



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

ACTION PLAN 2026–2030





Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and pays deep respect to all First Nations peoples and communities with enduring cultural connections to East Gippsland, who have cared for and nurtured Country for tens of thousands of years.

We honour and celebrate the rich diversity, living cultures, and ongoing contributions for all First Nations peoples who live, work, visit, and play across East Gippsland.

We also acknowledge the many First Nations communities who, together, continue to shape and contribute to the region we know as East Gippsland. The place where we, as Local Government, deliver services and support our community.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026–2030 outlines East Gippsland Shire Council's next phase of delivery under the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022–2032. It translates long-term strategic goals into practical, coordinated actions that respond to the growing challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, natural resource management challenges and increasing climate-related risks.

Building on the foundations established in the first action plan (2022–26), this Action Plan marks a shift toward organisation-wide implementation and embedding change. Council has already made significant progress in areas such as transitioning to renewable energy, reducing emissions, diverting waste, and building community resilience. The 2026–2030 phase focuses on embedding sustainability into everyday decision-making, operations, and service delivery to achieve long-term environmental, social, and economic benefits while responding to legislative obligations.

The Action Plan is structured around seven key goals from the strategy, that will collectively address environmental protection, supporting Traditional Owner partnerships, sustainable resource use, community engagement, economic development, and climate resilience.

A central focus of the Plan is Council's commitment to achieving net zero emissions from its operations by 2032.

Key priorities include fleet electrification, renewable energy adoption, energy efficiency improvements, and integrating emissions considerations into procurement. Alongside mitigation efforts, the Plan also emphasises adapting to climate impacts through resilient infrastructure, improved risk assessment, and community preparedness initiatives.

Delivery will be supported through existing Council programs, targeted investment, and seeking external funding opportunities where available. Progress will be monitored through established reporting frameworks, including annual public reporting, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Overall, the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026–2030 provides a clear and practical roadmap for advancing sustainability across East Gippsland. By embedding climate and environmental considerations into all aspects of Council's work, the Plan aims to reduce emissions, protect natural assets, strengthen community resilience, and support a sustainable and prosperous future for current and future generations.

1. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This four year Action Plan delivers the next phase of East Gippsland Shire Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022–2032 (the Strategy), translating goals into practical projects for 2026–2030.

The strategy and action plan sit within Council's broader strategic framework:

- > The Community Vision 2040 sets the long term aspirations for our people, place, environment and economy;
- > The Council Plan 2025–2029 (the Council Plan) then plans Council's four year priorities and themes; and
- > This Action Plan specifies the sustainability actions that Council will deliver, partner on, or advocate for to advance the strategies priorities.

Council's work is guided by four key themes of the Council Plan: Community Wellbeing and Social Responsibility, Prosperity, Making the Most of What We've Got, and Managing Council Well. This Action Plan helps enact these themes by focusing on what matters most to the community, caring for our natural environment, creating new opportunities through the circular economy, and supporting strong, healthy and resilient communities.

This Action Plan strongly supports Theme 3 of the Council Plan, Making the Most of What We've Got, by focusing on sustainable resource management, climate risk planning, and safeguarding heritage. Actions within this Plan prioritise getting greater value from existing infrastructure, improving how we manage water, energy and materials, and protecting the natural environment.

The Strategy recognises that climate change and the loss of nature pose real and growing risks for East Gippsland. Council will take direct action where it can, such as through how we manage assets, fleet and procurement, and work alongside others through partnerships and advocacy where influence is shared. As a result, this Action Plan brings together practical, organisation wide actions like biodiversity restoration, climate participation and resilience building, reflecting a shared approach to roles and responsibilities.



Community feedback has strongly shaped this Plan. Engagement undertaken for both the Strategy and the Council Plan highlighted clear priorities: meaningful climate action, protection of our landscapes and biodiversity, and working in partnership with Traditional Owner groups. These expectations have influenced not only what's in the Action Plan, but also how Council will work with partners and communities as the actions are delivered.



2. VISION AND COMMITMENTS

Council's vision for Environmental Sustainability:

“By 2032, sustainable behaviour and decision making will be embedded into all aspects of how East Gippslanders live and work. East Gippsland’s natural environment will be enhanced, connected and resilient, and East Gippsland will be recognised as a leader in regional climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

Delivering this vision will require consistent leadership, strong partnerships and shared responsibility across Council and the wider community. This Action Plan provides a clear, practical pathway for turning goals into action, prioritising effort that provides the best outcomes. Through the delivery of the actions, Council seeks to embed environmental sustainability into everyday practice and ensure progress toward a resilient, thriving East Gippsland for current and future generations.

