2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS BENCHMARK REPORT

Technical Report

EMRC

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Future-Fit Business

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report has been prepared to offer an insight into the work that has been undertaken to review and benchmark the EMRC's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals with the use of the Future-Fit Business Benchmark.

This report provides high level information in relation to the research, background and approaches undertaken and is designed so that our methodology can be duplicated by member Councils and other local governments.

The Future-Fit approach is not designed to be a reporting tool but a framework to guide to understanding and assisting with positive improvements over time. The way the benchmark is used by different businesses and organisations will vary depending on needs and requirements.

2 BACKGROUND

The Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) is a regional local government representing the interests of four member Councils in the EMRC region: Town of Bassendean, City of Bayswater, Shire of Mundaring, and City of Swan. Incorporated under the Local Government Act 1995, the EMRC provides strength in their partnerships with member Councils to build a sustainable community.

The EMRC's Sustainability Strategy 2022/2023 – 2026/2027 (Appendix 1) aligns with a strategic review undertaken in 2021, and included local, state, national and international drivers, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Sustainability Strategy is used to drive operational activities and alignment of priorities and allows the EMRC to meet the needs of member Councils while providing sustainable solutions for future generations.

3 WHAT ARE THE SDGs?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals that were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These goals provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet and aim to address various social, economic, and environmental challenges. The SDGs cover a wide range of issues, including poverty, hunger, health, education, gender equality, clean water, sanitation, affordable and clean energy, economic growth, industry innovation, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice, and partnerships for the goals (Diagram 1).

Each goal is interconnected, recognising the need for an integrated and holistic approach to development. The target year for achieving these goals is 2030. Governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals all play a role in working towards the achievement of the SDGs to create a more sustainable and equitable world.

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Diagram 1 – Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations

THE EMRC'S JOURNEY TO DATE

The EMRC's journey with the SDGs is shown in Diagram 2.

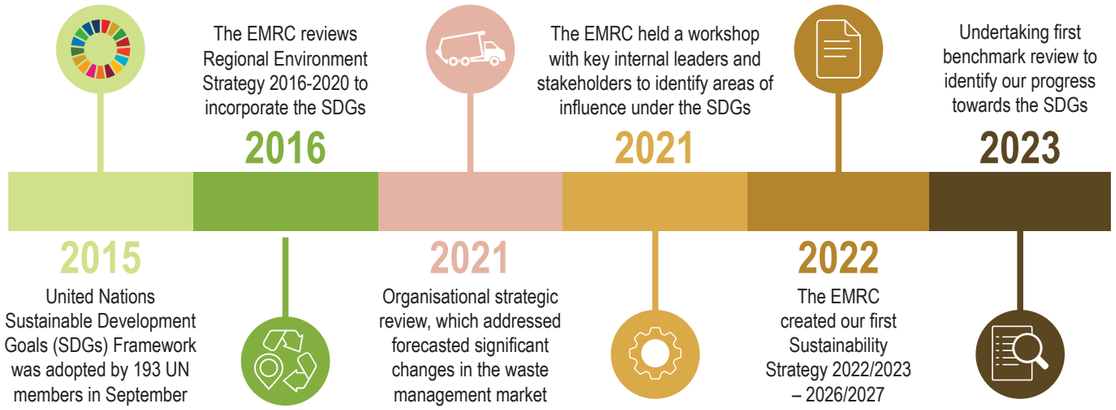

Diagram 2 - EMRC's journey with the SDGs.

The driving force for the EMRC to focus on sustainability was due to repositioning the business from a landfill-centric business to a resource recovery business. Focusing on sustainability, circular economy, net zero, decarbonisation and applying targets to monitor the success of existing and new initiatives

EMRC's Strategic Vision

The EMRC focuses on delivering waste, resource recovery and sustainability services, capitalising on its existing capabilities and infrastructure to act as an industry leader.

Diagram 3 highlights the EMRC's four key goals/themes, created to support the strategic sustainability vision. Each pillar has Objectives and Targets aligning back to the SDGs.

Since the launch of the Sustainability Strategy, the SDGs have been holistically embraced. EMRC employees proudly wear their SDG pinwheel lapel pins, and the EMRC has recently rebranded all sites to demonstrate the EMRC's commitment towards implementing the SDGs and the Sustainability Strategy's vision (Appendix 1).

