

**21.07**17/05/2012  
C81**ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES**

This focuses on the protection, conservation and sustainable management of the Shire's natural assets.

**Key Issues**

- The Shire contains mountainous country, rural areas and significant water catchments. These all play a significant role in the provision of the State's water and natural resources.
- The resources provide flora and fauna habitats, timber resources and landscapes of high visual quality that need to be protected.
- The demands for the use of the natural resources of the Shire, including water, timber and extractive materials, have an impact on the sustainability of the natural environment.

Baw Baw Shire falls mainly within two catchments, the Westernport catchment, and the West Gippsland water catchments. Land use and development within catchments may have an impact on water quality, biodiversity and natural resource management both within and outside the Shire. Therefore a whole of catchment approach is required for the management of natural resources and in the natural environment in the exercise of decision-making.

**21.07-1**17/05/2012  
C81**Natural Resource Base****Context**

The long term sustainable management of the environment, including the maintenance of a high quality natural resource base, is the most important factor influencing the economy, lifestyle and recreational choices in the Shire.

**Objective 1**

**To ensure development proposals demonstrate a positive contribution to the environment by taking into account the capability of the land in terms of soil stability, erosion, flood and drainage management and the retention of native vegetation.**

## Strategy 1.1

Protect the high quality productive land within the Shire from unplanned urban encroachment.

## Strategy 1.2

Ensure environmental quality and that expert advice is obtained on the potential impact of developments or land uses on the environment and amenity of residents.

## Strategy 1.3

Minimise the impact of pest plants and pest animals on environmental values.

**Implementation**

- Apply State policies on Environment under Clause 11.03-2, Management of Resources under Clause 11.03-3, and those relating to the environment under Clause 15.

- Apply local policy, Soil removal, under Clause 22.03-2 in a planning application that involves soil removal both as a use in itself or as part of another development or use, such as horticultural sheds.
- Apply local policy, Use and development of Land for Conservation Purposes, under Clause 22.03-3 in a planning application to use and develop forested land in a Farming Zone for residential purposes.
- Apply local policy, Removal of Native Vegetation, under Clause 22.03-5 for a planning application that involves native vegetation removal not affected by fire preparation clauses.
- Apply local policy, Effluent Disposal and Water Quality, under Clause 22.06-4 for a planning application that involves the development of a waste disposal device for black or grey water.
- Apply the Interim Guidelines for Potable Water Supply Catchments to use and development applications in those proclaimed catchments.

### Other Actions

Establish partnerships and common goals with:

- Department of Sustainability and Environment.
- Environment Protection Authority.
- Catchment Management Authorities.
- Minister for Planning and Local Government and the Alpine Resorts Management Board and community groups, such as Landcare.

## 21.07-2

17/05/2012  
C81

### Biodiversity

#### Context:

The Shire possesses a diverse assemblage of native biodiversity assets, including threatened flora and fauna, habitats and vegetation communities listed under Commonwealth and State legislation and within Victoria Threatened Species Advisory lists and regional Native Vegetation Plans. Some of these assets occur within the relatively pristine, vegetated mountain areas of the Shire (e.g., Baw Baw Frog, Leadbeaters Possum, Sooty Owl, Tall Astelia, Cool Temperate Rainforest, Sub-alpine Wet Heathland) whilst others continue to persist within landscapes extensively cleared for agriculture and urban development (e.g., Giant Gippsland Earthworm, Warragul Burrowing Crayfish, Southern Brown Bandicoot, Growling Grass Frog, Dwarf Galaxias, Australian Grayling and Strzelecki Gum).

The extent of remaining native vegetation cover on freehold land within the Shire is estimated to be 14% of pre-European settlement cover whilst the condition of a large portion of this vegetation is considered to be fragmented and degraded. The extent of vegetation clearing for agriculture and urban development has resulted in some flora having a threatened conservation status within the region, including the Strzelecki Gum and vegetation communities that support this species. Approximately 90% of the remaining population of Strzelecki Gum within the landscape occur as scattered trees on freehold land.

The Shire also comprises a unique assemblage of invertebrate species that live within the soil, including Giant Gippsland Earthworm, a diverse range of terrestrial burrowing crayfish (e.g., Warragul Burrowing Crayfish and Narracan Burrowing Crayfish) and the Trafalgar Millipede. Together with other soil invertebrates, these species play a significant role in long-term maintenance of soil fertility and structure within the Shire.

The Shire acknowledges the link between the long-term productivity of its highly valued agricultural landscapes and the provision of vital services by natural ecosystems (e.g., provision of clean water from healthy streams and wetlands). With predictions of more intense weather patterns in the future, building resilience and connectivity into natural ecosystems is considered fundamental to the long-term sustainable use of land within the Shire.

### **Objective 1**

#### **To increase the quality and extent of native vegetation within the Shire.**

##### Strategy 1.1

Protect, maintain and improve the condition of native vegetation remnants and scattered trees within Council's key reserves.

##### Strategy 1.2

Encourage the protection, maintenance, improvement and recruitment of native vegetation on private land.

##### Strategy 1.3

Encourage the establishment of native vegetation on private land for use as stock shelter belts, creek and stream protection, soil stabilisation in areas prone to land slip and soil erosion and for production of sustainable wood products.

##### Strategy 1.4

Encourage and provide leadership for the protection or recruitment of stands of native vegetation on private land to service new and emerging environmental markets (e.g., BushBroker, Bush Tender, Eco Tender, carbon offsetting).

### **Objective 2**

#### **To protect and manage native flora, fauna and habitats across the Shire.**

##### Strategy 2.1

Assist with the conservation of threatened species, habitats and communities identified under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.

##### Strategy 2.2

Address potentially Threatening Processes identified under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.

##### Strategy 2.3

Encourage the protection of native fauna on private land, with emphasis on threatened species, habitats and communities.

##### Strategy 2.4

Improve and maintain the condition of key Council reserves, with emphasis on threatened species, habitats and communities.

##### Strategy 2.5

Encourage and facilitate the development of biolinks or wildlife corridors across the Shire.

### **Implementation**

- Apply State policy under Clause 12.01, Biodiversity, to assist with the protection and conservation of biodiversity, including the provision for native plants and animals and conservation of habitats of threatened and endangered species and communities.

- Apply local policy under Clause 52.17, Native Vegetation, for protecting and managing native vegetation.
- Apply local policy under Clause 21.03-2, Environmental Management and Values, Protecting and further developing the Shire's wealth of natural attributes.
- Apply local policy under Clause 22.03-3, Use and development of land for conservation purposes within the Farming Zone, including the use and management of land for conservation of vegetation, habitat and flora and fauna and implementation of environmental management plans.
- Apply local policy under Clause 22.03-5, Removal of Native Vegetation, when dealing with a planning application for native vegetation removal.
- Apply guidelines contained in *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework For Action* (Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 2002).
- Apply any Strategy, relevant Governor-in-Council orders and Action Statements prepared under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.
- Apply planning scheme strategies to inform use and development in areas containing biodiversity assets, including revision or preparation of Environmental Significance and Vegetation Protection Overlays, land use zones, Structure Plans, Biodiversity Management Plans and Native Vegetation Precinct Plans.