Over the next 10 years, we are committed to:



Managing and mitigating the impact of climate change



Achieving sustainable resource management



Facilitating living and working within the capacity of the local environment

Our goals over the next 10 years are:

- 1/ Conservation of the natural environment and biodiversity
- 2/ Sustainable management of natural resources (includes climate mitigation)
- 3/ Community participation in the climate response
- 4/ Respect and alignment with the rights of the Traditional Owner Groups
- 5/ Environmental sustainability supports sustainable economic growth and new job opportunities
- 6/ Growth in the circular economy
- 7/ Community resilience to respond to increasing climate risk and natural disasters

3. REGULATION FRAMEWORK

The delivery of actions is guided by applicable legislative at both state and national levels. These frameworks establish Council's responsibilities and influence how sustainability outcomes are established and prioritised.

Key legislation relevant to this Action Plan includes:

- > Climate Change Act 2017;
- > Local Government Act 2020;
- > Planning and Environment Act 1987;
- > Environment Protection Act 2017;
- > Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988;
- > Water Act 1989;
- > Emergency Management Act 2013;
- > Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999; and
- > Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.



4. INTEGRATING CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS COUNCIL

Making real progress on climate change and environmental sustainability requires action across the whole organisation. Council will seek to embed sustainability into day to day decision making, planning and service delivery, rather than treating it as a stand alone activity.

This Action Plan supports a shared approach, where all teams need to understand their role in managing climate risks and supporting sustainable outcomes. Sustainability will be considered in key Council processes, including asset management, procurement, project planning, budgeting and risk reporting.

Council will build internal capability by:

- > embedding climate risks, sharing available data, and sharing lessons learned across services; and
- > clearly linking sustainability actions to Council Plan priorities and service responsibilities.

In addition, clear governance arrangements and regular reporting will help track progress, address challenges early and ensure actions remain aligned with Council priorities.

By embedding climate change and sustainability considerations into everyday work, Council can improve long term decision making, reduce costs, and better support community resilience and environmental outcomes across East Gippsland.

5. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATING OUTCOMES

In line with the Community Engagement Policy, Council will take a proactive approach to engaging with community and closing the loop by communicating outcomes of the Action Plan. The community and stakeholders can expect to remain informed of the Action Plans progress, achievements and key milestones through a variety of communication and engagement tools.

Council will communicate outcomes by:

- > Providing regular updates on progress through established reporting channels, including the Environmental Sustainability Annual Report and the Environment Matters Newsletter;
- > Using digital media platforms with targeted communications to reach a broad audience across East Gippsland, including business and industry; and
- > Ensuring transparency through timely and open access to information on projects, performance and delivery.

Internal communication will support the sharing of outcomes across Council, building staff awareness of progress and reinforcing shared responsibility for delivering sustainability initiatives.

Through the communication of outcomes, Council will demonstrate accountability in progressing the outcomes of the strategy.



6. PROGRESS TO DATE

Over the first four years of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy, Council focused on putting foundational actions in place. This initial phase prioritised actions that have strengthened Council's ability to respond to climate risks, deliver sustainability initiatives more consistently, and work more effectively with partners and the community.

7 Council-owned public electric vehicle charging stations	2 Fully electric mowers added to the fleet	18% Decline in proportion of organic waste entering landfill
29 Water usage monitoring devices on Council and community facilities	1,100+ mWh saved in electricity by swapping streetlights to LED in June 2022	2 Landfill gas flares installed to reduce emissions into the atmosphere
29 Projects for local community energy generation to improve resilience in emergencies	12,000+ Tonnes of CO ₂ -e saved through a power purchase agreement since January 2022	

Council is now seeking to move into a new phase that focuses on embedding sustainability more broadly across the organisation and services. This means shifting towards practical delivery and identifying opportunities to generate efficiencies for Council and the community. By integrating sustainability into day to day operations, Council can reduce long term costs, improve service outcomes and support community wide action.

The 2026–2030 Action Plan reflects this shift by placing greater emphasis on delivering tangible outcomes. Key areas of focus include electrification of Council assets, transitioning the vehicle fleet to electric vehicles, progressing climate risk assessment and adaptation projects, and continuing the delivery of integrated water management initiatives.

This next four year phase is also critical to advancing Council's commitment to achieve net zero emissions for Council operations by 2032. The actions outlined in this Plan build on progress already made and represent an important step toward reducing emissions, improving resilience and supporting a more sustainable future for East Gippsland.

7. EMISSIONS REDUCTION

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a central part of Council's response to climate change and is a key outcome of the Strategy. As outlined in the Strategy, Council is committed to achieving net zero emissions from its operations by 2032. This has been planned out through Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan.