Demonstrate circular economy leadership	Respond to a climate emergency	Create value in the community	Reduce our environmental impact
We will use our experience to provide circular based resource recovery solutions for the EMRC region and act as a knowledge hub for waste avoidance strategies.	We will reduce our carbon impact to achieve net zero and understand the risks associated with climate change to the EMRC region.	We will establish and support projects in the community that create social value from a residential level through to commercial levels.	We will lead by example by reducing our environmental impacts through efficient operations, forward thinking, and supporting circular and sustainability initiatives in the region.
Enabling circular economy initiatives through advocacy networks by 2025	Infrastructure adaptation and education by 2030	Community based source separation initiatives by 2027	Regional urban programs implemented
80% recovery of waste generated in the region by 2030	Below zero carbon emissions by 2040	Use of recovered materials in the region by 2040	Contribute to a decrease in illegal waste disposal by 2040
Recover 80% of material generated at all EMRC operated sites by 2040	Sustainability integrated into management processes	Increased participation in behaviour change programs	Revise EMRC wide environmental management system

Diagram 3 – EMRCs four key goals/themes.

The EMRC has created individual pinwheels (Diagram 4), which highlight how projects align with the SDGs. The EMRC is focused on making SDGs part of daily terminology, ensuring actions remain accountable. The strategic drive is knowing we all have a part to play in creating a sustainable world and the Sustainability Strategy and the SDGs are key to this success, with the SDGs fast becoming a universal language with a universal framework.

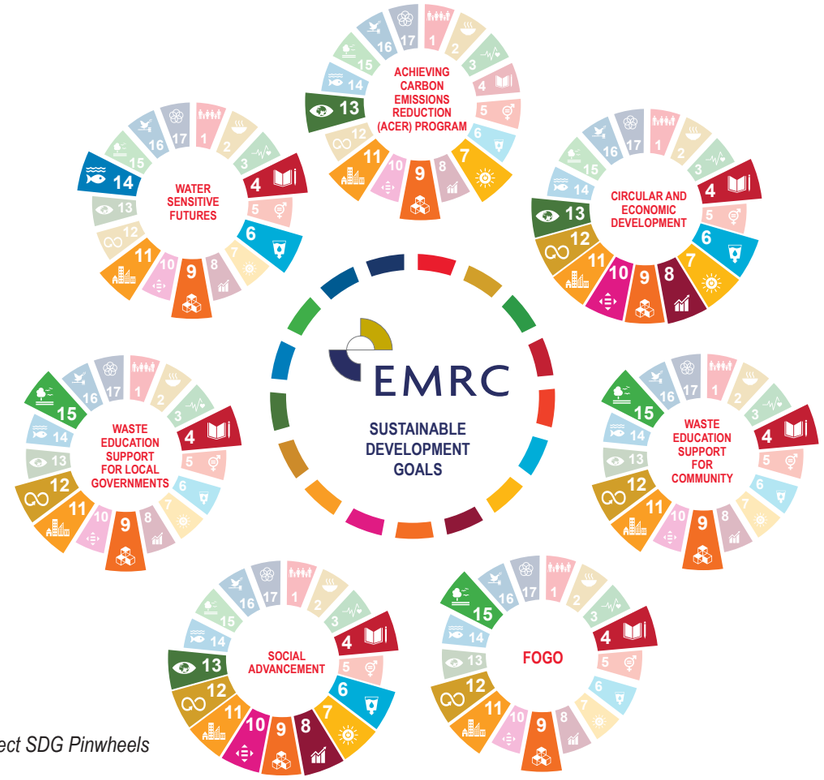

Diagram 4 - EMRC Project SDG Pinwheels

5 METHODOLOGY

Diagram 5 outlines the key steps the EMRC has taken, as well as actions planned for the future. Each of the steps will be discussed in more detail in coming sections of this Report.

Diagram 5
Methodology flow diagram.

5.1 RESEARCH

The EMRC reviewed a number of existing sustainability reports that utilise the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as researching how other local governments are reporting their progress against the 17 goals.

