

S.E.E. the Future
Society-Economy-Ecology

**A Local Agenda 21 for the Gold Coast:
a local action plan toward Ecologically
Sustainable Development in the City of Gold
Coast in the 21st Century**

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Glossary

Word or Phrase	Definition
Ecological Sustainability	development that improves the quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends.
IEMS Resource Sustainability	Integrated Environmental Management System the continued availability of the natural resources needed to support a desired quality of life, ie. "living off the interest, not plundering the capital"
Sustainability	the ability to maintain a desired condition over time.
Sustainable Development	development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Bruntland,1992)

Summary

Following the United Nations' Environment and Development Conference (1992) - known as the Rio Earth Summit - local councils, globally, have become the focus of strategies for "sustainable development" under the Local Agenda 21 initiative. At the Earth Summit, the Australian Government signed Agenda 21, a plan for action to achieve ESD in the 21st century - It is recognised that many problems and actions have their roots in local activities and if progress is to be made then it must start at a local level.

Agenda 21 specifically cites ecological sustainability as its long term goal and highlights the role of local government stating that councils should prepare with their communities a Local Agenda 21 for their area.

Local Agenda 21 is a local action plan, developed in consultation with the community that strives toward sustainability in the 21st century.

The Gold Coast City Council is already recognised, nationally, as being a leader in working toward Ecologically Sustainable Development and as complying with Local Agenda 21. This is because the Council has a number of programs that each address the key principles of a LA21, that is:

- integrate planning and policy making;
- focus on long term outcomes ; and,
- involve all sectors of the community.

The Council has also made considerable progress against all of the seven key steps identified by the Federal Government Department of Environment Sport and Territories for establishing an effective LA21 process in a local government area. These steps are:

- Getting started
- Creating a climate of support
- Council-Community partnership
- Focus on the future
- Implementation
- Reporting
- Standing back

The Council already has undertaken extensive community consultation to establish the Corporate Plan, the Strategic Plan and The Planning Scheme for the City that express the ideal of ecologically sustainable development and "Sustainable Communities" as a focus of the City's future for at least the next 25 years. In addition to the Council's extensive use of consultation, it is also undertaking a thorough review of its approach to community consultation, involvement and partnership toward these objectives. Council has been successful in implementing many strategies that address key issues such as the Northern Wastewater Strategy, Guragunbah Floodplain Strategy and the Community Health Plan.

Gold Coast is also a leading Council in the development of sustainability reporting frameworks for decision making in local government through its State of the Environment Reporting program.

While further and continuing improvement will always be needed to address progress toward Ecologically Sustainable Development and in refining our Local Agenda 21, there remain three key issues to finalising a Local Agenda 21 for the City of Gold Coast. These are:

- The articulation of the current Local Agenda 21 Strategy of the Council for the City,
- The establishment of an Officer's advisory technical working group to assist the CEO and Directors through the Executive Officers Committee in improving the integration and coordination of Council's activities toward the objectives of the Corporate Plan and toward ESD.
- The formal adoption of the current strategy and the endorsement of the technical working group

1. Introduction

The second half of the 20th Century has witnessed extraordinary economic growth and development in urban-industrial countries, including Australia. Clearly there have been major benefits to people in the developed world from this growth, including increased material well-being, better health and extended life expectancy. However, there is increasing evidence that these benefits have been achieved at a cost to our communities and the capacity of the ecosystem (land, water, air and organisms), the latter being both the main producer of raw materials and the main re-processor of wastes from human activities.

Typically this economic growth has been characterised by large scale production and consumption of goods, greatly increased use of and reliance upon fossil fuels (oil, natural gas coal) for basic energy supply in homes, factories, transport systems etc.; an increased dependence upon synthetic materials (eg plastics) rather than natural materials; and increased use of a wide range of mineral resources (Tyler Miller, 1992).

This development regime has raised concerns with regards to resulting adverse *social and environmental* impacts. It is these concerns in particular, which underpinned recent debates concerning the future of continuing large-scale urbanisation and utilisation of resources. That is, not all current human activities are necessarily supportable now or in the longer term when the wiser and true costs of development are taken into account. (Beder 1993)

A review of attitudes of Australians toward the environment over the period 1975 to 1994 (Lothian, 1994) noted a strong pro-environment preference amongst the Australian community with regard to key issues of concern including pollution and waste, loss of biodiversity, land degradation and urban problems (eg traffic congestion). This consensus is supported by recent surveys undertaken in Australia that indicate a generally raised environmental awareness amongst the majority of the population. Concerns over the environment now rank alongside those of health, crime and the economy (ABS 1996). Another survey revealed that both the 'green issues' (eg. Conservation of old growth forests, protection of wildlife habitats) and the 'brown issues' (effective disposal of solid, liquid and gaseous wastes) are receiving much more community attention today than in the past (ABS 1996, Table 14.4 p 388).

This awareness has been fostered, in part, through media coverage of national and international events eg. Global warming and French nuclear testing in the Pacific, as well as through direct personal experience. This greater level of awareness places pressure on decision-makers at national, state and local levels to be more accountable for environmental policies and actions.

Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and Sustainable Development are often misunderstood terms that are used when discussing future development of a City or a region.

The misunderstanding is often expressed through the various definitions used and the interpretations placed on them, eg. that ESD pits the environment against development. This confusion, and resulting debate, has detracted from the value of the basic concept: that of taking stock of a situation and of planning to improve the outcomes that are currently being achieved across all fronts; environmental, social as well as economic.

ESD does not imply no-development, neither does it imply no growth. It does require that the effects of different forms of development, designed to accommodate change and growth, consider the needs of the present as well as future generations. Consequently any development must consider the physical and biological processes on which all life depends. In Australia (the National Strategy for ESD and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment) and in Queensland (the Integrated Planning Act (1997) and the Environmental Protection Act (1994) stress the need for all levels of government to consider ESD.

Irrespective of the definition used, putting ESD into practice is problematic as we do not have complete knowledge of how the physical and biological systems operate. Consequently exact forms of planning to live sustainably within known ecological limits is not yet possible. Nor is it possible to look for a single example that can be said to be sustainable across all fronts.

While it may not be possible to identify what is sustainable, it is possible to determine which practices are not sustainable and to seek ways to reduce the impacts of these and move toward sustainability.

In this way ESD is a process of continuous improvement based on local information and practices as well as on benchmarking with other local governments and cities. ESD is a process of learning and review which strives to continually reduce the impact of human settlements on their surrounding environments as well as achieving socially and economically acceptable outcomes. Achieving ESD will not be easy and there will always be room for improving the way that things are done. An essential part of this process of continuous improvement will be identification of unsustainable practices and implementation of more sustainable practices.

Local Agenda 21 (LA21) focuses these objectives down to local governments and originates from Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 (UNCED 1992). It is aimed at helping local communities balance the needs and concerns of economic development and employment, environmental protection, and social justice. Every Local Agenda 21 should reflect the needs, resources and aspirations of a local community and place them in a global context. The whole ethos of Local Agenda 21 is based around the integration of local sustainable development initiatives and the participation of the community.

This strategy presents the concepts associated with Local Agenda 21 and relates these concepts to the existing major practices and programs within Gold Coast City

including its Governance model and the use of a triple bottom line (Society, Economy and Ecology) as part of Council's approach to 'S.E.E. the Future'. Finally it identifies how LA21 operates within the Council and provides an integrative reporting framework for identifying, coordinating and monitoring key actions that are needed for the City to move toward its vision.