Implementation of emissions reduction initiatives over the first phase of the Strategy has resulted in measurable outcomes.

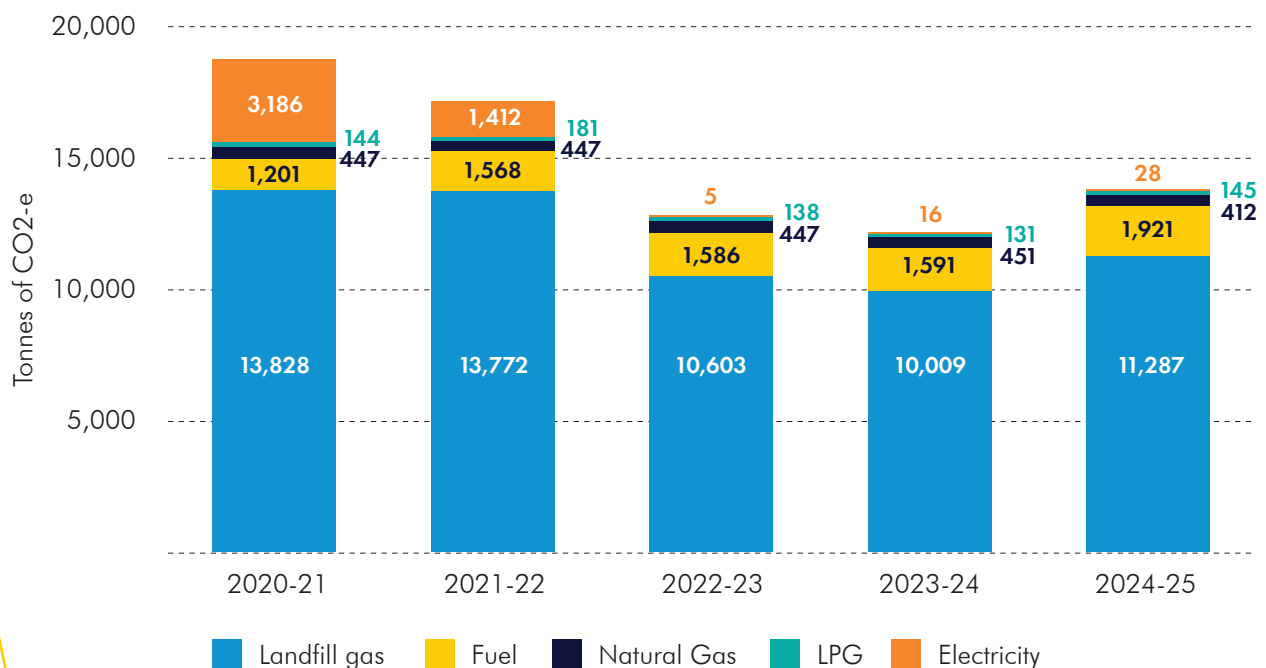
These reductions reflect a planned focus on high-impact emissions sources, particularly landfill gas and electricity use. While projects have delivered significant reductions, further work is required to accelerate progress toward our goal.

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan outlines each emissions source and identifies strategies to reduce or eliminate emissions across them. This approach aims to deliver both immediate reductions and longer-term structural change in how Council operates and delivers services.

The 2026–2030 Action Plan represents a critical delivery phase for emissions reduction, with a stronger focus on implementation at scale and integration across the organisation. Key priorities include:

- > Electric fleet and plant transition;
- > Energy efficiency and asset optimisation;
- > Renewable energy and emerging technologies;
- > Sustainable design and infrastructure; and
- > Procurement and supply chain emissions.

ANNUAL EMISSIONS BY TYPE



8. DEVELOPING CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Strengthening climate resilience is essential to ensuring that Council assets, infrastructure and services continue to perform under changing and increasingly extreme climate conditions. Council will take a proactive, risk based approach to embedding climate resilience across the full asset lifecycle, from long term planning and design through to maintenance, renewal and replacement. This includes integrating climate projections and adaptation pathways into asset management systems, capital works programs and service planning processes.

This will seek to improve longevity of assets by reducing exposure to climate risks such as flooding, heat, bushfire and coastal inundation, and designing infrastructure that can adapt over time. Council will build staff capability by making sure climate risks are considered in everyday decisions, improving the data we have access to, and better linking asset planning with Council's broader strategic planning and budgeting. This will help embed climate risks identification and planning part of normal business.

Council also recognises that community capacity is critical to building long term resilience. Council will work in partnership with communities, agencies and other local organisations to improve awareness of climate risks, support preparedness for emergencies, and enable locally led adaptation responses. This includes delivering place based engagement, improving access to information, and supporting initiatives.