From the research, it has been identified that quite a few of the larger Cities, with the assistance of universities, have been able to undertake SDG reviews. For these local governments, this is a great initiative but unachievable for smaller councils who are likely to have significantly smaller resources to be able to undertake such a large project.

Research includes:

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – City of Melbourne Voluntary Local Review 2022
- Sustainable Development Goals Australia (https://sdgs.org.au/)
- Transforming Australia SDG Progress Report 2020 Update – Monash University
- NSW Start of the Environment 2021 – NSW Environmental Protection Authority
- Sustainable Development Goals Impact Report 2022 – Griffith University
- Tracking Australia's Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals 2018 – Australian Government

The EMRC wanted to find a simpler, more cost-efficient process that would help smaller local governments achieve the same outcomes within a framework that could be dissected into manageable pieces. This is where EMRC saw benefit in Future-Fit.

5.1.1 Future-Fit

The Future-Fit Foundation is a UK-registered charity that exists to help businesses build a better world. They have a bright vision that we can create a future in which everyone has the opportunity to flourish.

Future-Fit's mission is to translate systems science into practical tools designed to help business leaders, investors and policy makers respond authentically and successfully to today's biggest challenges. By adopting an open-source and collaborative approach they have fostered a vibrant global partner ecosystem to accelerate the adoption of their vision.

Future-Fit starts with the best-available science and draws on the most credible and robust third-party resources available. The Future-Fit Business Benchmark translates over 30 years of scientific research into a practical tool designed to guide real progress.

5.1.2 The Science

Over 250 years ago

Over 250 years ago our current economic system was created. The world was a different place. There were less people on the planet and there was an abundance of resources. A time when we knew no better about the finality of the world that we lived on. There was no thought about the future and what would happen if those resources ran out.

As a result of this thinking and our unwillingness to change, our economic system is failing to meet the needs of hundreds of millions of people around the world today.

1970s

The 1970s started a line of thinking that recognised that the behaviors of the past will not sustain the future. During this time the world saw a rapid increase in population and a decrease in resources.

1990s

As environmental awareness in the1990s grew, so did the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the sustainability reporting movement emerge. It was hoped that this would hold companies accountable for their negative social and environmental impacts.

Unfortunately, while this highlighted some significant areas of negative impact, globally it has had little impact.

2010s

In the early 2010s the term Creating Shared Value (CSV) was coined. This is used to describe a framework for creating economic value while simultaneously addressing societal needs and challenges.

Where CSR was often perceived as just another cost of doing business, CSV casts 'doing the right thing' as an opportunity for growth. However, what does 'doing the right thing' mean? What does this look like? How do we measure it?

Today

Today, to understand the full extent of a company's impact, both the good and the bad, we must think in terms of Creating System Values (Diagram 6). Businesses must be aware what there is no such thing as a business decision that is free of a potential trade-off. By looking at activities and decisions from a system-based approach, it makes it possible to identify negative impacts and allows for unforeseen issues to be anticipated, avoided, or at the very least addressed.

