Front Cover

Background

Trunk of River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)

Inserts

Finger Flower (*Cheiranthera linearis*) – Photo courtesy Eileen Collins

Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) in winter, Lake Anderson – Chiltern

Diamond Firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*) - Photo courtesy Chris Tzaros
Acknowledgements

This plan could not have been accomplished without the support of a number of individuals and groups across Council and the community. Indigo Shire Council recognises that their input and insight has been critical for successful collection and collation of information, which has provided the foundation of this strategy.

The authors wish to thank the generous commitment and assistance of the following people

- Helen Jones, Environmental Projects Officer, Indigo Shire Council
- Shay Simpson, Natural Resource Management Officer, Indigo Shire Council
- Indigo Environment Advisory Committee members, 2009
- Councillors, management and staff of Indigo Shire Council
- Eileen Collins, Naturalist
- Robyn Rattray-Wood, Department of Environment and Sustainability
- Joy Phillips, Indigo Environment Advisory Committee

This project was partially funded through the Victorian Government's Sustainability Fund under the Victorian Local Sustainability Accord.

Acknowledgement to Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and the Custodians of this land.

We also pay respects to all Aboriginal Community Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the history of the region.
Indigo Shire Council Plan 2009-2012

Vision
INDIGO: A great place to live, work and visit

Indigo Shire Council Plan 2009-2012

Mission
To support and develop a sustainable, thriving and resilient community through leadership and partnerships
Mayor’s Foreword

The Council Plan, developed in conjunction with our community, identifies Indigo Shire as:

‘A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT.’

On behalf of Council I encourage everyone, residents and visitors alike, to consider the Environment Strategy necessary to maintain this emphasis.

There is a wealth of landscapes and natural beauty within Indigo Shire and every effort needs to be taken to maintain this diversity and appeal.

Development is inevitable, however, this needs to be balanced against the natural environment to make certain that our natural assets are protected. We must also ensure that there is sensitive management to maintain harmony between both needs and to provide for a sustainable outcome.

Accordingly, all aspects of our natural and built landscape need to be considered to achieve sustainability for residents and visitors and to reinforce the primary aim of making ‘Indigo – a great place to Live, Work and Visit.’

The maintenance of landscapes is not enough on its own. There must also be a strong emphasis on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and our ecological footprint, improved re-use of resources through best practice waste reduction and recovery, water conservation and consideration of environmental impacts when purchasing.

The appointment, in late 2008, of an Environment Advisory Committee within Indigo Shire is a step in the overall process. An Environment Strategy will provide a clear framework to guide and coordinate policy for Council, Council partnerships, and community awareness campaigns. It will, with the assistance of the Environment Advisory Committee, highlight future priorities and the way to achieve those priorities.

Council is aware that achieving positive environmental change will not be easy. Council is of the view that environmental stewardship and sustainability is a mission everyone must be involved with to ensure our future.

On behalf of the Indigo Shire Council I commend this Environment Strategy to everyone.

Peter Graham OAM

MAYOR INDIGO SHIRE COUNCIL (December 2nd 2008 – December 1st 2009)
Table of Contents
Acknowledgements .......................................................................................................................... iii
Acknowledgement to Country .......................................................................................................... iii
Mayor's Foreword ............................................................................................................................ v
PART A - Introduction....................................................................................................................... 1
  Local Government and the Environment ....................................................................................... 2
    Local Government Functions and Responsibilities ................................................................. 2
    The Changing Role ................................................................................................................. 2
  Indigo and the Environment ......................................................................................................... 4
    Geography and population ....................................................................................................... 4
    History ..................................................................................................................................... 4
    Today ....................................................................................................................................... 5
    Landscapes ............................................................................................................................... 5
    Wetlands and Waterways ......................................................................................................... 6
    Parks and Reserves .................................................................................................................. 7
  Threats ......................................................................................................................................... 7
  Developing the Strategy .............................................................................................................. 8
    Indigo Environment Advisory Committee ............................................................................ 8
    The Intent of the Strategy ....................................................................................................... 8
    Strategy Scope .................................................................................................................... 9
    Environmental Principles ..................................................................................................... 9
    Strategy Approach ............................................................................................................. 10
PART B - Key Strategy Directions .................................................................................................. 13
  Environment Strategy Integration Wheel ................................................................................... 14
  1. Using Resources Efficiently ................................................................................................. 15
    Rationale ............................................................................................................................... 15
    Outcomes .............................................................................................................................. 16
    Existing Council Documents ............................................................................................... 16
    Encompassing Themes ....................................................................................................... 16
    Actions Matrix .................................................................................................................... 17
  2. Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Municipal Assets .................................................... 20
    Rationale ............................................................................................................................... 20
    Outcomes .............................................................................................................................. 21
    Existing Council Documents ............................................................................................... 21
    Encompassing Themes ....................................................................................................... 22
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Matrix</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulating for Liveability</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Council Documents</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encompassing Themes</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions Matrix</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Supporting and Resourcing the Community</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Council Documents</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encompassing Themes</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Matrix</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary of Terms and Acronyms</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary of Links</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies Pending</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART A - Introduction
Local Government and the Environment

The role of local government in management of the environment should be considered in the context of Natural Resource Management (NRM). This refers to management of aspects of our environment such as land, water, soil, plants and animals with a particular focus on how such management affects quality of life for both present and future generations. Natural resource management in Victoria operates under state and national policy. In Victoria, there is an extensive list of stakeholders who actively deliver NRM outcomes, including local governments in a growing capacity. In the past, local government activities focused on infrastructure and service functions. Over recent years this has expanded to include an important role in the management of the local environment, in areas such as community education, greenhouse gas abatement, climate change adaptation, as well as NRM in the planning system.

As the third tier of government, Councils are in a position to make significant contributions to the management and protection of the state’s natural resources, primarily through statutory roles and non-statutory activities. However, as natural resources and their associated issues vary across the state, and because of the varying capacity of Councils, there is a broad and varied response between municipalities to environmental issues.

Local Government Functions and Responsibilities

Local government has a range of functions and responsibilities that can influence NRM on both public and private land. These include, but are not limited to

- **strategic planning** through land use zoning and statutory controls on all private land and locally managed open space
- **development control** of nearly all activities and works on private land and crown land (except national parks and state forest) through development consent powers eg density restrictions and clearing controls
- **enforcement powers** for development consent conditions and unauthorised land uses eg land clearing and unauthorised construction
- **water** including stormwater management and control, sewerage and septic works and flood control and planning in many jurisdictions
- **risk control measures** for pest plant and animal control
- **incentive programs** such as rate rebates and grants, which influence land clearance patterns
- **local open space management** to restore and enhance remnant vegetation and habitat values
- **tourism development** and
- **community group coordination and primary advocacy** (MAV, 2005).

The Changing Role

Local government commitment and action has increased in relation to the environment. Recent trends show that councils are employing staff via internal and external funding to deliver a range of environmental initiatives. This increase in functions can be attributed to five factors:

- **devolution**—another sphere of government gives local government responsibility for new functions
- **raising the bar**—another sphere of government increases the complexity or standard of local government services
- **cost shifting** by either of two means—local government agrees to take on the services of another sphere and funding is later reduced or stopped, but communities demand that the service continue; or another sphere ceases a function and local government steps in
- **increased community expectations**—community demands for improved services are met by local government and
• *policy choice*—individual local governments choose to expand their service provision (DEH, 2006).

These factors will continue to ensure local government plays a role in the management of the environment. The extent of this role, however, is hindered by resource and staff constraints that compete with essential and core council services and operations (MAV, 2005). Further hindering Councils in their environmental capacity is the inherent uncertainty in ecological processes, and in the management of natural resource systems. This means that standards in best practices are subject to change. Being risk-averse, local government can be slow in taking up these changes.
Indigo Shire Council
Environment Strategy

Indigo and the Environment

Geography and population
Renowned for its natural beauty and preserved historical character, Indigo Shire is located in north east Victoria, approximately 270km from Melbourne. The Shire is bordered by the Murray River and New South Wales border to the north, the Australian Alps, and the shire boundaries of Wangaratta, Wodonga, Alpine, Towong and Moira. Indigo Shire covers a total land area of 2,016km$^2$ (refer to Figure 1). The main townships of the Shire are Beechworth, Rutherglen, Chiltern and Yackandandah and smaller townships include Barnawartha, Kiewa, Tangambalanga, Wahgunyah and Stanley, with a total population across the Shire of 15,710 (ABS, 2007-2008).

History
Limited ethnographic information is available on the Aboriginal groups of the district and surrounding areas at the time of European settlement. It has been documented, however, that prior to this time the Yiatmathang people occupied the Kiewa and Mitta Mitta valleys, and Pangerang people inhabited the north east Goulburn valley region. Within these regions a number of localities were considered important sources for summer food, including the highly sought after Bogong Moth (NECMA, 2004). Further information suggests that groups often undertook patterns of seasonal movement to secure shelter, water and food supplies. The late Aboriginal elder, Eddie Kneebone, specified that Beechworth was within the Wangaratta Basin and was occupied by the Min-jambbuttu people and the Rutherglen plains were occupied by the Kwatta – Kwatta (Kneebone, 1999). European settlement of the Indigo region dates from the late 1830s when grazing was the dominant type of land use and...
rapid growth occurred during the 1850s and 1860s due to the discovery of gold in the area. The population waned through the late 1800s as mining declined.

Today

Indigo has a current growth rate of 1.3% (ABS, 2007-2008) and offers an appealing location with strong natural features, a comfortable climate, quiet lifestyle, close proximity to tertiary educational institutions as well as surrounding major service centres such as Albury-Wodonga and Wangaratta. The economy relies on a foundation of agriculture (beef, sheep, dairy, horticulture and viticulture), processing, as well as the provision of services and tourism. Many residents (47.9%) work outside the Shire especially in the surrounding Albury-Wodonga and Wangaratta areas (ABS, 2007-2008).

The Shire attracts large numbers of tourists annually to enjoy the fine local wine, gourmet food and produce, the many festivals, historical appeal and natural assets of the region. The area’s heritage significance has an obvious presence in urban areas and is reflected in the streetscapes, gardens and buildings of the townships. The parks and recreational reserves provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy picnicking, bushwalking, bird watching, rock climbing, bike riding, touring and prospecting.

Landscapes

Indigo has wide natural appeal as the landscape and vegetation types range from forested hilly terrain to broad agricultural river valleys and red gum floodplains. Physically the Shire lies at the junction of three contrasting landscape systems. It is positioned at the point of transition between the foothills of the Great Dividing Range and the Western Plains, which in turn borders the Murray River and its floodplain. These areas support a diverse range of fauna and flora, with many such individual species also listed as endangered or vulnerable. The threatened status of these communities, flora and fauna has resulted from past clearing activities, as well as the ongoing incremental loss and degradation of remaining habitat.

Flora and Fauna

A range of habitat types occur throughout the Shire including remnant forest and woodlands, scattered clumps of trees, water storage, water courses and cropping areas. There are at least 26 different vegetation communities present within the Shire and across these, a total of 10 nationally significant flora species have been recorded, along with 72 species of state significance. Examples include the Mountain Swainson-pea, the Pink Hyacinth Orchid, and the Crimson Spider-Orchid (Ecology Partners, 2007).

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF EILEEN COLLINS)
Indigo Shire is also home to a recorded nine fauna species of national significance and 36 of state significance. Examples of these include the Barking Owl, Grey-crowned Babbler, Regent Honeyeaters, Swift Parrot, Australasian Bittern, Murray Cod, Macquarie Perch, Eastern Long-eared Bat, Smoky Mouse, Superb Parrot, Australian Painted Snipe, Pink-tailed Worm-lizard, Striped Legless Lizard and the Golden Sun Moth (Ecology Partners, 2007).

The vulnerable Tree Goanna or Lace Monitor (*Varanus varius*)

Regent Honeyeater (*Xanthomyza phrygia*)

Grey-crowned Babbler (*Pomatostomus temporalis*)

(Wetlands and Waterways)

Wetlands and waterways are also important throughout the municipality because of their provision of habitat for aquatic and avian fauna, their role in the functioning of ecosystems, as well as the significant social and cultural values they provide. Four nationally important wetlands occur in or near the Shire boundary including Black Swamp, Lake Hume, Ovens River, and Ryan’s Lagoon. Other important wetlands within the Shire include Lake Moodemere (Ecology Partners, 2007).

The municipality also has important water resources, supporting reaches of the Kiewa River as well as many important smaller waterways. These feed into the Murray River with the broader north east Victorian area playing an essential role of collecting water resources for the Murray Darling Basin. Despite only comprising 2% of the geographic area of the Murray Darling Basin, the three primary river systems – Ovens, Kiewa and Upper Murray basins – contribute 38% of total water supply to the Murray Darling Basin System (DSE, 2008).
Parks and Reserves

The Shire contains National Parks such as Chiltern–Mt Pilot National Park, State Parks and forests such as Beechworth Historic Park, and nature conservation reserves such as Rutherglen and Moodemere. Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park protects 21,560ha of valuable Box-Ironbark forest and Granitic Hills Woodlands and is recognised as having the best assemblage of any Box-Ironbark protected areas in Victoria. The park contains the highest number of mammal, bird and reptile species recorded in any Box-Ironbark site (ECC, 2001). It is a priority site for Brush-tail Phascogale recovery, has the only recorded population of the Mt Pilot Spider Orchid, and is the largest reserved area of Black Cypress-pine in Victoria. Chiltern–Mt Pilot National Park is also a critical habitat for many other significant species in addition to holding valuable Aboriginal cultural and historic legacies (Parks Victoria, 2008).

Beechworth Historic Park covers 1090ha and has close links with the nearby township, containing significant examples of the area’s goldmining heritage. It is one of only four parks in Victoria reserved under the National Parks Act 1975 (Vic.) with a principal focus on the protection of cultural heritage values. In addition to its cultural appreciation, the park has an important role in the protection of substantial remnants of forest and woodlands, and associated flora and fauna populations. Beechworth Historical Park presents unusual geology and transitional vegetation types, being a key site for the endangered Yellow Hyacinth-orchid, and home to other rare and threatened flora and fauna species (Parks Victoria, 2007).

Threats

Many of the natural values of Indigo Shire are threatened from a range of activities. Flora and fauna are threatened by direct habitat loss, such as vegetation removal or habitat degradation such as removal of woody debris for firewood, or displacement or predation by pest plants and animals. Similarly, the health of aquatic habitats are subject to a range of activities relating to urban development, agriculture and mining, the removal and degradation of riparian vegetation, sediment input from human activities, alteration to temperature and flow regimes and the removal of stream debris.

Natural values are threatened by likely changes to climate. Changes may include an increase in average temperatures and extreme weather events (natural disasters). It is acknowledged that communities, species and individuals that are already stressed are less likely to adapt to such changes in climate. Accordingly, preservation of natural values assists with the functioning of ecosystems, which in turn increases the chance of resilience and a successful adaptation to the challenges of climate change. It is in the context of change and threats that Indigo Shire Council’s Environment Strategy has been developed.
Developing the Strategy

Indigo Environment Advisory Committee

Formed in late 2008 as a Section 86 Committee of Management under the Local Government Act, the Indigo Environment Advisory Committee (IEAC) is comprised of 23 people, representing the community, Landcare, government and commerce. Two Councillors are part of the committee, as well as two of Indigo's senior managers, and environment staff.

The role of the IEAC is to provide advice to Council on the development of Council policy as it relates to environmental and sustainability matters.

The committee also

- provides a forum for Council and community to which environmental concerns may be referred
- provides advice and recommendations
- reviews policy and strategic development
- channels stakeholder feedback and
- advocates for Council's environmental portfolio within the community (IEAC, 2008).

One of the first functions of the IEAC has been to provide advice and act as a key stakeholder group for the development of the Environment Strategy.

The Intent of the Strategy

The Environment Strategy outlines Indigo Shire Council’s vision for the management of environmental issues within the Shire. The intention is to provide a coordinated approach to Council’s actions and ensure greater communication and endorsement of Council’s environmental commitment, both internally and to the wider community. It provides a strategic context for the numerous environmental matters outlined in Council policies and strategies, and identifies the key environmental outcomes that Indigo wishes to achieve over the next five years. A substantial review should occur in 2011 to ensure that the strategy remains relevant in the dynamic context of natural resource management, and inform the review of the Council Plan due in 2012.

The need for an overarching environmental understanding has long been highlighted as essential to achieve effective implementation of objectives across all Council business units and within the community. The Strategy provides a way of coordinating existing organisational procedures, priorities and actions, and identifies existing gaps in policy. It focuses on Council operations, services and responsibilities, as well as areas that can be influenced by advocacy and education.

The strategy encourages the nurturing of partnerships to improve environmental outcomes and promote local responses to global concerns. The identification of action areas and priorities will assist Council to better manage its operations and to respond to the community and to government initiatives in environmental areas.

The goals of the Environment Strategy are to

- present a clear framework for environmental sustainability across the municipality
- provide a context for Council’s environmental policies and strategies
- provide a proactive approach for environmental projects
- effectively respond to environmental issues
- provide improved communication of Council’s environmental commitment
- allow recognition of common links between Council activities and other agencies
- demonstrate a commitment to partner with community, other agencies and educational institutions within the Shire to achieve environmental outcomes
- enable greater environmental return on investment and
- provide a strategic basis for future resource allocation for environmental activities.

The Environment Strategy is a dynamic document, responsive to change in attitudes, values, priorities and legislation over time. It is also a valuable guide and resource for Council, employees and the wider community.

**Strategy Scope**

As the third tier of government in Australia, local government has a responsibility to the local community and an important role in the successful and sustainable management of our environment. Moving away from the traditional notion that Council is only responsible for ‘roads, rates and rubbish’ Indigo recognises there are broader community concerns. Council embraces its role in leadership, as a member of a global community acting at a local level to ensure sustainable practices.

Within Indigo Shire’s sphere of influence Council has a responsibility to
- operate as a business to deliver community and infrastructure services
- manage Council and public assets
- regulate development and
- act as a leader, advocate and educator.

The Strategy aims to clearly outline Council’s response to environmental issues affecting these spheres of influence.

**Environmental Principles**

It is recognised that our natural environment is one of the Shire’s most important assets and should be protected and enhanced. In line with its sphere of influence and responsibilities, the Shire has seven principles that guide its commitment to the management of the environment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Shire has considerable influence through purchasing and is committed to waste reduction and recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water is a precious and finite resource and should be used wisely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil is a finite resource and communities need to reduce their reliance on it to become resilient to the inevitable impacts of peak oil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong biodiversity promotes healthy ecosystems and landscapes which will be more resilient to climate change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The land use planning system seeks a balanced approach to land use and development that takes into account impacts on, and the significance of, the natural environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Together Council, the community and agencies can be a strong advocate for the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our community should be encouraged, supported and educated to foster environmental stewardship and sustainable behaviour.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategy Approach

The Environment Strategy relates to the overarching Council vision of Indigo as ‘a great place to live, work and visit’ and Council’s mission to ‘support and develop a sustainable, thriving and resilient community through leadership and partnerships’. To achieve this end and fulfill Council’s environmental roles and responsibilities, four Key Strategy Directions have been identified with each linked to a basic environmental driver.