Draft

2. A brief history of Ecologically Sustainable Development and Local Agenda 21

2.1 General Development of ESD

Although concerns about adverse environmental impacts of development have been around since development began and have been growing since the 1950s and 1960s, notably Rachel Carson's *'The Silent Spring'* (1962), it is only more recently that environmental issues have come to the fore in the public arena. For the purpose of this history the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 is taken as a starting point as this was the first major international forum within which development and environment issues were debated together and the integral association of the two was recognised.

Out of these early agreements the concepts of Sustainability and Sustainable Development have evolved. These first came to the international stage in 1987 through the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED 1987) Report, referred to as the Brundtland Commission Report. This report defined sustainable development as:

“ Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”

This significant report in 1987 was followed by a series of Australian national documents, expanding on the theme of sustainable development as shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Keystone documents associated with the development of ESD concepts in Australia.

Year	Keystone Documents
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Common Future or the Brundtland Report (WCED)
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Our Country. Our Future' address by Prime Minister, R.Hawke
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian working groups on Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) established.
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development. • 'Statement on Environment' address by Prime Minister, P.Keating • Inter-Government Agreement on the Environment • Beyond the Limits (BTL) report • United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro • Local Agenda 21
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kyoto Agreement on Greenhouse emissions.

2.2 Agenda 21 and Local Agenda 21

Agenda 21 was the document developed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992, known as the Rio Earth Summit. As a 'consensus document' it is likely to further evolve through debate and experience gained during its application. Agenda 21, while not legally binding, is a practical long-term action plan or agenda for national governments to move toward global sustainability in the 21st century.

Agenda 21 was the culmination of some two years of research and drafting, including substantial input from the non-government sector, before its presentation, debate and ratification at the conference. Australia is one of 50 signatories to the document.

The Agenda 21 document is divided into five sections:

1. Chapter 1 which is a preamble which discusses the need for National Governments to provide legislative power and the finance for State and Local Governments
2. Chapters 2-8 which identify the social and economic issues arising from and resulting in the current unsustainable pattern of resource use.
3. Chapters 9-23 which deal with issues of global concern such as global warming, deforestation, biodiversity, oceans, toxic chemicals and land resources.
4. Chapters 24-32 which focuses on the international and national actions required to build a stronger social link between each section of society and the decision making processes.
5. Chapters 33-40 which consider the means of implementation, eg. finance, technology, science, education, institutional, legal and decision making.

Local Agenda 21 (LA21) focuses the objectives of Agenda 21 down to local government and community level and originates from Chapter 28 of Agenda 21. It is aimed at helping local communities balance the needs and concerns of economic development and employment, environmental protection, and social justice. Every LA21 should reflect the needs, resources and aspirations of a local community and place them in a global context.

The whole ethos of Agenda 21 and Local Agenda 21 is based around the integration of local sustainable development initiatives and the participation of the community. As the success of Australia's National Landcare has shown, it is critical for people at local and community levels to be involved in implementing sustainable development practices. It is vitally important for Australia's predominantly urban population to be drawn into environmental activities (Brown 1997). Global problems are the cumulative result of decisions taken by individuals over time. Local authorities are the level of government closest to the community and best placed to play a major role in enabling the conservation and sustainable development commitments of the community to be met.

The adoption of LA21 by the international community is regarded as a major step forward. The original vision was that, by 1996 most local authorities in each country should have undertaken a consultative process with their communities and achieved a consensus on a LA21.

However, as LA21 does not impose any legally binding obligations on the signatory governments, its adoption to date has varied around the world. The situation in Australia is that only 19 out of 750 local authorities have formally taken up the Local Agenda 21 program (Environment Business, April, 1996). This compares with the United Kingdom where about 75% of local councils have adopted Local Agenda 21 in their programs and policies.

