

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ISJO

Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities 2022-2032

Acknowledgement of Country

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Dharawal and Yuin nations on which we live and work, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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What is a Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities?

The *Local Government (General) Amendment (Regional Joint Organisations) Regulation 2018* requires that Joint Organisations such as the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (the ISJO) prepare a short statement of strategic regional priorities and the strategies and plans required to deliver them.

The statement of strategic regional priorities (statement) should set out a vision for the region and an overview of the joint organisation's strategic work program to achieve this vision.

The statement must be reviewed in the twelve month period following each Local Government General Election.

Content of the Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities

Under the integrated planning and reporting framework, all NSW councils must engage with their community to prepare a community strategic plan. Community strategic plans identify community aspirations and priorities for the future of the local area. These priorities may include issues that are common across the region and are therefore better addressed by working through the joint organisation.

Local and regional priorities are also described in many NSW Government documents.

A Joint Organisation's Statement of Regional Priorities should draw from its member Council community strategic plans, regional plans and other strategic documents to clearly identify the top regional priorities for the joint organisation.

It should focus on the highest priorities for the region. The statement does not need to list every activity the joint organisation may work on, or all the issues which are important to each member council. These activities and issues can be documented in other, more detailed supporting plans.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven strategic context

The Illawarra Shoalhaven region comprises, in alphabetical order, the Kiama, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Wollongong local government areas (LGAs). The councils for each of these LGAs are the members of the ISJO.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven shares its strategic footprint with the State Government's Illawarra Shoalhaven regional planning boundary and it is one of the Six Cities within the Greater Cities Commission area. The Six Cities comprise the Illawarra Shoalhaven, Western Parkland City, Central River City, Eastern Harbour City, Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City and Central Coast City.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Strategic Planning Context

A series of strategies exist to guide the development of our region. These strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Member Council Community Strategic Plans
- Member Council Local Strategic Planning Statements
- State Government regionally focused frameworks including the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041, the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan and Dharrandharrang Aboriginal Partnerships Framework, and
- Strategic frameworks being developed by the Greater Cities Commission including, at this stage, the Six Cities Discussion Paper and the forthcoming Greater Cities Commission Illawarra Shoalhaven Region Plan.

What is the role of the ISJO's Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities in the context of these plans?

Individually and collectively the strategic frameworks developed at a local, regional and beyond region level have a profound influence on the future of our region and the well-being of its residents.

The statutory roles of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation are:

- strategic planning and priority setting
- intergovernmental collaboration
- shared leadership and advocacy.

In the context of these statutory roles, the Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities serves as a mechanism to distil the essence of the local and State Government strategic frameworks impacting on and guiding the future of our region. It facilitates shared understanding of these frameworks and, importantly, it promotes intergovernmental cooperation and targeted resource allocations that will assist in the achievement of the short, medium and long term goals of the entities with which the ISJO and its member Councils work.

Desktop review

This Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities has been developed in the direct context of:

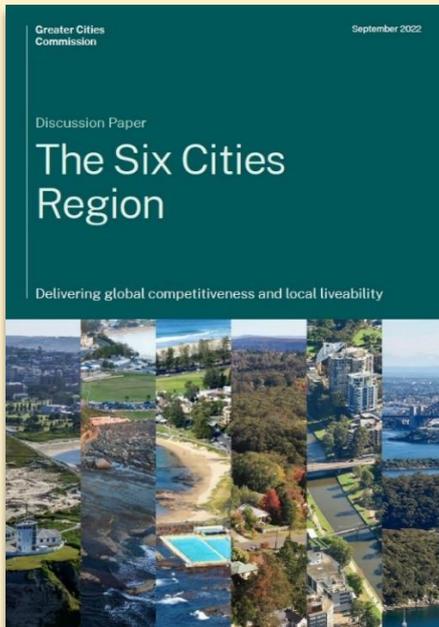
- The Greater Cities Commission Six Cities Discussion Paper
- The Department of Planning's Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041
- Transport for NSW's Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan
- The Dharrandharrang Aboriginal Partnerships Framework
- The Kiama Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032
- The Shellharbour Your Vision Our Future Community Strategic Plan 2022-2023
- The Shoalhaven 2032 Community Strategic Plan
- The Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan

What do these plans tell us?

