



Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015

Updated	3 May 2014
Re-approved	13 May 2014 (TBC)
Review Dates	Annual Update February 2015
Develop Strategic Plan 2015-2020	January- June 2015

Notes:

- Agreed to revise vision at 2015 review of Strategic Plan (May 2014)
- Review template at 2015 review – key activities – key performance indicators
- Review words regarding socially inclusive
- Note need for words re heritage for 2015 review

1. About the Conservation Council ACT Region

Vision

An ACT and Region with a high quality ecologically sustainable environment.

Mission Statement

As a peak body, the Conservation Council of the ACT Region (Conservation Council) will strive on behalf of and in collaboration with our member groups, to achieve an ecologically sustainable and carbon neutral society through advocacy, education, research and engagement with community, the private sector and with government.

Core ethics

Nature has an intrinsic value; while also providing services essential to the survival and well-being of our society.

Organisational values

As the peak environment group of the ACT Region, we operate according to the following values:

- integrity;
- respect;
- transparency;
- leadership;
- commitment;
- inclusiveness; and
- collaboration.

Objects

This strategic plan operates in accordance with the Objectives of the Association as set out in the constitution of the Conservation Council. This states that Conservation Council's objectives are to:

- (i) maintain, preserve and enhance the quality of the natural, urban and rural environment and the integrity of ecological systems and processes;
- (ii) preserve and safeguard the natural, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage; and,
- (iii) promote community understanding of the common responsibility for the maintenance of a healthy and sustainable environment, on which all life ultimately depends.

It further states that Conservation Council will take action, consistent with its objectives, to:

- (i) function as a peak body for community groups which support those goals;
- (ii) work cooperatively with the public and private sectors towards the development and implementation of relevant policies, programs and actions;
- (iii) undertake community education and engage the community in campaigns;
- (iv) undertake or promote research into ecological and environmental matters;
- (v) undertake such other conservation activities as the association shall from time to time adopt; and,
- (vi) establish and maintain a public fund to be called The Bogong Fund for the specific purpose of supporting the environmental objects/purposes of the association. The Fund is established to receive all gifts of money or property for this purpose and any money received because of such gifts must be credited to its bank account. The Fund must not receive any other money or property into its account and it must comply with subdivision 30-E of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Stakeholders

Primary Stakeholders include: member organisations, relevant ACT and Federal Government departments and agencies (ESD Directorate, TAMS Directorate, EDD Directorate, Department of the Environment), ACT political parties, Members of the Legislative Assembly, key national environment fora and other state Conservation Councils.

Secondary Stakeholders include: other Territory and regional NSW-based environmental organisations (non-members), academia, research institutions, schools and the media.

2. Operating Environment

The Conservation Council is the peak environment group for the ACT with a membership base of some 40+ groups with a combined individual membership of about 15,000 people.

The Conservation Council operates within the ACT and the surrounding Southern Tablelands and South Coast regions of NSW: an area containing a population base of some 500,000 people.

A substantial proportion of Conservation Council's funding base comes from Federal and Territory Governments as either Service Funding Agreements or grant programmes.

The Conservation Council enjoys a high level of access to ACT politicians and senior Government officers, and provides input into ACT Government decision-making through representation on committees and reference groups.

The ACT is facing a period of reductions in the Commonwealth Public Service and other stringencies will place difficulties on fund-raising and necessitate adoption of a more appropriate fund-raising model.

3. Strategic focus areas:

The Conservation Council's programmes over the next five years will focus on work towards the following four strategic outcomes:

1. Maintenance and Enhancement of Biodiversity and Ecological Processes;
2. Sustainability and Zero net emissions in Society;
3. A leader on environment issues in the ACT environment network and the ACT community; and
4. A modern, efficient and effective organisation.

