



South Coast Alliance Inc.

Leading sustainable economic development through collaboration.

SUBJECT : **Regional Climate Alliance**
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DATE : 22nd February 2022
NUMBER : 22220201

Summary

The purpose of this Briefing Note is to provide information to the SCA Committee on the Regional Climate Alliance program.

The Regional Climate Alliance Program aims to support Local Governments in Western Australia to take action on climate change, energy and sustainability through regional partnerships.

The Program is an initiative under the State Government's [Western Australian Climate Policy](#) and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) has partnered with WALGA to administer the Program.

Two Regional Climate Alliances were selected from a competitive application process (SCA and Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils).

The program funding (provided by DWER) will support:

1. Employment of a Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator within each of the two Alliances established ([Laura Bird](#)) for two years
2. \$200,000 available to the Alliances (combined) to deliver climate adaptation and mitigation projects through a competitive grant process (restrictions apply). First round closes May 2022 (working to develop now). Second round expected June 2022.

This is expected to enable earlier implementation of actions to address climate change risks, including bringing forward greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies from SCA member shires.

Background

Preliminary to the Regional Climate Alliance application, the EO completed a [Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies Snapshot Review](#). This sought to capture the

nature of climate adaptation or mitigation activities being undertaken by the Alliance, and other key regional stakeholders. It is a first draft intended to encourage collaboration and a shared sense of purpose across the Alliance, key regional stakeholders, industry, and community.

Mapping areas of focus across the geography of the Alliance served to highlight gaps and allow strategies to be developed that move the region more firmly towards a zero emissions outcome. That is, the snapshot report helped to better understand the climate change actions and targets, policies and strategies that need further focus.

Actions and opportunities identified for further action as provided in the Snapshot review, encourage a focus on the most significant contributors to carbon emissions in the South Coast Alliance Geography.

The Regional Climate Alliance opportunity allows the SCA and members to show leadership in this space, and through project funding, progress climate change mitigation or adaptation strategies.

The allocation of a Regional Climate Coordinator is helping to engage sustainability officers and others across the SCA region, sharing knowledge and helping facilitate an understanding of our carbon footprint.

Timelines

Program end data is 30 June 2023.

A Program Progress Report is due on a quarterly basis as outlined below or as determined from time to time by WALGA. The Program Progress Report is to contain information with respect to the Program and Project(s):

Deadline

- [13 December 2021](#)
- 14 March 2021
- 13 June 2022
- 19 September 2022
- 12 December 2022
- 13 March 2023
- 12 June 2023 (Final Report)

Budget/Financial Implications

Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator Funding

Income is received for Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator Funding - \$110,000 over two years. Laura Bird was recruited in November and WALGA have confirmed that funds to support this role can continue for a full 2 years (the project will technically end before then with a payment in advance to be received from WALGA).

The City of Albany is the employer of the Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator and is reimbursed monthly by the SCA. WALGA payments are annual in advance (so there is no adverse cash flow impact on the SCA).

Project Funding

No applications have been made at this time for project funding. Funding round 1 is presently open to applications, closing May 2022. A project has not yet been confirmed by the SCA members for submission.

SCA Obligations

As part of that application process, the SCA committed to cash contributions for the 2021/22 financial year amounting to \$57,500, representing the cost of the Consultant EO for consulting work relating to climate change mitigation activities and supervision of the Climate Coordinator. This is within the current EO funding allocation and consistent with time spent by the EO (not additional burden).

Future Budget Financial Implications

No commitment was made for the 2023 financial year with the application noting that the 2022/23 budget process had not been undertaken.

Strategic & Corporate Plan Implications

The Regional Climate Alliance supports the goals articulated through the various themes of the [SCA Strategic Plan](#) and a range of Implementation Strategies as **highlighted** in Annexure A.

A further explanation of the strategic context is outlined below.

In 2015 Australia committed to an economy-wide target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26 to 28% below 2005 levels by 2030 and will submit its next commitment with a post-2030 target, to the UNFCCC in 2025.

The Paris Agreement expressly recognises the importance of engagement at all levels of government. As such, the management of climate-change risks is spread across the three tiers of government: Commonwealth, State and Territory and Local.

In 2012, the Councils of Australian Governments (COAG) formally agreed on the roles and responsibilities for climate-change adaptation in Australia.

Federal

The Commonwealth Government is responsible for:

- Managing climate change science and national adaptation research to allow Australia to effectively adapt to the impacts of climate change;
- Providing leadership on national adaptation reform, and collaborating with States and Territories in setting and implementing national priorities and regional priorities;
- Managing climate change risks and impacts across the Commonwealth's portfolio of assets and programs; and
- Maintaining a strong, flexible economy and social safety net that will help Australia adapt to climate change impacts by ensuring resources are available to respond to climate change and can be deployed efficiently.

Western Australian Government

The State and Territory Governments are responsible for:

- Providing local and regional science and information;
- Managing climate change risks and impacts across State and Territory assets and programs;
- Working with the Commonwealth to implement the national adaptation reform; and
- Encouraging climate resilience and adaptive capacity.

In August 2019, the WA Government set the aspiration of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions for WA by 2050 under the WA Climate Change Policy.

Local Governments

Local Governments are responsible for:

- Administering relevant state and territory and/or Commonwealth legislation to promote adaptation as required including the application of relevant codes;
- Managing risks and impacts to public assets owned and managed by Local Governments;
- Managing risks and impacts to Local Government service delivery;
- Collaborating across Local Governments and with State and Territory Governments to manage risks of regional climate change impacts;
- Ensuring policies and regulations under their jurisdiction, including local planning and development regulations, incorporate climate change considerations and are consistent with State and Commonwealth Government adaptation approaches;
- Facilitating building resilience and adaptive capacity in the local community, including through providing information about relevant climate change risks;
- Working in partnership with the community, locally based and relevant NGOs, business and other key stakeholders to manage the risks and impacts associated with climate change; and
- Contributing appropriate resources to prepare, prevent, respond and recover from detrimental climatic impacts.

WALGA Climate Change Action Framework

Western Australia Local Government Association (WALGA) developed [WALGA's Policy Statement on Climate Change \(2018\)](#), stating the following policy position:

Local Government acknowledges:

- The science is clear: climate change is occurring and greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are the dominate cause*
- Climate change threatens human societies and the earth's ecosystems.*
- Urgent action is required to reduce emissions, and to adapt to the impacts from climate change that are now unavoidable*
- A failure to adequately address this climate change emergency places an unacceptable burden on future generations.*

Local Government is committed to addressing climate change.

Local Government is calling for:

- Strong climate action, leadership and coordination at all levels of government*
- Effective and adequate funded Commonwealth and State Government climate change policies and programs*

WALGA has developed a Climate Change Action Framework that sets out a sequence of steps that Local Governments can follow to respond to climate change. The framework is intended to guide both Local Governments that are commencing their climate change journey, and those that are well progressed and are strengthening their approach.

The Snapshot report maps the actions of SCA members against this framework.

Risks

An initial risk analysis has been undertaken by the EO.

The top three risks identified for the Regional Climate Alliance relate to stakeholder (member LGA) buy-in and project alignment for project funding:

Risk	Detail	Probability	Consequence	Management
Regional Transition Hub				
Lack of engagement with member LGAs	SCA LGA staff have competing priorities, insufficient time to dedicate to progressing their inputs to the initiative, or see it as unnecessary/irrelevant to their role.	Possible	Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project to be priority project for SCA and articulated as such by LGA CEOs to the relevant staff. Project tasks to be designed with relevance to LGAs own strategic pathways in mind. Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator to provide assistance to LGA staff in gathering inputs. Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator to elevate any concerns expressed by staff to EO to ensure these can be addressed. Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator to engage as a partner with LGA staff, providing encouragement and assistance.
Lack of agreement between LGA members on priority projects.	SCA LGA members have varying priorities within the program mix, leading to disagreement and lack of SCA support.	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive consultation with LGA designated personnel. Mapping of suggested project topics to WALGA requirements. Presentation to the SCA Board only after consultation with LGA CEOs.
Priority Project unable to secure funding	Lack of alignment with WALGA and DWER outcomes	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure understanding of the WALGA guidelines. Test proposals early with WALGA and DWER.

EO Commentary

This paper is provided for information purposes only. No decision required at this time.

Annexure A

Strategic & Corporate Plan Implications

The Regional Transition Hub supports the goals articulated through the various themes of the [SCA Strategic Plan](#) and supports a range of Implementation Strategies as **highlighted**:

Vision			
The South Coast Alliance, leading sustainable development through collaboration.			
Strategic Theme – Advocacy			
Goals			
To proactively connect industry and the community with opportunities and resources to progress their ideas.		To support multi-stakeholder partnerships working for the benefit of the community in the South Coast Alliance geography.	
Strategic Initiatives			
Workforce Development initiative		Support an innovation culture	
Strategic Theme - Economic Development			
Goals			
To lead the communication of regional sustainable development thinking, activating opportunities for our community.		To proactively measure and communicate population level social outcomes, activating partnerships to address issues of concern.	
Strategic Initiatives			
Support an innovation culture across all sectors.		Innovation Program	
Strategic Theme – Efficiency & Consistency			
Goals			
To share knowledge, opportunity, research and resources across the South Coast Alliance to maximise efficiency and collective action opportunities.	To provide a forum for individual members to bring forward ideas for exploration that impact more than one LGA.	To provide a forum for regional stakeholders to engage on issues that cover more than one LGA.	
Strategic Initiatives			
Develop a mechanism to encourage the surfacing of ideas across the network.	Allocate a pool of funds each year for exploration of ideas.	Communication Strategy to include engagement with key regional stakeholders.	SCA identified as a key regional development actor.

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop advocacy positions for barriers identified in SCA Energy Project (e.g. fees for LED in street lighting)
- Benchmarking to identify areas that would benefit from intervention.

Local Government Planning References:

Shire	Policy alignment	Strategic alignment
City of Albany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Policy (Climate Change) (2017) • Carbon Footprint Reduction Strategy (2014) • Sustainable Communities 	<p>Corporate Business Plan 2019 -2023.</p> <p><i>Objective 2 – Smart Prosperous & Growing:</i></p> <p>2.2 To develop a smart city that supports economic growth.</p> <p><i>Objective 3 – Clean, Green & Sustainable:</i></p> <p>3.1 To preserve and protect our built and natural environment in a changing climate.</p> <p>3.2 To build, maintain and renew city assets sustainably</p> <p>3.3 To identify and deliver improvements in sustainability within the City and wider community</p>
Shire of Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Strategy 2021 - 2023 • Climate Change Action • Water Efficiency Action Plan 2017 – 2022 • Policy Number 40: Rainwater Tanks and Greywater Re-use Systems 	<p>Denmark 2027 - Strategic Community</p> <p><i>N2.0 Our Natural Environment:</i></p> <p>N2.3 To reduce human impact on natural resources, reduce waste and utilise renewable energy.</p> <p>N2.4 To acknowledge and adapt to climate change.</p> <p><i>L5.0 Our Local Government:</i></p> <p>N2.3 To embrace change, apply technological advancement and pursue regional partnerships that drive business efficiency</p>

Shire of Jerramungup	Local Planning Policy No 17 Water Conservation Shire of Jerramungup Community Plan 2016-2026	Shire of Jerramungup Corporate Business Plan 2020-2024. <i>Strategic Direction 1: Environment.</i> Aspiration 1.1 Environmental Stewardship – To be an industry leader in implementing new technology and initiatives which deliver environmental benefits to the region. 1.1.1 Invest in and advocate for renewable and energy efficient options for Council buildings. 1.1.5 Development of modern, accessible, cost effective and innovative waste disposal options
Shire of Plantagenet	Town Planning Scheme Policy No. 21 Water Efficiency in Residential Development	Plantagenet 2026 Strategic Community Plan. <i>Outcome 2.8: Awareness of an appropriate response to effects of climate variation.</i> Strategy 2.8.1: Support community education and promotion of energy and water efficiency. Strategy 2.8.2: Investigate and adopt energy efficiency practices in Council operations. Strategy 2.8.3: Investigate green energy initiatives.