It is recognised that an environmental issue or aspect could be categorised in many ways. For the purpose of the Strategy, issues or aspects have been allocated to a Key Strategy Direction according to their primary relationship to Council. Clearly the Key Strategy Direction relationships are not independent of one another, with the performance in one area often affecting the performance of another.

The four Key Strategy Directions and their associated environmental drivers are

1. Using Resources Efficiently \(\rightarrow\) Reduce what we take
2. Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Municipal Assets \(\rightarrow\) Protect what we have
3. Regulating for Liveability \(\rightarrow\) Develop sustainably
4. Supporting and Resourcing the Community \(\rightarrow\) Share what we learn

Each Key Strategy Direction is comprised of

- a rationale
- statement of outcomes
- links to existing Council documents
- the major encompassing themes and
- an action matrix.

The action matrix outlines how Indigo Shire Council (ISC) will

- implement the strategy actions
- identify links to existing Council documents and relevant partners
- specify responsibilities and
- define a timeframe for achievement.

Each Key Strategy Direction will incorporate evaluation to ensure that implementation is measured and reported. This will be dependent on communication with those staff who have been delegated responsibilities, as many of the actions are adopted in existing Council documents. The evaluation will occur independently of the Environment Strategy. A number of unique actions, however, have been included where it was identified that there were gaps in policy. These actions require independent resourcing and evaluation. Given the dynamic nature of the Strategy, this feedback will help inform reviews, improve performance and form the basis of a periodic report for Council and community consideration.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council’s Roles</th>
<th>Driver</th>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operate as a business</td>
<td>Reduce what we take</td>
<td>The Shire has considerable purchasing power and is committed to waste reduction and recovery. Water is a precious and finite resource that should be used wisely. Oil is a finite resource and communities need to reduce reliance to become resilient to inevitable impacts of peak oil.</td>
<td>Using Resources Efficiently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Council and Public Assets</td>
<td>Protect what we have</td>
<td>Strong biodiversity promotes healthy ecosystems and landscapes that are more resilient to climate change.</td>
<td>Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Municipal Assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulate development</td>
<td>Develop sustainably</td>
<td>The land use planning system seeks a balanced approach to use and development that takes into account the environment.</td>
<td>Regulating for liveability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act as a leader, advocate and educator</td>
<td>Share what we learn</td>
<td>Together Council, the community and agencies can be a strong advocate for the environment. Our community should be encouraged, supported and educated to foster environmental stewardship and sustainable behaviour.</td>
<td>Supporting and Resourcing the Community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1. Key Strategy Direction Development.** Table provides an outline of how the Key Strategy Directions were developed by showing the links to the existing roles and responsibilities of Council, the environmental drivers and the environmental principles.
PART B - Key Strategy Directions
Environment Strategy Integration Wheel

The *Integration Wheel* illustrates the interrelationship between Council’s mission, which is shown in the core of the wheel, the Key Strategy Directions (KSD) shown in the second sphere, and the main encompassing themes that each KSD encompasses shown in the third band. The four cornerstones supporting the *Integration Wheel* reinforce the motivation for the Environment Strategy.

- **Operate as a business**
  - Reduce what we take

- **Manage Council & public assets**
  - Protect what we have

- **Act as a leader, advocate and educator**
  - Share what we learn

- **Regulate development**
  - Develop sustainably

Support & develop a sustainable, thriving & resilient community

- **Actions - Outcomes - Reporting**
  - Energy Use
  - Water Use
  - Purchasing
  - Waste

- **Actions - Outcomes - Reporting**
  - Biodiversity
  - Climate Change
  - Adaption
  - Council & Public Reserves & Land

- **Actions - Outcomes - Reporting**
  - Environment Incentives
  - Fire Management
  - Environment Incents
  - Fire Vegetation

- **Actions - Outcomes - Reporting**
  - Regulating for Liveability
  - Building Regulations
  - Land Use Planning & Development
  - Waterways & Wetlands

- **Actions - Outcomes - Reporting**
  - Native Vegetation
  - Pest Plants & Animals
  - Roads & Public Buildings
  - Waterways & Wetlands

- **Actions - Outcomes - Reporting**
  - Protecting & Enhancing Natural & Municipal Assets
  - Waterways & Wetlands
  - Roads & Public Buildings

- **Actions - Outcomes - Reporting**
  - Using Resources Efficiently
  - Supporting & Resourcing the Community
  - Distribution of Environmental Information
  - Clarification of Environmental Government Policy
1. Using Resources Efficiently

Rationale

Indigo Shire Council has a range of roles and responsibilities and is in the 'business' of delivering local government services. Similar to any organisation or business, Indigo Shire Council should strive to avoid and minimise environmental impacts arising from its operations. This can be achieved by efficiently and effectively using resources. Natural resources are finite and their increasing use is putting pressure on the earth’s systems. Sustainable use of resources can result in significant financial savings and represent greater responsibility in the expenditure of public money. As an organisation, Council must consider resource use through its energy and water use, purchasing, and through waste generated from business operations.

Energy Use

Energy as a resource relates to three main sources, including:

- electricity - which throughout Indigo Shire is primarily provided via coal fired power stations
- fuel - ie diesel and petrol which is produced from oil and
- gas - ie natural gas provided via the reticulated pipe system such as in Rutherglen and LPG provided in bottles.

These energy resources are made available from the harvesting of non-renewable resources. Their use results in the release of greenhouse gas emissions. As such, there is a strong need to minimise the ongoing use and reliance on such resources to enable a reduction in emissions, as well as a transition to cleaner energy sources. In recent times, an increasing awareness of energy use and its associated effects of climate change have culminated in more sustainable energy practices. Australia is one of the world’s highest per capita producers of greenhouse gases (Garnaut, 2008), as a result all sectors of our society have a role to play. In this context, many opportunities exist within the business operations of Council, as energy is used in public streetlighting, in administration and public buildings, in water pumping at municipal pools and in parks and gardens, as well as in the operation of plant and fleet vehicles.

Water Use

Increasing community awareness and the effects of climate change have also emphasised the importance of water as a resource. The threats posed to this resource have become more apparent over the past decade as the region has experienced drought, bushfire, significant pollution events and extreme low flow periods. As a water consumer, Council has an important role to play in demonstrating smart water practices within its operations to reduce demand on this precious resource. In particular, Council has the ability to reduce water consumption associated with administration and public buildings, municipal pools, parks and gardens and open spaces, works depots and public amenity facilities.

Purchasing

Resource use can also be minimised through environmentally responsible purchasing. Every purchase impacts on the environment in some way. However, by choosing products and services that are less damaging to the environment this impact can be minimised. Responsible purchasing means that products or services in relation to their recycled content, water and energy savings, toxicity, and ability for reuse, recycling or disposal must be considered. The expenditure of Indigo Shire as a business covers a very broad range of products and services, and represents considerable purchasing power. Accordingly, purchasing decisions must occur in a manner
where ‘greener’ products and services are compared to competing products and services that serve the same purpose.

Waste

Waste generation is also vital when considering resources, as some types of waste can be reused or recovered. Importantly, however, it is preferable to avoid generating waste in the first instance. Waste is inherently linked to purchasing, and products and services that minimise waste generation should be considered. This resource is also relevant to Indigo in its use of waste systems in business operations. There are many opportunities for the systems to accommodate increased levels of recycling and more efficient waste stream matching. Equally important is the service of waste management that Indigo Shire provides to the community. This service presents ongoing opportunities to foster improved community practices through resource recovery programs, recycling, composting, and campaigning for litter reduction.

Indigo Shire has significant opportunities to use resources efficiently in a wide range of business operations. This can be achieved through purchasing, as well as through energy, water and waste management and could achieve improved business performance.

Outcomes

To ensure efficient resource use, Indigo will

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Reduce, monitor and report on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Reduce, monitor and report on water consumption across Council owned and operated facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Reduce and monitor waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Increase and monitor proportion of green purchasing within Council operations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Existing Council Documents

- Sustainable Water Use Plan (SWUP) (2006)
- Indigo Shire Procurement Policy (2009)
- Indigo’s Eco Action Plan (2009-2010)

Encompassing Themes

- Energy use
- Water use
- Purchasing
- Waste
## Actions Matrix

### Key Strategy Direction 1. Using Resources Efficiently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.1 Reduce monitor and report on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions | 1.1.1 | Achieve a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from 2005/06 levels by 2015/16 | • Actively seek funding and resources to achieve a reduction in GHG emissions. Apply methods such as retrofitting buildings, capital works, down-sizing fleet vehicles, considered procurement activities and review of Council practices. (Refer to actions outlined in the Greenhouse Action Plan (GAP) - Objective 1 – ‘Reduce Greenhouse Emissions and Encourage Energy Efficiency in all Council Operations’).  
• Support community to undertake actions to reduce their GHG emissions (Refer to GAP Objective 4 - ‘Increase Community Awareness and facilitate Community Action’). | All Council Departments | High | 2009-ongoing | Greenhouse Action Plan (GAP), Council Plan (Obj 4.7), Victorian Greenhouse Strategy |
| 1.1.2 | Investigate partnering with other Councils to deliver alternative solar power technology | | | | | | |
| 1.1.3 | Monitor and report on GHG emissions within Indigo Shire | | | | | | |
| 1.2 Reduce monitor and report on water consumption across Council owned and operated facilities | 1.2.1 | Achieve a 20% reduction in water consumption across Council owned and operated facilities from 2000/01 levels by 2015 | • Actively seek funding and resources to achieve a reduction in water consumption across Council owned and operated facilities such as playing fields, toilet facilities, depots, swimming pools, open spaces, buildings and caravan parks. (Refer to actions contained in the Sustainable Water Use Plan (SWUP) Objective 2 – ‘To Reduce Water Consumption and Encourage Greater Water Efficiencies in all Council Operations and Outsourced Activities’). | Assets & Operation Dept | Medium | 2009-ongoing | Sustainable Water Use Plan, Council Plan (Obj 4.3), Recreation Plan, Our Water Our Future Action Plan |
| 1.2.2 | Develop and implement water conservation and reuse programs in consultation with stakeholders | | | | | | |

