



# Climate Change Policy

<b>Policy No:</b>	6.13
<b>Approved by Council:</b>	March 2025
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<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Manager Environmental Services
<b>Strategic Plan Reference:</b>	1.4 A Council that acknowledges the existence of a climate change and biodiversity emergency and has in place strategies to respond

### 1. POLICY STATEMENTS

Kingborough Council:

- 1.1 Acknowledges the existence of a climate change and biodiversity emergency and will implement strategies to respond.
- 1.2 Recognises that climate change presents a material risk to Council assets and operations and has the potential to impact the economic, social and environmental viability of the municipality.
- 1.3 Acknowledges the critical role of local government in responding to climate change and as such will take a leadership approach.
- 1.4 Will consider the potential implications associated with adapting to and mitigating climate change when making operational, strategic planning and management decisions
- 1.5 Is committed to a consistent, informed and risk-based approach in responding to the impacts and opportunities that climate change presents.
- 1.6 Is committed to planning for the economic impact of climate change on its operations.
- 1.7 Is committed to facilitating greater community awareness of the causes and effects of climate change as well as potential response actions.
- 1.8 Commits to working with other levels of government and key stakeholders in strategic climate change partnerships, programs and responses.
- 1.9 Recognises that focussing on innovation and early response will facilitate more cost-effective management of climate change risks and see Council and its community well-placed to capitalise on emerging opportunities.
- 1.10 Commits to a climate change program that is progressively implemented in accordance with the Kingborough Council Climate Change Plan (2019 to 2024) and subsequent documents.
- 1.11 Is committed to sequentially reducing its carbon footprint and targeting Net Zero Emissions for Council activities by 2035 or earlier.
- 1.12 Recognises the importance and validity of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as well Special and Assessment Reports periodically released by it.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **'Carbon footprint'** means the total greenhouse gas emissions caused by an individual, event, organization, service, place or product, expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent.
- 2.2 **'Climate change'** means a change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.
- 2.3 **'Climate change adaptation'** means adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.
- 2.4 **'Climate resilient development'** means the systematic inclusion of climate considerations in development decision-making.
- 2.5 **'Coastal hazards'** means an area subject to significant risk from natural coastal processes and hazards such as flooding, storms, erosion, landslip, littoral drift, dune mobility and sea level rise.
- 2.6 **'Community resilience'** means the sustained ability of a community to utilise available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations.

- 2.7 **‘Conference of the Parties (COP)’** means the formal meeting of the UNFCCC Parties to assess progress in dealing with climate change, and beginning in the mid-1990s, to negotiate the Kyoto Protocol to establish legally binding obligations for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2.8 **‘Exposure’** means the state of having no protection from something harmful.
- 2.9 **‘Greenhouse gas emissions’** means any gaseous compound in the atmosphere that is capable of absorbing infrared radiation, thereby trapping and holding heat in the atmosphere. By increasing the heat in the atmosphere, greenhouse gases are responsible for the greenhouse effect, which ultimately leads to global warming.
- 2.10 **‘Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)’** is an organisation of governments that are members of the United Nations or World Meteorological Organisation with the objective to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies.
- 2.11 **‘Net Zero Emissions’** means achieving an overall balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and greenhouse gas emissions taken out of the atmosphere.
- 2.12 **‘Paris Agreement’** means the agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, dealing with greenhouse-gas-emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance, signed in 2016.
- 2.13 **‘Planning scheme’** means the Kingborough Planning Scheme.
- 2.14 **‘Regional Climate Change Initiative (RCCI)’** means the body established by the Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority (STCA) to build the capacity of Councils and their communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and respond to climate change.
- 2.15 **‘Representative concentration pathways (RCPs)’** means the greenhouse gas concentration trajectory adopted by the IPCC for its fifth Assessment Report in 2014.
- 2.16 **‘Risk Management Policy’** means the Kingborough Risk Management Policy (No.3.10).
- 2.17 **‘Specific Area Plan’** (Kingborough) means a plan that is in place for areas that have a unique character that is desirable to be maintained, is encumbered by a Development, Local Area or Master Plan or has specific use or development requirements that are over and above the Zone or Code provisions
- 2.18 **‘Strategic Risk Register’** means the Strategic Risk Register documented in the Kingborough Risk Management Policy.
- 2.19 **‘UNFCC’** means the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and is an international environmental treaty adopted on 9 May 1992 and opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

### 3. OBJECTIVE

- 3.1 The objective of the Climate Change Policy is to underpin the Kingborough Council Climate Change Plan (2019 to 2024) which was developed to clearly articulate the importance that Council places on a meaningful response to climate change.