By combining resilient infrastructure with informed, empowered communities, Council can reduce vulnerability to climate impacts and support faster recovery following disruptive events. This integrated approach reflects Council's broader role across its circles of control and influence—taking direct action where it can, while working collaboratively with others to strengthen resilience across East Gippsland.



9. ACTION PLAN (2026–2030)

Goal 1 — Conserve Natural Environment & Biodiversity

Objective: Protect, restore and enhance biodiversity, ecosystems and natural landscapes by improving the health and resilience of native species and habitats, and strengthening ecological connectivity.

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
1.1 CP	Finalise the East Gippsland Bushland Strategy to guide the protection of important biodiversity values on Council managed land, and to identify funding opportunities and resourcing needed to support long-term environmental management.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X				Council budget and/or external funding
1.2	Improve compliance with environmental controls in the Planning Scheme through education materials, fact sheets and targeted engagement, with a focus on minimising offsets.	Planning and Development	Infrastructure and Open Space	X	X			Within existing resources
1.3	Embed stronger natural environment and biodiversity requirements into council's strategic planning to transition from discretionary to mandatory outcomes.	Planning and Development				X	X	Within existing resources
1.4	Update the Roadside Vegetation Strategy to preserve important ecological values and inform future management.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Infrastructure and Open Space; Planning		X	X		Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding

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CP Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 2 Deliverables
EDS Economic Development Strategy 2022-2032

RAP Reconciliation Action Plan 2025-2027
WTP 10 Year Waste and Recycling Services Transition Plan

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
1.5 CP	Advocate for the inclusion of local knowledge and reference groups in the management of select natural areas across East Gippsland, strengthening stewardship and ensuring community perspectives inform land management decisions.	Communications, Engagement and Advocacy	Economic Development; Infrastructure and Open Space; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X				Within existing resources
1.6 CP	Work with key stakeholders to develop an 'opt in' landowner roadside management pilot program to support landowners to reduce weeds and support improved management outcomes.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Infrastructure and Open Space	X	X			Within existing resources
1.7 CP	Work with partners to reassess the need and potential benefits of establishing a Gippsland Lakes Research and Education Centre, ensuring future decisions are informed by regional priorities and evidence.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X			Within existing resources
1.8 CP	Deliver the roadside weed management program, including education and support to landowners and community groups.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources and/or additional external funding
1.9 CP	Establish partnerships with volunteer organisations and environmental groups to partner in the management of natural environment values on publicly owned land.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Infrastructure and Open Space	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
1.10	Improve community understanding of native vegetation and canopy tree removal on private land by providing clear guidance on planning controls, approval pathways and alternatives, supported by monitoring to ensure requirements are met.	Planning and Development				X	X	Within existing resources

LEGEND



Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 2 Deliverables



Reconciliation Action Plan 2025-2027



Economic Development Strategy 2022-2032



10 Year Waste and Recycling Services Transition Plan

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
1.11 EDS	Support a high-quality, sustainable visitor experiences through coordinated destination planning and place stewardship to preserve important environmental values.	Economic Development		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
1.12 CP	Support the health of the Gippsland Lakes by delivering education programs on correct waste disposal and implementing actions identified in the Integrated Water Management Plans.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Assets and Engineering	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources and/or additional external funding
1.13	Continue to manage Council's natural reserve network to balance the protection of biodiversity, appropriate asset management and community access.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
1.14	Develop and deliver education for internal teams relating appropriate vegetation management and protection of natural values.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation			X	X		Within existing resources
1.15	Continue to work with partners and stakeholder groups to collaborate on regionally prioritised biodiversity outcomes.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
1.16	Create a data inventory that provides a snapshot of important environmental values and assets managed by Council to support informed decision making.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation			X			Requires additional Council budget
1.17 WTP	Work with relevant agencies and community to develop initiatives and programs to reduce illegal dumping and pollution.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation			X	X	X	Within existing resources
1.18	Embed protection of biodiversity values and sensitive natural environments into strategic planning for business assets located near coastal, marine and environmentally sensitive areas.	Council Enterprises	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources

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Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 2 Deliverables



Reconciliation Action Plan 2025-2027



Economic Development Strategy 2022-2032



10 Year Waste and Recycling Services Transition Plan

Goal 2 — Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

Objective: The sustainable management of natural resources refers to more efficient use of water, energy, fuel for transport, and sustainable use of land, soil and raw materials to support agriculture and industry across the public and private sectors.