Maintenance and Enhancement of Biodiversity and Ecological Processes

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>
OBJECTIVE 1: Protection of natural habitats and ecological connections	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and promote policies that maintain and enhance the biodiversity values 2. Influence governments, planning authorities and other decision-makers to ensure positive biodiversity outcomes 3. Identify and respond to DA's, PI's, reviews and investigations 4. Minimise environmental impacts in all new developments 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conservation Council continues to support and expand Bush on the Boundary (BoB) Groups. Bush on the Boundary generic guidelines and principles are adopted in planning processes 2. Submissions have been made on development of effective native vegetation protection legislation and offsets policy with an effective ACT Government policy is adopted on biodiversity offsets which includes an offsets register 3. Collaborations (government, business, academics, community) are established to maximise biodiversity outcomes 4. Bushfire Asset Protection Zones are outside nature reserves and conservation areas 5. Positive biodiversity outcomes in the Molonglo Valley and Gungahlin, and ensure Central Molonglo is excluded from future urban development 6. Adoption by Government, of an ACT-wide Cat Containment Policy for all new suburbs

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>
OBJECTIVE 2: Promoting improvement in biological condition through habitat enhancement and other measures	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guide and support Bush on the Boundary and other community conservation initiatives, particularly on the urban/bush interface 2. Provide input to Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment and Natural Resource Management Council activities, and promote/support restoration initiatives 3. Advocate for habitat enhancements in Central Molonglo and other areas, as emerging 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bush on the Boundary generic guidelines and principles are adopted in ACT Government planning processes 2. Regular liaison and discussions occur with Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment and Natural Resource Management Council, catchment management groups, bushland management teams and other groups involved in habitat enhancement projects 3. Restoration plans for Central Molonglo and other relevant areas are implemented by TAMS (collaboratively with on-ground groups)
OBJECTIVE 3: Improved information and knowledge to support conservation efforts	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake and/or support comprehensive mapping of biodiversity 2. Collaborate with member groups, researchers and other experts 3. Disseminate information to member groups and the broader community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biodiversity mapping project is completed and is widely available for use 2. Quality and timely information informs Council policies and activities 3. Links are established with, and information obtained from, researchers and other experts 4. Feedback from member groups and broader community is positive

Sustainable and Zero Net Emission Society

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>
OBJECTIVE 1: Reduce environmental footprint (carbon, water & other resource use [including land], pollution and other waste) of ACT, through:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage urban consolidation rather than further expansion 2. Promote sustainable transport 3. Encourage implementation of a waste management strategy 4. Work to ensure new residential suburban planning (eg. Molonglo) is high quality and sustainable 5. Promote sustainable use and re-use of water. 6. Cooperate with government and other stakeholders to plan for climate change including the need for adaptation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACT's environmental footprint is reduced 2. ACT Government accepts and implements Conservation Council's proposals for sustainability in relation to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. transport; b. planning of new residential suburbs; c. waste management. 3. ACT water policy is consistent with the Conservation Council policies on water.
OBJECTIVE 2: Maintain and enhance environmental quality and liveability of the ACT:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influence the government to ensure that relevant planning instruments protect biodiversity and ecological connectivity 2. Promote the planning of all new residential developments with safety and interconnectedness in mind 3. Promote the planning of all new housing development as socially inclusive 4. Promote the heritage values of the ACT 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government seeks input of Conservation Council on planning issues and incorporates suggestions. 2. Public open space is generous, accessible and complements conservation areas. 3. Government housing development focuses upon urban infill and limits biodiversity and environmental impacts of Greenfield development 4. Develop and expand Treasures series of publications

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>
OBJECTIVE 3: Seek to improve planning and development control processes in the ACT through government action	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote the better alignment of the National Capital Plan and Territory Plan and other planning instruments 2. Advocate for opportunities for meaningful public participation in planning policy development 3. Advocate for more effective and responsive planning decisions and review processes 4. Advocate to ensure an appropriate balance in environmental responsibilities and decision-making between Federal and Territory jurisdictions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spatial Plan incorporates biodiversity conservation and connectivity protection 2. Government organisations are restructured to reduce "silo" effect 3. Government creates a single nature conservation agency operating under a substantially revised Nature Conservation Act. 4. Opportunities for public participation in environment decision-making are improved 5. Planning processes become more transparent