Each of these strategic frameworks is the result of widespread consultation, analysis and a bold vision for a more sustainable, diverse and prosperous Illawarra Shoalhaven.

By their nature, audience and intent each of the frameworks adopts a strategic structure that is appropriate to the agency / level of government that prepared it and the imperatives that are driving its operations.

In summary, the frameworks are structured / have as their areas of focus, the following.



The Greater Cities Commission Six Cities Discussion Paper

The Six Cities Discussion Paper articulates the following in regard to the future of the Six Cities Region:

We envision a connected region of six cities where we can move people and goods across the region in 90 minutes, and everyone in the region is digitally and globally connected in a nanosecond. In each city, great jobs are 30 minutes by public transport from great homes. We enjoy a greater range of lifestyle choices connected to economic opportunity and most people live in vibrant local centres and neighbourhoods where all our daily needs are met within a 15 minute walk.

More than 65,000 years of continuous culture is central to our shared identity and sets us apart from anywhere else in the world. The wisdom and aspirations of First Nations peoples are recognised and embedded in planning for our future, and we care for Country.

Housing is more affordable and accessible, leveraging our transport and social infrastructure investments, with the government playing a material role in enabling supply. People live in homes that are sustainable, efficient and adaptable, and that meet their changing needs over time.

Local infrastructure and growth are strategically coordinated to leverage diverse centres that support their communities.

Our economic assets are coordinated and leveraged in an integrated way, capturing our potential as an Indo-Pacific economic powerhouse.

An interconnected ecosystem of innovation districts linked to places of learning supercharges knowledge jobs across the region while supporting the broader jobs economy.

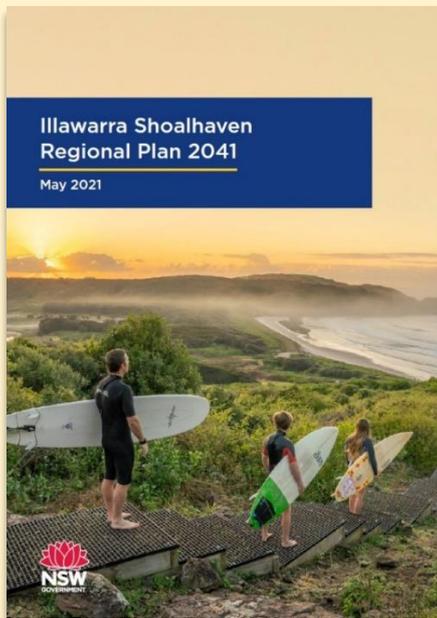
All six cities have greater resilience because of the economic diversification of their wider and connected city economies.

Our economic opportunities are matched by spectacular lifestyles offered across the region. We enjoy unparalleled accessibility to beaches, national parks, rivers and waterways, ancient geological formations and natural beauty.

The Discussion Paper identifies six “region shapers” that will frame the city strategies to be developed in 2023:

- First Nations voice
- A connected region
- Housing

- Inclusive places
- Jobs and economies
- Green cities



NSW Department of Planning: Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041