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
2.1	Advocate for standardised ESD principles in state and local planning policy and enforce their application through land use planning to deliver sustainable housing outcomes.	Planning and Development		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
2.2	Oversee implementation of the Emissions Reduction Plan to achieve net zero Council operations, that aligns emissions reduction, operational resilience and generate savings.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Assets and Engineering; Recreational Facilities	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
2.3	Improve fleet efficiency and reduce emissions through electrification, better vehicle utilisation and policy development.	Assets and Engineering	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding
2.4	Explore opportunities for the use of geothermal technology in West Bairnsdale.	Recreational Facilities	Infrastructure Projects; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X			Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding
2.5	Integrate sustainability and climate change considerations into the Project Management Framework, linking ESD Policy Guidelines and the Climate Risk Assessment to capital project planning.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Assets and Engineering Infrastructure Projects Project Management Framework	X	X			Within existing resources
2.6	Integrate energy and other efficiency measures into the planning, operation and renewal of aquatic facilities through the Aquatic Facilities Strategy.	Recreational Facilities		X	X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding

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#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
2.7	Incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) features into asset renewal and maintenance projects to reduce energy, water use and protect against whole of life environmental impacts.	Assets and Engineering	Infrastructure Projects; Project Management Framework	X	X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding
2.8	Implement expanded use of recycled, reused and alternative water sources to improve water security and drought proof priority Council assets.	Assets and Engineering	Infrastructure and Open Space; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding
2.9 CP	Complete detailed design for the Lakes Entrance Northern Growth Area and Lanes Road drainage projects to support housing growth and protect the Gippsland Lakes, noting that construction timing for the Lakes Entrance drainage is to be determined.	Assets and Engineering	Planning and Development	X				Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding
2.10 CP	Subject to budget, commence the implementation of the Stormwater Management Plan to improve stormwater quality, manage flood risk and support sustainable urban development.	Assets and Engineering	Planning and Development	X	X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding
2.11	Undertake audits to identify opportunities to reduce energy, water, waste and wastage across Council facilities.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Assets and Engineering	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
2.12	Develop and participate in training to accelerate the embedding of circular economy, climate adaptation, nature consideration throughout council and council contractors to ensure cross team collaboration and shared sustainability outcomes.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
2.13	Assess and model viable low emissions replacement options for the Raymond Island Ferry, including electrification.	Council Enterprises	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget

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Reconciliation Action Plan 2025-2027



Economic Development Strategy 2022-2032



10 Year Waste and Recycling Services Transition Plan

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
2.14	Integrate energy, water and resource efficiency considerations into strategic planning for Council operated commercial services, and establish a pathway to eco certification for the Mallacoota foreshore holiday park.	Council Enterprises	Economic Development; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
2.15	Strengthen Planning Scheme policy and controls to require the delivery of best practice Water Sensitive Urban Design in new urban development.	Planning and Development		X	X			Within existing resources
2.16	Deliver renewable water initiatives that were identified through the water audits at the Bairnsdale Aquatic and Recreation Centre and Lakes Entrance Aquadome.	Recreational Facilities	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X		Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding
2.17	Review internal processes to drive reductions in utility costs and support reinvestment in sustainable initiatives and projects.	Finance	All Assets Owners; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation			X	X	Within existing resources

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Goal 3 — Community Participation in the Climate Response

Objective: Enable and support residents, businesses and community groups to actively reduce emissions and strengthen climate resilience by improving access to practical information, programs and tools that encourage sustainable choices.

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
3.1 CP	Commence the Active Transport Strategy to guide future investment in safe, accessible and sustainable travel options.	Community Futures	Infrastructure and Open Space; Planning	X	X			Requires additional Council budget
3.2	Integrate Ministerial Direction No. 22 and Council's Climate Risk Assessment into relevant planning scheme amendments to embed climate change mitigation and resilience into strategic planning and demonstrate measurable adaptation outcomes.	Planning and Development	Community Resilience and Emergency Management; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X			Within existing resources
3.3	Develop a policy and framework for managing the installation and operation of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure across East Gippsland.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Infrastructure Projects	X	X			Within existing resources
3.4	Identify and implement opportunities to reduce water and utility consumption at community facilities through data led analysis and collaboration with Committees of Management.	Recreational Facilities	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources and/or additional external funding
3.5	Undertake place based planning and engagement activities that build community understanding of local climate risks and enable active participation in the development and delivery of local climate responses.	Community Futures	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
3.6	Support community events that support people and community to take leadership on mitigating and responding to the impacts of climate change.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources

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#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
3.7	Update community information packages to promote sustainability initiatives and provide guidance on electrification opportunities.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation			X	X		Within existing resources
3.8	Engage with youth and school programs about the impact and response to climate change, with initiatives such as the Youth Ambassadors and Resource SMART School program.	Community Resilience and Emergency Management	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
3.9 CP	Develop a business case for using Class A water (and other alternative water supply options) to 'drought proof' priority Council active and passive recreation assets.	Infrastructure and Open Space;	Assets and Engineering Recreational Facilities; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X				Within existing resources
3.10	Enhance procurement practices to improve cross Council collaboration, clarify sustainability reporting requirements, and support effective contractor emissions reporting.	Finance	Infrastructure Projects; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	Within existing resources
3.11 WTP	Work with industry to establish commercial food waste collection and composting-targeting food processors and hospitality sectors.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation				X		Within existing resources
3.12 CP	Support community involvement in the implementation of recommendations from the Great Outdoors Taskforce, including the Healthy Forests Pilot Program.	Economic Development		X				Within existing resources

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Goal 4 — Respect & Alignment with Rights of Traditional Owner Groups

Objective: Strengthen and deepen partnerships with Traditional Owners to embed cultural knowledge, values and land management practices into environmental stewardship.

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
					26-27	28-29	29-30	
4.1 RAP	Develop and implement relevant Natural Resource Agreements and practices with First Nations land management organisations and groups.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation			X	X		Within existing resources
4.2 RAP	Increase First Nations-led input and knowledge into managing natural assets and strategic environmental projects .	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Infrastructure and Open Space	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources and/or additional external funding
4.3 RAP	Provide shared learning opportunities between Council and First Nations organisations and groups in traditional and modern natural resource management practices.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
4.4 RAP	Work towards formalising partnerships through an MOU with the strategic operations of First Nations land management organisations, people and groups.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Community Resilience and Emergency Management; Communications, Engagement and Advocacy	X	X			Within existing resources
4.5	Implement recommendations from the Aboriginal and Cultural Recovery and Resilience Strengthening Program (Lessons Acknowledged and Learnt Report) to build stronger relationships and support joint projects with Traditional Owner communities and groups.	Community Resilience and Emergency Management		X	X			Within existing resources and/or additional external funding
4.6	Continue to develop and implement Community Emergency Management Plans (CEMPs), prioritising high-risk communities, including Traditional Owner organisations and groups.	Community Resilience and Emergency Management		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
4.7	Integrate cultural considerations into the Mallacoota Foreshore Master Plan, including evaluating the learning from the engagement activity.	Council Enterprises	Community Resilience and Emergency Management	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources

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Goal 5 — Sustainability Supports Economic Growth & Jobs

Objective: Support a sustainable and resilient local economy by fostering growth in green industries, enabling new job opportunities and encouraging businesses to adopt low emissions and environmentally responsible practices.

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
5.1 EDS	Strengthen the resilience, growth and long-term success of local businesses through proactive engagement that supports sustainable growth and cost savings.	Economic Development			X	X	X	Within existing resources and/or additional external funding
5.2 WTP	Deliver education programs and campaigns to enhance resource recovery and maximise material diversion from landfill across community, business and industry.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
5.3 WTP	Work with Business and industry to leverage cost savings and create new investment and job creation in a circular economy.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Economic Development		X	X	X	Within existing resources
5.4 EDS	Build stronger collaboration across the visitor economy industry, government and regional partners to embed eco-destination accreditation and support sustainable visitor experiences.	Economic Development		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
5.5 EDS	Increase workforce participation and capability by strengthening education, training and career pathways in new energy and other emerging industries.	Economic Development		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
5.6 EDS	Develop a structured pipeline of business growth and investment opportunities aligned with East Gippsland's economic priorities and natural resource strengths.	Economic Development		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
5.7 EDS	Drive collaboration and innovation with community, business and industry to develop local circular economy initiatives and create job opportunities.	Economic Development		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources

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Goal 6 — Growth in the Circular Economy

Objective: Reduce waste, increase reuse/recycling and stimulate circular markets.

