

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy sets out how we acknowledge and respond to the impact of climate change.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the following:

- All of Council's activities and services.
- Council's communication and collaboration with the community and regional partners to mitigate against climate change and to help our residents, businesses and local ecosystems to build resilience and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate.

3. CONTEXT

Changes to Australia's climate are being accelerated by human activity: average temperatures will continue to increase and we will experience more heat extremes and fewer cold extremes; annual rainfall will decrease while extreme rainfall events that lead to flooding are likely to become more intense; our region is projected to experience harsher fire weather; sea levels will continue to rise throughout the 21st century and beyond; and oceans will warm and become more acidic.

In this context the City of Marion recognises the importance of climate change, the impact of human activity on the composition of the global atmosphere and the urgent need to mitigate the production of greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change that cannot be avoided.

4. PRINCIPLES

The following key principles will define Council's response:

- 4.1 An **evidence based approach** founded on the best available science, whilst recognising the need for flexibility to adapt as scientific knowledge improves, will be applied to Council policies, strategies and actions to address climate change, support informed decision-making, and facilitate a change to a low carbon economy.
- 4.2 **Mitigation and adaptation** to climate change impacts will be undertaken, particularly through statutory responsibilities and regulatory powers relating to land use planning, asset and infrastructure management, environmental planning, environmental protection and natural resource management, and provision of support services to vulnerable members of our community.
- 4.3 Council will **support its community** through education and encouraging behaviour change that will increase community mitigation and adaptation efforts and build resilience to changes in our climate.
- 4.4 Consideration of climate change and its potential impacts will be incorporated into **Council's operations**, whilst appropriate mitigation and adaptation actions will be integrated into all relevant strategic and operational activities.
- 4.5 Council will **work regionally** and at a State and Federal level with our partners to increase the resilience of our communities to climate change through supporting appropriate policies and strategies that support a low carbon economy.

5. DEFINITIONS

Adaptation: Taking action to avoid, withstand or benefit from current and projected climate changes and impacts.

Climate Change: Refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity.

Greenhouse Gas: A gas in an atmosphere that absorbs and emits radiation within the thermal infrared range. This process is the fundamental cause of the greenhouse effect. The primary greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere are water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone. Greenhouse gases (GHGs) can be emitted through transport, land clearance, and the production and consumption of food, fuels, manufactured goods, materials, wood, roads, buildings, and services. For simplicity of reporting, GHG emissions are often expressed in terms of the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide or carbon emissions.

Low Carbon Economy: An economy based on low carbon power sources that therefore has a minimal output of greenhouse gas emissions into the environment. Can also be referred to as 'low-fossil-fuel economy' or 'decarbonised economy'.

Mitigation: Taking action to reduce or prevent emission of greenhouse gases. Can also be referred to as 'Abatement'.

Resilience: The ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity for self-organisation, and the capacity to adapt to stress and change.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- City of Marion Community Vision: Towards 2040 (adopted 26 July 2016)
- City of Marion Business Plan, 2016 – 2019 (adopted 26 July 2016)
- City of Marion Environmental Policy
- Resilient South Regional Climate Change Adaptation Plan (2014)
- Resilient South Southern Region Local Government Implementation Plan (2016)

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