

# Delivering a healthy environment and liveable Sunshine Coast

## Environment and Liveability Strategy Annual Report 2019/20





## Acknowledgement of Country

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the traditional Country of the Kabi Kabi Peoples and the Jinibara Peoples of the coastal plains and hinterlands of the Sunshine Coast and recognise that these have always been places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging – and acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

Council is committed to ongoing communications and consultation with the Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of the Sunshine Coast in the implementation of the strategy.

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### Reference document

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## Message from our Mayor



Our Sunshine Coast Council has been on its sustainability journey for many years. Our Council has made it a priority to take real and decisive action to preserve our environment, improve our liveability and better position the region to adapt to the challenges of a changing climate.

In 2017, our Council adopted its Environment and Liveability Strategy, which provides a vision and contemporary approach to delivering a healthy environment and liveable Sunshine Coast in 2041.

Through the Environment and Liveability Strategy, Council is striking a balance between our natural and built environments while supporting a strong economy and our diverse communities into the future.

We cannot however, rest on our laurels – there is always more to be done if we are to ensure our natural environment and liveability are not to be compromised. 2019/20 has certainly been a year of uncertainty and challenges in our everyday lives due to COVID-19.

However, it has also been a year of great significance in terms of major achievements delivered through our Environment and Liveability Strategy. From establishing our Blue Heart – an Australian-first blue carbon partnership providing a sustainable future for the important Maroochy River floodplain – to proceeding with the nomination of our Sunshine Coast as a UNESCO Biosphere, there is much that we can look back on in the last year and be rightly proud.

This annual report contains so much more and I encourage everyone to learn more about the extensive Environment and Liveability Strategy projects our Council is delivering across the region via [els.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](https://els.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au).

Mayor Mark Jamieson

We won a handful of AWARDS



Mary Cairncross won a national **Banksia Sustainability Award (Government)** for its innovative vertical **BioBlitz project** bringing multiple knowledge systems to the study and celebration of biodiversity.



## The Environment and Liveability Strategy

Our strategy was adopted in September 2017.  
 This Annual Report showcases our third year of implementation.

### What is the purpose of the strategy?

The strategy provides long-term strategic direction to guide growth and shape the Sunshine Coast for future generations to 2041.

It focuses on the natural environment and how it can be preserved and enhanced, as well as the liveability of the region. It enables a good quality of life for all residents, while supporting a strong economy in an accessible and well-connected built environment.

### Why is it needed?

In this rapidly changing world there are many challenges and opportunities for our much-loved Sunshine Coast way of life. We face an increasing population, changing climate, economic growth and emerging technologies.

The strategy helps us to navigate through these challenges while harnessing opportunities. Its integrated and long-term approach to guiding development of the Sunshine Coast offers clarity, inspiration and direction.

The strategy is a forward-looking document and seeks to do things differently.

### Our progress

We use annual performance measures to help us monitor and track progress.

TARGET	BASELINE	2019/20	2019/20 OUTCOME
No loss of the Regional Inter-urban Break in its current extent	32,034 ha	32,034 ha	No change to the current extent
Hectares of land per 1000 residents acquired through Environment Levy for conservation and preservation purposes maintained	9.6 ha per 1000 residents	10.59 ha per 1000 residents*	90.33 ha acquired
Hectares of land per 1000 residents for sport and recreation purposes maintained*	4.74 ha per 1000 residents	4.14 ha per 1000 residents*	5.7 ha of open space secured
Renewable energy capacity increased	124.8 MW	221.09 MW	Increase of 26.99 MW^
Council's greenhouse gas emissions reduced#	0.58 tCO <sub>2</sub> e per resident	0.61 tCO <sub>2</sub> e per resident*	Decrease of 0.01 tCO <sub>2</sub> e per resident^

ha – Hectares MW – Megawatts tCO<sub>2</sub>e – Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent  
 \*Based on a population forecast figure of 336,500 (30 June 2020). +Figures based on updated open space data.  
 #Note adjusted figures in response to revised method. ^Compared to 2018/19 results.



### Find out what's happening in your backyard

There's now an easier way for you to stay up-to-date on what's happening in your local area and across the whole region.

Search online via your postcode to view Council projects and initiatives that are helping to deliver a healthy environment and liveable Sunshine Coast.

Head to [els.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](https://els.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au) today.



## A snapshot of our achievements

### Protect the Regional Inter-urban Break

We developed in partnership an Inter-urban Break Outdoor Recreation Plan to guide management of outdoor recreation activities in this major green space.



### Expand our green space

We secured more than 120 hectares of new lands for conservation and recreation purposes.



### Proactive planning for the potential impacts of climate change

We progressed, in partnership with our community, our long-term strategy to help manage the impacts of coastal hazards and increase our resilience.



### A step ahead

We again partnered with Energex on a joint offsets program, which will deliver more than \$1.5 million worth of tree planting and ecological restoration work in the region.