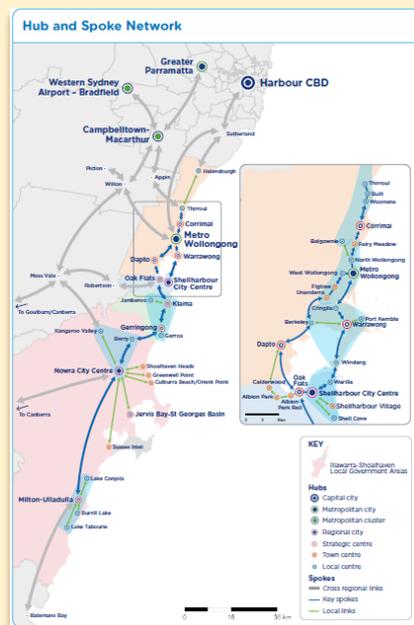
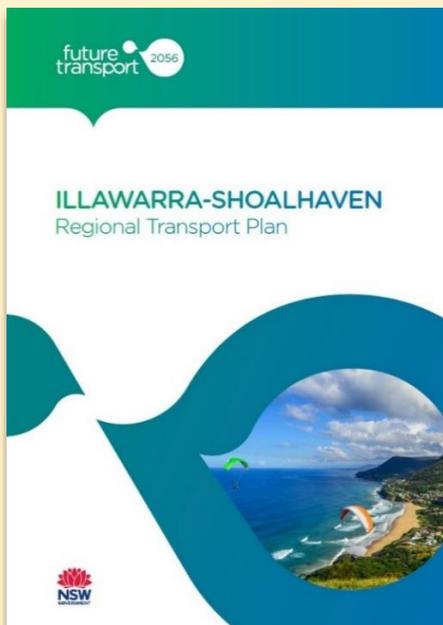
The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan sets the strategic planning framework for the Illawarra Shoalhaven region, aiming to protect and enhance the region’s assets and plan for a sustainable future. It is a 20-year land use plan prepared in accordance with section 3.3 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and applies to the local government areas of Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven.

The vision of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan is “An innovative, sustainable, resilient, connected, diverse and creative region”.

It seeks to achieve this vision through actions, strategies and collaboration activities focused on four key themes:

- A productive and innovative region
- A sustainable and resilient region
- A region that values its people and places
- A smart and connected region

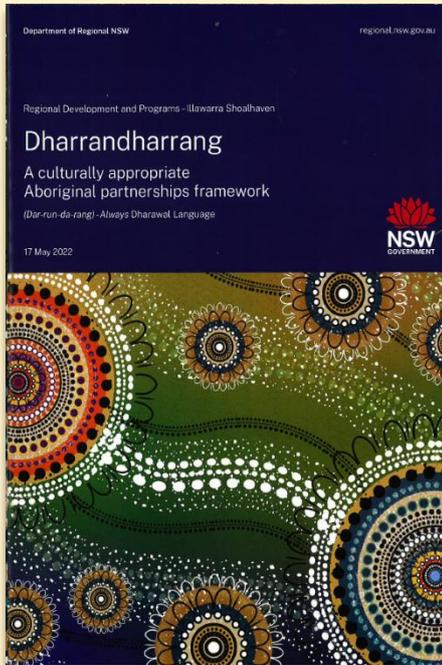
Collaboration underpinned the process to review the Regional Plan and also underpins a whole-of-government approach to strategic planning, streamlining the planning process and helping to optimise opportunities for transformational change.



Transport for NSW: Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan

A supporting plan of the State Government's *Future Transport 2056* and developed in conjunction with the *Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041*, the *Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan* provides a blueprint for how Transport for NSW will proactively respond to the transport needs of the region and address the key trends that necessitate a transport-related response into the future. The Plan seeks to achieve its vision in relation to transport through 20 key objectives organised within six broad themes:

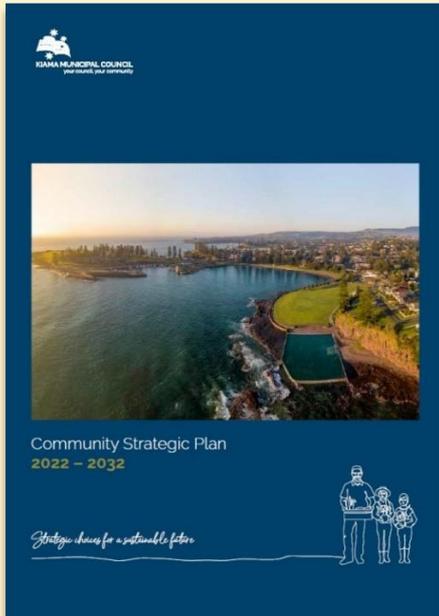
- Connected – A transport network that facilitates seamless, multi-modal connectivity between where people live, work and play
- Safe – A transport network that delivers a safer future for the Illawarra-Shoalhaven
- Liveable – A transport network that supports vibrant places while enabling the successful movement of people to access jobs, services and social opportunities regardless of age, ability and income
- Adaptive and Sustainable – A transport network that both contributes to, and supports, a seamless transition to a low emissions future
- Productive – A transport network that supports the efficient, safe and sustainable movement of freight through the principle of “moving more with less”
- Resilient – A transport network that is resilient to major disruptions associated with natural disasters, climate change and planned and unplanned events



