

The Conservation Council ACT Region released a draft version of our Strategic Plan 2026 - 2030 to our community in August 2025. We have since received really positive engagement on the document from member groups and supporters. Below is a summary of the feedback we received and how we have responded to it in the updated version of the Strategic Plan.

Feedback	Response
<b>General Comments</b>	
Check the consistency of the use of 'Canberra' vs 'ACT Region'	We have checked the consistency and have amended all to 'ACT Region'.
It was asked whether we should define 'environment' to include both built environment and natural environment.	We decided not to attempt to define 'environment' as this was too challenging. However, we noted that the vision focused on the natural environment. We added in the term 'sustainable', to create a 'healthy sustainable environment'. We think this speaks both to the natural and built environments.
The use of the word 'courageous' exists in two places, under 'Our vision' and 'Our values'. It was asked why this word was chosen and what this means in practice/practically? The suggestion was to possibly use the words 'strong voice' under 'Our purpose' as this makes the meaning clear, and also reflects long standing terminology, the Council being a strong voice for the environment.	We agreed to remove this duplication. We have changed the term from 'courageous voice' to 'strong voice' in the section 'our purpose'.
There were some questions as to why we do not have specific campaign goals within the draft. Some folks felt the strategic priorities were too broad.	<p>The Board has discussed this extensively, both prior to and after this consultation period. We have avoided naming specific goals as we believe that things could change dramatically over the five years of the plan and we do not want to lock ourselves into specific or narrow campaigns.</p> <p>In saying this, the Board has discussed how we can engage member groups on specific campaign priorities. We have decided that the Executive Director will develop a campaign priorities document at the start of each calendar year, which will be informed by the strategic plan and distributed to member groups for consultation. This ongoing process will allow for members to</p>

	have a say on our ongoing campaign priorities, without locking us into them over the course of five years.
<b>About Us</b>	
We should emphasise that we are the peak body in the about us section.	Agreed. Text has been amended.
There should be more focus on member groups in the About Us section.	Agreed. Text has been amended.
Parts of the About Us section are clunky and need reworking.	Agreed. This has been re-written to make it clearer.
<b>Our Vision</b>	
No feedback received	
<b>Our Purpose</b>	
There is little discussion of systemic change in the document - specifically the growth paradigm and overconsumption.	This was a broader comment for the document. We thought the best place to address this was in the 'purpose' section, and we have added a reference to systemic change here.
In the sentence "We speak with a courageous voice on behalf of our region's environment" it was suggested to add in the word 'natural' before environment.	As our work focuses on both the natural and built environments, we thought best to leave as is.
<b>Our Values</b>	
No feedback received	
<b>Our Strategic Priorities</b>	
Dot point One (Nature protection): it is suggested to not separate out waterways from landscapes, they are all part of the same thing, whether ephemeral waterways, drainage lines, creeks and rivers. It is instead suggested to change the words to something like "Protect and restore biodiversity across all terrestrial and aquatic landscapes to ensure they are resilient, connected and healthy."	The text has been amended to reflect this.
Dot point One (Nature protection): The Conservation Council should focus on enforcing all environmental laws.	It is not the role of the Conservation Council to enforce environmental laws as we are not a regulatory body. However, we recognise that enforcement is an issue. We have therefore added in a point that we will agitate for the enforcement of laws in this

	section.
Dot point One (Nature protection): it was asked whether we should include something about the issue of waste water.	<p>As a result of this feedback, we noted that the current draft does not talk about pollution at all. We have therefore added a broader note about reducing pollution, both on land and in water.</p> <p>We also noted that in this section we talk about water management, but not land management. We have therefore updated the text to talk about better land and water management.</p>
Dot point One (Nature protection): should there be any mention about national issues in this section, particularly EPBC reforms?	This section is deliberately written without any specific geographic focus. All points can relate to the region as well as nationally. We therefore think this is already covered.
Dot point One (Nature protection): It was asked where connectivity/biodiversity corridors fits in.	We have added a note about connectivity/biodiversity corridors.
Dot point One (Nature protection): It was asked about the use of the word 'high' to describe protecting areas of ecological value. This might be confused with terminology often used to describe native content/structure, and imply only patches of the highest native quality are protected. A more holistic, clearer wording might be 'areas of significant ecological value including high to moderate quality areas and connectivity corridors'.	We have removed the reference to areas of 'high' ecological value. We have not changed the language otherwise, as we did not want to discuss gradation of ecological value, but instead have a broader definition to allow us to also campaign for areas that have potential future ecological value that we believe should be rehabilitated/regenerated.
Dot point two (Climate): it was asked, should the strategic plan prioritise reducing the ACT's per capita carbon footprint, noting that our footprint is three times the world average?	We recognise this reality for the ACT. We believe this is, in part, currently reflected in the section on climate action in point two. However, this is also a consumption issue and related to Scope 3 emissions. We have therefore included a point about reducing consumption in the section on waste and circular economy (dot point four).
Dot point two (Climate): it was noted that we talk both about speeding up the phase out of fossil fuels, and of working with national organisations to phase out coal and gas. As both are related to phasing out fossil fuels, it was suggested we could delete the latter.	After discussion, the Board wanted to emphasise that these are two different bodies of work, one focused locally and one focused nationally. The national climate work in particular is a space where we want to emphasise working with national colleagues. Instead of deleting the section on coal and gas, we have emphasised the

	ACT-focused nature of the campaign to phase out fossil fuels.
Dot point two (Climate): There is no mention of climate adaptation. This should be inserted.	Agreed. We have added a sentence on climate adaptation.
Dot point two (Climate): There was some confusion as to whether by 'safe climate' we meant 'sustainable life for all'	We believe that a 'sustainable life for all' is implicit within a safe climate. We have decided not to change or define this text, but have communicated our intention to the person who asked this question.
Dot point three (Sustainable city): we should be consistent with the use of 'urban' or 'suburban' sprawl.	Agreed. We have chosen to use the term 'urban sprawl'.
Dot point three (Sustainable city): should the strategic plan prioritise reducing the ACT's public transport pollution to less than those from the travel it displaces?	We noted that we have a long history of advocating for the transition of public transport fleets to electric vehicles. We believe this is somewhat addressed by our focus on the ACT being a climate leader in dot point two of this section. However, we noted that there was no mention of pollution in the draft plan, and have added a note on pollution in the biodiversity section (dot point one).
Dot point four (Waste and circular economy): it was suggested to remove the term 'food and garden organics' when referring to recycling, as we support all recycling.	It was agreed that this section was written clunkily. However, we want to emphasise food and organics as a key issue that is not being managed well in the ACT. We have now split out food and organics from recycling as we believe they are two separate issues.
Dot point four (Waste and circular economy): there is no discussion about the initial problem, which is overconsumption.	We have added reducing consumption to the list of things we work on in this section.
<b>What We Do</b>	
Under 'Advocate' remove 'large-scale' in this sentence: "Deliver effective large-scale campaigns on key environmental issues within the ACT and region."	Agree - This has been done..
Under 'Advocate' it was asked whether we should flip the order of the two sub-points.	We were happy with the current order and have not made that change.
Under 'Collaborate' the previous plan had language about working in partnership with business and other stakeholders. Why has that been removed?	This was not done intentionally, but was a victim of too much consolidation. This point has been added back in.

<p>Under 'Collaborate' the previous plan had language about encouraging member group involvement in decision-making. Why has this been removed?</p>	<p>This was not done intentionally, but was a victim of too much consolidation. This point has been added back in.</p>
<p>Under 'Activate', there is nothing about volunteers. We should add in something about building a volunteer movement and celebrating their successes.</p>	<p>We agreed and have added this in.</p>