



Unitywater

Environmental Sustainability Plan: Snapshot

Acknowledgement of Country

Unitywater acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we operate - the Jinibara, Kabi Kabi and Turrbal people. We recognise their significant contributions to the conservation of our environment and their deep connection to the land and waters.

We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and acknowledge the important role all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to play within our communities.

Our Cultural Spring motif symbolises a water hole, traditionally a gathering place where knowledge is shared. The depth of colour illustrates the connection between land and water and our commitment to reconciliation, bringing our people together and fostering a deeper understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



Artwork: Gilimbaa Creative Agency

Summary

We proudly present our commitment to a sustainable future.

We've made a pledge for our future, and yours, to demonstrate environmental leadership through more liveable communities, greener spaces, cleaner waterways and a circular economy.

We will continue to embrace innovation, foster collaboration, and drive collective efforts towards a greener and more sustainable world.

Our commitment to environmental sustainability aligns with the **United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals**, addressing the following five key areas of impact.



Ensuring waterway health

Unitywater is committed to improving the ecological health of waterways in our region by embracing nature-based solutions, innovative wastewater treatment and integrated water management opportunities. We aim to combat excessive nutrients in our rivers and achieve our goal of net zero nutrients to waterways by 2040.



Climate action

We are taking steps to reduce our carbon footprint and combat climate change. By improving energy efficiency, embracing renewable energy, promoting a circular economy, and transitioning to green vehicles, we aim for net zero carbon emissions by 2040.



Resource recovery from waste

Unitywater recognises the value of our biosolids, a by-product of wastewater treatment, and is already diverting 100% of the biosolids we generate from landfill. By exploring reuse and circular economy opportunities, we aim to unlock the full potential of biosolids while minimising their environmental impact.



Value every drop

Unitywater recognises water is our most precious resource and we will look for innovative ways to conserve and protect water supply and prioritise water recycling to support the lifestyles and livelihoods for our community. We are aiming for a future of Net Positive Blue by 2040.



Nature positive

In collaboration with our partners, we aim to achieve Net Positive Green by 2030, planting more trees than we remove. Future communities will have green, open spaces with native plants and animals.



We will continue to embrace innovation, foster collaboration, and drive collective efforts towards a greener and more sustainable world.



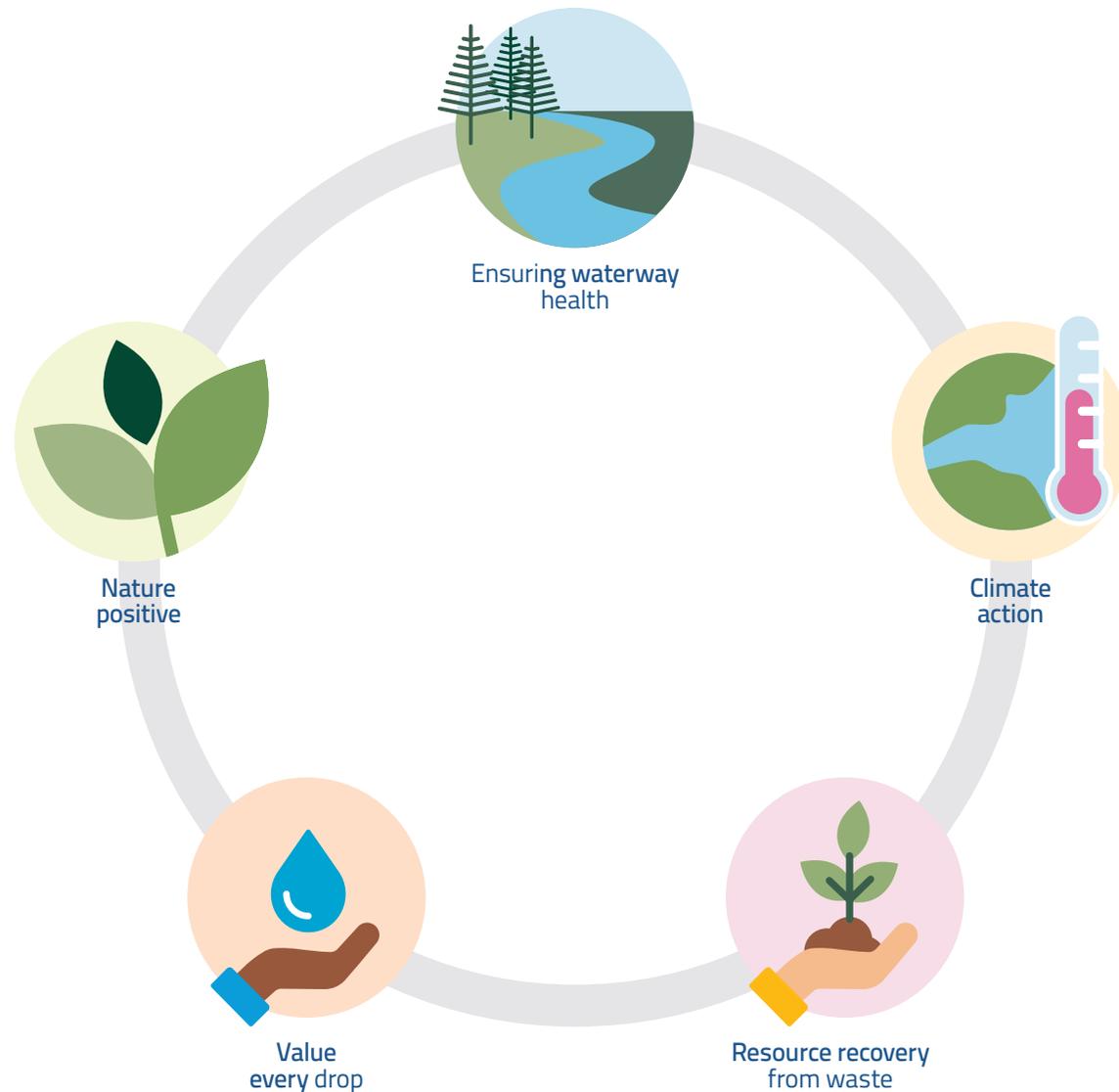
Environmental Sustainability: Our first steps

