

Gladstone Regional Council

Council Policy

Title	ENVIRONMENT
Policy Number	P-2021-14
Business Unit/s	STRATEGIC ASSET PERFORMANCE
Date of Adoption	
Resolution Number	
Review Date	
Date Repealed	

1.0 PURPOSE:

To enable sustainable, environmentally managed growth and the preservation and enhancement of environmental values for the Gladstone Region.

2.0 SCOPE:

This policy/s applies to all Council activities.

3.0 RELATED LEGISLATION:

- *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003;*
- *Biosecurity Act 2014;*
- *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995 and Associated Regulation/s;*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1994 and Associated Regulation/s;*
- *Environmental Protection (Air) Policy 2019;*
- *Environmental Protection (Noise) Policy 2019;*
- *Environmental Protection (Water and Wetland Biodiversity) Policy 2019;*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwth);*
- *Fisheries Act 1994;*
- *Human Rights Act 2019;*
- *Local Government Act 2009 and Associated Regulation/s;*
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Associated Regulation/s;*
- *Planning Act 2016;*
- *Stock Route Management Act 2002 and Associated Regulation/s;*
- *Vegetation Management Act 1999 and Associated Regulation/s;*
- *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and Associated Regulation/s;*
- *Water Act 2000 and Associated Regulation/s;*
- *Local Laws of Gladstone Regional Council.*

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Biodiversity Conservation Strategic Plan 2016-25;
- Biosecurity Plan 2021-2025;
- Corporate Plan;
- Environmental Authorities;
- ISO 14001 - Environmental Management Standard;
- Environmental Management System (EMS) Manual;
- Gladstone Regional Council Planning Scheme Our Place Our Plan;
- Our Coast. Our Future. Strategic Plan;
- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Management Corporate Standard;
- Single Use Plastics Policy;
- Urban Forest and Tree Management Corporate Standard;
- Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy 2019.

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in interpretation of this policy the following definitions apply:

“Best Practice” means the management of an activity to achieve an ongoing minimisation or prevention of the activity’s environmental harm through cost-effective measures assessed against the measures currently used nationally and internationally for the activity.

“Climate Change” means a change in the state of the climate that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be a result of natural internal processes or external forcing such as modulations of the solar cycles, volcanic eruptions and human influence through atmospheric emissions or land use.

“Conserve” means to prevent damage, decay or loss through appropriate management and actions.

“Ecologically Sustainable” means the balance of the integration of:

- the protection of ecological processes and natural systems at local, regional, State, and wider levels; and
- economic development; and
- the maintenance of cultural, economic, physical and social wellbeing of people and communities.

“Environmental Management System” means the framework that helps Council achieve its environmental goals through consistent review, evaluation, and improvement of its environmental performance.

“Heritage tree” refers to a tree that could be associated with an important historical or honorary event, building or place and/or historically planted by a dignitary in the past and could have special value due to age, size and exist as living reminders of the past and may be represented on Federal, State or Local Government registers.

“Local Significant Tree” refers to a tree on any land tenure that has been determined as locally significant due to characteristics such as; limited population or rare species; high horticultural or genetic value, located in a unique location, particularly old, ancient or veteran specimen, be of

outstanding girth, height or spread, high aesthetic value, interesting growth habit, outstanding example of species, remnant vegetation, high habitat values or a tree that the community or cultural group recognises as important to them for valid reasons. This will be determined by assessment against developed criteria.

“Local Significant Tree Register” means a list of Local Significant Trees and/or Heritage Trees maintained by Gladstone Regional Council. It may also include trees represented on State or Federal State registers identifying the management measures required by state or federal requirements.

“Open Space” means land that is publicly accessible and provided for community benefit such as recreational parks, linear trails and walking tracks and natural areas.

“Shrub” means a woody plant that is less than five (5) metres tall and often multi-stemmed from the base (Specht 1970).

“Tree” means a woody plant that is (or when full grown is likely to be) greater than 5 metres tall and generally have a single trunk. Growth form of plants can be variable and is dependent on landform and substrate.

“Urban Forest” means the totality of trees and shrubs on all public and private land in and around urban areas (including bushland, parks, gardens, and street trees) and can be physically measured as a canopy percentage of the total areas. Urban Forest further refers to all trees on Council land and Council leased land in the urban environment that Council has management and responsibility for and trees listed on the Local Significant Tree Register.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT:

Refer to policy statement attached.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS:

1. Environment Policy Statement.

8.0 REVIEW MECHANISM:

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related legislation or governing documents are amended or replaced; or
2. Other circumstances as determined by resolution of Council or the CEO; or
3. Three years from date of adoption.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS			
Document History	Date	Council Resolution No.	Notes (including the prior Policy No, precise of change/s, etc)
Originally Approved	06 April 2010	10/115	Formerly P-5.02.01
Amendment 1	01 October 2013	G/13/1742	
Amendment 2	06 October 2015	G/15/2586	
Amendment 3			Formerly P-2015/28. Conversion of a policy to strategic statements of intent. Inclusion of statements pertaining to urban forest and tree management.

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LEISA DOWLING
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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ENVIRONMENT POLICY STATEMENT

At Gladstone Regional Council our vision is to **Connect. Innovate. Diversify.**

The environment will be front of mind in Council’s activities. Council will make environmentally sound decisions, providing good stewardship built on a foundation of trust and reducing the environmental impacts of our activities.

To achieve this we will:

- maintain compliance with all legislative obligations;
- maintain an Environmental Management System (EMS) that promotes best practice in the delivery of services and completion of activities;
- be a responsible land manager enhancing and preventing harm to the environment, natural resources, and areas of cultural heritage;
- participate in initiatives to protect and improve the Great Barrier Reef and its waterways;
- enhance and protect the economic and ecological role of urban forest street, park, and open space trees through best practice safety principles and consideration of impacts during planning, design, maintenance, development processes, and applications;
- strive for best practice for the replacement of trees that have been removed from streetscape, parks, and open spaces;
- implement the Our Coast. Our Future. Strategic Plan to adapt to coastal hazard impacts;
- manage Council’s climate change risk, increasing resilience and response capabilities;
- invest in waste reduction to promote sustainable waste management and resource recovery practices;
- advocate and educate for the protection of conservation and environmental values of the Gladstone Region;
- encourage connected communities through collaboration and/or engagement for the protection and enhancement of environmental values; and
- provide information, training, and appropriate resources to enable this to be achieved.

We all have a responsibility to comply with environmental legislation, this policy, and Council’s Environmental Management System.

Contribution towards continuous improvement will reduce Council’s environmental impacts and promote a healthy environment for current and future generations.

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LEISA DOWLING
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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DATE

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REVIEW DATE