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
6.1 CP	Progress the development of a composting facility that reuses food organics and garden organics and continue working with industry partners to expand the use of composting products across the region.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Infrastructure and Projects	X	X			Capital funded project
6.2	Establish the Bairnsdale Regional Landfill and Transfer Station precinct as a 'Circular Economy Hub' to capture resource recovery supply chains and attract and co-locate value-added processing.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
6.3	Support communities and social enterprises to establish material recovery, reuse and new job opportunities.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation			X	X		Within existing resources
6.4 WTP	Reduce Council waste generation through avoidance, minimisation and use of recovered material by embedding within policies and procedures to support and achieve behaviour change.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
6.5	Support local circular economy initiatives through tip shop services and community programs such as repair cafés, reuse shops, tool libraries, mobile recycling and exchange initiatives.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Infrastructure and Projects		X	X		Within existing resources
6.6	Support utilisation of composted products through farm trials and partnerships with local agribusiness.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Economic Development	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources

LEGEND

CP Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 2 Deliverables
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#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
6.7 WTP	Assess circular economy and waste management impacts and support the co design of local, scalable solutions through place based planning in remote communities.	Community Futures	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
6.8 WTP	Increase resource recovery through waste infrastructure design, investment, services planning, and logistics.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Infrastructure and Projects	X	X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget and/or external funding
6.9 CP	Use procurement and the project management framework to increase the use of recycled materials and support contractors to build their capability through education and shared learning .	Project Management Framework	Finance; Infrastructure and Projects			X	X	Within existing resources
6.10	Assess circular economy and waste management impacts and support the co design of local, scalable solutions through place based planning in remote communities.	Community Futures	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
6.11	Progressively increase the use of recycled materials in Council infrastructure and maintenance works by trailing, evaluating and integrating viable recycled products into roads, pavements and other construction projects	Infrastructure and projects			X	X	X	Within existing resources

LEGEND



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Economic Development Strategy 2022-2032



10 Year Waste and Recycling Services Transition Plan

Goal 7 — Community Resilience to Climate Risk & Natural Disasters

Objective: Build adaptation capacity for heat, bushfire, flood, storms and sea-level rise.

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
7.1 CP	Work with the Climate Risk working group to pilot the Climate Risk Assessment Tool to test its effectiveness across council and report on the outcomes.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Community Resilience and Emergency Management	X	X			Within existing resources
7.2	Engage with local agencies and other stakeholders to identify and mitigate risks to assets and critical infrastructure due to the impacts of climate change.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	Community Resilience and Emergency Management		X	X	X	Within existing resources
7.3	Integrate Council's climate risks and opportunities assessment into the Risk Register to meet AASB S2 requirements, enabling consistent risk treatment planning and reporting across Council.	Governance	Finance			X	X	Requires additional Council budget
7.4	Develop and assign treatment plans for climate related risks identified through the updated Risk Register, consistent across Council services.	Governance		X	X			Requires additional Council budget
7.5	Prepare Council for emerging sustainability related financial disclosure requirements, including AASB S2, by strengthening governance, improving cross functional collaboration, and developing consistent processes for collecting and using sustainability data.	Finance	Governance; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X		Requires additional Council budget
7.6 CP	Work with partners to educate and raise awareness in relation to climate impacts.	Community Resilience and Emergency Management	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources

LEGEND

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#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
7.7	Update the Asset Management Strategy to improve resilience of Council and community assets by accommodating for the impacts of climate change.	Assets and Engineering		X	X			Within existing resources
7.8	Improve the resilience of assets and critical infrastructure by incorporating climate risk mitigation and adaptation planning into Asset Management planning.	Assets and Engineering	Community Resilience and Emergency Management; Infrastructure Projects; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
7.9	Strengthen community resilience through the delivery of self-sufficient infrastructure and assets that support communities during emergencies.	Community Resilience and Emergency Management		X	X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget
7.10	Deliver the East Gippsland Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP), targeting high-risk areas identified through the Climate Risk Assessment to enhance community resilience and preparedness.	Community Resilience and Emergency Management		X	X	X	X	Requires additional Council budget
7.11	Embed climate change risks and opportunities into service planning templates to ensure climate factors become part of routine business planning and decision making.	Corporate Strategy	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X			Within existing resources
7.12	Build organisational capacity through training on climate related risks identified in the Risk Register and their impacts on Council operations, roles, and decision making.	Governance	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation			X	X	Requires additional Council budget
7.13	Monitor, review, and update climate related risks and treatment plans through the Risk Register on a regular basis to ensure continued effectiveness, organisational accountability, and alignment with evolving climate risks, Council operations, and AASB S2 requirements.	Governance				X	X	Within existing resources

LEGEND


Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 2 Deliverables



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10 Year Waste and Recycling Services Transition Plan

#	ACTION	LEAD TEAM	SUPPORTING TEAMS	YEARS PLANNED				RESOURCING
				26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	
7.14 WTP	Ensure timely, safe, and efficient resource recovery and waste disposal services to support community resilience and operational readiness before, during, and after emergency events.	Sustainability and Waste Minimisation		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
7.15	Integrate climate and natural disaster resilience into strategic business planning for Council business assets through the development of master plans and business plans.	Council Enterprises	Community Resilience and Emergency Management; Sustainability and Waste Minimisation	X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
7.16 EDS	Improve resident retention by strengthening settlement experiences, social connection and community participation.	Economic Development		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources
7.17 EDS	Support informed settlement decisions by improving access to practical, accurate and balanced information about living in East Gippsland.	Economic Development		X	X	X	X	Within existing resources