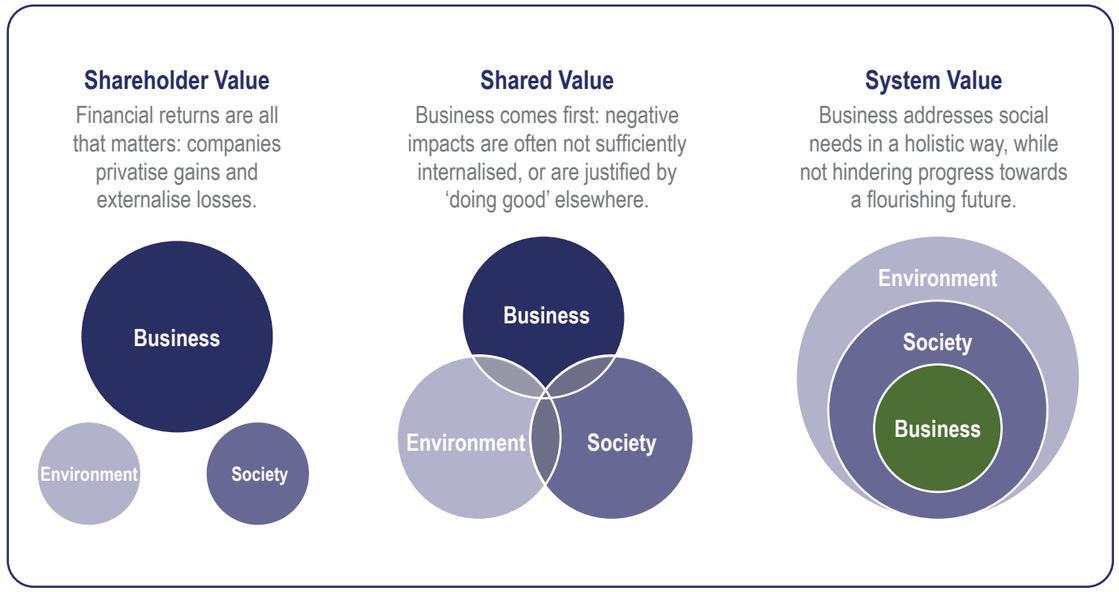

Diagram 6 – Rethinking value creation through a systems lens.

5.2 ACCREDITATION

The EMRC wanted to ensure and build confidence that all work that was undertaken as part of this review was able to stand as an accredited source of information. In addition, the EMRC felt the accreditation would assist other local governments identify this methodology as a legitimate framework and one in which EMRC can assist implementing.

Accreditation is an individual qualification and is held by the person, not the company. Accredited Advisors can support clients on corporate strategy creation, reporting, change management and data assurance. They are involved in developing off-the-shelf solutions that incorporate the Future-Fit approach.

Accredited Advisors have undertaken four exams to gain accreditation as well as paying an annual registration fee. This enables access to the Future-Fit Accreditation logo on their work and communications along with access to the Sustainable Business Coach tool to help streamline benchmark assessments. The EMRC currently has one Accredited Advisor, who is the first Local Government Officer globally, to hold this accreditation.

5.3 RISK ASSESSMENT AND POSITIVE ACTIVITIES

Using the Future-Fit Business SDG Workshop tool, the ERMC conducted individual interviews with selected staff members (7 in total) to answer a series of questions. The tool was built based on the Future-Fit Benchmark and helps to pinpoint where the various business operations may be impacting the SDGs in both a positive and negative way.

Outcomes discussed in **Section 6** of this report.

5.4 SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COACH

The Sustainable Business Coach has been developed with Accredited Advisors in mind. The tool has been designed to help collect and interpret information in a succinct manner to help guide clients and their organisation on the Future-Fit journey. The Business Coach helps translate science into principles, goals, indicators, and guides to help businesses increase their own resilience.

5.4.1 Break-Even Goals

Using Future-Fit terminology, Break-Even Goals are the minimum action that organisations should achieve to be considered 'future-fit' in that area of focus. Each SDG has linkages to a number of Break-Even Goals, and it is this matrix of connections that allows for assessment of each SDG while making sure minimal negative impact is inflicted in other areas. Please refer to Appendix 2 for a breakdown of the connections.

The Break-Even Goals give organisations a clear objective to aim for and include the following:

- Each goal is expressed as a single sentence, whose meaning can be grasped by business leaders, investors, and other key stakeholders without lengthy explanation.
- Each goal represents the minimum level of performance in one area of the value web and relates to one issue.
- Together, all goals identify the social and environmental break-even point that each company must reach.

5.4.2 Positive Pursuits

Positive Pursuits are looking at actions that organisations can undertake above and beyond their own operations to help others achieve their own Break-Even Goals. Please refer to Appendix 3 for a breakdown of the connections.

The Positive Pursuits actively contribute to society's future-fitness and include the following:

- Each Positive Pursuit is expressed as a single sentence, whose meaning can be grasped by business leaders, investors, and other key stakeholders without lengthy explanation.
- Each Positive Pursuit identifies a way to reverse the effects of negative environmental or social impacts that occurred in the past, or to help others avoid having such negative impacts in the future.
- Each Positive Pursuit relates to one type of intended outcome which can be delivered across the value web and encompasses a range of possible actions: improving supplier performance; offering beneficial products; and/or strengthening the abilities of markets and institutions to pursue future-fitness.