A leader on environment issues in the ACT Environment Network and the ACT Community;

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>
OBJECTIVE 1: Positively influence government policy, community opinion and environmental outcomes	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish informed, clear policies in key areas 2. Identify and engage with key government stakeholders to influence policy outcomes 3. Communicate and engage with the community, including youth, indigenous and business members of the community, to better understand community priorities and to communicate Conservation Council policies and activities 4. Engage in targeted participation in priority government and community events 5. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indications that Government and community stakeholders factored Conservation Council views into their decisions and views on policy matters 2. Policies developed and effectively communicated 3. Key Stakeholders identified and engagement program developed and implemented 4. Communication plan developed and implemented, including participation in priority events, that targets the community and particular community subsets such as youth, indigenous and business members 5.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>
OBJECTIVE 2: Enhance relationships, coordination and communication with member groups and other relevant organisations regarding Conservation Council activities	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue and evolve Member and community fora to promote both information exchange and discussion on Conservation Council policies and strategies 2. Build and enhance our membership 3. Build and enhance our relationships with relevant organisations 4. Support member groups and their activities where consistent with Conservation Council policies and priorities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good attendance by members and others at fora and positive feedback received 2. Improved relationships and better and wider understanding of Conservation Council and member group policies and activities 3. Strong membership of the Conservation Council 4. Conservation Council participates in various ACT environmental fora and alliances 5. Records show strong engagement by Conservation Council Board and staff with individual member groups 6. Member groups integrated into working groups and subcommittees 7. Conservation Council strategic plan and annual work plan effectively communicated to Member Groups and members show high level of awareness 8. Strategies developed and implemented to better communicate with member groups, within available resources 9. Results of any member group surveys distributed to Board and members

A modern, efficient and effective organisation

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>
OBJECTIVE 1: Effective internal processes	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have mechanisms to meet statutory reporting requirements 2. Develop and review policies and strategies 3. Foster an engaged board and subcommittees 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reports to Board and sub-committees are submitted on time and accepted 2. Statutory reports are submitted on time and accepted 3. A public policy document revised regularly and made accessible on the website 4. Board and subcommittees meet regularly with high attendance 5. Annual strategic planning session conducted and Strategic Plan and Operational Plan revised

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>
OBJECTIVE 2: Create a safe, effective and enjoyable work culture which attracts and retains skilled staff and plans for succession	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put in place mechanisms for succession planning and knowledge retention 2. Implement processes designed to foster and manage volunteers 3. Provide a workplace that is conducive to our organisational goals 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop staff strategic plan, revised annually 2. Positive board/staff relations 3. High attendance at working groups and increased numbers of general volunteers 4. Staff provided with appropriate training opportunities to improve skills
OBJECTIVE 3: Ensure financial viability	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain regular financial management and budgeting (including forecasting) 2. Pursue identification, development and management of grant programmes (including auspicing for member groups) 3. Undertake efficient and effective fundraising 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget balanced and monthly reporting provided 2. At least two grant applications successful per year 3. Grant income supports at least one full time staff member 4. Core funding is adequate to include a full-time campaign position 5. Fundraising is profitable

5. Mechanisms

These Strategic Outcomes will be achieved through the employ of the following mechanisms:

- Strengthening Conservation Council as an organisation (Statutory Responsibilities, Probity, Member Groups, Board, Staff, Volunteers, and Financial Management);
- Concerned Group engagement, information and activation (Member groups, non-member groups);
- Political structures engagement, information and activism (Ministers in ACT Govt and Commonwealth Govt , elected representatives, Advisors);
- Public service engagement, information and activism (ACT public service, Commonwealth public service);
- Whole Community engagement, education and information (Schools, general public, media); and,
- Development of policy positions on a range of relevant issues.

6. Policies

The Conservation Council will set out policies, consistent with the Strategic Plan, for approval by the Board and subsequent implementation.

7. Operational Plans:

The specifics of activities and programmes will be described in annual Operational Plans which will identify objectives, targets, resources and timelines. These will be produced in March/April each year and approved by the Board.