

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Policy | Integrated Risk Management

To define Council's commitment to and objectives for the effective management of risks to the environment arising from Council's operations

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Service Unit:	Integrated Risk Management		
Responsible Officer:	Manager Integrated Risk		
Responsible Director:	Director Corporate & Community Services		
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1 Background

1.1 Title of the Policy and Commencement Date

The Environmental Management Policy takes effect from 18 March 2019.

1.2 Purpose of the Policy

This policy is intended to express Singleton Council's commitment to protecting and preserving the environment within our local government area and to outline our approach to minimise impacts associated with our activities. It provides direction for Council's overall approach to managing its environmental performance and operating in an environmentally responsible manner.

2 Objective

2.1 Objectives and Coverage of the Policy

Council is committed to ensuring a healthy natural environment for the wellbeing and enjoyment of its community now and into the future. We will:

- develop and maintain an Environmental Management System
- proactively manage the environmental impacts of its operations
- invest our employees with responsibility for the continuous improvement of our environmental performance
- comply with legal and statutory responsibilities under environmental legislation
- communicate and consult on environmental management with the community, regulators, industry and other stakeholders.

3 Application

3.1 Application of this Policy

This policy applies to all employees, councillors, volunteers and contractors of Council.

4 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Term	Meaning
Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)	Effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes
Environmental Management System (EMS)	A system that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhances environmental performance; - fulfils environmental compliance obligations; - ensures achievement of environmental objectives
Risk management	Coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk



5 Principles/Body

The Singleton Council local government area is a diverse region encompassing mountain ranges, natural bushland, rivers, wetlands and lakes. Council is committed to responsible management of the environment within the local government area for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.

In addition, the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework requires councils to integrate social, environmental and economic factors to enable holistic and sustainable planning for the future.

While this policy influences Council's approach to management of environment-related risk, our Integrated Risk Management policy provides the overall direction on Council's systematic management of risk and the two policies should be considered jointly.

5.1 Environmental Management System

The natural environment is a complex and interdependent system making it challenging to accurately quantify and assess impacts. Council will develop, maintain and continuously improve an Environmental Management System that accords with AS/NZS ISO 14001:2016 *Environmental Management Systems* to enhance its environmental performance and to comply with statutory requirements. When developed, the EMS will assist Council to manage its environmental responsibilities in a systematic manner that contributes to the environmental pillar of sustainability and ensures compliance with the conditions of our Environment Protection Licences.

5.2 Ecologically Sustainable Development

Council plays an important role in protecting and enhancing the natural environment in order to achieve Ecologically Sustainable Development. Council's role is "to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development".

The principles of ESD are detailed in the *Local Government Act 1993, NSW* which states that "ecologically sustainable development requires the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes".

5.3 Proactive Management of Environmental Impacts

Council will seek to proactively manage potential environmental impacts by integrating consideration of environmental factors into our operations, activities and decision-making.

We will regularly set and review environmental objectives, targets and procedures to achieve continuous improvement in our environmental performance.

Council will strive to lead by example and support action for sustainability by reducing the use of resources and minimising the generation of greenhouse emissions and waste.

5.4 Responsibility and Accountability for Environmental Performance

Council will raise awareness, encourage participation in environmental matters and invest its employees with responsibility for the continuous improvement of its environmental performance. We will provide adequate training to employees to



ensure they are aware of and comply with this policy, the requirements of our EMS and our statutory reporting responsibilities.

We will require contractors to demonstrate awareness of Singleton Council's Environmental Management policy and the requirements of our EMS.

5.5 Legal and Statutory Compliance

Council will comply with relevant environmental legislation, regulations and codes of practice including, but not limited to, those listed at clause 6 below.

5.6 Communication and Consultation

We will work with staff, volunteers and the local community to raise environmental awareness with a view to mitigating any adverse impact on the environment, enhancing the environment and maintaining healthy ecosystems within the local government area.

6 Relevant Legislation

Local Government Act 1993, NSW

Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991, NSW

Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997, NSW and associated regulations

Smoke-free Environment Act 2000, NSW

AS/NZS ISO 14001:2016 Environmental Management Systems

7 Document Information

Related documents and reference information in this section provides a single reference point to develop and maintain site compliance information.

7.1 Related Documents

Related documents, listed in **Table 7-1** below, are internal documents directly related to or referenced from this document.

Number	Title
POL/9008.3	Integrated Risk Management Policy
18/72766	Corporate Sustainability Action Plan 2018 - 2019
16/71185	Community Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan
17/30172	Singleton Council Community Strategic Plan 2017 - 2027
POL/10065.2	Enforcement and Compliance Policy
TBA	Sustainability Policy

Table 7-1 – Related documents

8 Responsible Officer / Policy Owner

Ownership of this policy rests with the Manager Integrated Risk.



9 Responsibilities

Parties or Persons	Responsibilities
Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive environmental management across the organisation and implement it in their respective areas of accountability • Assign authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities for relevant roles with respect to environmental management • Ensure allocation of appropriate resources for environmental management • Raise awareness this policy and the EMS with staff at all levels of the organisation
Integrated Risk Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement an Environmental Management System • Continually improve the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the EMS
All Staff, Volunteers and Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and manage environment-related risks in their areas of accountability • Communicate those risks to their manager or supervisor in accordance with the corrective action tables and risk escalation process • Minimise environmental harm by preventing pollution and the degradation of ecosystems

10 Approval

As per cover sheet.

11 Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by the Leadership Team to ensure compliance.

12 Review Date

This policy, once adopted, is to remain in force until it is reviewed by Council. This policy is to be reviewed approximately every two (2) years to ensure that it meets legislative requirements.

13 Record Keeping, Confidentiality and Privacy

This policy is to be made available for public viewing as required under the *Government Information (Public Access) 2009, NSW*.

14 Breaches and Sanctions

Any breaches of this Policy will be referred to the General Manager for appropriate action.