6 OUTCOMES

6.1 RISK PROFILER ASSESSMENT

The Risk Profiler tool is used by assessors to identify the potential area an organisation's activities are most likely to have significant negative impact if no action is taken to mitigate them.

The tool has been developed to help organisations prioritise actions across the Break-Even Goals. Through a series of questions and answers, the tool will determine the potential impact of the organisation as either 'High', 'Moderate', 'Low' or 'Unlikely' for each Break-Even Goal **(Diagram 7).**

Diagram 8 highlights the current Risk Profile for EMRC.

LEVEL OF RISK	DEFINITION
High	There is a high risk that a typical company's activities will cause significant harm in this issue area
Moderate	There is a moderate risk that a typical company's activities will cause significant harm in this issue area
Low	There is a low risk that a typical company's activities will cause significant harm in this issue area
Unlikely	A typical company's activities are unlikely to cause any harm in this issue area

Diagram 7 – Level of Risk

BREAK-EVEN GOALS	RISK LEVEL
BE01 - Energy Use	Moderate
BE02 - Water Use	Low
BE03 - Natural Resources	High
BE04 - Procurement	Moderate
BE05 - Non-GHG Emissions	High
BE06 - GHG Emissions	High
BE07 - Operational Waste	High
BE08 - Physical Presence	High
BE09 - Community Engagment	High
BE10 - Employee Health	High
BE11 - Living Wage	Low
BE12 - Employment Terms	Moderate
BE13 - Employee Discrimination	Moderate
BE14 - Employee Engagment	High
BE15 - Product Communiations	Low
BE16 - Customer Engagment	High
BE17 - Product Characteristics	High
BE18 - Product GHG Emissions	High
BE19 - Product Repurposing	Low
BE20 - Business Ethics	High
BE21 - Tax	Moderate
BE22 - Lobbying and Advocacy	High
BE23 - Financial Assets	Low

Diagram 8 – Level of risk associated to each Break-Even Goal

RISK LEVEL	NUMBER OF GOALS
Low	5
Moderate	5
High	13

Diagram 9 – Number of risks by level

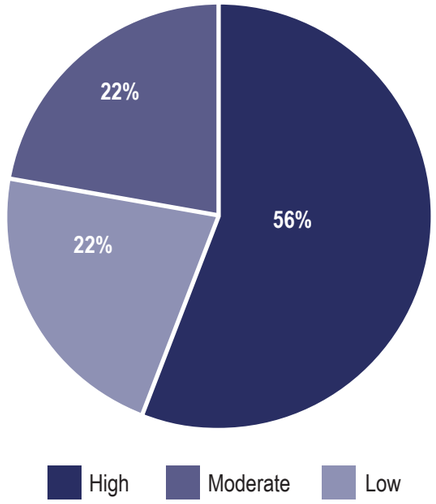

Diagram 10
Breakdown of potential risk and risk level.

The above information has been used to help identify priority actions in relation to the Break-Even Goals. Just because a goal has a high risk doesn't mean it's in danger of causing an immediate negative impact. The risk level is based on potential impact of doing nothing or the incorrect mitigation of the situation.

Example – the EMRC owns and operates a landfill facility. The site is managed within legislative requirements and operates to standards considered best practice when it comes to methane capture. However, if the EMRC decided to no longer cap their landfills or capture the methane buildup within the landfill, this would result in a high risk to BE06 – GHG Emissions.

6.2 POSITIVE ACTIVITIES REVIEW

Using the Positive Activities tool, individual staff interviews have been undertaken to assess what potential impacts of EMRC activities, considered positive, could have on the SDGs and if these match up with key priority areas within the Sustainability Strategy.

Diagram 11 shows several positive activities that the EMRC are currently delivering with linkages to the SDGs. These linkages have been generated through a series of questions to identify which SDG it is most likely contributing to. This is the initial phase of this assessment, and all claims of positive impacts will be backed up by solid evidence in the future. This evidence is beyond the scope of Diagram 11 and this current report but will be further validated once the EMRC progresses with the identified actions within Section 6.3 of this report.

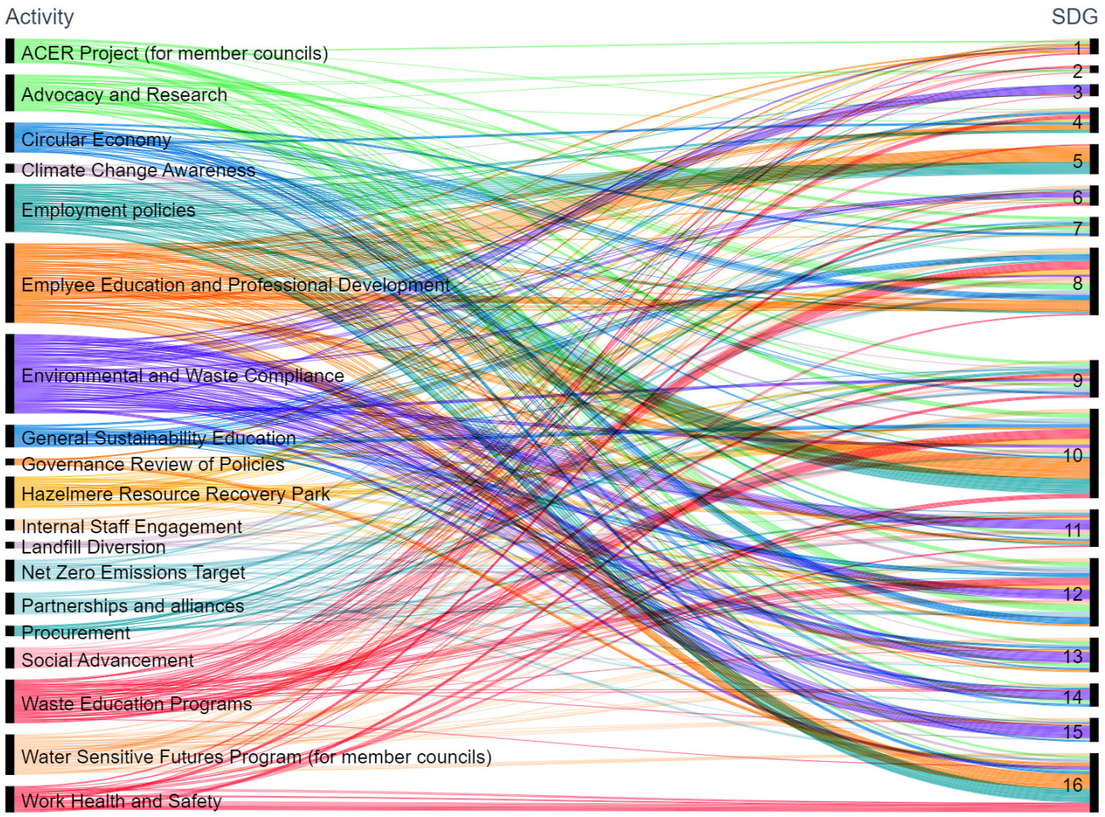

Diagram 11 – Positive Activities with linkages to the SDGs.

An interesting outcome from this review is how the EMRC is either directly or indirectly impacting all SDGs (note SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals is missing. The assessment assumes that if you are collaboratively working on and promoting the SDGs, then you are achieving SDG 17).

A surprising outcome was the indirect impact that is being had in relation to SDG 2 – No Hunger. Delving into this a little further, we began to understand that through projects such as Waste Education, our teams are talking to the community about food waste as well as growing your own fruit and vegetables at home. Through this activity, people can learn about growing their own food in healthy soils, generating less waste, and becoming less reliant on other means of food production. Although this one small action is not going to solve World Hunger, it is one small step in the right direction through education that is helping our community to think more about food and food waste and learn more about becoming sustainable and self-sufficient.

PROGRESS SCORE	
SDG 1 - No Poverty	53%
SDG 2 - Zero Hunger	53%
SDG 3 - Good Health and Wellbeing	61%
SDG 4 - Quality Education	33%
SDG 5 - Gender Equality	61%
SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation	66%
SDG 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy	55%
SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth	44%
SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrustructure	22%
SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities	44%
SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communties	52%
SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production	43%
SDG 13 - Climate Action	55%
SDG 14 - Life Below Water	37%
SDG 15 - Life on Land	50%
SDG 16 - Peace and Justice Strong Institutions	66%
SDG 17 - Partnership for the Goals	100%

Diagram 12 – Percentage breakdown of progress against each SDG.

6.3 ACTION PLANS

6.3.1 Internal Action Plan

This data has been broken down one step further using the Future-Fit Business Coach. This tool has allowed for more detailed analysis and interpretation of the data. Based on the assessment, the EMRC has been able to generate a percentage of progress against each of the SDGs based on a number of assumptions. This gives an indicative indications of the level of impact that is currently being assumed with each Break-Even Goal (Diagram 12). Based on this analysis, the EMRC is sitting at an average of 53% progress towards the SDGs goals.

Future steps will be for EMRC to collect actual data and justify the progress score with verified information. This action is yet to be undertaken.

AVERAGE
53%

Based on Stakeholder engagement at the time of the development of the Sustainability Strategy, the following SDGs have been identified as EMRCs priorities.

Priority SDGs:

SDG 09 – Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure (22% progress)

SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities (52% progress)

SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production (43% progress)

SDG 13 – Climate Action (55% progress)

SDG 17 – Partnership for the Goals (100% achievement)

Building upon priority SDGs, the linked Break-Even Goals have been reviewed and prioritised to generate an action plan **(Table 1)**. The priority assessment included the following considerations:

1. Risk Profile potential impact.
2. Number of times the Break-Even Goal repeats as a linkage to the priority SDGs.
3. Achievability of the Break-Even Goal.
4. Internal and external stakeholder intervention requirements.
5. EMRC's strengths and opportunities to be able to make meaningful change.

The EMRC has a strong skillset to deliver this level of service internally. Having an officer with Future-Fit Accreditation allows this work to be undertaken and monitored internally, rather than consulting through a third party.

The EMRC has an opportunity to be able to assist other local governments as well as strengthen its own business. The EMRC needs to lessen its dependence on landfill operations and focus on more effective and sustainable methods of creating a circular economy to operate within and this is part of the organisation's strategic direction.

BREAK-EVEN (BE) GOAL ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
High Priority – Long Term Actions – due 2029/2030		
BE04 – Procurement safeguards the pursuit for future-fitness	Procurement	Long Term – 5 years
BE21 – The right tax is paid in the right place at the right time	Finance	Long Term – 5 years
BE 23– Financial assets safeguard the pursuit for future-fitness	Finance	Long Term – 5 years
Medium Priority – Medium Term Actions – due 2027/2028		
BE05 – Operational emissions do not harm people or the environment	Sustainability	Medium Term – 3 years
BE07 – Operational waste is eliminated	Sustainability	Medium Term – 3 years
BE08 – Operations do not encroach on ecosystems or communities	Waste Management	Medium Term – 3 years
BE17 – Products do not harm people or the environment	Waste Management	Medium Term – 3 years
BE19 – Products can be repurposed	Waste Management	Medium Term – 3 years
BE15 – Product communications are honest, ethical, and promote responsible use	Waste Management and Marketing	Medium Term – 3 years
BE16 – Product concerns are actively solicited, impartially judged, and transparently addressed	Waste Management and Marketing	Medium Term – 3 years
BE18 – Products emit no greenhouse gases	Waste Management and Marketing	Medium Term – 3 years
LOW PRIORITY – SHORT TERM ACTIONS – DUE 2024/2025		
BE01 – Energy is from renewable sources	Sustainability	Short Term – 1 year
BE02 – Water is environmentally responsible and socially equitable	Sustainability	Short Term – 1 year
BE03 – Natural resources are managed to respect the welfare of ecosystems, people, and animals	Sustainability	Short Term – 1 year
BE06 – Operations emit no greenhouse gases	Sustainability	Short Term – 1 year
BE09 – Community health is safeguarded.	Waste Management	Short Term – 1 year

Table 1 – Internal Action Plan

6.3.2 External Action Plan

Using the Future-Fit Business Coach and further analysing and interpretating the data, the following results have been generated to provide a progress assumption against the SDGs for actions that are consisted as Positive Pursuits. These are actions the EMRC can assist within above and beyond its own internal operations (Diagram 13). Based on this analysis, the EMRC is averaging 39% towards assisting others meet their SDGs goals.