Dharrandharrang: A culturally appropriate Aboriginal partnerships framework

Launched in 2022, the *Dharrandharrang Framework* aligns closely with the *Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy* and the *Closing the Gap* policy initiatives.

Dharrandharrang aims to explore and highlight strategies that open up opportunities to establish culturally appropriate partnerships, to support the working relationships with Aboriginal communities in regional NSW through land activation and economic development, and co-lead projects with Aboriginal-led organisations, NSW Government agencies and private enterprises.



Kiama Municipal Council: Kiama Community Strategic Plan 2022-2023

The Kiama Community Strategic Plan establishes a detailed vision for the future of its community:

We live where the sea has sound, energy and life.

We look to the rolling hills, the jagged coastline, and can feel the culture and heritage that came before us.

As we grow, we respect what makes our home special, but we move with the times.

We choose our own path, think deeply and allow change.

We are a strong, adventurous, creative and courageous community.

Our way of life supports our economy, global or local, regional or on our own street, we call this place home.

We embrace diversity of thought, experience and ideas, our differences add vibrancy and character.

The knowledge of who we were, who we are and what we can be makes us strong.

It seeks to achieve that vision through strategies focused on five key themes or “Pillars”:

- We belong and contribute
- We thrive in a sustainable environment
- We create a strong and diverse economy
- We are part of a connected and liveable community
- We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a Council that is financially sustainable





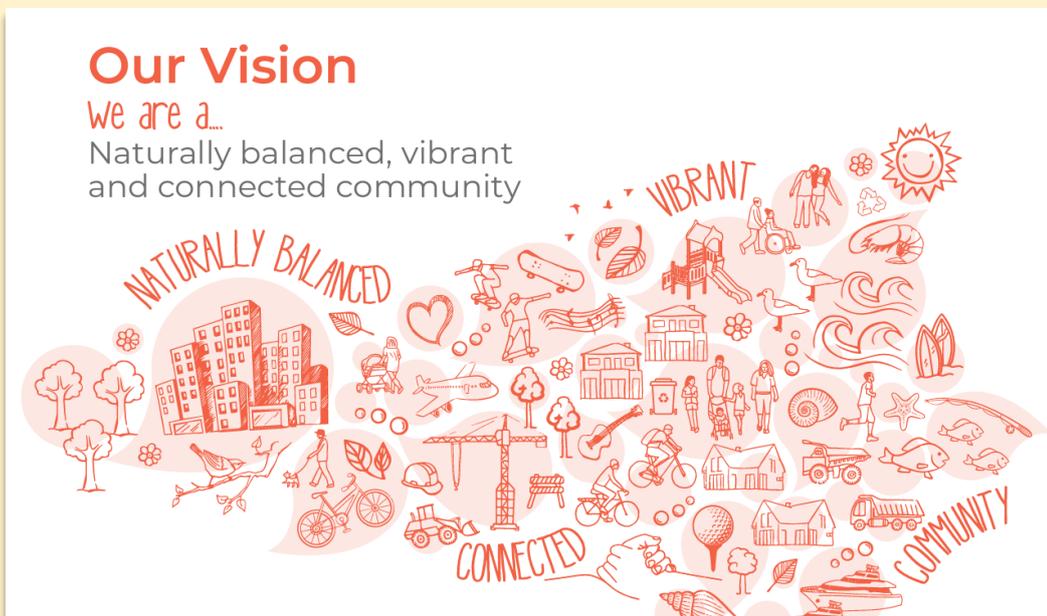
Shellharbour City Council: Your Vision, Our Future Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032

The Vision of Shellharbour City Council's 2022-2032 Community Strategic Plan is:

We are a naturally balanced, vibrant and connected community.

