

Frankston City Council Policy	Policy Number:
Environmental Sustainability Policy	Issue: Endorsed OM200 Date 07/12/2010

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Frankston City Council will demonstrate leadership and achieve best practice in Environmental Sustainability in partnership with its community. Environmental Sustainability is the maintenance of functioning natural ecosystems, as well as the control of pollutants and toxins in human environments such as cities and agricultural areas. It is the concept of humans living in such a fashion that their use of natural resources is balanced with the ability of the natural world to generate these resources and enhances the living requirements of other organisms on earth.

2. PRINCIPLES

Frankston City Council will demonstrate leadership, model behaviour and achieve best practice in working with our staff, contractors and the community by:

- increasing awareness of and behaviour change towards greater environmental sustainability;
- working in partnership with the community to develop programs and initiatives that improve environmental sustainability in Frankston;
- preventing harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, applying a precautionary approach;
- preserving, protecting and enhancing the indigenous biodiversity of the municipality including preserving remnant indigenous vegetation, the multiple ecological vegetation communities and the creation of habitat corridors to connect these natural assets. Where remnant indigenous vegetation cannot be preserved, appropriate offsets will be provided;
- practicing and promoting ecologically sustainable development principles (ESD) in planning and development of the city;
- adopting and promoting patterns of production, consumption and reproduction that minimise consumption of natural resources, recycling what we use and replacing non-renewable resources with renewable resources;
- improving the quality of air, land and water for current and future generations;
- researching, planning and taking action for changing environmental conditions and threats;
- monitoring environmental performance outcomes and regularly reviewing and updating environmental policies, strategies and management plans;
- collaborating with other Local Governments in support of environmental sustainability;

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- advocating to State and Federal governments and other local governments for improvements to environmental policies and regulations; and
- abiding by relevant Federal, State and Local Government environmental legislation.

3. REASON FOR POLICY

Frankston City Council is responding to the community’s vision in Frankston 2025 for having a proactive approach to environmental management that conserves natural resources and minimises the environmental impact on the natural world. This vision is based on the inheritance by the current community of a rich and diverse natural heritage - a result of finely balanced interactions between the land and aboriginal cultures.

Positive economic and social environments are dependent upon the health of the natural world and the ecosystem services which it provides such as clean air, clean fresh water, soil and biomass. Evidence points to humanity consuming more resources and destroying ecosystems faster than the natural world can replace lost resources and repair damage to itself illustrated by climate change and peak oil problems. This is an escalating trend at both a local and global scale which, if left unchecked, is leading to catastrophic consequences for humanity and all of life on the planet.

Council has important roles to play in demonstrating leadership and facilitating the wider uptake of environmental sustainability practices in partnership with the community. Council has moral and legal obligations as a custodian of land, steward of community resources and consumer of natural resources to leave the natural environment for future generations of all life in as good a condition as inherited, if not better. Legal obligations for Council relate to Federal and State legislation, Council local laws and previous Council resolutions.

4. SCOPE:

This policy informs decision making and the development of all policy, strategies and actions as well as the delivery of Council’s services and operations and the actions of contractors, staff, and Councillors alike.

This policy has both an internal and an external focus.

5. AUTHORISATION:

This policy is managed by the Chief Executive Officer, Frankston City Council, and is approved by:

..... CEO, Frankston City Council

..... Mayor, Frankston City Council

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6. REVISION DATE/RELEVANT POLICIES SUPERSECEDED

This policy will be reviewed and presented to Council no later than 30 June 2012 or earlier as deemed necessary by Council, and then every four years thereafter.

This policy replaces the Environmental Management Policy and the policies stated in the Environmental Strategy 1998. The intent of these documents is now incorporated into this policy in addition those of:

- Frankston 2025 - Theme 9: Clean and Green
- Frankston City's Council Plan - Strategic Objective 5: Clean and Green for Our Future
- Frankston City Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy (to be developed)

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7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is ultimately the responsibility of the Councillors, CEO, the Corporate Management Team and staff to develop a culture that values the principles of environmental sustainability and embeds them in decision making processes.