LEGEND

CP Council Plan 2025-2029 Year 2 Deliverables
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10. MONITORING, EVALUATION & REPORTING

Council delivers the Environmental Sustainability Strategy through rolling four-year action plans that align with each Council Plan term. This approach allows actions to remain responsive to priorities as they arise, such as changing climate risks, new legislation, funding opportunities and community priorities. By reviewing progress and refreshing actions on a four-year cycle, Council can focus effort where it will have the greatest impact.

This Action Plan provides a framework for action over the next four years as we work deliver on the goals of the Sustainability Strategy. As circumstances change, Council may review and update actions where appropriate to ensure alignment with Council priorities, resourcing, emerging opportunities. Progress of actions and any significant changes to the plan will be communicated through Council's established reporting processes.

Council will monitor delivery of this Action Plan through already established reporting systems, ensuring progress on actions is tracked and communicated clearly. Progress against the seven Strategy goals and accompanying actions is reported annually through the Environmental Sustainability Annual Report, which provides an update for Council and the community.

Council will continue to publish quarterly updates on projects and initiatives through the Environment Matters Newsletter, and other Council media channels and publications.

11. FUNDING AND RESOURCING PLAN

Delivery of the Action Plan will be supported through a combination of Council investment, external funding and partnerships, reflecting the shared responsibility required to achieve the Strategy's goals.

Actions will be prioritised based on strategic alignment, community benefit and available resources. Resourcing will remain flexible to respond to funding opportunities, emerging risks and changing conditions, ensuring an adaptive and responsive approach to delivery.

Achieved within existing resources

A high proportion of actions will be delivered using existing Council resources by embedding sustainability into current programs, service delivery, asset management and capital works. These actions are primarily within Council's direct control and will be progressed through business as usual activities, improved coordination across teams, and more efficient use of existing budgets and staff capacity.

Requires additional Council resourcing

Some actions will require additional funding and resourcing above existing budgets. These actions are typically larger scale, more complex, or cross organisational initiatives and will be considered through Council's annual budget process.

External funding and partnerships

Council will actively seek State and Commonwealth funding to deliver priority actions. This includes enabling partnerships by working with Traditional Owners, agencies, industry and community partners. These partnerships will be essential to leverage additional resources and deliver outcomes beyond Council's direct control.

12. RISK MANAGEMENT

Key risks to delivery of the Action Plan include increasing climate extremes and disasters, variability in external funding programs, and constraints within recycling and recycled materials markets.

Council will manage risks through phased delivery of actions, strong partnerships with government, Traditional Owners, industry and community organisations, and a diversified approach to funding. An adaptive management approach, supported by established monitoring and annual reporting processes, will enable Council to respond to changing conditions, emerging risks and new opportunities over the life of the Action Plan.

13. GLOSSARY

TERM / ACRONYM	DEFINITION
AASB S2	Australian Accounting Standards Board Climate-related Financial Disclosures - Standard requiring disclosure of climate-related risks, opportunities, and impacts on financial performance.
Climate adaptation	Actions taken to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change (e.g. flood resilience, heat mitigation).
Climate mitigation	Efforts to reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. renewable energy, electrification).
Circular economy	An economic system focused on reducing waste, reusing materials, and keeping resources in use for as long as possible.
Council Plan	Council Plan 2025–2029 - East Gippsland Shire Council's four-year strategic plan guiding organisational priorities.
CO ₂ -e	Carbon dioxide equivalent - A standard unit for measuring greenhouse gas emissions, expressed as the equivalent impact of carbon dioxide.
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Design - Design practices that reduce environmental impacts of buildings and infrastructure over their lifecycle.
Emissions Reduction Plan	Council's plan outlining actions to achieve net zero emissions from operations by 2032.
EV	Electric Vehicle - A vehicle powered by electricity instead of internal combustion engines, reducing emissions.
IWM	Integrated Water Management - A collaborative approach to managing all elements of the water cycle (stormwater, wastewater, drinking water) to maximise benefits.
Net Zero	Achieving a balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and emissions removed from the atmosphere.
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan - A structured framework for supporting reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design - Design approach integrating water cycle management into urban planning to improve environmental outcomes.



East Gippsland Shire Council
Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2026-2030
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