There are related social, economic and environmental benefits for the development of a Local Agenda 21. The benefits of the program include:

- reconciling differences, and reducing major trade-offs, between environmental sustainability, social justice and economic viability;
- improving the efficiency of council operations and service delivery;
- providing new opportunities for new future-focussed industry;
- involving those persons who are often disenfranchised in decisions about their future;
- achieving sustainable pricing policies and pricing mechanisms;
- providing greater certainty to residents and developers through forward planning;
- focussing on long-term planning as well as the immediate requirements; and,
- providing a basis for monitoring progress toward sustainability leading to the creation of sustainable jobs.

2.3 The development of Local Agenda 21 in Australia and Queensland

The LA21 program in Australia is very much a local government initiative developed by the Municipal Conservation Association (now Environs Australia) through support from the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Sport and Territories. It has been refined and tested by workshops and reviews undertaken by council officers, individuals and Local Government Associations. Environs Australia is a not-for-profit group supporting local government ESD initiatives in Australia.

LA21 is, therefore, a process where local government and their communities develop an action plan for moving toward ESD in the 21st Century. Such a plan needs to reflect the community's vision for their municipality and to relate to the legislative framework that local governments operate in.

A Local Agenda 21 can be a unique document by incorporating the Corporate Plan and long-term action plan together. In Queensland, all councils are required to do a corporate plan and the concept of a LA21 can seem redundant. However, LA21 does add value to existing corporate plans that are based on consultation with the community and espouse the goal of ESD. The LA21 does this through listing the specific actions and programs being conducted or to be undertaken thus providing a long-term action plan against which performance can be determined. In this way it differs from the annual focus of the Operational Plan.

An LA21 may rely on the new planning schemes required in Queensland under the Integrated Planning Act (1997) through the desired environmental outcomes and that the planning schemes focus on ecological sustainability through land-use planning and

regulation. However, LA21 covers a broader range of issues across Social, Ecological and Economic spheres.

LA21 relates directly to State of the Environment Reporting, which provides the benchmarking tool to monitor progress towards a local vision of ESD and may recommend changes to the LA21 to improve the performance of the City towards its goals.

2.4 The Key Elements of a Local Agenda 21

LA21 has three key elements that are fundamental to the process. LA21 is based upon the creation of appropriate Local Government systems to manage for the future. The key elements are:

- integrate planning and policy making;
- focus on long term outcomes; and,
- involve all sectors of the community.

Managed carefully, Local Agenda 21 will have long-term impacts on every Local Government activity.

3. Gold Coast City's progress toward ESD and Local Agenda 21

The City's State of the Environment Report, Benchmark '97 (Gold Coast City Council 1997) identified that the Gold Coast City's population growth was a major pressure affecting the environment of the City. The City's population more than trebled from 76,862 in 1971 to over 370,000 in 1996 and in June 1998, was estimated at approximately 400,000. This rapid growth in population has resulted in a spread of the built-up areas across the coastal plains and into the foothills of the hinterland. Much of the development of the urban area has been in the form of residential development associated with shopping complexes. This growth is expected to be further stimulated by the completion of the Gold Coast Railway and the Pacific Highway upgrade (Salt, 1995).

The challenge for the Gold Coast is to sustain the key elements of the City's economy and lifestyle which depend heavily on both the natural and built environments. For example, a 'clean/green environment' is regarded by some as a vital asset that underpins the tourism industry and quality of life for local residents. However, poorly managed growth could have adverse effects on these environmental assets. Similarly, housing estates, with minimal social or community facilities pose problems for local residents, particularly the aged, single parent families and youth.

The Council's vision for the City of Gold Coast is "*Naturally, the world's best place to be...because we will create a city that is recognised internationally for the quality,*

diversity and sustainability of its lifestyle, economy and environment. The Gold Coast's future will be secure as Australia's most desirable place to live and favourite place to visit" (GCCC 1998). The vision, as part of the Gold Coast City Council's Corporate Plan, promotes an ecologically sustainable approach to development and is consistent with the profile that the city has internationally. This vision is further strengthened, when combined with the thrust of the Integrated Planning Act (1997), and provides the basis for striving toward ESD in the City. The four key objectives the Council has for the City relate the three components of ESD (quality of life [society], environmental sustainability, and healthy economy) and to the national and international profile of the City. These objectives are consistent with the aims and objectives of LA21 and have direct parallels with the issues being put forward as priorities for sustainable development in the international and national arenas as well by local governments elsewhere in Australia.

