

Environment Policy

Version No	V5
Approved By	Board
Approval Date	28 th October 2024
Next Review Date	December 2027

Purpose

Westernport Water aims to be an environmentally sustainable organisation through minimising environmental impacts, mitigating and adapting to climate change, protecting and enhancing our environment as well as empowering the community to use water in a sustainable manner.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Westernport Water and contractors or consultants working on behalf of Westernport Water.

Policy Application

This policy aims to build awareness and motivate employees and all persons working for or on behalf of Westernport Water so they are aware of the importance of the policy, the significant actual or potential environmental impacts of their work activities and the consequence of departures from applicable environmental standards or controls. All staff receive an induction to the Environmental Management System (EMS) and principles and procedures that are used by responsible staff in Westernport Water's contract management system and site inductions and audits.

This policy is supported by an EMS based on the ISO 14001:2015 Environment Management Standard.

Applicable legislation, regulation and standards

Westernport Water's Environment Policy responds to the WPW's governing bodies' requirements and the principles of good corporate governance.

- The following documents must be considered when editing this policy.
- ISO 14001:2015 Environment Management Standard
- *Environment Protection Act 2017*, (as amended by the *Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018*) and underpinned by the General Environmental Duty (GED)
- *Climate Change Act 2017*(as amended 2023)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Water Act 1989*.

Any changes made to this document are to be reflected in and aligned to:

- Climate Change Strategy 2023-2028,
- Reconciliation Action Plan, and
- Procurement Policy
- Environmental Management System

Policy Statement

Westernport Water operates within a unique natural environment providing services more than 23,000 customers, and we understand that the sustainability of our communities relies on a resilient and healthy environment. We will protect the environment by minimising our environmental impact and seek opportunities to enhance environmental outcomes wherever possible.

<i>Role</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
<i>All Staff</i>	All staff and contractors working for and on behalf of Westernport Water strive for excellence in environmental management
<i>Environment Specialist</i>	Update Policy to align with ISO 14001:2015
<i>Manager Water and Wastewater Treatment</i>	Review and champion this procedure
<i>GM Corporate & Customer and GM Assets & Operations</i>	Ensure staff and contractors comply with requirements
<i>Executive Team</i>	To approve updates
<i>Board</i>	To endorse updated Policy

Westernport Water will:

- meet the requirements specified in AS14001:2016 Environment Management Standard and align our business with an effective, and continuous improvement methodology of the EMS that will assist the organisation to manage the activities that pose a risk of impact to the environment
- minimise impacts of our activities on the environment by preventing pollution through strong and comprehensive environmental management procedures. Where pollution prevention is not possible, we will avoid, reduce and control pollution through best practice design and planning

- continue to operate our assets within our given licence conditions, striving to reduce the impact of our treated wastewater discharges over time
- ensure staff and contractors working for and on behalf of Westernport Water strive for excellence in environmental management
- Aim to select suppliers based on their alignment with our environmental policy objectives
- meet the organisation’s applicable environmental legal requirements and other obligations, including the General Environmental Duty (GED) of the *Environment Protection Act (2017)* which requires duty holders including our organisation to prevent harm to the environment
- respond to climate change by implementing actions to mitigate our climate change impact by reducing emissions and planning and adapting to a changing climate, in accordance with the *Climate Change Act (2017)*, *Statement of Obligations – Emission Reduction (2022)* and EPA Victoria’s *Guideline for minimizing greenhouse gas emissions (2022)*
- so far as reasonably practicable putting in proportionate controls to understand and minimize the risk of harm from greenhouse gas emissions through suitable actions and controls available to eliminate or reduce the harm
- assess nature-based solutions with co-benefits to biodiversity and habitat for threatened species, in consideration for incoming laws aligned with the *Nature Positive Plan*
- inform our community on this environmental policy, our environmental initiatives and our environmental performance to ensure continuous improvement and to meet our customer and stakeholder’s expectations
- work with stakeholders and partners on sustainable solutions to address regional environmental issues, including the Traditional Owners, the Bunurong Land Council to promote and preserve the cultural heritage and natural resources of the area; and
- utilise the waste hierarchy to ensure we make sustainable business decisions and maximize the efficient use of natural resources in our day to day activities.

Review Date

This policy is to be reviewed every three years and approved by the Board. The Policy will continue until replaced by a later version or rescinded.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Policy Owner – General Manager, Assets and Operations

Responsible Policy Officer – Manager Water and Wastewater Treatment