### A sustainable through soc

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### Community events for a sustainable future

- We continued to run our Living Smart program, completing an improved website and supported activities including:
- National Recycling Week
    - World Environment Day Festival
    - Sunshine Coast Open House
  - Change Makers event
    - Fabric program
    - Plastic Free July.



### Sustainable design for our built environment

We developed the Sunshine Coast Design Book to help plan and design places and spaces by using a set of simple and accessible values and design principles.



### An involved community

We held a forum with over 300 attendees to give thanks to Council's environmental volunteers and conservation partners and provide an opportunity to build awareness and knowledge in local conservation and coastal research and projects.



 **Adventure Sunshine Coast,** Council's innovative trail finding website, won the **QORF Government Achievement Award** at the **Outdoors Queensland Awards.**

 **Our Get Ready Schools Program,** which empowers students to help build their community's ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters, won the **Get Ready Queensland Resilient Australia Award (Local Government).**

 **Our inspiring Kids in Action program,** which engages youth in becoming future environmental custodians through connecting to Country and learning from First Nations people, won a **Queensland Reconciliation Award (Partnership).**



**Build productive partnerships**  
 We commenced an Australian-first blue carbon partnership with Unitywater and the Queensland Government to protect and manage the most critical areas of the Maroochy River floodplain.



**Celebrate people and nature**  
 We submitted our UNESCO Biosphere nomination to the State Government to have our region's sustainability story internationally recognised.



**Create great places and spaces**  
 We redeveloped the Caloundra Arts Centre, providing premier performing arts and conference opportunities.

**Did you know...**

We are establishing and setting our strategic vision for five major green spaces:

**Sunshine Coast Infrastructure**

We finalised the Landsborough Place Making Master Plan, a 15 year visionary roadmap for Landsborough's public spaces.



**Blue Heart Sunshine Coast**



**Your Levy in action**

We delivered your Environment Levy Program to support land acquisitions, on-ground activities, and research and community partnerships that protect and enhance our natural environment.



**The Coast**



**Mountain View**



**Lower Mooloolah River**



**Build our knowledge**

We held a Blue Heart Carbon Research Forum bringing together blue carbon and carbon farming industry experts to begin mapping out the phases of a blue carbon pilot project within the Blue Heart.



**Regional Inter-urban Break**

Green spaces provide for conservation, flood management, rural production and sport and recreation opportunities. They also provide visual and physical relief from the built environment and enable us to build our resilience for the future.

These major green spaces will be essential in maintaining a healthy environment and liveable Sunshine Coast.



The **Sunshine Coast Design Strategy** and book won the **AILA QLD Landscape Architecture Award (Research, Policy and Communications)**.  
 Sunshine Coast Design is a resource to help design homes, buildings, parks, public spaces, streets and neighbourhoods on the Sunshine Coast using a set of simple and accessible values and design principles.



The **Inter-urban Break Outdoor Recreation Plan**, a strategic plan guiding management of outdoor recreation activities in the Inter-urban Break won the **AILA Queensland Landscape Architecture Award (Regional Achievement Sunshine Coast)**.



## The year ahead

In 2020/21, we'll maintain our momentum and continue the delivery of our 26 Transformational Actions and key Council services.  
 For a full suite of actions and tasks visit [els.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](http://els.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au).

### Protecting the Regional Inter-urban Break

Protecting the Regional Inter-urban Break in perpetuity to secure the environmental, production and recreation values.



### Building our knowledge

Enabling evidence based decisions for a healthy environment and liveable Sunshine Coast.



### Great places and spaces

In partnership with industry and community, developing a network of contemporary places and spaces that provide and support opportunities for creative, community and active experiences.



### Connecting nature and people

Connecting our valued habitat areas to support our native flora and fauna and providing the community with opportunities to participate in conservation and experience the natural environment.



### Zero emissions organisation

Delivering a zero-net emissions organisation and transitioning to a renewable energy future.



### Being prepared

Proactively planning for the potential impacts of climate change and natural hazards to build the resilience of the region.



### Acknowledgements

Council would like to acknowledge the contributors of a number of images in this document, including:

**FRONT COVER:** M. Swaine - Coolool Beach, lone surfer  
 R. Monk - Buderim, natures unseen  
 M. Cody - Mudjimba, sunrise

**INSIDE FRONT COVER:** A. Ward - Mt Ngungun

**DOUBLE PAGE SPREAD:**  
 L. Allanson - Glass House Mountains  
 J. Hill - Mt Ngungun

**MAJOR GREEN SPACES:**  
 A. Bell - Moffat Beach sunset  
 A. Bryan - Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve forest walk  
 Z. Jones - Bells Creek, Glass House Mountains.



**Sunshine Coast**  
COUNCIL



Environment  
and Liveability

[els.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](http://els.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au)  
[els@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](mailto:els@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au)  
**T** 07 5475 7272 **F** 07 5475 7277  
 Locked Bag 72 Sunshine Coast Mail Centre Qld 4560