



KEMPSEY
Shire Council

DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT

11th December 2007

DSDS6

CLIMATE CHANGE

FILE: 1048 NDH

{Folio No. *}

SUMMARY:

Reporting to Council on local activities undertaken to address climate change, including further recommendations for Council to participate in the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) program and endorse the NSW Mayors' Agreement on Climate Change.

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DESCRIPTION

Local governments around the world are responding to the threat of climate change by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and helping the community do the same. In recent years Kempsey Shire Council has initiated or participated in a number of programs to begin monitoring, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as educating people about global warming and climate change, including:

1. **Council Electricity Consumption Data Analysis and Benchmarking** – Council engaged external consultants to undertake detailed electricity service reports and benchmarking to compare Council's energy use with similar sized Councils. By quantifying current and historic electricity consumption Council can put measures in place to reduce future electricity consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. **Introduction of Smaller, Fuel Efficient Vehicles** – a number of smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles have been introduced into the Council's general fleet, including 2 vehicles running on LPG for which financial incentives are provided. Smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles generate less greenhouse gas emissions.
3. **Caravan Park Upgrade Works** – A number of actions have been taken to improve the energy and water efficiencies of the 4 caravan parks, including:
 - Low wattage lighting installed in power-head upgrades;
 - Solar walkway lighting installed at Hat Head Caravan Park;
 - Energy efficient fluorescent lighting installed in 4 caravan park amenities and common buildings;
 - Water saving shower heads installed within amenities blocks of caravan parks;

- Water saving crystals mixed into soil for new garden beds in public recreation reserves and caravan parks to reduce water of gardens;
 - Planting of approximately 300 trees and plants within the four caravan parks;
 - Beach showers at Crescent Head that feature auto shut off to reduce water usage.
4. **Saleyard Upgrades** – Photocell and timer controlled lighting has been installed at the Kempsey Regional Saleyard complex to reduce unnecessary use of electricity when the complex is not being utilised.
 5. **Capping of Former Landfill Sites** - Landfill operations in the Shire have been reduced from four to one central landfill located on Crescent Head Road. All sites have now been permanently capped, reducing the amount of greenhouse gases escaping from these sites.
 6. **Recycling** – the kerbside recycling program has now been in operation for over 12 months and, along with further waste separation activities conducted at the main landfill site, has significantly reduced the quantity of solid waste going to landfill, and as such reduced potential greenhouse gas emissions.
 7. **Green Waste** – Council is conducting research in collaboration with Port Macquarie Hastings Council on carbon sequestration and emission trading in relation to green waste collection and treatments.
 8. **Pilot Copy & Printing Paper Monitoring Program** – During 2006 / 07, a pilot paper usage monitoring program was undertaken within SDS to determine paper usage and equate it to number of trees felled and greenhouse gas emissions produced. The pilot program was designed to raise staff awareness about their collective paper usage and associated greenhouse gas emissions. The overall aim of the program is to introduce paper saving initiatives and potentially purchase 100% recycled paper in the future to further cut Council's greenhouse gas emissions from this source.
 9. **Revegetation Projects** – Over a number of years now Council has been actively involved in a number of community and corporate based revegetation programs. In total over 8,000 endemic trees and shrubs have been planted, substantially adding to the carbon sequestration (offsetting) capabilities of the Shire.
 10. **Community Climate Saver Pack Campaign** - In September 2006, Council formed a partnership with Easy Being Green, to distribute Climate Saver Packs free of charge to the community. Once installed, these Packs helped to reduce household energy and water consumption and also aided in raising community awareness about what actions individuals can take to help combat climate change at a local level.
 11. **Sustainable Choice Program** – Delivered through the LGSA, Council signed up to this Program in May 2007. The Program aims to assist Council with sustainable procurement in all operations and includes buying products that save water and energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contain recycled content and minimise waste.

While these programs have been successful in partly quantifying, monitoring, reducing and educating people about greenhouse gas emissions, they have been somewhat opportunistic in nature, formed part of other programs and have lacked overall strategic direction required to fully formulate a comprehensive action plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Program offers a very reputable program for developing such an action plan.

Summary of the CCP Program

The CCP Program Australia is a performance-based program that builds local government capacity to address climate change through a milestone framework. In joining the CCP Program, Council has the opportunity to show leadership to the community and be part of a growing number of local governments nationally and internationally who are finding that greenhouse action makes good financial, environmental and social sense.

The CCP Program provides technical advice and support to local governments, as well as appropriate tools, materials and assistance with educational forums and promotions. To become a CCP participant requires a council resolution, a commitment to undertake and resource the milestone program as well as an annual participation fee. Full details of the program can be found in [\(Appendix H – Page G23\)](#).

NSW Mayors' Agreement on Climate Change

The Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW have invited NSW Councils to participate in a Mayors' Agreement on Climate Change as a result of a motion resolved at the 2006 LGA Annual Conference.

The agreement proposed is:

NSW Mayors support the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Kyoto Protocol) targets and agree to:

- Strive to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets in their operations, activities and communities, through actions ranging from anti-sprawl, land use policies to urban forest restoration projects to information campaigns.
- Urge the State and Federal Government to enact policies and programs to meet or beat the greenhouse gas emission reduction, suggested for Australia in the Kyoto Protocol, of 108% of its 1990 baseline.
- Urge the State and Federal Government and the Federal Opposition to build on the Prime Minister's commitment to developing and investing funding in programs to meet the target Australia agreed to at Kyoto in 1997 by now formally ratifying the Kyoto Protocol and that target.

A copy of the proposed Mayors Agreement tailored to suit Council's current position in terms of measuring and setting an emissions reduction goal, is included in [\(Appendix I – Page G26\)](#).

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- *Environmental*

Any actions to monitor and put measures in place to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are directly contributing to combating climate change and therefore should be encouraged and continued. Joining the CCP Program and endorsing the Mayors Agreement will provide a solid platform for reducing Council's and the broader community's combined emissions.

- **Social**

Although climate change is global in scale, many of the impacts and possible solutions occur at a local level and as such local government and the community play a major role in mitigating such impacts and providing realistic solutions. The CCP Program is very much focused on the local level and will encourage participation from the community to reduce their individual and collective emissions through education forums and workshops.

- **Economic (Financial)**

There is the potential for significant financial savings to be made in the longer term by identifying areas for improved efficiencies and thus reduction in energy consumption. Being a member of CCP will also increase Council's ability to attract funding through the federal government's Climate Change Fund and put Council in a strong position to take part in future carbon emissions trading schemes.

To become a CCP Australia participant requires an annual participation fee of \$2,000 for Council's with a population between 20,000 – 40,000 people which would be funded from the ESD Strategy Implementation vote.

- **Policy or Statutory**

Joining the CCP Program and developing a shire wide action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will meet the requirements of 2 high priority actions recommended in the Kempsey Shire ESD Strategy, adopted by Council in July 2007.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. That Council note the climate change activities undertaken in the Shire so far;
- B. That Council participate in the Cities for Climate Protection Program and nominate a Councillor as contact for the Program.
- C. That Council endorse the NSW Mayors' Agreement on Climate Change and delegate the Mayor to sign the agreement on behalf of Council.

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R B Pitt
DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES