

# State of the Environment Snapshot

**Former Dubbo City Council  
Local Government Area**

A State of the Environment (SoE) Report is an important management tool which aims to provide the community and Local Council with information on the condition of the environment in the local area to assist in decision-making.

Since 2007, the Councils of the Greater Central West Region of NSW (see map) have joined to produce Regional SoE Reports as part of Council reporting requirements.

Changes to NSW legislation mean that Councils are no longer required to produce SoE Reports each year, but only once every four years, in the year of the Council election (this year for some Councils). However, the participating Councils have decided to continue reporting on an annual basis so that they can provide a detailed Regional SoE report this year that covers trends in the intervening years.

This is a brief snapshot of data for the former Dubbo City Council Local Government Area in 2015-16 across a range of environmental indicators as shown in the tables below. The tables provide an understanding of trends by comparing this year's data with an average of previous years. The Council snapshot report should be read in conjunction with the 2015-16 Regional SoE report.

## 2015-16 Highlights

- ⬆ Landuse conflict complaints to Council rose to its highest level in the past four years.
- ⬆ There was a dramatic increase in the number of native fish restocked into local waterways compared with the previous three years.
- ⬆ Council's active management of invasive species was at its highest level in three years.
- ⬆ The number of gross pollutant traps installed by Council across the urban catchment reached 36.
- ⬆ The total waste (tonnes) entombed at Council's primary landfill continued to rise.
- ⬆ The volume of material recycled by the local community was at its highest level in the last four years.

## Land

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Contamination	Contaminated land sites - Contaminated Land Register (Number)	1	1	1	1	➡
	Contaminated land sites - potentially contaminated sites (Number)	389	396	396	398	⬇
	Contaminated sites rehabilitated	6	2	1	1	⬇
Erosion	Erosion affected land rehabilitated (ha)	0	0	0	0	➡
Land use planning and management	Number of development consents and building approvals	717	802	879	852	⬇
	Landuse conflict complaints (Number)	8	19	25	41	⬇
	Loss of primary agricultural land through rezoning (ha)	0	0	0	0	➡
Minerals & Petroleum*	Number of mining and exploration titles	40	80	71	64	⬇
	Area covered by mining and exploration titles (ha)	312K	311K		219K	⬆

⬆ improvement   ➡ no or little change   ⬇ worsening trend

Note - the trend is based on comparing the average of the previous three years of reporting with 2015-16

\* 2015-16 Minerals & Petroleum data was not available separately for the Dubbo City LGA so the annual totals for the new Dubbo Regional LGA are shown here instead.

# Biodiversity

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Habitat Loss	Total Area in the National Parks Estate (ha)			50,447	50,377	→
	Total Area of State Forests (ha)			135	135	→
	Total Area Protected in Wildlife Refuges (ha)	597	597	597	597	→
	Total Area protected in conservation reserves & under voluntary conservation agreements (ha)	72	72	72	72	→
	Proportion of Council reserves that is bushland/remnant vegetation	67%	67%	67%	67%	→
	Habitat areas revegetated (ha)	8	5	8	4	↓
	Roadside vegetation management plan	0	0	0	1	↑
	Roadside vegetation rehabilitated (ha)			25	0	↓
Threatened Species	Threatened species actions implemented (e.g. PAS, recovery plans) (Number)	5	2	3	3	↓
	Fish restocking activities: native species (Number)	6,502	13,885	0	80,862	↑
Noxious weeds and feral animals	Fish restocking activities: non-native species (Number)	0	0	0	0	→
	Number of declared noxious weeds	97	104	109	109	↓
	Invasive species (listed noxious or WONS) under active management (Number)	16	12	12	27	↑

# Water and Waterways

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Surface & Ground Water Quality	E.coli remote from wastewater treatment plants (per 100ml)	277	397	159	360	↓
Riparian	Riparian vegetation recovery actions (Number)	2	2	2	2	→
	Riparian vegetation recovery area (ha)	4	12	11	4	↓
Industrial/ Agricultural Pollution	Load Based Licencing Volume (kg)	27,304	2,813	11,360	4,626	↑
	Exceedances of license discharge consent recorded	6	0	0	0	↑
	Erosion & Sediment Control complaints received by Council	4	6	3	4	↑
Stormwater Pollution	Number of gross pollutant traps installed	26	26	29	36	↑
	Total catchment area of GPTs (ha)	1,250	1,200	1,300	1,176	↓
	Water pollution complaints (Number)	10	19	16	12	↑
Water extraction*	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from surface water sources		375	376	357	↑
	Volume of surface water permissible for extraction under licences (GL)		26	63	58	↓
	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from groundwater resources		3,069	3,151	3,090	↑
	Volume of groundwater permissible for extraction under licences (GL)	42	36	41	40	↑
	Actual volume extracted through groundwater licences (GL)			13	14	↓
Council water consumption	Area of irrigated Council managed parks, sportsgrounds, public open space (ha)	169	169	169	177	↓
	Water used by council for irrigation (including treated and untreated) (ML)	1,008	1,011	931	974	↑
Town water consumption	Annual metered supply (ML)	7,859	7,857	7,626	7,924	↓
	Annual consumption (Total from WTP) (ML)	8,602	8,092	8,147	8,526	↓
	Average annual household mains potable water usage (kL)	413.4	397.4	377.9	388.1	↑
	Average level of water restrictions implemented	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	→
	Water conservation programs (Number)	0	2	6	7	↑
Town Water Quality	Number of instances drinking water guidelines not met	8	3	2	2	↑
	Number of drinking water complaints	11	6	11	6	↑

\* 2015-16 Water extraction data was not available separately for the Dubbo City LGA so the annual totals for the new Dubbo Regional LGA are shown here instead.

# Towards Sustainability

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Waste Generation	Total waste entombed at primary landfill (tonnes)	59,416	43,416	49,953	53,218	↓
	Total waste entombed at other landfills (exc recyclables) (tonnes)	0	0	0	0	→
	Average total waste generated per person (tonnes)	1	1.06	1.20	1.27	↓
	Average cost of waste service per residential household	\$258	\$262	\$270	\$284	↓
Hazardous/Liquid Waste	DrumMuster collections (number of drums)	1,166	0	1,771	1,981	↑
	Household Hazardous Wastes collected (kg)	4138	6,490	6,224	12,980	↑
Reduce	Garden organics collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	3,528	1,986	2,513	2,651	↓
	E-Waste collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	31	20	6	11	↓
Recycle	Volume of material recycled (tonnes)	6,345	6,173	5,954	7,171	↑
	Volume of material recycled per person (kg)	156	151	143	171	↑
Littering and illegal dumping	Number of illegal waste disposal complaints to Council	171	158	150	130	↑
Engineering, Infrastructure and Civil Works	New road construction (km)	1	3	8	3	↑
	Road upgrades (km)	70	26	34	39	↑
Risk Management	Flood management plans/ flood mapping - increase in area covered (ha)	0	0	0	0	→
	Hazard reduction burns (Number)	5	1	2	1	↑
Climate Change Mitigation	Office paper used by Council (A4 & A3 reams)	3,393	4,274	4,207	3,028	↑
	Council sustainability initiatives (Number)	6	8	31	32	↑
	Council mitigation initiatives (Number)	6	3	10	10	↑
Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Annual electricity consumption for Council controlled facilities (MWh)	16,253	16,641	17,309	18,327	↓
	Annual natural gas consumption for Council controlled facilities (GJ)	6,047	5,646	5,274	5,370	↑
	Annual bottled gas consumption for Council controlled facilities (L)	18,885	22,568	29,549	26,859	↓
	Total fuel consumption (KL)	744	789	781	715	↑
	Council total operational greenhouse gas emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> -e/year)	52,598	54,726	36,679	49,739	↓
Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Small scale renewable energy uptake (kW installed)	1,243	1,531	2,026	1,486	↓
	Number of solar water heaters and heat pumps installed	69	61	89	35	↓

# People and Communities

Issue	Indicator	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Active community involvement	Environmental volunteers working on public open space (hrs)	9,050	7,851	3,807	6,565	↓
	Number of environmental community engagement programs	47	45	75	79	↑
	Number of growers markets/local food retailers specialising in local food	2	2	2	3	↑
Indigenous Heritage	Number of Indigenous sites on AHIMS register		796	813	820	↑
	Inclusion in DCPs & rural strategies (Yes or No)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	→
	Extent of liaison with Indigenous communities (self-assessed from 0 = none to 3 = High)	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	↑
	Development approvals on listed Indigenous sites (Number)	6	5	6	10	↓
	Number of Indigenous heritage management actions/responses	0	1	0	0	↓
Non-Indigenous Heritage	NSW Heritage Items (Number)	10	9	9	9	↓
	Locally listed heritage items (Number)	260	266	266	266	↑
	Actions to protect non-Indigenous heritage (including management plans) (Number)	2	1	1	1	↓
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists demolished/degraded in past year (Number)	0	0	0	0	→
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists renovated/improved in past year (Number)	16	28	15	20	↑

## CASE STUDY: Growth of Dubbo's Sustainable City Expo & Science Festival (former Dubbo City Council LGA)

Crowd numbers at the 2015 Dubbo Sustainable City Expo & Science Festival on Saturday 10 October 2015 topped 1,000 – the biggest the event has recorded since first starting as an information night in 2006.

Former Dubbo City Council was amazed at the popularity of the event which dove-tailed with the Australian Museum's Science Festival for school students at the Western Plains Cultural Centre.

Part of the success of the 2015 expo was joining forces with the Australian Museum, the Central West Science Hub, local businesses and organisations, to provide a number of new and exciting activities.

The Australian Museum's Science Festival, held over two days preceding the Expo, introduced science to around 500 primary and high school students from around the Central West with interactive workshops, talks and science shows.

Many of the scientists and partners stayed on for Former Council's community event, the Sustainable City Expo & Science Festival. The event, which was free and open to the public, featured over 30 displays, including a range of sustainable living and hands-on science exhibits.

Both events provided a fantastic opportunity for the local community to better understand local and global environmental issues, find out how science can play a central role in tackling those issues, and highlighted possible actions people could take to reduce their impact on the environment.

'Inspiring Australia' and the NSW Government have continued their support of this event through the Central West Science hub partnership initiative which included Former Dubbo City Council, Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Wambalang Environmental Education Centre, the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and the Dubbo Field Naturalist Society.

The collaboration with many state and national science educators also added a new dimension to the 2015 Expo. Supporting partners included the Australian Museum, the Siding Springs Observatory (including the Australian National University), the University of NSW, Macquarie University, Age of Fishes Museum, Larry Brandy, and the Indigenous Digital Excellence (IDX) Initiative.

The Dubbo Sustainable City Expo will return in 2016 and will continue to be an annual event.



Hands-on science and sustainable living exhibits



Native animal encounters with Taronga Western Plains Zoo



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