



# ABOUT THIS REPORT



This report summarises the state of the environment of Shoalhaven City in a series of one-page 'report cards'. Each report card represents an environmental issue relevant to the community and Council activities. The issues may be presented separately as individual reports, or combined into a summary report such as this where the entire state of the environment for the City can be viewed.

## Report Inclusions

Each report card includes the following information:

### Part A: State of the Environment Over Time

Presents information that shows the condition of the environment within the City over time, and against targets set by Council.

### Part B: Council Response

Presents information about the main Council responses to alleviate pressures, or to improve the state of the environment. Many of Council's responses focus on addressing pressures on the environment as this is the only way Council can have a direct influence on the state of an issue.

### Part C: How is the Shoalhaven Performing?

Provides a rating of performance in terms of:

***Trend over time:*** The improvement or otherwise of the state of the issue, as shown in the trend over time of the leading state indicator\*.

***Performance against target:*** The achievement or otherwise of any target set for the issue, as shown in the leading state indicator\*.

***Performance against other local government areas:*** The performance of the City compared to the average performance of other local governments nationally, based on the leading state indicator\*.

\* The leading state indicator is generally shown in the first chart in Part A of the report, with the italicised chart title. Some reports cards rate performance against a pressure indicator, which are shown in Part B of the report, again with the italicised chart title.

### Part D: Comments

Commentary by Council staff to explain the performance results.

## Indicators Used for Reporting

The environmental performance of the City is measured across a number of issues, each with its own set of indicators to measure that performance as well as Council's response. There are potentially hundreds of indicators that could be used to summarise the environmental performance for each issue and Council's response. The purpose of these report cards is not capture all these indicators. This would make it impossible to present the performance information succinctly.

Rather, only one or two indicators have been selected for each issue. The indicators that have been included are regarded as 'primary' indicators, each of which on their own provide a thorough assessment of performance from which decisions can be made. These indicators are complemented by a range of 'secondary' indicators which are not shown in the reports, but which may be maintained by respective Council departments and stakeholders as required. Some of these secondary indicators can be accessed online from the same location as these reports.

The various issues and indicators for each issue were selected through a comprehensive research and consultation program. Council's environment team worked with Planet Footprint to develop the issues and indicators list, in consultation with key staff across Council. Processes for the ongoing capture of data to feed into each report card were also developed at this time.

For some reports, historical performance prior to 2009-2010 is not reported. This is due to a lack of data for these earlier years, or data being available which is not in a format to allow for confident reporting. Council has implemented processes to ensure data for most indicators can be collected from 2010-2011 onwards.

### **Comparisons and Benchmarking with other Council areas**

The indicators that have been selected for inclusion in these report cards were also identified as being the most universally acceptable to Australian local government. As a result, Council will be working with Planet Footprint to generate wider interest in this reporting process among other Councils with the objective of encouraging them to report their performance using the same set of indicators. This will bring all Councils to a 'level playing field' in terms of data, enabling comparisons and benchmarking of performance to take place between local government areas.

### **Targets**

Council is seeking to measure its performance against targets for each issue. An initial set of targets has been developed for the primary performance or response based indicator in each report. In the absence of a specific target being set for an issue, a 5 per cent improvement on previous year's performance has been set as the default target. Note that no target has been set for *Biodiversity* as Council lacks influence in generating performance improvement for this issue.

It is anticipated that Council will produce a refined set of targets in future years as performance trends become obvious and staff are consulted on what can be achieved for each issue.

### **Ongoing Data Collection, Management and Reporting**

Planet Footprint coordinates the ongoing collection and management of data and generates updated report cards for Council on a quarterly basis. These report cards are available to Council on demand via Planet Footprint's website.

### **For more information**

Visit [www.planetfootprint.com](http://www.planetfootprint.com)

Call Shoalhaven City Council on 02 4429 3111



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