



Department of Water and
Environmental Regulation



Strategic Intent: Beyond 2050

For a thriving, sustainable WA

Caring for Country, climate and community



Acknowledgment

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we live and work throughout Western Australia and we pay our respects to Elders past and present. The Department recognises the practice of intergenerational care for Country and its relevance to our work and working with the community. The Department continues to move forward with a shared commitment to protect and conserve Country for our future generations.



Artwork

The First Nations artwork was created by Wongutha artist and designer Kevin Wilson.

The artwork explores the interconnectedness of water sources across Western Australia, above and below the ground. It depicts the rivers, creeks, waterways, and waterholes that sustain Country.

The repeated waterhole motif emphasises that, despite geographical separation, water remains intrinsically connected beneath a shared sky. These connections are shaped by the Western Australian landscape – the land (Country) and its natural systems.

The meeting place motif represents our communities, while the surrounding scattered dots symbolise the diversity of flora found throughout the state. Kangaroo and emu footprints are incorporated to acknowledge the presence and movement of animals through Country.

The vibrant colour palette reflects the breadth and richness of the state's environmental landscapes and natural wonders. Together, these elements show that people, animals, and plants can only continue to thrive within a healthy, well-stewarded environment, recognising the importance of caring for Country.

Foreword from the Director General



Western Australia has a strong economy that makes a significant contribution to the nation. As the demands to meet expectations for our State's growth and development increases, so too does our responsibility to protect our unique environment, water resources and the liveability of our communities.

This Strategic Intent sets out the Department's contribution to a thriving, sustainable Western Australia – where economic prosperity, social wellbeing, and effective environmental management work together for the benefit of all.

In shaping our Strategic Intent, we listened to voices from across our Department and beyond. Through workshops with staff, we heard a clear message: Western Australians care deeply about the legacy we leave for future generations.

Our new Strategic Intent reflects the aspirations of people from every corner of our State – protecting our environment and water resources, embedding Aboriginal knowledge into our practices and programs, building resilience to climate change and supporting sustainable economic development.

This is more than a plan for our Department. Our Strategic Intent will guide our decisions and actions through 2050 and beyond. It is an invitation to all who share our commitment to Western Australia's future.

Whether you are an employee of the Department, a community member, industry leader, Traditional Owner or government partner, your role is vital to our strategic vision. We can create lasting change by leading with integrity, embracing new ideas and working in genuine partnership.

Together, we are shaping a thriving and sustainable future for Western Australia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alistair Jones'.

Alistair Jones, Director General
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

WA is an incredible place, with an enviable lifestyle, rare biodiversity, natural systems and thriving industries. To be the best it can be, we all need to help lead its future in a responsible way.





Our purpose

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) protects what makes Western Australia unique, so every generation can enjoy a healthy environment, secure water and a prosperous future.

Our context

The integrity and long-term resilience of Western Australia's natural systems underpins everyone's health, wellbeing and prosperity.

We are a prosperous State

Western Australia's population and economy are growing at the fastest rate in the country, which places real demands on our housing, energy, infrastructure, water, and natural resources. To support this growth, we have a collective responsibility to reduce emissions, manage waste, and safeguard the unique ecosystems that define our State.

We all face climate change

Climate change is reshaping the way we live and work. More frequent extreme weather events, shifting rainfall patterns and reduced water flows are already impacting communities across the State. Each region faces its own pressures and requires tailored, long-term responses.

We must balance growth and protection

As a global leader in critical minerals and clean energy, Western Australia has a responsibility to balance growth with environmental protection. We must avoid irreversible loss while building more resilient communities.

We enjoy regional diversity

Our regions are as diverse as they are vast. Each faces distinct environmental, economic and social pressures, but they also offer unique opportunities to shape a more sustainable future for the people and communities living in them.

Our approach

We lead with integrity, accountability and courage. By working with community, industry and governments, we ensure WA is prosperous, protected, and thriving - for today and beyond 2050.

Responsive, credible regulation

- We make timely, transparent and evidence-based decisions.
- We ensure our guidance is clear, contemporary and accessible.
- We lead and support major projects in housing, energy and infrastructure through streamlined approvals.

Effective policy that drives real-world change

- We deliver the State's legislative and policy foundations for the climate, environment and water resources.
- We collaborate to develop policy for impact.
- We advance towards a circular economy and waste reduction through targeted programs and infrastructure grants.

Promoting, enforcing and monitoring compliance

- We uphold standards and take action when required.
- We educate those we regulate, as well as the broader community.
- We support emergency responses to environmental incidents including droughts, floods, bushfires, and pollution events.

Partnering with purpose

- We engage, listen and act in partnership with the community we serve.
- We raise awareness and promote behavioural change.

- We adapt our approach to meet regional needs.
- We support statutory bodies such as the Environmental Protection Authority, Waste Authority, and State Government advisory committees.

World-class science and research

- We deliver scientific advice and information to government, industry, and the public.
- We apply advanced modelling and monitoring to assess environmental impacts and guide decisions.
- We invest in independent, peer-reviewed science to support our work.

Embedding Aboriginal worldviews and knowledge systems

- We listen and embed Aboriginal worldviews and ways of knowing, being and doing.
- We respect traditional knowledge in our decision-making processes.
- We foster partnerships with Aboriginal communities for mutual benefit.

Customer-focused systems and services

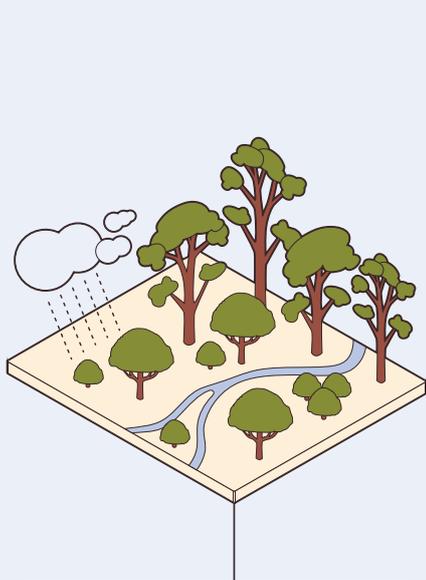
- We design and deliver our services around customer needs.
- We seek feedback and work constructively with our customers to improve our services.



For a thriving, sustainable WA

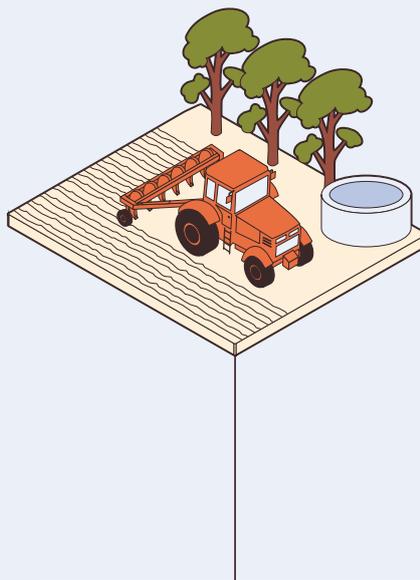
Caring for Country, climate and community

Our impact



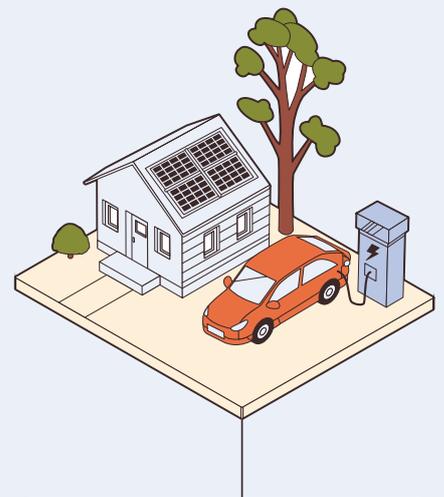
Healthy and protected natural systems

Our unique landscapes, biodiversity, and ecosystems are safeguarded, resilient, and flourishing, forming the foundation for a healthy, prosperous State.



Secure water for people, nature and the economy

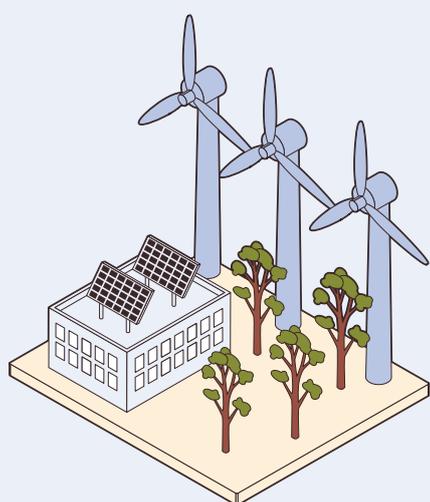
Reliable and sustainable water resources support thriving communities, productive industries and resilient ecosystems across every region.



Climate-resilient communities

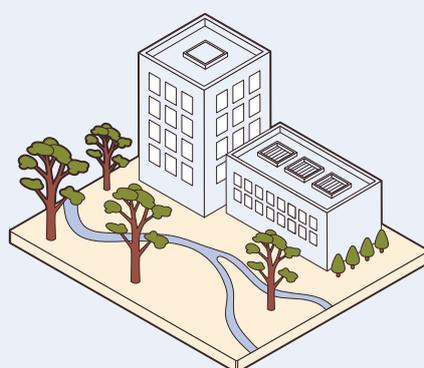
People, infrastructure, and industries are prepared and adapting for a changing climate, able to respond to extreme events while maintaining safety, wellbeing and prosperity.

We know that Western Australia is a place where our environment, communities and economy can thrive together in harmony.