Council seeks to achieve that Vision through seven key strategic objectives:

- We inspire community spirit
- We are a liveable community
- We are sustainable
- We are a beautiful & connected City
- We support a strong local economy
- We deliver our future together
- We have strong leadership



Shoalhaven 2032 Community Strategic Plan



Shoalhaven City Council: Shoalhaven 2032 Community Strategic Plan

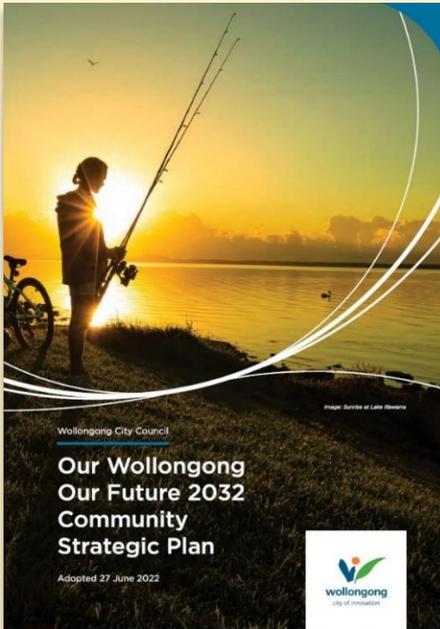
The Vision of *Shoalhaven 2032* is:

We will work together in Shoalhaven to foster a safe & attractive community for people to live, work, stay & play; where sustainable growth, development & environmental protection are managed to provide a unique & relaxed lifestyle

A series of priorities emerged from the consultation processes undertaken by the Council. These priorities led to the development of four key themes to drive the Council's strategic endeavours over the ten year life of the Plan:

- Resilient, Safe, Accessible & Inclusive Communities
- Sustainable, Liveable Environments
- Thriving local economies that meet community needs
- Effective, Responsible & Authentic Leadership





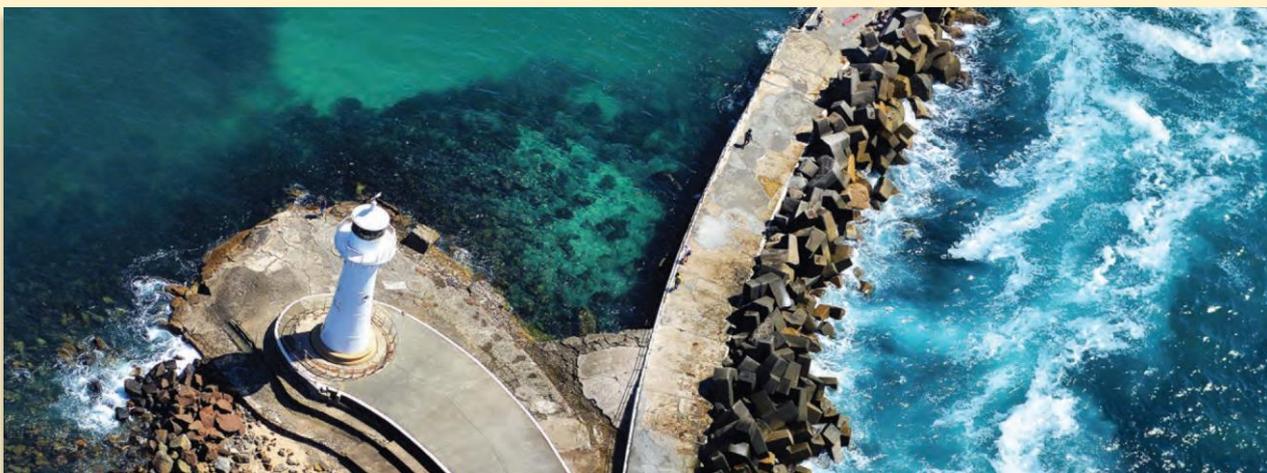
Wollongong City Council: Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan

The Vision of the *Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan* is:

From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and will be leaders in building an educated, creative, sustainable and connected community

Council seeks to achieve that Vision through seven key strategic goals:

- We value and protect our environment
- We have an innovative and sustainable economy
- Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city
- We are a connected and engaged community
- We have a healthy community in a liveable city
- We have affordable and accessible transport



Distilling the Essence of the Plans

Each of the outlined strategic frameworks was developed with a specific purpose in mind and either establishes a framework for or was the product of intensive community and stakeholder consultation.