(Links refer to Council Plan (Obj 4.7), GAP, Council Plan (Obj 4.3), Victorian Greenhouse Strategy)
### Key Strategy Direction 1. Using Resources Efficiently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Reduce, monitor, &amp; report on water consumption across Council owned and operated facilities</td>
<td>1.2.3</td>
<td>Enable community projects to bulk purchase water tanks</td>
<td>Investigate delivery of a project model used by Towong Shire Council to encourage residents and businesses to install water tanks.</td>
<td>NRM Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Towong Shire, NEGHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.4</td>
<td>Monitor and report on Council’s water consumption</td>
<td>Implement monitoring and reporting of Council’s water consumption. (Refer to actions contained in the SWUP Objective 6 – ‘Monitor and Report Annually on Council’s Water Consumption Levels and Progress Towards Reaching the Target Reduction in Water Consumption’).</td>
<td>NRM Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-ongoing</td>
<td>Sustainable Water Use Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Reduce and monitor waste</td>
<td>1.3.1</td>
<td>Continue active participation in the NevRwaste Program</td>
<td>Support NevRwaste initiatives for the community.</td>
<td>Waste Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Council Plan (Obj 2.4), North East Victorian Regional Waste Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.3</td>
<td>Continue Council’s commitment to the Waste Wise (Resource Smart) program</td>
<td>Ensure recertification to the Waste Wise (transitioning to Resource Smart) program and implementation of training and awareness programs for staff and the community. Partner with NevRwaste for the delivery of the Waste Wise program targeting schools, events and workplaces to promote practical action to reduce waste.</td>
<td>Waste Department</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Resource Smart, NevRwaste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Key Strategy Direction 1. Using Resources Efficiently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.4.1    | Continue Council commitment to the Eco-Buy program | - Ensure renewal of Memorandum of Understanding with Eco-Buy and annual membership.  
- Increase staff awareness and understanding of the environmental impacts of purchasing and provide resources to enable smarter purchasing decisions. (Refer to Indigo’s Eco Action Plan).  
- Establish effective processes to enable easier annual reporting of proportion of green spending. | All Council Departments | High | 2009-ongoing | Eco-Buy, Eco Action Group, ISC Eco Action Plan |
| 1.4.2    | Promote Council’s Sustainable Procurement Commitment | - Ensure staff consider greener alternatives when purchasing criteria in tendering processes.  
- Update relevant Council policies so that they incorporate sustainability aspects (Refer to Indigo’s Eco Action Plan). | All Council Departments | High | 2009-ongoing | ISC Procurement Policy, Eco Action Group, ISC Eco Action Plan |
| 1.5.1    | Participate in sustainability forums to improve knowledge base | - Continue to participate in internal and external sustainability forums to improve knowledge, best practices and behaviour. Disseminate learning within Council and the community. | NRM Dept & Eco Action Group | Medium | Ongoing |       |
| 1.5.2    | Increase sustainable behaviour in the workplace | - Foster sustainable behaviour in the workplace and identify barriers in existing operations via an internal working group, delivery of education campaigns, auditing and reporting, introduction of relevant policies. (Refer to actions contained in Indigo’s Eco Action Plan). | All Council departments | High | Ongoing | ISC Eco Action Plan |
2. Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Municipal Assets

Rationale

Indigo Shire has abundant natural and historical appeal and is home to many rare and threatened flora and fauna species, as well as many heritage listed structures. These natural and municipal assets provide a strong foundation for the local economy through agriculture, tourism and recreation.

The natural assets of the Shire are found throughout the diverse landscape containing national and state parks and forests, as well as fertile farming lands. These landscapes support a rich array of ‘biodiversity’ which can be defined as the range of all living life-forms including plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain and the eco-systems of which they form a part. As every native plant and animal plays an important role in maintaining the health of our natural environment, a healthy biodiversity equals a healthy environment which can provide many natural services. A healthy environment can provide clean air and water, nutrient recycling in soils, barriers to pest weeds and animals, abatement of climate change, production of goods such as firewood and timber, filtration and erosion controls and waste decay and assimilation. The municipal assets of the Shire are equally as diverse and include heritage listed buildings, a significant network of local roads and associated drainage infrastructure, public open spaces and recreational facilities, as well as many parks, gardens and reserves. Council has a responsibility to apply sound environmental practices to promote a healthy environment with clean air and water, diverse plant and wildlife communities, attractive park and recreational facilities, social engagement and sound infrastructure.

Council and Public Reserves, Lands and Waterways

Council has the capacity to affect positive biodiversity outcomes through direct land management, as well as through support to other land managers. Indigo Shire Council manages land directly as it owns over 100 properties and manages more than 40 delegated Crown land parcels. In many cases this management is greatly assisted through Committees of Management, established under s86 of the Local Government Act. These groups comprise local community members who volunteer their time to assist Council in the maintenance and improvement of these areas.

Council also supports the activities of other agencies in the management of public lands and watercourses. This support is provided through a range of means, in order to improve management with available resources.

Roadsides

Indigo Shire has an active role in the management of local roadsides within the Shire. Roadsides often provide valuable pockets of remnant vegetation, habitat and sources of indigenous seed stock in otherwise cleared landscapes. Council’s responsibility is to monitor and protect the conservation values of roadsides, as well as negotiate functional, recreational and land management issues associated with their use.

Climate Change Adaptation

Indigo has an important role to play in ensuring municipal assets are prepared for the likely impacts of climate change, firstly through appropriate maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure, and secondly through strategic land use and social planning. Such adaptation aims to reduce the impact of climate change both in advance of anticipated impacts and in response to impacts that occur. Adaptation approaches tend to be based around assessment and management of risks, impacts and vulnerabilities. Timely identification, prioritisation and implementation of climate change adaptation measures will increase community resilience in the future.
Firewood

Indigo Shire acknowledges that firewood is a major source of heating within the municipality, given the limited access to reticulated natural gas coupled with increasing electricity prices. When collected sustainably firewood is a carbon neutral source of heating and energy.

Indigo Shire is a stakeholder in the North East Firewood Strategy, which is relevant in two main ways. Firstly, the Shire operates community woodlots that optimise use of timber stockpiled as a result of storm events and regular council operations. Secondly, it supports the development of firewood plantations to ensure that demand is met in the future.

Both measures work towards meeting firewood demand and help protect high conservation areas from inappropriate collection.

Pest Plant & Animals

The issue of pest plants and animals affects Indigo Shire Council in many ways. As a landholder Indigo has a responsibility to control pest plants and animals on land owned and managed by the Shire. It also plays a key role in encouraging appropriate control on private land. With regard to pest plants and animals that occur on roadsides, Indigo Shire provides financial incentives for adjacent landholders to undertake control measures, and implements some direct control where external funding allows. Indigo Shire Council liaises with the Department of Primary Industries the key government department charged with enforcement of weed control.

In summary, Indigo Shire can play a both direct and a supporting role in protecting and enhancing natural and municipal assets. This can be achieved through direct land and asset management of council reserves, through supporting public land and waterway management, as a facilitator of roadside management, through preparation of community and infrastructure for the likely impacts of climate change, and through encouraging sustainable practices of appropriate firewood collection and pest control.

Outcomes

To protect and enhance our natural and municipal assets, Indigo will

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1</strong></td>
<td>Increase Council and community preparedness for the likely impacts of climate change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2</strong></td>
<td>Implement environmentally sustainable management practices on Council managed reserves, lands and built assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.3</strong></td>
<td>Liaise with other government agencies, public land managers and custodians on the environmentally sustainable management of Council and public reserves, lands and built assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.4</strong></td>
<td>Increase positive environmental stewardship on private land</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Existing Council Documents

Roadside Management Plan 2004 (Due for review)
Indigo Shire Code of Works Practice 2004 (Due for review)
Annual Capital Works Program (ongoing)
Strategic Bike Plan (2008)
Encompassing Themes

- Biodiversity
- Council and Public Reserves, Lands & Waterways
- Roadsides
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Firewood
- Pest Plants & Animals
## Action Matrix