The Gold Coast City Council is recognised as having a management system that is consistent with the objectives of LA21 (Environs Australia).

That is:

- the Council has integrated the majority of planning and policy development areas into the Planning Environment and Transport Directorate;
- the Council has been conducting targeted and applied research into issues related to the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of the City and has been developing a new Planning Scheme that is consistent with the Integrated Planning Act (1997) to help provide a long-term focus to planning decisions in the City and to move toward ESD; and,
- The Council has encouraged extensive community participation in policy development within the City.

The following list of documents and programs illustrate some areas where Council has demonstrated an on-going commitment to the ethos of sustainable development. Each of them has involved community consultation and involvement and is focussed on the long-term and has involved the integration of planning and policy and in many cases the implementation of actions.

Gold Coast City Council's Current (July 2000) Agenda for a Sustainable City

General

- Member of the 20% Club striving to reduce impacts in nominated areas by 20% in five years.
- State of the Environment Reporting - provides an environmental report card to the City across all activities.
- Gold Coast City Council Professorial Chair - Centre for Coastal Management, Griffith University
- Gold Coast City Council's Commitment to the Environment
- Gold Coast City Council Statement of Intent for Nature Conservation
- IPA based Planning Scheme

Ecological

- Nature Conservation Strategy which sets out a strategy for protecting the key ecological assets of the City.
- Bushfire Management Strategy.
- Environmental Management Systems for the management of the Council's own resources and assets.
- Key Community, Industry and Business Advisory groups dealing with the environment, urban design and development issues
- Total Management Planning for Drainage and Catchment Management
- Catchment Management Committees to coordinate advice and consultation in water catchment areas.
- Implementation of Waterwatch and Stormwater awareness program for the community and Industry.
- Waterwise strategy and marketing plan (User pay) to further reduce water consumption.
- Tertiary Treatment Strategy to upgrade all wastewater treatments to tertiary standard by 2003.
- Northern Reclaimed Water Strategy to maximise beneficial reuse of effluent from northern area with no ocean discharge
- Northern Wastewater Strategy to treat wastewater generated in the Northern area of the City
- Acid Sulfate Soil Management Policy.
- Waste Minimisation and kerbside recycling

Social

- Urban Heritage and Character study.
- Community Health Plan.
- Ageing Community Strategy.
- Community Consultation and Participation Strategy
- Local Area Planning Program.
- Guragunbah Floodplain Structure Plan.

Economic

- Implementation of the City Transport Plan.
- Implementation of the Economic Development Strategy.
- Development of incentives to attract new 'clean and green' industries to the city.

4. LA21 structures and linkages to governance

The Council's existing major governance structures (Council, Executive Officer's Committee, Community Advisory Committees, Corporate Plan, Operational Plan, Commercial Business Unit Plans and the list of major strategies in section 3) already fulfil the basic requirements of LA21, these are:

- integrate planning and policy making;
- focus on long term outcomes ; and,
- involve all sectors of the community.

The Council developed the Corporate Plan, through consultation, and identified a vision for the City that is based on Ecologically Sustainable Development, and sets forth a range of broad objectives that cover social, economic and ecological outcomes toward this vision. The Executive Officers (CEO and Directors) are charged to steer the Council toward meeting these objectives, with the Director of Planning Environment and Transport given the role of reporting against environmental sustainability in the City.

This Strategy supports this structure by:

- providing a list of the current long term agenda of actions and programs for the Council to move the City toward its objectives that provides a framework for the development of the annual Operational Plan.
- Identifying the Executive Officers Committee as the Steering Committee for the LA21
- Linking the State of the Environment Reporting process to the triple bottom line of social, economic and ecological outcomes
- Developing the discipline of explicitly addressing the triple bottom line in decision making at all levels.