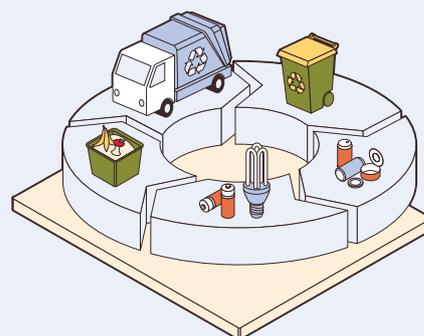
Low-carbon industries and exports

Western Australia is a leader in clean energy and decarbonised industries, generating sustainable economic growth and delivering global impact through low-emission products and services.



Sustainable economic development

Economic growth occurs together with sound environmental management and social wellbeing, creating long-term prosperity for all Western Australians.



Low-waste circular economy

Resources are used efficiently and responsibly, waste is minimised, and materials are continually reused, supporting both environmental health and economic opportunities.



Our values

We serve to make a difference

- We are professionals who deliver sustainable outcomes for current and future generations.
- We align our work with the Department's priorities and government's direction.
- We continue to improve our engagement with Aboriginal people for everyone's prosperity.
- We recognise the practice of intergenerational care for Country by Traditional Custodians.
- We plan with the future in mind, regularly reviewing our efforts to focus on the right priorities at the right time.

We build trust

- We engage early, listen to understand, and respond consistently.
- We ensure our work is transparent, evidence-based, and accountable.
- We are respectful, honest and kind, and demonstrate empathy.
- We operate with the highest levels of integrity.
- We hold ourselves and each other to account.

We care

- We work as a team, valuing the expertise of each other.
- We take time to build capability and contribute to the development of our people.
- We contribute to an inclusive, safe and healthy workplace.
- We are upstanders and support one another to respectfully challenge inappropriate behaviour.



Open minds

- We embrace new ideas and innovation.
- We are mindful of both the big picture and local place-based information in our work.
- We are flexible and seek better ways to do our work, and we learn from our mistakes.
- We are adaptable and resilient in the face of change.

Better together

- We work inclusively and collaboratively and have a 'one Government' mindset.
- We value our differences and use them to expand our thinking.
- We actively share knowledge and information.
- We engage in a practical and courteous way with those affected by our work.
- We lead at all levels and empower our people to make decisions.

Our strategic focus areas: 1-5 years



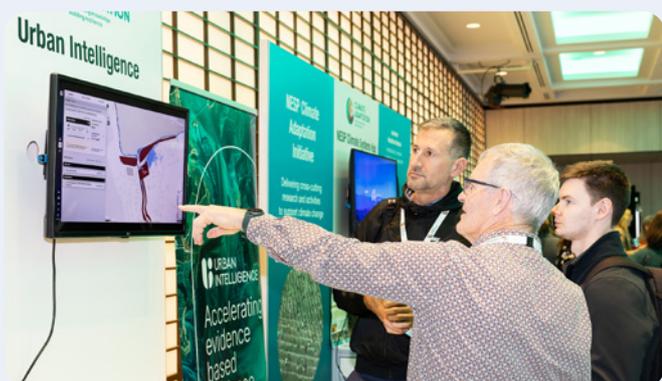
Intelligence

Robust data, integrated monitoring systems, predictive analytics and transparent reporting are essential for understanding the state of our environment, responding to emerging challenges and making informed regulatory decisions.



Influencing for impact

Shaping sustainable behaviours and decisions across government, industry and the community is key to achieving lasting environmental outcomes. Through engagement, policy leadership, and partnerships, we accelerate the adoption of best practices and foster a culture of shared responsibility.



Adaptive capability

A skilled, agile workforce and advanced systems allows us to respond effectively to change. By improving our people's capabilities and investing in innovation, we build the capacity to tackle complex challenges and embrace new opportunities.





Delivering for Western Australia

DWER will play a vital role in delivering on the WA Government's priorities for the next four years and beyond across jobs, health, housing, community, environment and infrastructure. We are committed to enabling clean energy and low-carbon industries, securing water for people and nature, supporting regional growth, advancing climate adaptation, climate resilience and protecting our unique natural systems and biodiversity. Through credible regulation, strong partnerships, and science-led action, we will help ensure that Western Australia remains a great place to live, work, and thrive for generations to come.



Jobs:

Diversifying the WA economy to remain the strongest in the nation

- Continuing to deliver strong budget management.
- Becoming a renewable energy powerhouse.
- Securing our water future in a drying climate.



Housing:

Ensuring every Western Australian has a home

- Increasing land supply for housing.
- Cutting red tape for housing developments.



Protecting and restoring our environment

- Decarbonising the WA economy and supporting our trading partners to reduce their GHG emissions.
- Protecting and restoring our land and oceans.
- Increasing the urban tree canopy.
- Reducing the impact of waste.

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Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
8 Davidson Terrace JOONDALUP WA 6027
Locked Bag 10 Joondalup DC JOONDALUP WA 6919

Phone: 08 6364 7000

Fax: 08 6364 7001

National Relay Service 13 36 77

dwer.wa.gov.au

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