It is the responsibility of all Councillors, staff and contractors to understand the concepts and principles of environmental sustainability outlined in this policy and to apply these principles in all planning, decision-making, activities and reporting.

8. POLICY NON-COMPLIANCE:

Non-compliance of this policy may negatively affect the natural environment and consequently individuals and the broader community - compromising nature's and society's ability to flourish and also impacting upon sustainable economic growth and social prosperity of our local communities. It may also negatively affect the Council's ability to continuously improve and exercise its legal and moral obligations.

9. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Federal Legislation
 - Kyoto Protocol 2007
 - Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- State Legislation and Policy
 - Our Environment Our Future - Victoria's Environmental Sustainability Framework 2005
 - Our Water Our Future 2004
 - Victorian Native Vegetation Management: A Framework for Action 2002
 - Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
 - Planning and Environment Act 1987
 - Environment Protection Act 1970
- Council Local Laws
 - General Local Law No. 7 and its Amendments
- Council Policies and Plans
 - Frankston 2025 – A vision for our community's future
 - Frankston City Council Plan 2009 – 2013
 - Sustainability Policy
 - Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009 – 2013
 - Economic Development Strategy
 - Municipal Strategic Statement
- Relevant Reference Documents
 - Earth Charter
 - Melbourne Principles of Sustainable Cities
 - Local Agenda 21

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10. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

This policy will be incorporated into key decision making processes of Council.

Its implementation will be outlined in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy which will be developed in 2010-2011. Existing plans and strategies that will fall under the umbrella of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy are:

- Frankston City Council's Greenhouse Strategy
- Frankston City Council's Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Plan (in development)
- Frankston City Council's Sustainable Water Use Plan
- Frankston City Council's Waste Minimisation and Management Plan
- Litter Prevention Plan
- Stormwater Management Plan
- Greening Frankston Policy
- Street Tree Master Plan
- Street Tree Management Strategy
- Various management plans for Natural Reserves and Waterways

11. DEFINITIONS

Biomass - The total mass of living matter within a given unit of environmental area.

Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)- The Victorian *Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Act 2003* (the Act) defines ESD as development that improves the total quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends.¹

Ecosystem - The international Convention on Biological Diversity defines an ecosystem as a 'dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit'.²

Ecosystem Services - They are the services that nature provides which are essential for maintaining the Earth in a state that can support life. They include regulation of the atmosphere and climate; protection from the effects of extreme weather; provision and storage of water; production and protection of soils and associated nutrients; treatment of wastes; provision of systems that support biodiversity; food and fibre production; provision of natural medicines; opportunities for outdoor recreation; and a range of cultural values. These services are complex and cannot easily or economically be replaced by technology, at least within the timescale in which humans have degraded some ecosystems.³

Environment - can be broadly defined as the Earth, its natural features and resources and the eco-systems that sustain life and all life forms. It must be understood that everything on the planet is interconnected and interdependent and the continuance of life on earth is reliant on maintaining healthy biodiversity and eco-system processes including the naturally evolved plants and animals, clean air, fresh water, climate, soil, minerals and energy.

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Indigenous – an organism that is native to a given region or ecosystem and its presence in that region is the result of only natural evolutionary processes.

Sustainability—In its broadest sense, it is defined as: *“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future Report, 1987)*

In a localised sense, it is defined as: *“The Frankston community will prosper socially and economically, while preserving the ability of our natural environment to support a good quality of life for current and future generations” (Frankston 2025 community consultation).*

12. REFERENCES

- 1 *State of the Environment Victoria 2008*, Dr. Ian MacPhail, published by the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability, State of Victoria, 2009 ISSN 1449-938X, pg 41
- 2 *Ibid*, pg 42
- 3 *Ibid*