



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

1. POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework for environmental stewardship across all Council operations by establishing clear principles for leadership, governance, accountability, and sustainable practices.

This Policy supports McKinlay Shire Council's commitment to environmental protection, compliance with applicable legislation, continual improvement in environmental performance, pollution prevention, and environmentally sustainable decision-making in the delivery of services, infrastructure, and community outcomes.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

McKinlay Shire Council recognises environmental protection as a guiding principle in its Corporate Plan and is committed to minimising the environmental impacts associated with its operations.

Council will seek opportunities to continually improve on its environmental performance and encourage a culture of environmental sustainability among its staff and the community.

3. PRINCIPLES

Council is committed to:

- demonstrate environmental leadership and encouraging its staff and the community to adopt more sustainable lifestyles;
- effective management and protection of the natural and built environment through the implementation of sustainable growth and development patterns; and,
- carrying out its operations in an environmentally sustainable manner and integrating environmental sustainability into its planning, decision-making, and operational processes.

4. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Councillors, employees, contractors, volunteers, consultants, and any other persons undertaking work on behalf of McKinlay Shire Council.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring this Policy is implemented throughout the organisation. Directors and Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance within their areas of responsibility, and all Council workers are responsible for complying with this Policy

6. DEFINITIONS

- **Council Operations** – means any action performed by or on behalf of McKinlay Shire Council.
- **Ecological sustainability** is a balance that integrates:
 - (a) the protection of ecological processes and natural systems at local, regional, state and wider levels;
 - (b) economic development; and
 - (c) maintenance of the cultural, economic, physical, and social wellbeing of people and communities (*s3(2) Planning Act 2016*).
- **Staff:** includes employees, contractors, volunteers, and all others who perform work for Council.

7. POLICY CONTENT

7.1. People and Leadership

Fostering Sustainable Behaviours

Council will encourage the community to adopt a culture of environmental responsibility at work and at home and promote sustainable practices such as energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable transport, waste reduction and recycling.

Community Leadership

Council will work in partnership with the community and industry stakeholders to promote environmental awareness, protection, and sustainability initiatives.

7.2. Governance and Accountability

Compliance with Legislation

Council will comply with the environmental legislation, regulations and other permit and licence requirements relevant to its operations and will strive to achieve best practice in environmental management where it is feasible to do so.

Prevention of Pollution

Council will strive to implement processes and practices, provide services and products to control the release of pollutants from its works. If incidents do occur, Council will implement pollution response procedures to minimise environmental harm and take action to reduce the likelihood of future occurrences.

Continual Environmental Improvement

Council will continue to review policies and procedures to maintain and improve environmental management practices and will set environmental objectives and targets in its Operational Plan when required.

7.3. Practices and Processes

Waste Reduction and Recycling

Council will promote the efficient use of resources by applying the principles of waste reduction in the first instance, followed by reuse, recycling and recovery options, and then disposal, the least preferred option.

Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Council will work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with its operations through sustainable energy practices and investigate options to utilise low emission technology where feasible.

Sustainable Design and Resilience of Projects

Council will encourage sustainable design and practices related to building, infrastructure, and maintenance projects to include consideration of tropical design, energy efficiency, demand management and greenhouse gas emissions to reduce the operating costs over the life of the asset.

Water Management

Council will strive to improve its management of the Council's water consumption and endeavour to reduce the impact of wastewater discharge and run off within its areas of operation.

Sustainable Planning and Climate Change Adaptation

Council will consider ecological sustainability principles in its strategic land use, infrastructure, and development planning to facilitate the protection of natural and urban environments and places of heritage significance.

Biodiversity Protection and Management

Council will work to manage and protect natural environments under council care through land, vegetation and water management practices. Council will seek to support and enable local Landcare, coast care and catchment groups.

Purchasing Goods and Services

When purchasing goods and services, council will apply the contracting principles set out in the *Local Government Act 2009*, one of which is Environmental Protection. Consideration should be given to the effective, efficient use of materials and resources to minimise environmental impact.

Council expects high standards of environmental management from its suppliers and contractors.

8. LEGAL PARAMETERS

- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003
- Environmental Protection Act 1994
- Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Fisheries Act 1994
- Local Government Act 2009
- Nature Conservation Act 1992
- Queensland Heritage Act 1992
- Planning Act 2016
- Vegetation Management Act 1999
- Water Act 2000
- Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011
- Biosecurity Act 2014

9. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Council Documents,

- McKinlay Shire Council Corporate Plan
- McKinlay Shire Council Operational Plan
- McKinlay Shire Council Procurement Policy
- McKinlay Shire Council Disaster Management Plan
- McKinlay Shire Council Planning Scheme 2019

External Documents,

- Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2030
- Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy
- ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems
- State Planning Policies - (relevant to council operations)