

Executive Summary

The aim of the Swan Region Strategy for Natural Resource Management (the Strategy) is to promote the sustainable use and management of natural resources in the Swan Region (the Region). It seeks to influence natural resource management (NRM) decision-makers to not only consider the economic impacts of management decisions, but also the environmental and social impacts as well.

The Strategy formalises the partnership between the Australian Government, the Western Australian State Government and the wider regional community. It demonstrates how collectively they will develop, implement and evaluate programs for sustainable NRM outcomes, using priority targets and management actions.

In developing this Strategy, the Swan Catchment Council (the Council) adopted a process based on the principles of conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources. This process involved comprehensive consultation and engagement of the wider regional community and key stakeholders in identification of issues and the use of available scientific and technical information. Priority issues and actions were subsequently identified through this process.

The development of this Strategy has been based on the following core objectives:

- **Biodiversity Conservation** - conservation of the Region's biodiversity through the protection and restoration of terrestrial, freshwater, estuarine and marine ecosystems and habitat for native plants and animals
- **Sustainable Use of Natural Resources** - the sustainable use and management of the Region's land, water and marine resources to provide net environmental, social and economic benefits for both current and future generations
- **Community Capacity Building and Institutional Change** - support for individuals, landholders, industry and communities with skills, knowledge, information and institutional frameworks to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use and management

Threatening Processes

The underlying fundamental pressures that impact upon the Region's assets and associated values have been classified under the following categories:

- Population growth and urbanisation
- Limited knowledge and awareness
- Inappropriate planning and development
- Incompatible and unsustainable management practices and resource use

These are further classified into the following categories:

- **Cause** – the underlying fundamental pressures impacting the Region's assets and associated values.
- **Threatening processes** – processes that occur as a result of the underlying fundamental pressures.
- **Effects** – the symptoms of the pressures impacting the Region's assets and associated values, degrading the condition, amenity or productive capacity of those assets.

Natural Resource Assets

The Strategy recognises that the successful management and sustainable use of natural resource assets, is closely linked to the values (environmental, social and economic) attributed to them by the community. For the purpose of this Strategy the Region's assets are classified as either biophysical or social and economic.

The biophysical assets are: land, water, biodiversity, coastal and marine and air. The social and economic aspects of natural resource management are classified as: cultural heritage and regional capacity.

A description for each asset category is provided, outlining resource condition, values, issues and pressures the current response, the required NRM Strategy response and the potential 'trade-offs' that may have to occur.

Targets

The Council has developed a framework for the assessment of the Region's natural resource assets using a State-Pressure-Response approach as the basis for a target setting process. This approach has enabled the Council to focus on addressing the causes rather than the symptoms of NRM problems.

Aspirational Targets, Resource Condition Targets, Management Action Targets and associated management actions have been developed for each asset category to address key regional threatening processes.

Regional Priorities

The Council has developed a process for prioritisation to assign a priority to each of the NRM targets and their associated management actions. This promotes the allocation of investments into achieving priority targets and management actions that are integrated across natural resource asset categories.

Integrated NRM is a central theme of this Strategy. An emphasis on integrating targets and actions will optimise the achievement of multiple benefit outcomes. This will ensure duplication of effort and resources is minimised to enable maximum return on investments for sustainable NRM outcomes.

Implementation

This Strategy outlines the necessary partnerships for action and provides a guide for investment decisions in the Region to meet local, regional and institutional priorities. It is intended to provide a basis for implementation to improve NRM outcomes through planning for investment through the targets and management actions developed to meet the desired NRM outcomes.