### 4. SCOPE

- 4.1 This policy applies to all Council activities and staff.

### 5. PROCEDURE (POLICY DETAIL)

- 5.1 Council will maintain its focus on responding to climate change through the implementation of the Kingborough Council Climate Change Plan (2019 - 2024) (Plan).

- 5.2 Council will maintain organisation-wide accountability, responsibility and reporting for climate objectives.
- 5.3 As identified in the Plan, Council's response will be via three priority objectives:
- Climate Change Strategic Management
  - Energy and Greenhouse Gas Management
  - Climate Change Adaptation
- 5.4 Council will advocate for and participate in programs that focus on key climate related impacts for Kingborough. These have been identified as:
- Wildfire
  - Sea level rise and storm surge
  - Extreme weather events and flooding
  - Heat
- 5.5 Council will identify the risk that climate change poses to its operations and the community and progressively implement governance measures to maintain the risk at an acceptable level.
- 5.6 Council will use climate risk assessments to inform the prioritisation of climate change actions and initiatives.
- 5.7 Council will implement programs and initiatives that strive to improve the Kingborough community's resilience and understanding of the potential impacts of climate change and maximise opportunities to communicate and consult on critical issues and responses.
- 5.8 Council will progressively improve its climate change asset management programs and procedures to accord with best practice with regards to specific climate predictions for Kingborough.
- 5.9 Council will emphasise community engagement in its approach to action on climate change as well as assisting to reduce the community's carbon footprint.
- 5.10 Council recognises the importance and validity of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and will review all actions upon the publication of new assessment reports within six months of publication. Council also recognises that global greenhouse gas emissions are at the high-end (worst case) of global projections and as such, as a minimum, Council commits to using the top two global Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs) during decision-making (these being RCP6 and RCP8.5). These are derived from the top two global greenhouse gas (GHG) projections for warming (2.0 °C – 5.8 °C global average warming above pre-industrial levels by 2100).
- 5.11 Council will undertake relevant adaptation actions to maintain an aligned approach to the UNFCCC Paris Agreement and any relevant information associated with Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings.
- 5.12 Council will actively monitor and report its energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions and develop an Emissions Reduction Plan to provide a pathway to achieve the Net Zero Emissions 2035 target.
- 5.13 Council will continue to invest in solar energy, energy efficiency and carbon footprint reduction projects at key operational sites.
- 5.14 Council will reduce its greenhouse emissions by progressively transitioning its light vehicle fleet to electric cars as well as its heavy vehicles via electric (where possible) and alternative fuels.
- 5.15 Council's approach to climate change adaptation recognises that a diverse range of roles and responsibilities exist across all levels of Australian governments. As such Council will strive to form

strategic partnerships with key stakeholders such as the Regional Climate Change and the Tasmanian Climate Change Office.

- 5.16 Council will implement a Coastal hazards program guided by the Coastal Hazards Policy (6.9) in response to the current and future risks that have been identified. Council commits to advancing integrated representative case studies in climate change adaptation and community resilience.
- 5.17 Council will evaluate and where possible strengthen planning and development controls available to it to facilitate risk minimised and resilient developments.
- 5.18 Council will advocate for and participate in research initiatives and projects to better understand and protect the environmental assets and ecosystems within Kingborough from climate change impacts.
- 5.19 Council will continue to focus on community resilience initiatives with regards its emergency management responsibilities particularly given the profound impact climate change will have on the frequency and severity of climate change related events.

## **6. GUIDELINES**

- 6.1 Nil.

## **7. COMMUNICATION**

- 7.1 All Councillors and employees will be briefed on this policy as part of induction programs and on an on-going basis.
- 7.2 This policy is publicly accessible via Council's website.

## **8. LEGISLATION**

- 8.1 *Local Government Act 1993.*
- 8.2 *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993.*
- 8.3 Kingborough Interim Planning Scheme 2015 and subsequent schemes.
- 8.4 Tasmanian Planning Scheme.
- 8.5 *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994.*
- 8.6 *Tasmanian Climate Change (State Action) Act 2008.*

## **9. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- 9.1 Coastal Hazards Policy (6.9)
- 9.2 Kingborough Council Climate Change Plan (2019 – 2024).
- 9.3 Tasmanian Climate Change Action Plan (2023-2025).
- 9.4 National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) Scheme
- 9.5 Regional Councils Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.

## **10. AUDIENCE**

- 10.1 Council employees and Councillors
- 10.2 Community