However, in an organisation the size of the Council and for a City as dynamic as the Gold Coast such structures need to be supported to ensure that the integration, long term view and community involvement criteria are both efficient and effective in progressing the objectives of the corporate plan and its vision for the future of the City.

This strategy also involves the establishment of a cross-directorate officers committee to advise the Executive Officers Committee in its role as the LA21 steering committee. This group would assist the executive by integrating consultation with the community into the LA21, undertaking detailed debate on issues and improving coordination and linkages between similar initiatives between directorates. This group, the Society-Economy-Ecology Technical Advisory Group (SEETAG) would provide technical and coordinative advice to the executive and assist in Council moving the City toward an ecologically sustainable future.

SEETAG must have a clear linkage to the City's community for effective consultation. An immediate link for the SEETAG to the community would be through

Council's existing advisory committees using a programmed exchange of minutes. Such an arrangement can provide an effective interaction without the need for duplicating the functions of the advisory committees in a separate larger officer-community committee of some 50-60 people. A single, larger committee would find difficulty in performing effectively on a regular basis but improved integration could be facilitated through an annual workshop each year to allow the LA21 coordinating group and the advisory committees to combine and review the progress of the City toward ESD and the upcoming initiatives for the next year prior to the formulation of Council's operation plan and the budget. It could also be structured to provide an acknowledgment of the work done by individuals from the community for the previous year.

The linkage between SEETAG and the community advisory groups does not reduce the need for improved community consultation and involvement.

To further increase the effectiveness of the SEETAG, it should be comprised of relatively senior staff with a solid knowledge of the relevant activities of their respective directorates and should seek to include key representatives from existing officer groups such as the IEMS group.

While, all Directorates have a major stake in the future of the City, the Director of Planning Environment and Transport (PE&T) has the primary responsibility of reporting on Council's progress toward Ecological Sustainability. In this light the SEETAG committee should be chaired by the Director PE&T or nominee so that they are up-to date on progress toward Ecological Sustainability and it is the responsibility of the Director PE&T to report the recommendations of SEETAG to the EOC in their role as steering committee.

The Charter of the SEETAG would be to identify, coordinate and report against Council's programs related to ESD across all directorates by:

- Establishing and monitoring protocols to improve coordination across directorates within the Council and regionally;
- Developing an information strategy for LA21 that will encourage participation and will celebrate Council's initiatives and successes;
- Providing a programmed opportunity for updating Council initiatives and general information exchange;
- Identify areas of unnecessary duplication of effort;
- Identify areas which are not currently being addressed;
- Providing reports to the Director PE&T on the City's progress toward ESD in conjunction with the City's State of the Environment Report;
- Coordinating with the Council's established Community Advisory Committees on progress toward ESD; and,
- Reviewing current Council programs with the view to continuous improvement.

5. Remaining Elements of the Strategy to be implemented

Developing a Local Agenda 21 is a new activity for most local communities in Australia so as yet there is no single 'best' process that has been refined through broad experience.

However, more recently Environs Australia has recognised that some local Governments, such as Gold Coast City Council, may have already covered many of the key aspects of a Local Agenda 21. The issue is to identify the remaining elements that need to be completed to establish an effective process.

Section 3 identifies the comprehensive range of activities undertaken by Gold Coast City Council that are forward thinking, involved community consultation and focussed on the long-term management of the City.

Early in the development of Local Agenda 21 in Australia the Federal Department of Environment Sport and Territories identified specific activities necessary for all organisations to undertake in order to start the process. The department suggested seven steps toward establishing a Local Agenda 21. Table 2 presents these seven steps and recommended actions against the progress Gold Coast City Council has made on developing a Local Agenda 21 and identifies which actions remain to be completed.

