

Council: Eurobodalla Shire (NSW)

Res Population: 32000

Urban/Rural Mix: 75/25



Key Policy Documents

Management Plan

Strategic Environment Management Plan [Local Environment Management Plans (rural & urban), Integrated Waste Management Strategy, State of the Environment Report, Sustainable Living (ESD) Policy].

Strategic Asset Plan [Infrastructure Strategies, Works Priority Matrix, Coastal Strategies, Community Land Strategy]

Social Plan [Competitive Provision of services Policy; Disability Action Plan; Aboriginal agreement]

Planning Approach:

Council has developed a structured approach to drafting its strategies and plans. At each stage, the broader community and local interest and government groups, are consulted.

- *Land use plans* such as LEP's project the future path of land use development, securing areas of environmental or cultural value, and areas to be retained or developed for agricultural or economic production. Development Control Plans (DCP's) present the character proposed for each of our urban areas or areas of special significance.
- Once LEP's are adopted, a range of *head infrastructure and facility strategies* are prepared to project the siting, size and timing of asset expansion.
- *Environment Management Plans and Community Land Plans of Management*, propose responses to address or resolve those issues, such as sewer surcharges, soil erosion and river water quality.
- Similarly, *the Social Plan (SP)* – together with the outcomes of the 2000 Community Survey and Focus Groups, identify a range of issues that require resolution, investigation or funding.
- Council's believes its role, is to understand the inter-relationships between the Natural, Built and Social Environments, assessing the relative merits and impacts of the proposals we receive, as private or public investment, to achieve the 'balance' espoused in the Strategic Objectives of the Management Plan.

Integrated approach to environmental management. Head Strategy (Infrastructure), Estuary Management Plans, Plans of Management for Community Land and Social Plan priorities are reviewed at 5 yearly intervals. Information feeds into Annual Management and Financial Plan which then feeds into staff work plans.

Subsequently there are a range of outputs including state of the environment report, executive information reports, customer surveys, financial reports, etc feeding into the Annual Report (information on environment condition/works, condition of public works, human services programme).

Prior to design of infrastructure projects a Review of Environmental Factors' (REF) is prepared to identify environmental and public risk and mitigate those matters through design or site management.

The comprehensive State of the Environment Report (SoER) produced every four years, will be a major tool in:

Assessing our progress in sustaining the condition, and minimising human or other pressures on the SoER themes of:

- Land
- Water
- Atmosphere
- Biodiversity
- Heritage
- Human Settlement
- Preparing responses to improve, protect or restore the condition or key environmental processes
- assess the cumulative impacts of humans and development
- judge the social health of our community
- utilising key indicators to monitor trends in the change of economic, environmental and social health (eg ANZECC environment indicators, ABS economic indicators, or our quarterly corporate goal indicator reports)

Monitoring Approach:

A comprehensive state of the environment report is prepared every 4 years. A number of indicators (generic ANZECC indicators) have been identified for particular themes and are reported on, the themes are: water, atmosphere, land, biodiversity, noise, heritage, waste, human settlement, sustainability, community well-being.

For each theme the following are identified: implications, condition, pressure, response and, headline indicator. Information from the SoE report feeds into the Ecologically Sustainable Development Tool to identify status of environmental theme, gaps in information and any required actions. This information then feeds into the Strategic Management Plan where strategic actions are identified (with reference to strategic council goals/objectives) and resources made available for actions (staff and \$). Headline indicators are reported annually through the Annual Report. Costs and revenues and change in asset values are tracked through Environment and Asset Special Schedules attached to annual financial accounts, as progressive step towards Triple Bottom Line accounting.

Key Issues/Provisions Monitored:

Monitoring priorities

As an integrated approach to ESD and risk management, all strategies and reports to council are assessed against business risks of: legal, policy, environment, asset, social, economic, staff, strategic links and financial. Each quarter, council receives report and presentation (Executive Information Report) of graphs, trends and analysis against goal areas of customer service, asset management, environmental protection, investment in development, employment statistics, financial management etc. Indicators such as new developments, service connections, complaints records etc are used)

How key issues/provisions prioritised

Reported against council goals listed above, rather than just on status of workload and strategic actions contained in Management Plan. Those goals are capable of grouping into environment, economic and social themes. Decided to fashion the statutory State of Environment report, Condition of Public Works Report and Social Plan into a 'condition (state)-pressure-response' model

The status of key projects are reported monthly

Information management/capture systems

- Recently released new IT Strategy. Hold all Management Plan, strategy, study, budget and staff work plan/performance systems on MS Access, integrated by coding. Held on network, all staff daily utilise database for developments,

complaints, workload statistics, asset maintenance scheduling etc. Databases progressively being restructured to enable extraction of key datasets for monthly and quarterly statistical and executive reporting via a 'clearing house' concept.

- IT Strategy aims to move entirely to imaging of documents, plans, maps etc. all property and infrastructure based information spatially presented on GIS. Progressively presenting infrastructure strategies and condition on GIS by colour-coding. Data will be accessed by intra/internet browser and navigation panel, rather than directly accessing each database – just search by question/keyword via metadata files.

