

CASE STUDY:

Mackay Regional Council

What's the story?

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy was formally endorsed by the Council in August 2017. It comprises nine key focus areas, and details a list of actions for each in order to pave the way for a coordinated approach to climate and sustainability initiatives within council and across the region for the next four years.

Leveraging off their membership to ICLEI - the world's leading organisation for local governments dedicated to sustainable development - the Strategy brings global learnings for advancing sustainability to the Mackay region.

The Strategy's initial focus is to look for opportunities to improve sustainability within council's own area of direct control including its corporate governance, operations and service delivery. For example, some actions from the Strategy include increasing usage of renewable energy, reduce council's water consumption and waste, and reduce herbicide use.

As one of the largest organisations and environmental managers in the Mackay region, the Strategy also demonstrates council's commitment to supporting community action and fostering industry partnerships to achieve more sustainable outcomes.



How is Mackay Regional Council aligning with our climate plan?

- Queensland Climate Resilient Council Program membership
- Detailed climate adaptation governance assessment completed
- Initial public consultation commenced on the Mackay Storm Smart Strategy
- Sustainability & procurement policies updated to incorporate key sustainability principles
- Strategic risk register reviewed to strengthen controls for climate related risks
- Utility control system implemented to improve visibility of electricity consumption
- Strategic biodiversity & conservation indicators established for the Mackay region
- One new fishway constructed to facilitate life-cycle dependent fish migration
- \$2.9M spent on sustainable transport infrastructure such as bikeways and footpaths
- Four Local Coastal Plans endorsed and implemented
- Development of a community greenhouse gas emissions profile
- Steam weeding trials commenced to reduce chemical herbicide use



LEADING THE WAY

Mackay Regional Council is leading regional climate adaptation through a wide range of projects. Their Environmental Sustainability Strategy is a key example of how the Council are aligning their goals with the Climate Sustainability Plan, and acting as a leader within the community to address climate change.



Additional major projects that Mackay Regional Council are actioning in the climate space include:

- Being an active member of the Climate Resilient Council Program. The program seeks to build capacity within councils to implement leading practice governance arrangements that effectively manage climate risk and improve climate adaptation outcomes. The Council has also recently completed a detailed governance assessment and comprehensive staff survey. Key recommendations from the report will be implemented to improve resilience within Mackay Regional Council and across the Mackay region.
- Joining the Cities Power Partnership which connects proactive Councils to accelerate action in key areas such as emission reduction, renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport. Demonstrating its commitment to the partnership, council has recently awarded a major contract for installation of 1.7MW of solar generation across 21 sites to significantly reduce electricity costs and its corporate emissions profile.
- Developing a greenhouse gas profile for the Mackay region to accurately assess the region's contribution to climate change and assist the Council to transition to a low carbon future. Mackay Region Council is one of the first large regional councils in Australia working in this space.
- Design a Biodiversity and Waterways Network "blueprint" for Mackay to provide an understanding of the overall status of biodiversity within the region.
- Ongoing funding for Local Coastal Plan development to ensure best practice management and a coordinated approach to protecting and improving valuable coastal areas.

We're proud to be setting an example by advancing sustainability within our own operations, and we hope that other local organisations will follow in our footsteps to improve environmental sustainability across the broader Mackay region

The Council is passionate about this region and ensuring that it is strong and resilient in the face of climate change