It is clear from Table 2 that Gold Coast City Council has already progressed significantly against each of the suggested steps toward a LA21. However, several tasks remain to be completed.

Table 2: Steps to establish an effective Local Agenda 21

Step	Recommended Actions	GCCC progress to date	Actions required to establish LA21
1. Getting Started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a team to start the process, • check resources and • report to Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Planning section starting process • Integrated Environmental Plan/ Local Agenda 21 approved by Council in operational plan and Budget 	

Step	Recommended Actions	GCCC progress to date	Actions required to establish LA21
2. Creating a climate of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an information strategy • Publicise widely and encourage involvement of all sectors of the community • Undertake research and establish an accurate community profile • Establish database on community information, groups and local issues • Disseminate information on examples of local issues • Place local issues in the global context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research undertaken and community profile developed in Strategic and Environmental Planning • Community information, groups and issues established through research and consultation • Researched information published in reports and factsheets, at libraries and through groups and where possible the media. Such publications strive to place local information in national and international context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an information strategy for LA21 and encourage wider publicity and involvement across all sectors
3. A Council-community partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a partnership for Agenda 21 with the local community and industry • Select a steering Committee and if required form working groups • Determine and publicise a community vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the vision established in the Corporate Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda 21 partnerships yet to be established

Step	Recommended Actions	GCCC progress to date	Actions required to establish LA21
4. Focus on the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and publicise community goals • Establish local principles for action • Investigate and evaluate the current situation • Establish agreement on the need to change current management systems • Formulate new policy directions for Council and appropriate actions • publicise widely and encourage comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan • Operational Plan • Research/State of the Environment Report • Implementation of Integrated Environmental Management Systems and Leadership Development Program • New Policies developed as required and in response to emerging conditions and trends. • Public involvement encouraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
5. Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement actions to achieve goals • Share information with other communities, local authorities and other spheres of government • Show who is responsible for implementing actions • Begin implementation on new policy directions and actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation is already a strong focus of the Council for each strategy and with accountable staff identified • Council publishes information in reports and shares information with other councils through fora such as SouthROC, SEQROC and LGAQ. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
6. Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a report on Local Agenda 21 • Publicise widely and disseminate in many forms and languages • Advertise changes to Council practices and systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Environment Reporting process already established as vehicle for reporting and promoting progress on Local Agenda 21 • Council information available mainly in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is also a need for a more active promotion of Council initiatives and successes in moving toward ecologically sustainable development

Step	Recommended Actions	GCCC progress to date	Actions required to establish LA21
7. Standing back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the sustainability of actions • Establish monitoring programs and make regular reports • Review policies and actions not making progress • Share experiences with other local authorities • Celebrate the outcomes of the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of the Environment Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for review of policies to evaluate success and poor performance via the SoER process • Need to celebrate progress and success more often

5. Conclusions

The Gold Coast City Council is already recognised, nationally, as complying with Local Agenda 21. The Council has a number of programs that each address the key principles of a LA21; that is:

- integrate planning and policy making,
- focus on long term outcomes and
- involve all sectors of the community.

The Council has also made considerable progress against the seven key steps identified by the Federal Government Department of Environment Sport and Territories for establishing an effective LA21 process in a local government area.

In addition, the Corporate Plan identifies that responsibility for the environment lies with each of the Directorates and that the Planning Environment and Transport Directorate has the primary responsibility for reporting the Council's progress toward ESD.

This strategy sets forth a model for progressing Ecologically Sustainable Development in the City by:

1. Identifying the governance structures currently in place to steer the City toward its future
2. Identifying the current long term action plan of the Council to effect the Council's vision for the City.
3. Identifying Key reporting roles for monitoring the City's progress
4. Identifying the need for a Technical Advisory Group to assist the Executive Officer's steer the Council's implementation of the Action plan and to advise on the need to further and continuing improvement.

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