Costs and Benefits of Policy/Plan Monitoring

- Vital. Very important to 'invest' in improving knowledge and understanding relationship between natural, built and social environments, through studies, strategies then prioritising into works/projects etc.
- To judge 'value-for-money' need to select 'easy to monitor' measures (or generally accepted measures such as ANZECC indicators), and track costs etc via alignment of chart of accounts for financial reporting purposes (TBL)
- Choose maps, graphs and trend analysis rather than tables and narrative to present the issues and responses (eg change detection analysis by satellite mapping/remote sensing)

Hot Tips for Policy/Plan Monitoring Success:

- nurture a 'champion' high in organisation
- establish organisation structure, staff position profiles, management plans and chart of accounts to match organisation goals
- choose measurable and collectable performance targets and monitor with fervour
- Review type/usefulness of existing datasets/collection regimes. Establish structured, integrated data collection, storage and transfer regimes. Appoint data and web custodians amongst staff
- present data graphically and spatially
- Use weighted factors to assess risk and objectively prioritise competing projects/issues

Key Lessons learnt and Pitfalls to Avoid

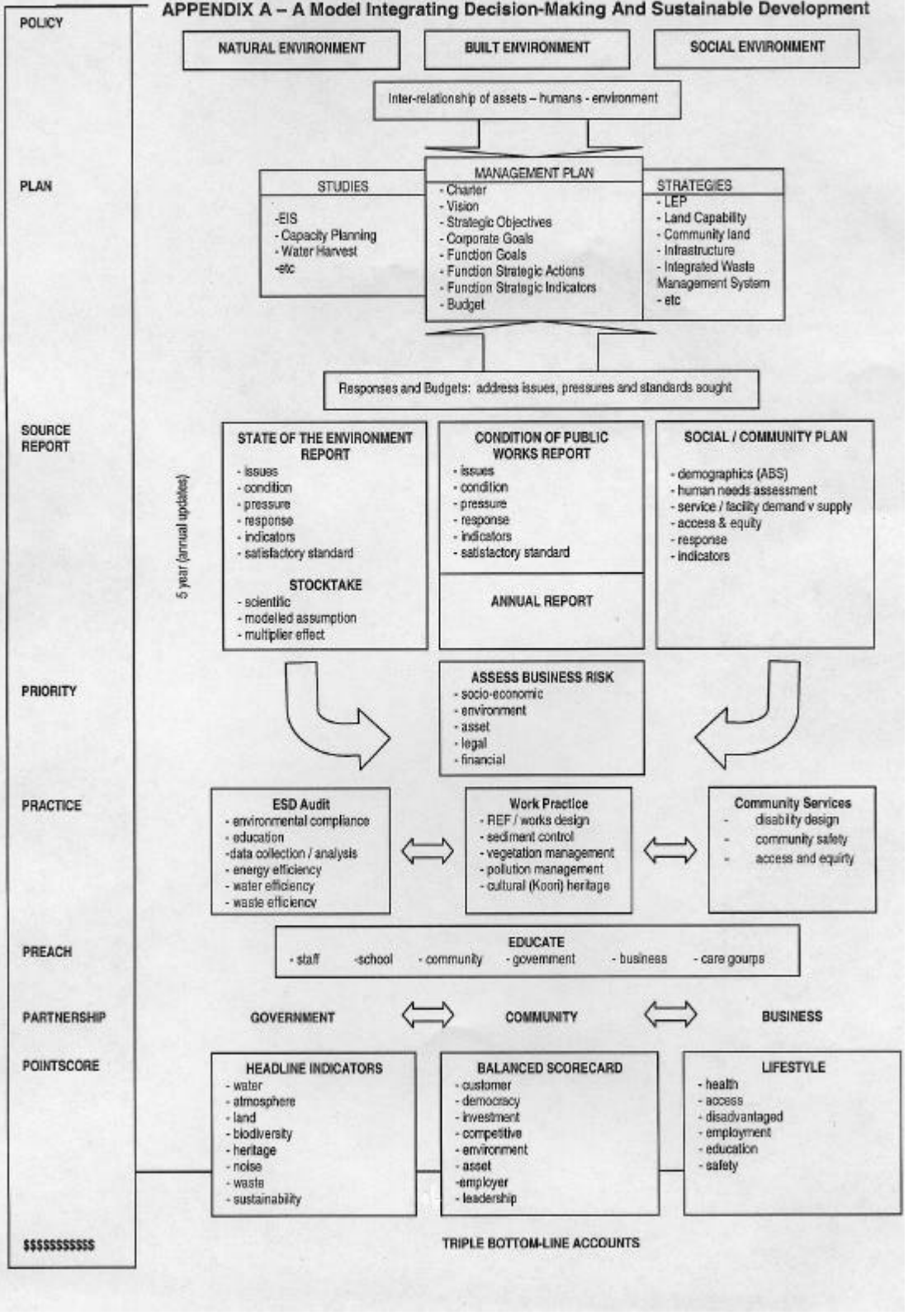
- Recognise that people are becoming more articulate/know what they want.
- Present the 'science' and 'accounts' in a structured way
- Use pictures
- Recognise that compliance develops a 'bunker' mentality – initiative and recognition builds passion! Think of compliance as a challenge and an opportunity

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APPENDIX A – A Model Integrating Decision-Making And Sustainable Development



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TRIPLE BOTTOM-LINE ACCOUNTS