

DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT

14th November 2006

DSDS6	STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT 2005/06 – SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT FILE: 715 KEO
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SUMMARY:

The Kempsey Shire Supplementary State of the Environment (SoE) Report for 2005/06 has been prepared for submission by 30 November 2006 to the Department of Local Government.

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Background:

The 2005/06 Supplementary SoE Report has been prepared as an ancillary to the 2003/04 Comprehensive and 2004/05 Supplementary SoE Reports, for the Kempsey Shire LGA for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006. The aim of this Supplementary Report is to provide an update on Kempsey Shire's progress towards sustainability and the trends in environmental indicators of the core environmental sectors; the land, water, atmosphere (encompassing noise), biodiversity, human settlements (encompassing waste) and aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage. While doing so the report will provide a "snapshot" of the present day environment in Kempsey Shire with that of previous years and identify any new environmental pressures since the previous report.

Following a similar reporting style to the 2003/04 Comprehensive and 2004/05 Supplementary SoE Reports, environmental indicators presented within this report provide updated information on environmental conditions and trends for the Kempsey Shire LGA, to enable the Shire's progress to be measured and reviewed as it moves toward sustainability. These indicators include physical, chemical, biological and socio-economic measures of the natural or built environment in order to assess natural resources or environmental quality.

The 2005/06 Supplementary SoE Report also provides a summary table for each of the core environmental sectors of the report (At A Glance). These summary tables outline the main findings of each the core sectors to allow for easy viewing before referring to the relevant section for more detailed information on a specific subject.

OUTCOMES OF DLG REFORM PROGRAM – PROMOTING BETTER PRACTICE 2005

A review of the 2003/04 Comprehensive SoE Report conducted by the Department of Local Government's (DLG) Reform Program for promoting better practice in late 2005 outlined the need for Council to:

- Explore opportunities for preparing regional SoE Reports with other Councils.
- Include environmental advice from other Councils and provide information on the regional setting in future SoE Reports.
- Provide information about gaps in data and environmental information in future SoE Reports.
- Provide a list of issues and future actions to be undertaken by Council in future SoE Reports.
- Provide evidence of community consultation or involvement of the community in monitoring changes in the environment.

Council's response to these recommendations is outlined below.

Opportunities for Preparing Regional SoE Reports

During the reporting period Council raised the issue of regional reporting at the Mid North Coast Strategic Alliance – Planners Group Meeting. The Group resolved to advise the GM's Group of the potential economies of a regional based State of the Environment Report, incorporating regional sustainability indices reporting. The Group further resolved to seek advice from the Department of Local Government (DLG) as to whether regional reporting would satisfy the requirements of the Local Government Act. The Departments response referred to the ACT Region Report as an example of Regional SOE Report. [\(Appendix F\)](#) The report was assessed and reported to the Town Planners Group which resolved to advise the General Managers Group that whilst there were benefits in regional SOE reporting it should not be assigned a high priority.

Environmental Advice from Other Councils & Regional Setting

Consultation with surrounding Council's took place prior to the preparation of 2003/04 Comprehensive Report, with detailed discussions on what type of indicators to select for and the appropriate environmental information to provide. No direct inter-Council consultation was conducted for this year's Supplementary Report, although a number of other Council's SoE Reports were reviewed prior to the production of this report to ensure this Report is up to date with regional reporting trends.

A section describing the regional setting was included within the Report.

Gaps in Data and Environmental Information

The 2004/05 Supplementary SoE Report addressed the majority of data gaps identified in the 2003/04 Comprehensive SoE Report, with data on some indicators such as, commercial fish catches within the Shire and Council's electricity and fuel consumption being quantified for the first time in the 2004/05 SoE Report and refined and reported on again in this year's Report.

There are, however, a few circumstances where data was not able to be obtained, or gathered in time for the SoE Reporting. For example data on surface water licensing was not obtained from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for the 2004/05 Report until February 2006 and as such was not able to be included in the 2005 Report, but was subsequently reported on in this year's Report. Data on groundwater licensing sourced from DNR was not made available for both the 2004/05 and current SoE Report.

List of Issues and Future Actions

The following summary table was included in this year's report which identified priority issues with associated current and proposed future actions.

Table 1 - Summary of Issues and Current and Future Actions

Issue	Current Actions (05/06)	Future Actions
LAND		
Acid Sulfate Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remedial works undertaken included 3 floodgate and 5 drain modifications using external and internal funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue remedial works on floodgates and drainage structures.
Land Degradation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of Groundwater Management Plan for area surrounding former fuel terminals at SWR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake land degradation assessment. Mapping of potential plumes at former fuel terminal sites.
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Controls – LEP 2006 to supersede LEP 1987 Two Local Environmental Studies (LES) nearing completion for rezoning applications for the former Shell Petroleum Site and Saltwater Developments Site at SWR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of land capacity study. Preparation residential land release strategy. Review of SWR structure plan. Standard LEP 2008 ESD Strategy Industrial Land Strategy Rural Residential Land Release Strategy. SWR DCP and CP
WATER		

Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beachwatch and stream water quality monitoring programs. • Installation of various stormwater quality improvement devices. • Pollution Reduction Programs (PRP) for West Kempsey Sewage Treatment Plant to identify and bring into operation effluent reuse opportunities. • Continued inspections in line with the On-site Sewage Management Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue water quality monitoring program • Implement actions outlined in Kempsey Shire Urban Stormwater Management Strategy • Continue inspections in line with the On-site Sewage Management Strategy.
Estuarine/River Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Killick Creek and Saltwater Creek & Lagoon Estuary Management Plans finalised and adopted by Council. • Macleay River Estuary Data Compilation Study completed and Process Study underway. • Consultant engaged to undertake data compilation and process study component of Korogoro Creek Estuary Management Plan, Hat Head. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt & and seek funding for implementation of recommendations made in Killick Creek and Saltwater Creek & Lagoon Estuary Management Plans. • Continue process for preparing Macleay River and Korogoro Creek Estuary Management Plans.
Flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Saltwater Creek Catchment Flood Study completed. • Preparation of Draft Kempsey Flood Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise Saltwater Creek Catchment Flood Study. • Finalise Draft Kempsey Flood Study • Adopt planning flood levels for the Saltwater Creek Catchment
Riparian Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 2 of Pola Creek Rehabilitation Project • Revegetation works continued for the Nestle Community Vegetation Project – Jerseyville. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Gills Bridge Creek Rehabilitation Plan. • Continue revegetation works for the Nestle Community Vegetation Project
ATMOSPHERE		
Air Pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responded to air pollution complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop & Implement Air Pollution Complaint Register.
Odour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing odour management at Sewerage Treatment Plants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop effective Odour Complaint Register and Prepare Action Plans for Problem Areas.
Greenhouse Gases & Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific responses within the reporting period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate opportunities for joining Cities for Climate Protection Program.
BIODIVERSITY		
Endangered and or Vulnerable Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertook preparation of Vegetation Mapping Project for eastern portion of the Shire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare Koala Management Plan • Prepare Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. • Vegetation Mapping Zone 2
Feral Animals and Exotic Weeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's ongoing weed control and education program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare companion and feral animal management plan. • Prepare a comprehensive Weed Management Strategy.

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS		
Population Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update or preparation of, DCP – Kempsey Shire Master Plan, DCP – Crescent Head Local Housing Strategy, DCP 22 - Local Housing Strategy (Urban Areas other than Crescent Head 2003) and DCP 28 – Leasing of Public Areas for Restaurants and Cafes. Finalised Kempsey Shire Population Profile Report. Undertook preparation of Population Projection Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence Kempsey Strategic Direction Project Finalise Population Projection Study. Preparation of residential land release strategy.
Water & Sewage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Water Treatment Plant at South West Rocks. Continued inspections in line with the On-site Sewage Management Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Rocks Wastewater Recycling Project Sewerage System for Jerseyville and Greenhills. Continued inspections in line with the On-site Sewage Management Strategy.
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Landfill Environmental Management Plan (LEMP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of Shire wide Waste Management Strategy Implementation of Kerbside Recycling Program.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Infrastructure Strategic Plan completed. Ongoing Works Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Transport Infrastructure Strategic Plan.
ABORIGINAL & NON-ABORIGINAL HERITAGE		
Encroachment by Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Kempsey Shire Community Based Heritage Study completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise and implement the Kempsey Shire Community Based Heritage Study.
COUNCIL PERFORMANCE		
Energy Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific responses within the reporting period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake energy audit & prepare Energy Saving Action Plan.
Water Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Audits finalised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire funding for implementation of retrofitting program for Council premises.
Paper Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trial run of using recycled paper for Council minute taking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare & Implement a Paper Recycling Program.
Fuel Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Staff Motor Vehicle Policy amended in January 2006 with reduced leaseback incentives for staff to have small vehicles. Program for appropriate servicing of vehicles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate options for purchasing smaller, fuel efficient vehicles with improved emission ratings for Council's Vehicle Fleet, based NSW Clean Car Benchmarks

Community Consultation

A community consultation meeting was conducted for the 2003/04 Comprehensive Report to present the new Draft 2003/04 SoE Report structure. The Draft 2003/04 SoE Report was made publicly available on Council's Internet Site (www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au) and Copies

were also available at the Council Civic Centre and Public Libraries. Submissions were received with regard to the direction being taken and proposed content of the report and were included where appropriate into the final 2003/04 Comprehensive SoE Report. No major changes in structure or content (only updates where data was available) have been made since the 2003/04 Report and as such no direct community consultation has taken place for the previous two Supplementary Reports. A community consultation program will be undertaken upon the preparation of the next Comprehensive Report, due in 2007/08.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- ***Environmental***

The 2005/06 Supplementary SoE Report provides both an update on the trends in environmental indicators and a "snapshot" of the present day environment in Kempsey Shire with that of previous years to identify any new environmental pressures since the previous report. The Report also flags high priority environmental issues that need to be addressed by Council in years to come to ensure the necessary resources can be targeted to where they are needed.

- ***Social***

The 2005/06 Supplementary SoE Report presents a range of social issues and indicators that can directly have an affect on the natural environment. The Report provides an update on the current trends within the social environment, enabling resources to be directed to key areas for action.

- ***Economic (Financial)***

The 2005/06 Supplementary SoE Report provides an update on many economic factors within the Shire, including annualised growth rates, household incomes, employment and unemployment figures. Furthermore, the state of Kempsey Shire's environment has direct significant economic implications with regard to a wide range of issues including agricultural production, tourism, employment opportunities, human health and liveability.

- ***Policy or Statutory***

This SoE Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation, taking into account the 1997 amendments to the Act.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the information be noted.

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R B Pitt
DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES