



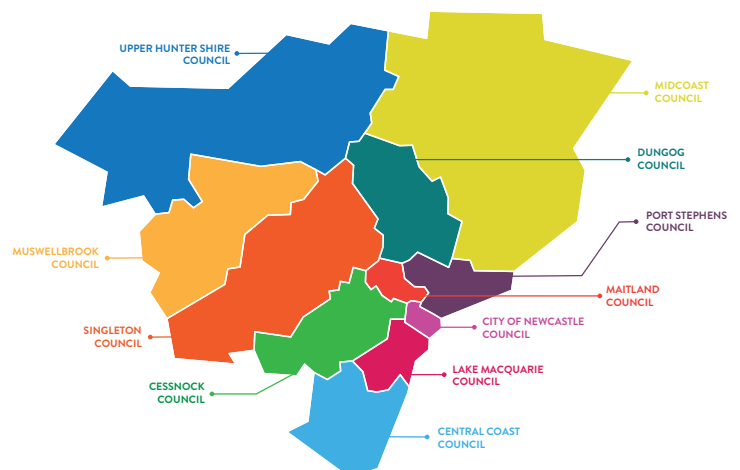
Hunter and Central Coast Environment Program

For over two decades the Councils of the Hunter & Central Coast area have been collaborating to deliver improved environmental outcomes for our region. Having achieved significant results, the Environment Program continues to represent a primary component of the body of work being delivered by the Hunter JO.

The projects that fall under the Environment Program contribute directly to the delivery of a number of the regional strategic priorities identified in the [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032](#), implementation of which is overseen by the Hunter JO Board, comprising the ten Mayors of the Hunter region.

Key focus areas for the Environment Program currently include:

- Climate Adaptation
- Disaster Resilience
- Net Zero Acceleration
- Circular Economy
- Regional Waste Management
- Regional Illegal Dumping
- Contaminated Land



The funds that are invested by Councils into the Environment Program directly support and contribute to the core operating costs of the Hunter JO, underpinning the attraction and management of a wide range of environmentally focused grant projects.

The benefits these projects provide to Member Councils and their communities is significant, as is the return on each Council's annual investment in the program (which collectively contributes around \$300k per annum). The nature and value of projects currently being delivered can be seen in the following table.

Program Delivery

Projects being delivered with the support of the Environment Program include:

Strategic Themes*	Project	Total Grant Value	Purpose
● ●	Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework	\$300,000	To support Member Councils embed resilience principles and projects into their Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R), in order to support their ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects.
● ●	Act Now on Coastal Adaptation	\$120,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Package which embeds resilience to Climate Change into Councils operations through incorporation into the overarching IP&R documents. • Provide a coastal adaptation communication framework, media templates and suite of practical resources to directly build the capacity of the coastal councils of the Hunter and Central Coast. • Build capacity within Councils to reduce risks, increase resilience and reduce climate vulnerability by collaboratively building community understanding and literacy around coastal management and adaptation issues and bridging the gap between the IP&R framework and prioritisation of Climate Change resilience.
● ● ●	Disaster Risk Reduction	\$1,493,856	<p>To facilitate place-based regional collaboration across four sub projects to empower Councils and communities in the regional to reduce disaster risk through early action. The focus of the sub-projects includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Support and Capacity Building - embedding disaster resilience into Council operations and building capacity to communicate disaster resilience to local communities. • Disaster waste management and resource recovery preparedness - assisting Councils to plan place-based solutions for effective disaster waste management and resource recovery systems • Delivering a regional transport vulnerability and connectivity assessment and mitigation plan • Continued refinement and expansion of the use of Simtables regionally for multi-hazard disaster engagement
● ●	Simtables for Community Empowerment	\$300,000	Simtables provide a “State of the Art” tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions. This project has purchased two Simtables for the collective use of Member Councils and is providing direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.
● ●	Circular Economy Procurement	\$30,000	To support Councils to prioritise recycled materials and circular economy services in their procurement systems and processes, and to collaborate with the Hunter JO and other participating councils to develop a common framework for a joint regional procurement of recycled materials.