### Key Strategy Direction 2. Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Municipal Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th></th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Increase Council and community preparedness for the impacts of climate change</td>
<td>2.1.1</td>
<td>Undertake a risk assessment for adaptation to climate change</td>
<td>▪ Source funding to undertake a risk assessment of the capacity of the Shire to adapt to the challenges of climate change.</td>
<td>NRM Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-2014</td>
<td>SV, Federal Government, North East Greenhouse Alliance (NEGHA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2</td>
<td>Ensure all assets and infrastructure provide for mitigation and adaptation to the likely impacts of climate change</td>
<td>▪ Develop processes to ensure ‘whole of life costing’ for assets and infrastructure maintenance and development. ▪ Ensure that sustainable principles are considered in the strategic development of appropriate recreation infrastructure and facilities. ▪ Investigate internal and external options to fund infrastructure improvements that account for climate change adaptation.</td>
<td>Assets &amp; Operations Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Council Plan (Obj 2.2), Recreation Plan, NEGHA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3</td>
<td>Ensure Council buildings are maintained for protection against climate change</td>
<td>▪ Develop a Building Assets Management Plan that considers climate change adaptation responses.</td>
<td>Assets Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Council Plan (Obj 2.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Implement sustainable management practices on Council managed reserves, lands and built assets</td>
<td>2.2.1</td>
<td>Enhance Council’s natural assets</td>
<td>▪ Where applicable undertake appropriate revegetation programs across municipal natural assets.</td>
<td>NRM &amp; Operations Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Council Plan (Obj 2.6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2</td>
<td>Rehabilitate the former municipal landfill sites</td>
<td>▪ The Beechworth, Rutherglen and Chiltern former landfill sites require rehabilitation – secure funding and resources to enable completion of designs, approvals and works.</td>
<td>Operations Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2009-2019</td>
<td>Council Plan (Obj 2.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3</td>
<td>Adopt and implement a Tree Management Strategy for new and existing street trees</td>
<td>▪ Develop a plan based on planting, maintenance and risk management for urban street planting.</td>
<td>Assets &amp; Operations Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Council Plan (Obj 2.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.4</td>
<td>Protect and enhance native roadside flora and fauna</td>
<td>▪ Review the Roadside Management Plan and ensure activities undertaken on roadsides occur in accordance with this plan. ▪ Facilitate education programs for Council staff and contractors working within roadside corridors to understand the best practices for activities. ▪ Liaise with relevant road users to facilitate sustainable use of roadsides whilst protecting roadside conservation values.</td>
<td>NRM Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2009-ongoing</td>
<td>Roadside Management Plan, DSE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Key Strategy Direction 2. Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Municipal Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.2.5    | Ensure best practices are being applied in works undertaken or outsourced by Council | ▪ Establish an appropriate internal environmental risk assessment process to ensure project works identify and minimise environmental damage.  
▪ Undertake a review of the ISC Code of Works Practice to ensure best practices are used during routine maintenance activities.  
▪ Investigate use of environmental bonds in contracts for works outsourced by Council.  
▪ Integrate environmental considerations into the tendering process to ensure that contracts can be assessed in terms of environmental impact. | Assets & Operations Dept & NRM Dept | High | 2009-2010 | ISC Code of Works Practice (2004) |
| 2.2.6    | Reduce threats (such as pest plants and animals) to aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and protect Councils natural assets | ▪ Develop a weed management plan for Council’s parks, gardens and reserves to ensure control is strategic and effective.  
▪ Continue delivery of the Roadside Weed Initiative to encourage residents to control weeds on their roadside.  
▪ Continue to partner with DPI to undertake on-ground control of priority weeds. | NRM Dept | High | Ongoing | DPI, DSE, Council Plan (Obj 4.3) |
| 2.2.7    | Ensure protection and enhancement of high value biodiversity assets where Council has direct land management role | ▪ Assess Council land assets to determine areas of high biodiversity value.  
▪ Develop management plan/s to ensure biodiversity values are actively protected, enhanced and promoted. | Assets & Operations Dept & NRM Dept | High | 2009-2010 | NECMA, RCS |
| 2.2.8    | Apply regional catchment information at a local level | ▪ Participate in the Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) review and assimilate reviewed document into business of Council where appropriate. | NRM Dept | High | 2009-2010 | NECMA, RCS |
| 2.2.9    | Undertake a review of the Stormwater Management Plan | ▪ Undertake review of the Stormwater Management Plan to ensure that stormwater activities undertaken by Council are of relevant priority. | NRM & Assets Dept | Medium | 2009-2013 | Stormwater Mgt Plan (2002) |
| 2.2.10   | Review the stormwater master plans including consideration of any potential wetland developments | ▪ Undertake an upgrade of the stormwater master plan across Indigo townships, inclusion of GIS information. | Assets Dept | Medium | 2009-2013 | Council Plan (Obj 2.9) |
### Key Strategy Direction 2. Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Municipal Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1</td>
<td>Support agencies that protect and enhance public lands</td>
<td>• Support the objectives outlined in management documents for public lands, offer representation on advisory committees and provide comment during document development.</td>
<td>NRM Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-ongoing</td>
<td>DSE, Parks Vic, Chiltern-Mt Pilot, Beechworth Historic Park Mgt Plan, Rutherglen &amp; Moodermere Nature Conservation Reserve Mgt Statements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2</td>
<td>Investigate options for off-site wastewater schemes for Stanley</td>
<td>• Investigate options for more sustainable water treatment and reuse scheme for Stanley.</td>
<td>Operations &amp; Environmental Health Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>Council Plan (Obj. 2.5), Domestic Wastewater Mgt Plan, NEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3</td>
<td>Support ‘Committees of Management’ with the administration of Council and community assets</td>
<td>• Provide in-kind support, representation and resources to assist in the management and maintenance of Council and community assets. • Continue to provide asset maintenance grants to registered Committees of Management.</td>
<td>All Departments &amp; Sustainable Communities</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Various Committees of Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4</td>
<td>Support local Landcare and sustainability groups</td>
<td>• Continue Council’s commitment to encourage and support, coordinate and liaise with Landcare and sustainability groups and their activities throughout the Shire.</td>
<td>NRM Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-ongoing</td>
<td>ISC Landcare Support &amp; Environmental Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.5</td>
<td>Promote natural assets through tourism</td>
<td>• Encourage promotion of parks and reserves through Shire tourism programs. • Promote and develop cycle tourism.</td>
<td>Assets &amp; Operations Dept, Tourism Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-ongoing</td>
<td>Parks Vic, DSE, Council Plan, Strategic Bike Plan, Recreation Plan, Indigo Tourism Advisory Committee, Rail Trail Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.6</td>
<td>Encourage a sustainable firewood industry</td>
<td>• Continue operation of Community Firewood Depots. • Partner with other agencies to implement the North East Firewood Strategy. • Encourage and promote incentives for the development of firewood plantations.</td>
<td>NRM &amp; Operations Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-ongoing</td>
<td>North East Firewood Strategy and implementation committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Key Strategy Direction 2. Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Municipal Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.4      | 2.4.1      | Promote environmental stewardship programs on private land | ▪ Provide clear links to incentive programs and grants promoting environmental stewardship for private land.  
▪ Investigate rate differential for landholders with conservation covenants. | NRM Dept | Medium | 2009-2012 | DSE, DPI, TFN, NECMA |
| 2.4      | 2.4.2      | Encourage and support extension programs to landholders to foster sustainable land management | ▪ Undertake landholder engagement to increase awareness and ownership of roadside conservation values in relation to whole property planning  
▪ Support and link state programs offering financial incentives for environmental programs to resident landholders. | NRM Dept | High | 2009-2010 | Roadside Mgt Plan, SV, DSE |
3. Regulating for Liveability

Rationale

The population of Indigo has grown at a rate of 1.3% over the 2007/2008 period (ABS, 2007-2008). Urban areas are expanding, land use patterns are changing and greater pressure is being placed on existing infrastructure and services. For example, farming operations are experiencing pressure from severe and prolonged weather conditions such as extended drought and poor seasons. This may result in the transfer of land ownership and use, trading in water entitlements and changing farming practices. These changes have the potential to impact on important and sensitive landscapes across the Shire.

Land Use, Planning and Development

Indigo Shire Council has a key role to play in guiding land development, which is achieved in the first instance through strategic planning and secondly by the assessment of individual applications for land use and development (planning permits). This process occurs within a framework defined by State government policy and regulation, as well as local strategies. All municipalities in Victoria are covered by land use planning controls that are prepared and administered by State and local government authorities. The legislation governing such controls is the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The Indigo Planning Scheme contains a Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS), that presents a vision for the community, and which is supported by local planning policies. The planning scheme identifies long term directions about land use and development in the municipality, presents a vision for its community and other stakeholders, and provides the rationale for the application of planning controls in the Shire. Planning for sustainable development is a guiding principle that Indigo Shire can use to minimise the environmental impacts of land use and development, and protect and enhance our regional landscape.

The Indigo Planning Scheme considers a wide range of issues including native vegetation, stormwater and wastewater management, subdivision development, solar access, open space public land, fire management and flooding. The Scheme is used the Shire in association with other agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Department of Primary Industries (DPI), North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA), and the water authorities, to help guide the outcomes of this decision making process.

Council also has various responsibilities and authority under both State and Federal laws. Where appropriate, Council may make local laws which are often adopted to protect public health, safety, the environment or management of amenities in a municipality. Local laws are designed to ensure they compliment or implement other legislation and cannot duplicate or contradict Federal or State law. Unless revoked sooner, a local law has a 10 year life and must be renewed after that time to remain valid. This ensures that local laws remain current and suitable to the purpose for which they were originally intended.

Native Vegetation

The Planning Scheme guides land use and development and is also the primary mechanism for vegetation protection in Victoria. Essentially, local government is a key delivery agent for the State government’s policy for native vegetation retention Victoria’s Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action. This means that Council is required to assess, monitor and enforce activities relating to the lopping, removal or destruction of native vegetation. This regulatory function is often compromised when Council itself is a proponent of development, for example with the construction of new roads or capital works activities. In such cases assessment is referred to DSE and there is a strong onus on Council to ensure such works are compliant.
Regulation of native vegetation protection requires considerable staff and financial resources, particularly when breaches, or illegal removal/destruction occurs. Council has a responsibility to ensure that all applications for native vegetation removal result in positive environmental outcomes and that cases of illegal removal are dealt with consistently, to send a strong message to the wider public that such practices will not be tolerated.

Forestry

There is a significant forest industry within Indigo Shire, primarily softwood plantations managed by Hancocks Plantation Victoria (HPV), which provides local employment and many flow-on benefits. Local government is the responsible authority for ensuring compliance with Victoria’s Code of Forest Practice for native forests on private land and timber production activities on plantations within their shire. The Code is an incorporated document of all planning schemes, with Council’s function listed under the Planning & Environment Act 1987. The Code aims to ensure that timber growing and harvesting are compatible with the conservation of environmental values in the wider landscape. In turn, the Code sets out state-wide goals and guidelines applicable to timber harvesting, timber extraction roading, regeneration and reforestation in native forests, as well as to the establishment and management of softwood and hardwood plantations.