Unitywater provides safe water services to the Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast and Noosa regions of South East Queensland.

Our vision for Healthy and Thriving Communities is about the people and the regions we serve. Our services are essential to life and growth, but extend beyond public health. We're committed to environmental leadership by creating liveable communities, greener spaces, cleaner waterways and a circular economy.

We operate in one of Australia's most exceptional environments in terms of natural beauty, and a diverse geographic and demographic landscape, serving one of the fastest growing regions in the country. With two out of three of our council areas of remit declared UNESCO Biospheres, our consideration of how we interact with our natural environmental assets is continuously evolving.

To position ourselves effectively, we have established a set of priority themes. These strategic focus areas will guide our efforts and help us achieve our sustainability goals.



Ensuring waterway health

The well-being of our region's ecosystems and communities relies on the preservation of our waterways.

As one of the caretakers of these precious resources, we are taking steps to enhance waterway health and combat excessive nutrients in our rivers.

With 17 treatment plants spanning our service region, we play a critical role in treating wastewater from homes and businesses, ensuring it is free from excessive nutrients and contaminants to protect waterway and public health. However, we recognise that simply meeting regulatory standards is not enough. We aspire to environmental leadership and going beyond compliance with our goal: net zero nutrients to waterways by 2040.

Over the next five years, we will take the following actions to contribute towards this goal.



Supporting research and monitoring

In our commitment to preserving the ecological health of our waterways, we collaborate with organisations such as **Healthy Land and Water** and the **University of the Sunshine Coast** to support research and monitor our environmental impacts. Empowered with these insights, we are taking actions to mitigate negative impacts and safeguard the well-being of these precious ecosystems.



Collaboration for nature-based solutions

We will continue to work closely with local governments and stakeholders to undertake innovative projects focused on nature-based solutions. These initiatives, such as **Yandina Creek Wetland**, **Caboolture River Nutrient Offset Project**, and our **Oyster Reef Restoration Project** showcase our commitment to restoring and preserving the natural environment, while promoting sustainable practices within our service region.



Investing in sustainable water solutions

We are committed to valuing every drop and investing in local and regional recycled water solutions, such as our **Wamuran Irrigation Scheme**, that divert treated wastewater away from waterways. By finding beneficial uses for this valuable resource, we reduce our environmental footprint and promote sustainable water management practices.



Innovative wastewater treatment

We will explore innovative approaches to reduce nutrient discharges from our wastewater treatment processes. We aim to efficiently remove and recover excess nutrients from wastewater, ensuring that the treated water released back into the environment is of high quality, promoting the overall well-being of our precious waterways.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Climate action: Reducing our carbon footprint

As part of our commitment to combatting climate change, we recognise the need to reduce our carbon footprint.

We must do this in a way that sustains value for our customers and community. With a clear vision in mind, we have set a goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

Over the next five years, we will take the following actions to contribute towards this goal.



Improving energy efficiency

We will implement measures to improve the energy efficiency of our plant and network assets. By optimising energy consumption, we aim to minimise our energy waste and maximise operational sustainability.



Embracing renewable energy

We will collaborate with renewable energy providers to explore power purchase agreements. By supporting the generation and strategic procurement of renewable energy in our service area, we can reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and transition towards cleaner and sustainable energy sources.



Promoting a circular economy

We are committed to finding valuable uses for waste streams, including generating energy from waste and biogas to reduce emissions. By embracing the principles of the circular economy we aim to minimise waste, reduce emissions and maximise resource recovery.



