</p> <p>A key obligation for Council is to avoid impacts on protected plants. The Queensland Government has established a process for proponents to check the State Government's Flora Survey Trigger map to determine the likelihood of impacting protected plants. When triggered, Council commissions flora surveys in accordance with State guidelines, and avoids or minimises impacts as far as possible.</p> <p>Council is also required to manage potential impacts on animal breeding places, including nesting birds, bats, and frogs. Tampering with animal breeding places is an offense unless an approved Species Management Program is in place. Council has an approved Species Management Program for Low Risk Impacts.</p>
<i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i>	Non-Indigenous heritage	<p>The Act establishes the Queensland Heritage Council and a register of Queensland Heritage places.</p> <p>It also allows provides for the identification and management of local heritage places by local government.</p> <p>The Act regulates the development of heritage places, and provides for the establishment of heritage agreements between owners of heritage registered places and the Queensland Government that are listed on the Certificate of Title.</p> <p>Discovery of an object that may be of cultural heritage significance must be reported to the administering authority as soon as practical.</p>	<p>Search Queensland Heritage registers to ensure Council activities are not impacting on heritage values.</p> <p>Develop and implement Conservation Management Plans for heritage places in Council's ownership.</p> <p>Development carried out on a heritage registered place is assessable development under the <i>Planning Act 2016</i> unless an exemption applies and development is carried out in accordance with exemption requirements.</p> <p>At Council's discretion, a register of local heritage places can be developed for protection under this Act.</p>

Legislation	Environmental Element	Purpose of the Act	Obligations
<i>Planning Act 2016</i>	All	<p>The purpose of this Act is to establish an efficient, effective, transparent, integrated, coordinated, and accountable system of land use planning (planning), development assessment and related matters that facilitates the achievement of ecological sustainability.</p> <p>The Act provides for the creation State planning policies, regional plans, planning schemes, temporary local planning instruments, planning scheme policies and a development assessment system.</p>	<p>Gympie Regional Council has authority to make decisions on development permits in accordance with the objectives of the Act, and set decision-making criteria.</p> <p>Decision-making authority extends to works under planning scheme, prescribed tidal works, operational works in a local government tidal area, environmentally relevant activities devolved to Council.</p>
<i>Plant Protection Act and Regulation 2002</i>	Pests	<p>This regulation outlines controlled pests and how they are dealt with; relevantly it deals with fire ant control to prevent the spread of fire ants and eradicate them.</p>	<p>Currently the Gympie region has no declared fire ant restricted areas.</p> <p>Within a declared fire ant area (restricted area) a restricted item (soil, hay bales or any appliance used for moving soil) may not be moved without signing a fire ant declaration or under a fire ant management plan. Within a restricted area, no more than one cubic meter of soil may be disturbed without approval of a fire ant inspector.</p> <p>Any imported soil must be from an area that is declared free of fire ants or purchased from an authorised supplier. The discovery of fire ants at any time must be notified to Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries within 24 hours.</p>
<i>Vegetation Management Act 1999</i>	Vegetation (Regional Ecosystems)	<p>This Act provides for the management and conservation of vegetation, and ensures clearing of vegetation does not cause land degradation. The framework for approvals for clearing native vegetation is set out in the <i>Planning Regulation 2017</i>.</p>	<p>A development permit is required to clear regulated vegetation, unless the clearing is considered acceptable development in accordance with Schedules in the <i>Planning Regulation 2017</i>.</p> <p>Assessable development that has a significant impact on regulated vegetation may be subject to a requirement to deliver an environmental offset to compensate for those impacts.</p> <p>Regulated vegetation includes Category A and B vegetation and essential habitat. Amendments are expected to the <i>Vegetation Management Act 1999</i> during 2018.</p>
<i>Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource management • Waste generation 	<p>To promote waste avoidance and reduction, and resource recovery and efficiency actions, as well as reduce consumption of natural resources and encourage waste avoidance and the recovery, re-use and recycling of waste.</p> <p>Also to minimise the overall impact of waste generation and disposal.</p>	<p>Council is authorised to undertake strategic planning for waste with other local governments in accordance with requirements for waste reduction and recycling plans.</p> <p>Council is required to ensure that all waste management is comprehensively addressed by at least one waste reduction and recycling plan, including waste reduction and recycling targets.</p>
<i>Water Act 2000</i>	Rivers and streams	<p>This Act provides for the sustainable management of water and other resources, and establishes a regulatory framework for providing water and sewerage services and the establishment and operation of water authorities.</p> <p>The Act requires owners of land and persons involved with the interference of water or watercourses to obtain permits in relation to activities affecting the water supply or water courses.</p> <p>Sections 266, 269, 469 and 814</p>	<p>Under some circumstances a Riverine Protection Permit must be obtained under the <i>Water Act 2000</i> for excavation, placement of fill, destroying vegetation in a watercourse, lake or spring.</p> <p>In other cases the Department of Natural Resources and Mines document Accepted Development Requirements must be followed.</p> <p>A person must not do anything likely to pollute water in a service provider's water service.</p> <p>The <i>Water Plan (Mary Basin) 2006</i> is subordinate legislation that manages water allocations and environmental flows for sections of the Mary River.</p>

Legislation	Environmental Element	Purpose of the Act	Obligations
GRC Local Laws			
<i>Gympie Regional Planning Scheme 2013</i>	All	Local governments prepare planning schemes — legally binding plans prepared in consultation with the local community and signed off by the Planning Minister — and assess most development applications. Planning schemes are developed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the strategic outcomes for the area • include measures that facilitate achieving the strategic outcomes • identify the preferred growth pattern • coordinate and integrate community, state and regional interests • include a local government infrastructure plan (LGIP). 	Council is the delegated assessment manager for many forms of assessable development. Development applications are assessed against prescribed or performance-based outcomes established in the Planning Scheme.
<i>Local Law 1</i>	All	Identifies prescribed activities for which Council can grant permission or approval, particularly with respect to use of Council-controlled areas and roads.	Council enforces local laws and grants approvals in accordance with Local Law 1 and its Subordinate Local Law 1, including activities on Council-controlled areas and roads.
<i>Local Law No. 3</i>	Community and Environmental Management	Provides Council with the ability to declare local pests, search private properties for pests and prohibit sale or propagation of pests. Provides Council with the ability to prohibit or restrict lighting or maintaining fires in the open, and provide a notice for land owners to take action to reduce fire hazards. Provides Council with the ability to make noise standards, if Council is the administering authority for Chapter 8 part 3B of the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> .	Currently no local pests are declared. The <i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i> requires councils to develop Regional Biosecurity Plans that identify priority local pest species that would then be subject to Local Law 3 and Subordinate Local Law 3.
<i>Local Law No. 4</i>	Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads	Purpose of Local Law 4 is to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) protect the health and safety of persons using local government controlled land, facilities, infrastructure and roads; and (b) preserve features of the natural and built environment and other aspects of the amenity of local government controlled land, facilities, infrastructure and roads. 	To enforce and grant approvals in accordance with Local Law 4 and its Subordinate Local Law 4, including activities on Council-controlled areas and roads.

Attachment 1: Environmental Priorities Network Map



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