Building Regulations

Indigo Shire Council, as with all local governments, is responsible for enforcing state building regulations. These regulations assess the construction of buildings classified according to their occupancy and are implemented in agreement with the Australian Building Code. Building regulations cover aspects such as site preparation and performance provisions including structure, fire safety, health and amenity, safe movement and access, energy efficiency and others. In response to concerns over global warming, the Australian Government announced in July 2000 that agreement had been reached with industry and State and Territory Governments to adopt a two-pronged approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from buildings. The first approach was the introduction of mandatory minimum energy performance requirements through the Building Code of Australia (BCA) and the second approach was the encouragement of best practice voluntary initiatives by industry. Industry was supportive of this two-pronged approach, taking the view that building-related matters should be consolidated in the BCA wherever possible.

The Building Code of Australia (BCA) outlines the minimum energy controls required of new buildings and major refurbishment. Following extensive consultation, energy efficiency measures were introduced in January 2003, and the BCA has now been amended to include energy efficiency measures for all building classifications. The inclusion of energy efficiency measures in the BCA is part of a comprehensive strategy being undertaken by the Australian, State and Territory Governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The BCA will be moving to a minimum 6 star energy rating on all new homes in May 2010. Although Indigo is constrained as to the building standard it can enforce, there are considerable opportunities to encourage and showcase building designs that exceed minimum ratings.

Fire Management

Indigo Shire Council plays a key role in the development of plans and strategies that identify the potential threats and management opportunities presented by fire activity. Regular identification of risks, community education and implementation of preparation measures need to be considered to help prevent loss of life and property. Council maintains strong partnerships with local brigades of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) to support the review and implementation of plans such as the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan. Equally important is Council’s role with regard to the response and recovery phases of a bushfire event. Council staff and resources, along with other government and non-government bodies, are integral in the coordination of such events. It is acknowledged that the findings of current 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission may radically impact many laws and procedures associated with land use and development.
Overall, Indigo Shire Council plays a major role in the regulation of development. It is Council’s responsibility to plan and assess land use and development, monitor and assess native vegetation, ensure compliance with the Code of Forest Practice and Building Code, and to assist in the management of fire.

**Outcomes**

To regulate for liveability, Indigo will

| 3.1 | Promote development of communities that are environmentally sustainable |
| 3.2 | Review the Indigo Planning Scheme to reflect advances in environmental understanding and community expectations |
| 3.3 | Encourage and advocate for ecologically sustainable building design |
| 3.4 | Implement and monitor native vegetation retention controls |
| 3.5 | Support the development, delivery and review of wildfire plans and strategies across the Shire |

**Existing Council Documents**

- Indigo Planning Scheme
- Municipal Strategic Statement
- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (2007)
- Municipal Fire Prevention Strategy (Reviewed annually)
- Rural Land Use Strategy (in development)

**Encompassing Themes**

- Land Use, Planning and Development
- Native Vegetation Protection
- Forestry
- Building Regulations
- Fire Management
### Actions Matrix

#### Key Strategy Direction 3. Regulating for Liveability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3.1.1    | Investigate introduction of additional planning controls to protect the Shire’s priority biodiversity assets | • Progress amendments to the Planning Scheme that consider the recommendations arising from the Biodiversity Planning Project.  
• Partner with other agencies to increase the protection of biodiversity assets identified across the Shire. | Planning & NRM Dept | High | 2009-2010 | Biodiversity Assets within ISC, Biodiversity Planning Project, Council Plan (Obj 4.4) NECMA |
| 3.1.2    | Monitor the development and consider the adaptation of the objectives of the Hume Sustainable Communities Strategy | • Identify opportunities from Hume Sustainable Communities Strategy for Indigo Shire and the region. | Council | Medium | 2010-2013 | DSE, Council Plan (Obj 4.4) |
| 3.1.3    | Ensure local laws encourage environmental sustainability | • Continue the operation and enforcement of pet registrations and operation of ranger program to ensure responsible domestic animal control.  
• Investigate the viability of a local law to encourage more sustainable practices in the building and construction industry. | Enforcement services | High | 2009-ongoing | |
| 3.1.4    | Encourage an environmentally sustainable forest industry within the Shire | • Maintain good working relations with key contacts from Hancocks Victoria Plantations.  
• Investigate complaints associated with forest industry practices.  
• Undertake monitoring of forest harvest to ensure compliance with the Code of Forest Practice.  
• Assist private landholders in the administration associated with establishment of plantations. | NRM Dept | Medium | 2009-ongoing | Code of Forest Practice, Hancocks Victoria Plantations, DPI |
# Key Strategy Direction 3. Regulating for Liveability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure research informs periodic reviews of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and Indigo Planning Scheme</td>
<td>• Review of these documents to be accompanied by consultation with the community and relevant government bodies.</td>
<td>Planning Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>MSS, Indigo Planning Scheme, Council Plan (Obj 4.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider the adoption of the objectives of the Rural Land Strategy under development</td>
<td>• Assess the recommendations from the Rural Land Use Strategy and where appropriate implement within the Indigo Planning Scheme.</td>
<td>Planning Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>MSS, Council Plan (Obj 4.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure application of the Indigo Planning Scheme considers current environmental understanding and knowledge</td>
<td>• Where appropriate statutory or voluntary referrals should be made to relevant government departments so as planning outcomes are made with due consideration of environmental issues.</td>
<td>Planning Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>DPCD, DSE, DPI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Support the implementation of sustainable building design above the minimum requirements for new dwellings and energy efficient modifications to existing dwellings</td>
<td>• Encourage the inclusion of sustainable design above the minimum requirement by initiating a sustainable housing design competition, brochures outlining improved design action, rebate information, green suppliers and contractor data, as well as information packs for new home owners to the area. (Refer Greenhouse Action Plan, Objective 4).</td>
<td>Sustainable Development &amp; NRM Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-2012</td>
<td>GAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assess the potential to implement the ‘Sustainable tools for Environmental Performance Strategy’ (STEPS) and ‘Sustainable Design Scorecard’ (SDS) programs into the planning process</td>
<td>• Identify the opportunities and costs associated with implementation of the STEPS and SDS programs, as developed by the Moreland and the Port Phillip Councils, to assist sustainability assessments as part of the planning permit process to encourage improved standards.</td>
<td>Sustainable Communities</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Moreland City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Establish sustainability principles for implementation of sustainable building design and lifestyle practices</td>
<td>• Investigate participation in the ‘Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment’ Ecologically Sustainable Design as part of the planning process. • Continue to follow BCA energy efficiency requirements.</td>
<td>NRM, Building, &amp; Planning Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Council Plan (Obj 4.4), Moreland City Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Key Strategy Direction 3. Regulating for Liveability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>Ensure Council compliance with regard to native vegetation retention</td>
<td>Maintain good working relationships with DSE to assist with implementation of best practice in regard to native vegetation retention. Ensure Council works are designed and constructed to avoid, minimise - and where appropriate - offset native vegetation removal.</td>
<td>NRM Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>DSE, DPI, CFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4.2</td>
<td>Support development proponents to comply with native vegetation retention controls</td>
<td>Assist residents to understand requirements associated with native vegetation retention controls through pre-application consultation and completion of the ‘Native Vegetation – Planning Permit Applicants Kit’. Ensure reports of illegal native vegetation removal are promptly investigated and documented, and regulations enforced where appropriate.</td>
<td>NRM &amp; Planning Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2009 – ongoing</td>
<td>Victoria’s Native Vegetation Management, North East Native Vegetation Management Plan, DSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1</td>
<td>3.5.1</td>
<td>Support the Country Fire Authority (CFA) in community wildfire preparation activities</td>
<td>Provide support and work in partnership with the CFA to undertake fire planning and prevention measures throughout the Shire. Ensure implementation of the annual fire hazard inspection program for private land including the issue of fire hazard prevention notices to ensure compliance.</td>
<td>Operations Dept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2009-ongoing</td>
<td>CFA, MFPS, Yackandandah Wildfire plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2</td>
<td>3.5.2</td>
<td>Annually review Municipal Fire Prevention Strategy (MFPS)</td>
<td>Participate in the debrief from 2009 Royal Bushfire Commission and identify strategies to implement priority outcomes. Undertake annual review of the MFPS. Review and update all emergency management policies, plans and procedures and assess the adequacy of Municipal Emergency Control Centres and Relief Centres.</td>
<td>Operations Dept</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>MFPS, MERO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Supporting and Resourcing the Community

Act as a leader, advocate and educator ➔ Share what we learn

Rationale

Council has an important function to lead, educate and advocate on behalf of community. This recognises that education and incentives are as important as regulation to achieve environmental improvement. Indeed, education is a necessary precursor for any new or existing regulation, and education and incentives reduce the cost associated with regulation. The right mix of these three tools provides a strong and balanced policy base which enables value for money.

Community Environmental Education Programs

Indigo Shire Council has in place a number of issues-based environmental plans, such as the Roadside Management Plan, Sustainable Water Use Plan and the Greenhouse Action Plan. These plans set out Council’s goals such as protection of high conservation road sides, and reduced water and energy consumption. Education programs associated with the strategies are necessary to inform relevant stakeholders such as other users of high conservation roads in the example of the Roadside Management Plan, or other users of Council buildings and facilities in the examples of the Sustainable Water Use and Greenhouse Action Plans.

Also inherent in these strategies is that Council should ‘lead by example’. In other words, Council’s own operations should not threaten high conservation road sides, and should minimise water and energy use. Educational activities are aimed at promoting best practice to the wider community so that the Shire as a whole, benefits from environmental improvement.

Clarification of Government Environmental Policy

There is a clear responsibility for Council to provide education to target audiences, with regard to the environment, on aspects which it directly regulates - for example land use and development. Where the regulation is through another government body, Council has a role in directing enquiries and assisting in the clarification of policy. This role acknowledges that Council is often the first port of call for many people with regard to a wide range of issues, including the environment.