Each of the frameworks establishes a coherency in its exposition of strategic focus that, as noted previously, is the appropriate product of the entity responsible for its preparation and the statutory and other roles governing its operations.

This results in a narrative flow in the documents that is not always consistent. This is demonstrated in their enunciation and ordering of key themes / focus areas:

First Nations Voice	A connected region	Housing	Inclusive Places	Jobs and Economies	Green Cities	
A productive and innovative region	A sustainable and resilient region	A region that values its people and places	A smart and connected region			
Connected	Safe	Liveable	Adaptive and Sustainable	Productive	Resilient	
We belong and contribute	We thrive in a sustainable environment	We create a strong and diverse economy	We are part of a connected and liveable community	We expect accountable and transparent leadership; a Council that is financially sustainable		
We inspire community spirit	We are a liveable community	We are sustainable	We are a beautiful & connected City	We support a strong local economy	We deliver our future together	We have strong leadership
Resilient, Safe, Accessible & Inclusive Communities	Sustainable, Liveable Environments	Thriving local economies that meet community needs	Effective, Responsible and Authentic Leadership			
We value and protect our environment	We have an innovative and sustainable economy	Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city	We are a connected and engaged community	We have a healthy community in a liveable city	We have affordable and accessible transport	

What is notable, however, is the degree to which the strategic intent and ambition of all the plans spring from very similar motivations.

Each of the plans focuses on liveability, connection, safety, sense of community and sense of place.

Each of the plans recognises in multiple ways the disparate and unique nature of our communities and the strength that comes from valuing those differences as we focus on collective and regional needs.

Each of the plans highlights the fragile nature of our natural environment and the importance of sustainability in what we do and resilience in the face of increasingly volatile climate impacts.

Each of the plans recognises the importance of vibrant, diverse and innovative local and regional economies. The plans also recognise and address the inter and intra-regional movements and beyond region business context upon which our nationally significant regional economy is based.

Each of the plans recognises the importance of transport and other infrastructure in facilitating connection, enhancing lifestyles and safety and in underpinning business growth.

Each of the plans acknowledges the imperative for good governance and the responsible management of resources.

Significantly, each of the plans recognises the importance of culture and cultural awareness in binding communities together. The importance of cultural awareness is no better exemplified than in the acknowledgement of the traditional owners of our land and their over 40,000 years of living in, caring for and remaining deeply connected to land, sea and sky country. Relationship building, partnership, respect, cultural safety and truth telling underpin the philosophical approach of all the frameworks.

The Dharrandharrang Framework provides context, examples and a toolkit on actualising these ambitions.

Adding a national and international perspective

The Global Goals were agreed and adopted by the United Nations member states, including Australia, in September 2015 as part of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underpinned by 169 targets are now in place to guide efforts to increase global well-being by addressing some of society's key challenges. The goals apply equally to Australia and Australians as they do internationally.

Belief in a “fair go”

The SDGs reflect things that Australians value highly and seek to protect, like a healthy environment, access to opportunity and services, human rights, inclusive economies, diverse and supportive communities and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage. Our support for political, economic and religious freedoms, liberal democracy, the rule of law, equality and mutual respect underpin a strong, fair and cohesive society.

Core to the Australian understanding of the SDGs is the Australian valuing of a “fair go”. Like the concept of a fair go the SDGs are a call to action for fairness, justice and equality of opportunity.