Investing in solar power

We will assess the feasibility of installing solar panels and other renewable energy systems across our facilities. We have already started this journey with solar at our [Maroochydore and Morayfield service centres](#), and [Kenilworth wastewater treatment plant](#) and are investigating further options. By utilising clean energy technologies, we can power our operations with renewable sources and contribute to a greener future.



Transitioning to green vehicles

We will promote the use of electric and hybrid vehicles and equipment in our fleet. By transitioning away from conventional fuel-powered vehicles, we aim to over time reduce emissions from our transportation activities and support the adoption of sustainable mobility solutions.



... we have set a goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2040.





Offsetting hard-to-abate emissions

We will explore opportunities to invest in nature-based carbon offsets. By supporting projects that absorb and store carbon, we can compensate for emissions that are challenging to eliminate directly and contribute to carbon reduction efforts.



Sustainable supply chain

We will identify key sources of emissions generated within our supply chain and target priority areas where we can effectively influence sustainable practices with contractors and suppliers to achieve shared outcomes.



Innovative wastewater management

We will explore strategies to reduce direct emissions from our wastewater assets. By identifying the main sources of emissions and implementing process and technology improvements, we can reduce the environmental impact of our operations.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	13 CLIMATE ACTION
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Resource recovery from waste

As we strive for a more sustainable future, Unitywater recognises the value of biosolids, a by-product of our wastewater treatment process.

These biosolids hold great potential for various beneficial uses, including land application that nourishes and enriches the soil.

We are committed to maximising resource recovery and circular economy outcomes. We divert 100% of the biosolids we generate from landfill.

Over the next five years, we will take the following actions to contribute towards this goal.



Collaborating with our stakeholders

We will explore opportunities to play a strong role in enabling circular economy outcomes in regional growth and development.



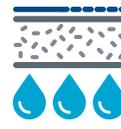
Investing effort in research and partnerships

We will identify innovation opportunities to accelerate our sustainability and circular economy contributions through the planning and design of our infrastructure.



Developing a plan

We are developing a plan for effective biosolids management, harnessing regional collaboration and innovative technologies to optimise resource recovery and circular economy outcomes in the long term are developing.



Exploring adaptable pathways and opportunities

We will explore the reuse of biosolids, ensuring adaptability in response to evolving regulations, emerging contaminants, and disposal costs.

“ We will identify innovation opportunities to accelerate our sustainability and circular economy contributions through the planning and design of our infrastructure. ”

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Value every drop

Unitywater recognises water is our most precious resource.

Water plays a critical role in the liveability of communities, including the benefits of clean drinking water, cultural value, supporting environmental and recreational activities, as well as cooling and overall amenity. Together, these elements create liveable, healthy and thriving communities.

We will look for innovative ways to conserve and protect water supply and prioritise water recycling to support the well-being of our community, and ensure success of major events such as the 2032 Olympics. We are aiming for a future of Net Positive Blue where we recycle more of the wastewater we treat and ensure a significant portion is repurposed, contributing to long-term water security for South East Queensland.

Over the next five years, we will take the following actions to contribute towards this goal.



Developing a plan

We are developing a plan for effective recycled water use, harnessing regional collaboration and innovative opportunities.



Prioritise digitisation and advances in technology

We will identify solutions that create smart and efficient networks to protect and preserve water as a precious resource, including to identify leakage points, reduce demand, and predict problems before they occur.



Investing in sustainable water solutions

We are committed to valuing every drop and investing in local and regional recycled water solutions, such as our [Wamuran Irrigation Scheme](#), that divert treated effluent away from waterways. By finding beneficial uses for this valuable resource, we reduce our environmental footprint and promote sustainable water management practices.



Nature positive

Unitywater recognises that our natural environment and ecosystems are fundamental to the region’s character and liveability.

With two out of three of our councils’ areas of remit declared UNESCO Biospheres, consideration of interaction with our natural environmental assets is growing all the time.

In collaboration with our partners we aim to achieve Net Positive Green by 2030, planting more trees than we remove. Future communities will have green, open spaces with native plants and animals.

Over the next five years, we will take the following actions to contribute to this goal.

“
In collaboration with our partners, we aim to achieve Net Positive Green by 2030, planting more trees than we remove.
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Minimise native vegetation removal from the outset

We are committed to innovative design, environmental planning and advanced construction methodologies that aim to minimise our impacts on native vegetation to the greatest extent possible.



Developing a plan

We are developing a plan for effective nature repair outcomes, harnessing regional collaboration and innovative opportunities.



Collaboration with partners

We will work with our partners to implement nature-positive solutions and to restore and manage natural areas, such as through the **Yandina Creek Wetland and Blue Heart project**.



What's next

Continued collaboration

We will collaborate with stakeholders, including local governments, communities and industry partners, to implement and improve our environmental sustainability initiatives.

Regular reporting

We are committed to transparency and accountability and will report on the progress of our Environmental Sustainability Plan as part of our annual reporting.

More information

You can read more about our [sustainability goals and practices](#) on our website.