In this regard, Council can also act as a conduit between the community and other government departments. In situations where an environmental issue affects the constituency, Council has a responsibility to ensure that the issue is communicated effectively through the relevant government body or process. This function should also aim to ensure that new government policy has been made in an informed manner through participation and contributions during the development or review process.

Distribution of Environmental Information

As Council operates closely with local communities, it is often best placed to distribute information. With new and changing government environmental priorities, community can easily be misinformed or not informed at all about significant opportunities that may be relevant to them. This presents an opportunity for Council to collate environmental information and distribute it so that it not only reaches target audience, but that it is also readily understood.

Environmental Incentives

Indigo Shire Council is well placed to provide incentives to residents and community groups to stimulate environmental action and improvement. These incentives can be in a range of forms including financial rebates or the provision of materials or services. In addition, Council has a key role in linking community to the range of environmental incentives offered through other government bodies.
It is clear that Council plays an important role in supporting and resourcing the community for environmental improvement. This includes delivering and supporting community environmental education programs, clarifying and contributing to development of government policy on the environment, collating and distributing environmental information to community and providing and linking community to environmental incentives.

**Outcomes**

To ensure we develop and support community engagement, education and resourcing, Indigo will

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.1</th>
<th>Provide information on environmentally sustainable initiatives, action, best practices and government policy in a number of easy to access formats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Promote community understanding and involvement by supporting environmental education programs and initiatives within schools and community groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Advocate key environmental priorities on behalf of the community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Existing Council Documents**

- Greenhouse Action Plan (2009)
- Sustainable Water Use Plan (2006)
- Municipal Fire Prevention Strategy (Reviewed annually)
- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (2007)

**Encompassing Themes**

- Community Environmental Education Programs
- Distribution of Environmental Information
- Clarification of Government Environmental Policy
- Environmental Incentives

Clean Up Australia Day

SEED - North East Schools Environmental Education Day
## Action Matrix

### Key Strategy Direction 4. Supporting and Resourcing the Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4.1.1    |            | Ensure environmental information distributed by Council is accessible | • Disseminate environmental information relevant to the community in a range of formats to maximise exposure. For example hard copies available from customer service centres, mail outs, electronic versions available via the ISC web site, associated links, email distribution lists, information included in Council publications, and placed on community notice boards.  
• Undertake a review of the Council website and ensure that the website has links to public documents and presents a user friendly design.  
• Maintain active networks with relevant government departments so that enquiries relevant to these departments can be referred efficiently. | Various Departments | High | 2009 - ongoing |       |
• Support and encourage community participation in education programs offered through other agencies such as DSE, DPI and NECMA. | NRM Dept | Medium | 2009 - ongoing | GAP, Sustainable Water Use Plan, NevRwaste, NEW, NECMA |
| 4.1.3    |            | Encourage best environmental practice in the community | • Lead by example through promotion of best environmental practices applied in Shire operations.  
• Develop information on green businesses and products available within the community to help the public realise sustainable improvements within their communities. | All Departments | Medium | 2009 - ongoing | Business groups, Chamber of commerce. |
| 4.1.4    |            | Provide and promote rebate initiatives available for the community | • Promote the current information on State and Federal government rebates and look for opportunities to assist uptake of initiatives.  
• Investigate rate rebate incentives for landholders who actively undertake exceptional environmental works on their properties, such as those with conservation covenants. | NRM Dept | Medium | 2009-2010 | Resource Smart, Dept of Environment, Water, Heritage & the Arts |
### Key Strategy Direction 4. Supporting and Resourcing the Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Key Strategy Direction Actions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Time-frame</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4.2.1    |            | Support schools undertaking environmentally related activities | • Use environmental event days such as National Tree Day to encourage schools to participate in environmental initiatives.  
• Support ongoing improvement and delivery of the Schools Environmental Education Directory program (SEED).  
• Promote relevant environment funding opportunities to schools.  
• Deliver educational activities on request in schools that demonstrate an integrated and ongoing curriculum for sustainability. | NRM Dept | High | 2009 - ongoing | SEED, NECMA, NevRwaste |
| 4.2.2    |            | Support the activities of local sustainability groups in our communities | • Provide information and resource support to local sustainability and Landcare groups on request.  
• Offer promotion of training opportunities and initiatives delivered through these community channels via Council media formats.  
• Maintain strong connections with group leaders to ensure identification of opportunities for project partnerships. | NRM Dept (Various Depts) | Medium | 2009 - ongoing | Council Plan (Obj 4.4) |
| 4.3.1    |            | Provide a platform for community issues and priorities to be discussed and presented to Council | • Continue operation of the Indigo Shire Environment Advisory Committee. | NRM Dept | High | 2009 ongoing | Council Plan (Obj 4.7), IEAC |
| 4.3.2    |            | Continue to support the north east sustainability and environmental alliances | • Continue membership of the regional North East Greenhouse Alliance to enable local stakeholders to collaborate on a variety of greenhouse projects.  
• Strengthen partnerships with surrounding local government NRM departments through participation in the North East Local Government Environmental Network (NELGEN). | NRM Dept | High | 2009 - ongoing | SV, DSE, NEGHA, NELGEN |
## Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABCB</td>
<td>Australian Building Code Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCA</td>
<td>Building Code of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon Neutral</td>
<td>A product or process that does not add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere over its lifecycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFA</td>
<td>Country Fire Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSE</td>
<td>Department of Sustainability and Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPCD</td>
<td>Department of Planning and Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPI</td>
<td>Department of Primary Industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological Footprint</td>
<td>A measure of human demand on the Earth’s ecosystems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEC</td>
<td>Full name (former Environment Conservation Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAP</td>
<td>Indigo Shire Council Greenhouse Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhouse Gas Emission</td>
<td>Discharge of gases that trap heat within the Earth’s atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEAC</td>
<td>Indigo Environment Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISC</td>
<td>Indigo Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NECMA</td>
<td>North East Catchment Management Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEGHA</td>
<td>North East Greenhouse Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NELGEN</td>
<td>North East Local Government Environment Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>North East Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFEE</td>
<td>National Framework for energy efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>Natural Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAV</td>
<td>Municipal Association of Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERO</td>
<td>Municipal Emergency Response Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFPS</td>
<td>Municipal Fire Prevention Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSS</td>
<td>Municipal Strategic Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak Oil</td>
<td>The point when the maximum rate of global petroleum extraction is reached, after which the rate of production enters terminal decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>Regional Catchment Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEED</td>
<td>School Environment Education Directory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sustainability

In a broad sense it is the ability to continue. In ecological terms it is the ability for biosystems to remain diverse and prolific. For humans it the ability to maintain wellbeing which is generally reflected in the considered and responsible use of the world around us and natural resources.

SV    Sustainability Victoria
TFN    Trust for Nature
Glossary of Links

Internal

Annual Capital Works Program (ongoing)
This annual program outlines Council’s capital expenditure for the year. While the works are mainly focused on construction and maintenance it covers a diverse range of projects such as roads, bridges, plant replacement, and tree planting. The funding for these works is obtained from both rates and government grants.

Biodiversity Assets within Indigo Shire Council - Stage 1 (2007)
This report was undertaken to identify biodiversity assets and priorities within the municipality. This information has provided a platform for stage two of the project that determined whether existing planning controls are sufficient for the protection of these assets. It will also inform development of additional provisions and controls, such as zones, overlays, schedules and local planning policies to meet biodiversity conservation objectives within the Shire. The primary objective of the project was to obtain a broad overview of the biodiversity assets which are likely to experience development pressure in the future.

Biodiversity Planning Project – Stage 2 (2008)
The purpose of this report is to establish a clear strategic direction on how to implement suitable biodiversity planning controls into the current Indigo Shire Planning Scheme, in order to protect biodiversity assets within the projected growth areas within the municipality. This report builds upon the research from stage 1 (above) and makes recommendations on types and levels of protective planning provisions that may be developed or applied to guard such assets.

Code of Work Practice 2004 (Due for review)
The Code of Work Practice operates in conjunction with the Shire’s Roadside Management Plan and provides guidance for road construction and maintenance work undertaken by or on behalf of Council. The objective of the code is to

- ensure a safe and efficient road and associated drainage system and to manage stockpile sites whilst ensuring minimum disturbance to roadside indigenous vegetation
- to minimise the spread of weeds and improve the amenity of the area
- to limit the extent of damage caused by vegetation removal and to ensure that only the minimum vegetation is removed and
- to re-establish indigenous vegetation along roadsides following construction and significant maintenance works.

Communications Strategy (2009)
The policy outlines how Council consults and engages with the Indigo community and stresses the importance of community input into its decision-making processes. The Communications Strategy embraces the sentiments of the earlier policy and combines the principles of communication, community engagement and public relations into one document.

Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (2007)
The Domestic Wastewater Management Plan identifies the environmental and health risks posed by existing and proposed septic tank systems within Indigo and identify the options for minimising these threats.
Wastewater is generated by domestic and commercial actions such as toilet, bathroom, kitchen and laundry activities. It contains high levels of micro-organisms, chemicals and other contaminants capable of causing harm to our health and the environment. Usually wastewater is either transported away from the property for treatment by a centralised sewerage system, or treated on site by means of effluent disposal and a septic system.

The purpose of the plan is to

- protect public health and the physical environment in settled areas and
- promote environmental sustainability by reducing the impacts of domestic wastewater on the local receiving environments.

The plan identifies a need to collect data on the location of new and existing systems, undertake community education, develop a monitoring program and domestic waste water information management system, and undertake analysis of this information.

**Eco Action Plan (2009-2011)**

An action plan developed by Council’s internal Eco Action Group to facilitate improved operational behaviours by staff and advance sustainable objectives. The plan outlines actions, targets, timeframes and responsibilities.

**Greenhouse Action Plan (2009)**

The Greenhouse Action Plan outlines the approach that Council will take to realise a reduction target of 20% on 2005/2006 baselines figures by 2015/2016 for both corporate and community for emissions of greenhouse gases.