The 2030 Agenda is not just for and about government initiatives and activity. It also involves the business sector, civil society, academia, communities, families and individuals. Australians are already contributing to achievement of the SDGs through their work in the care economy, by volunteering, by preserving the natural environment and through their everyday activity. Australia's youth play a crucial role given their potential to deliver on the SDGs into the future and their stake in the realisation of the Goals.

The Sustainable Development Goals add a national and international perspective to our regional planning as well as a means of enhancing understanding of what we are hoping to achieve through our work.



Recognising the interplay of the strategic frameworks and their core agreement on priority, what is the strategic role of the ISJO?

Does it have a Vision and Mission?

As noted previously, the core, statutory roles of the ISJO are:

- strategic planning and priority setting
- intergovernmental collaboration
- shared leadership and advocacy.

The ISJO carries out these roles in an environment of modest recurrent funding and a heavy reliance on the often fickle and evolving nature of State and Commonwealth grant funding programs. The priorities of these funding programs do not always accord with regional priorities, the timing of those priorities or the resourcing requirements of a small regional entity.

In the context of its funding base, access to personnel and the nature of its membership it is questionable as to whether any Joint Organisation should establish a strategic agenda in its own right. What is more than arguable is that a Joint Organisation should be aware of the strategic imperatives of its key council and State Agency stakeholders and that it should use its best endeavours to plan for, where appropriate seek the funding of and then implement initiatives designed to complement, support and sometimes catalyse the achievement of stakeholder priorities.

Vision and Mission

In 2017 the ISJO in its pilot form adopted Vision and Mission Statements. These statements were formally ratified at the time the ISJO began formal operations in 2018.

The statements are:

Vision Statement:

A confident, vibrant, safe and productive region that optimises the potential of its people and environment now and into the future.

Mission statement

The ISJO will: Lead, advocate, collaborate and deliver outcomes that serve the interests of the region's diverse communities.

These statements remain strategically valid after more than four years of operations.

Work Program

The Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities adopted by the ISJO in 2018 contained a series of themes, actions, year specific activities and an attribution of functional areas.

There are many difficulties associated with such an approach in the constantly evolving environment in which an entity such as the ISJO operates.

From 2022 on the ISJO's Work Program will be structured on a series of key processes rather than an arbitrary list of pre-determined activities.

These processes will be:

1. Mapping on an annual basis of the strategic frameworks, operational plans and related resource allocations of member Councils and key State Agency partners to identify areas of shared strategic importance and potential collaboration
2. Within the context of the strategic matrix resulting from the mapping process, implementing on an annual basis a dynamic Operational Planning process that identifies on a rolling basis strategies to be undertaken, partnerships formed, timeframes involved, funding sources and accountability for performance
3. Reviewing on an ongoing basis implementation of the Operational Plan to identify outcomes, new programs and new funding sources
4. Tying the organisational structure of the Joint Organisation to the strategic matrix and Operational Plan and modifying the structure in light of emerging priorities
5. Reporting on the evolving nature of the Operational Plan to the ISJO Board at least six times per year
6. Reporting on aspects of organisational structure at least annually to the Board
7. Reporting at least annually to the strategic partners of the ISJO on progress in implementation of the Operational Plan. This reporting is to be customised to individual partner requirements to facilitate utilisation of the information by strategic partners in their own reporting and planning processes
8. Partnering with key strategic partners on the development, implementation and review of regionally significant initiatives led by those partners
9. Developing and implementing strategies to promote awareness of the Joint Organisation, member Councils and strategic partner roles, operations and program successes
10. Developing, implementing and reviewing strategies to expand the range of activities of the Joint Organisation and to underpin its ongoing contribution to the region.

Program Structure

The Joint Organisation's program structure, and therefore its organisational structure, will evolve as strategies are completed and new priorities emerge.

Our program focus areas will, however, always mirror and support the work of our member Councils and strategic partners.

These focus areas will therefore concentrate on:

Community and Cultural Development



Environmental Programs, Sustainability, Resilience, Waste Management and the Circular Economy



Economic Development, Infrastructure and Innovation



Strategy, Governance and Partnerships