*Strategic Themes from the Hunter JO Strategic Plan



CONNECTIVITY



RESILIENCE



JOBS AND A GROWING ECONOMY



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Program Delivery

Projects being delivered with the support of the Environment Program include:

Strategic Themes*	Project	Total Grant Value	Purpose
● ●	Circular Economy Eco-System	\$92,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and improve circular economy communication for all circular economy eco-system participants in the Hunter and Central Coast • Build circular economy knowledge through education and capacity building opportunities for Hunter JO member councils and Central Coast Council • Develop and improve circular economy data and analytics systems for use by all circular economy eco-system participants in the Hunter and Central Coast.
● ●	Circular Economy Precincts and Futures Hub	\$878,600	<p>To deliver concept plans and business cases for four multi-element circular economy precincts, that would each represent a key part of the Hunter. Project outputs will outline the potential for circular processing, renewable energy production and value-added businesses, delivering diversified employment opportunities and new industries to the region. Key project deliverables will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A concept plan and strategy for Circular Economy Precincts, including an Anaerobic Digestion component for the circular processing of organics and biogas or energy production for the precinct. • A concept plan and strategy for establishing a Circular Economy Futures Hub.
●	Regional Illegal Dumping Program	\$2,668,341	<p>To support Member Councils manage illegal dumping by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering a regional approach to target illegal dumping • Employing skilled officers to undertake compliance action against illegal dumpers • Undertaking proactive measures to prevent illegal dumping • Targeting problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents. • Increasing capacity to target problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents.
●	Small Acts Big Change	\$180,000	<p>To deliver a regional communication campaign to improve community waste avoidance behaviours at the top end of the waste management hierarchy, along with reuse and recycling habits.</p>
●	Community Recycling Centres	\$98,095	<p>To deliver a regionally coordinated approach to promoting community awareness of Community Recycling Centres (CRC's).</p>

*Strategic Themes from the Hunter JO Strategic Plan



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Program Delivery

Projects being delivered with the support of the Environment Program include:

Strategic Themes*	Project	Total Grant Value	Purpose
● ● ● ●	Net Zero Acceleration	\$155,000	To support Member Councils reduce their carbon emissions to achieve their part in the State's Net Zero target of 50 per cent reduction by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050. This includes employing a staff member dedicated to progressing the JO and its member councils toward net zero emissions, and to provide a link to other NSW government support mechanisms.
● ●	Landfill Emissions Data Management Program	\$199,650	To establish a landfill emission data management program for councils to assist in understanding their baseline landfill emissions, and building a model data management framework and tools to support the collation and interpretation of landfill emission data.
● ●	Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub	\$293,469	To create and pilot a digital circular knowledge hub for two distinct user groups – for council staff, and for the community at large. The aim is to address the information accessibility and knowledge barriers that prevail and frustrate uptake of circular services and recovery pathways in the region. By creating tools to broaden participation, these solutions will be supported to scale and increase their impact. The project will gather information on services and solutions available in the region, then deploy tools that will present that information in a user-friendly format designed specifically for that group's needs.
● ●	Hospitality Circularity Network	\$500,000	The project seeks to engage hospitality SMEs across the region, to build their capacity to evaluate and adopt circular solutions for their business operations and supply chains, focusing on organics and single use items. The project will also seek to create or strengthen existing business networks and assist them to collaborate and co design practical solutions that benefit from network efficiency and scale.
● ●	Regional Waste Coordination	\$220,822	To facilitate collaborative implementation of the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Circular Materials Strategy (2022-2027) and Annual Action Plan.
● ●	Contaminated Land Program	\$736,000	To build capacity and capability within Member Councils to manage contaminated sites on private and council managed land, and to support Councils transition to their new role as regulator of the Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) Regulation.
TOTAL:		\$8,265,833	

*Strategic Themes from the Hunter JO Strategic Plan



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