The action plan is separated into four objectives

- reduce greenhouse emissions and encourage energy efficiency in all Council operations
- monitor and report on Councils greenhouse gas emissions and progress towards reaching reduction target
- partner with others to achieve greater efficiency in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and
- increase community awareness and facilitate community action.

**Indigo Planning Scheme (2006-2007)**

The Indigo Planning Scheme includes the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and outlines a vision for the community and related policies with regards to land use and development.

The planning scheme identifies a long term direction for the Shire with respect to land use and development, presents a vision for the community and other stakeholders, and provides a rationale for the application of planning controls in the municipality.

**Landcare Support and Environmental Policy (2001)**

This policy outlines Council commitment to encourage and support, coordinate and liaise with Landcare groups and their activities throughout the Shire. Council will foster the protection of the physical environment and promotion of community awareness on the need for environmental sustainability.

**Local Environmental Sustainability Priority Statement (2008)**

The aim of a Local Environmental Sustainability Priority Statement is to enable recognition of the local priorities within a municipality and strengthen relationships between local and the Victorian Government. The statement outlines Council’s key strategies, major achievements in environmental sustainability, and priority environmental or sustainability issues.

**Municipal Fire Prevention Strategy (Amended Annually)**

This strategy identifies the need to plan for long term fire prevention to ensure that the community expectations of a fire-safe environment are achieved. The primary objective is the protection of life and the minimisation of
property loss. The document presents a comprehensive approach to fire prevention based on the identification and appropriate management of all risks associated with fire throughout the Shire. The strategy includes the goals and objectives for Council on fire related risks as well as specific action plans, ranging from community education through to enforcement of legislation provisions. The strategy should be seen as complementary to the Roadside Management Plan, Council Plan, long term policies of Council, and work programs.

Procurement Policy (2009)

The policy outlines Council’s procurement strategy and principles for processes and procedures applied to all purchases of goods, services and works by Council. The purpose of the document is to provide guidance, consistency, and control over procurement activities, with a review of the document annually.

Recreation Plan (2008)

The Recreation Plan aims to ensure that the recreational needs of the community and visitors are met through strategic action planning over the next 10 years. The plan outlines key areas such as future management and improvement of sport and recreation infrastructure, and improving access and information regarding recreational activities.

Roadside Management Plan (Due for review)

The Plan provides a framework for the management of roadsides across the Shire to enhance biodiversity while meeting the needs of roads and roadside users. The Plan outlines objectives and actions for managing roadside activities which may threaten roadside conservation values. Roadsides may contain the legacy of remnant native vegetation which offers valuable habitat and important links for many flora and fauna species.

Strategic Bike Plan (2008)

The Plan identifies local opportunities to develop and expand the existing bicycle network in Indigo. The objective is to improve cycling accessibility and safety, as well as provide links across and between townships. The document also identifies priorities and costs for actions and improvements to current biking facilities.


Stormwater is run-off from urban areas and can potentially carry pollutants into waterways and adversely impact our creeks, rivers and lakes. The key objective of the plan is to improve the management of stormwater in urban areas across the Indigo Shire in order to protect and enhance the environment of receiving waters. Significant actions include increasing community awareness on stormwater issues, stencilling of street drains, review of street sweeping practices, installation of pollutant traps and litter traps, septic tank and sewer assessments, drain stabilisation works, and wetland developments.

A local provision has been included in the Planning Scheme with the aim of improving the quality of surface water. The local policy will provide standards to be met as part of the planning and development application process.

Sustainable Water Use Plan (2006)

The plan provides a strategic framework to achieve improved water management across Council’s assets. The plan highlights clear policy links to Council’s own plans, as well as to regional and state legislation. A reduction target of 20% in water consumption has been adopted on 2000/2001 levels by 2015, and a range of actions are specified as to how to achieve this. The plan has acted as an important platform to seek funding with more than $300 000 in state and federal investment awarded to Indigo to carry out actions identified in the plan.

Specific areas of consideration include reserves, public toilets, swimming pool, playing fields, caravan parks and open spaces.
External

**Code of Practice – Timber production (2007)**

Produced by the Department of Sustainability & Environment the Code outlines directions and guidance for forest managers and operators to deliver sound environmental performance when undertaking commercial timber growing and harvesting operations.

**Council Committee of Management**

Committees of management are formed to act in an advisory and/or decision making capacity to assist Council in the administration and monitoring of a particular function of Council, or community asset. The committee may represent various interested community sectors such as Council staff, community, business, government or non-government agencies.

**Country Fire Authority (CFA)**

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) was formed on the 2 April 1945 when legislation was passed to establish a single coordinated fire fighting organisation for country Victoria. The CFA has now evolved to become one of the world’s largest volunteer based emergency management organisations. There are currently more than 1,200 CFA brigades throughout regional Victoria (except in state forests and parks) and outer metropolitan Melbourne. A majority of the CFA’s activities involves responding to accident rescue and incident response, and suppressing fire activity. The CFA is also involved with community education and awareness programs, safety inspections, incident analysis and fire prevention planning. In addition a large percentage of the CFA budget is spent on infrastructure such as buildings, equipment, uniforms and communications, as well as planning and maintaining incident responses and management capacity. Under the Country Fire Authority Act 1958, CFA receives funding through the State Government, insurance companies (through fire service levies on insurance premiums) and from other companies under Section 80A of the Act.

**Eco Buy**

Eco Buy is a green purchasing program established to encourage the purchasing of environmentally preferable products and services. It is based on the premise that every purchase impacts on the environment in some way, and promotes choosing to buy products and services that are less damaging to our environment and human health than competing products and services that serve the same purpose.

**Hancocks Victoria Plantations**

Australia’s largest private timber plantation company jointly owned by Australian and American Superannuation and investment funds. The company manages approximately 245,000ha of land across Victoria including 50,000 of native vegetation for conservation.

**NevRwaste**

The role of NevRwaste as a regional waste management group is to partner with state and local authorities to implement the State’s waste management policies and strategies at a regional and local level.

**North East Regional Catchment Strategy (Due for review)**

The purpose of the strategy developed by the North East Catchment Management Authority is to set out how the catchments of a region are to be managed, to deliver a coordinated approach to managing our regional natural resources and to work towards improvement targets in catchment condition.

The strategy contains

- assessment of land and water resources of the region and how they are used
- assessment of the features, cause, extent and severity of land degradation
• identification of objectives for the quality of land and water resources
• measures to promote improved use of land and water resources and to manage land degradation
• the actions necessary to implement the strategy and specifies who is responsible for them
• specific procedures for monitoring implementation.

North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA)
Across the Shire the North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA) has the role of protection and restoration of land and water resources within the catchment area. Specifically the NECMA operates through direct management and coordination with other agencies to help manage floodplains, stormwater runoff and pollution, rural drainage, water quality and nutrient management, water supply, catchment protection, wetlands and restoration of degraded waterways.

North East Victorian Firewood Strategy
Firewood is generally viewed as a sustainable, renewable and environmentally friendly source of energy if managed correctly. The North East Victorian Firewood Strategy aims to identify sustainable sources of, and access to, firewood to meet needs over the next twenty years, without compromising the natural environment.

North East Victorian Regional Waste Management Plan (2009)
The North East Victorian Regional Waste Management Plan developed by NevRwaste sets out the objectives and priorities for the management of municipal waste generation and disposal in the north east region, and associated education activities.

North East Water (NEW)
Within Indigo Shire the provider, North East Water is responsible for the supply of water and sewerage for customers within the region. Across the region North East Water provides water and sewerage services to 38 towns, villages and cities in North East Victoria, serving an estimated population of 100 000 people in an area of approximately 20 000 square kilometres.

The Victorian Government’s Our Water Our Future sets out 110 initiatives for water conservation aimed at every sector of the community, seeking to provide water to sustain growth over the next 50 years. The initiatives include the repair of rivers and groundwater systems, pricing water to encourage people to use it more wisely, permanently saving water in our towns and cities through water saving and recycling measures, securing water for farms through water allocation and trading systems, and managing the water allocation to find the right balance between economic, environmental and social values.

Regional Waste Minimisation Strategy (2008)
The Regional Waste Minimisation Working Group (RWMWG) comprises of local governments which deposit waste at the Albury Waste Management Centre, Murray Regional Organisation of Councils voluntary waste group, and NevRwaste. RWMWG developed the strategy to provide a clear direction in the future management of waste services in the Albury Wodonga region. It was developed in accordance with targets set by Victorian and New South Wales state Governments for waste reduction, avoidance and recovery and makes a suite of recommendations for consideration by RWMWG member for implementation.

Water Supply - Demand Strategy (WSDS) (NEW, 2007)
The strategy developed by North East Water aims to balance demand and available water to secure future urban water supplies throughout the region. The strategy provides long term planning and outlines priority actions to meet increased demand for water arising from population and industry growth, the forecast effects of climate change and other environmental factors. The WSDS takes a 50-year perspective and will be reviewed every five years.
Strategies Pending

Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities
The strategy will have a ten year outlook for the Hume Region based on priorities to improve the areas productivity, sustainability and liveability and allow for managed future growth and development across communities. The document will outline a regional framework and set plans with priority action to guide decision making.

Indigo Shire Council Rural Land Use Strategy
The strategy will consider the management of land use across the Shire rural areas with a primary focus on privately owned rural land.

The main objectives will be to protect rural land areas from urban use, and encourage the proper management of these areas through a customised and strategic approach.
References


DSE (Department of Sustainability & Environment). 2008. ‘Climate Change in the North East Region’.


Kneebone, E. 27 April 1999. Personal communication, letter and supporting information received.


Disclaimer: Indigo Shire Council has attempted to ensure that the information contained in this document is as accurate and up to date as possible. You should verify critical information with the relevant authorities.

December 2009.