As above, future steps will be for EMRC to collect actual data and justify the progress score with verified information. This action is yet to be undertaken.

AVERAGE
39%

PROGRESS SCORE	
SDG 1 - No Poverty	33%
SDG 2 - Zero Hunger	36%
SDG 3 - Good Health and Wellbeing	25%
SDG 4 - Quality Education	33%
SDG 5 - Gender Equality	25%
SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation	36%
SDG 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy	33%
SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth	42%
SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrustructure	36%
SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities	29%
SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communties	33%
SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production	67%
SDG 13 - Climate Action	44%
SDG 14 - Life Below Water	42%
SDG 15 - Life on Land	33%
SDG 16 - Peace and Justice Strong Institutions	14%
SDG 17 - Partnership for the Goals	100%

Diagram 13 - Percentage breakdown of progress against each SDG.

During the strategic review undertaken in 2020/21, the EMRC's activities beyond operational was not a key focus. However, based on the review of the EMRC's Positive Pursuits, the following SDGs have come up as areas the EMRC is currently performing the highest in.

Leading areas:

SDG 08 – Decent Work and Economic Growth (42%)

SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production (67%)

SDG 13 – Climate Action (44%)

SDG 14 – Life Below Water (42%)

SDG 17 – Partnership for the Goals (100%)

The EMRC strengths include collaboration; skill building; sharing resources; and sharing knowledge. EMRC weaknesses included an inability to directly control others' actions and a lack of consistent/useful data for validation of the goals. Example SDG 13 – Climate Action (44%) and SDG 14 – Life Below Water (42%) are reflective of the Achieving Carbon Emissions Reduction (ACER) Program and Water Sensitive Futures Program which is aimed at helping member Councils reduce carbon emissions and water use. However, EMRC has not taken this opportunity itself (internally).

The EMRC has an opportunity to lead by example and take up the actions that they are working with member Councils to implement. Also given the strategic position of the EMRC, there is a strong opportunity to test and improve the process of new projects and frameworks, such as this one, as well as advocating for policy change and impacting social norms.

As the EMRC moves beyond BAU it will experience new successes and new challenges with some positive and negative learnings/lesson being experienced along the way. The EMRC intends to share these findings with the Future-Fit Asia Pacific Alliance to help everyone learn from their findings.

POSITIVE PURSUITS (PP) ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
PP01 - Others depend less on non-renewable energy	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing
PP03 - Others contribute less to water stress	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing
PP05 - Others depend less on inadequately managed natural resources	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing
PP06 - Others generate fewer greenhouse emissions	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing
PP08 - Others generate fewer harmful emissions	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing
PP10 - Others generate less waste	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing
PP12 - Others cause less ecosystem degradation	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing
PP17 - People's capabilities are strengthened	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing
PP21 - Infrastructure is strengthened in pursuit of future-fitness	Sustainability & Operations	Ongoing

Table 2 – External Action Plan

7.1 ACTION PROGRESS

Future-Fit Business Benchmark has a dedicated, comprehensive spreadsheet for each of the 24 Break-Even Goals that the EMRC will work on over the coming year to compile evidence, identify gaps and work towards continued improvement.

A Break-Even Goal will not be considered achieved until all evidence is collected for each individual goal and every possible success is achieved.

By breaking down the priority areas as discussed in Section 6.3 of this Report, the EMRC will be able to progress through the validation process in a more streamlined and achievable manner. Local Governments have limited finances, time and resources and it is believed that this step process will be more achievable for LGAs to move through.

7.2 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTING

At the end of each Financial Year, the EMRC will provide a Progress Report which will update the advancement of the actions plan outlined within this report as well as review EMRC's data in verifying impact progression.

7.3 CONTINUED REINDORSEMENT OF ACCREDITATION

The EMRC will continue to pay for the re-endorsement of its Sustainability Officer to retain their Advisor accreditation for the foreseeable future. This will allow the EMRC, as well as member Councils, to know that the quality of work delivered is of the highest possible standard and that the EMRC will remain committed to the emerging changes in system science and the methodology put forward.

The EMRC's Accredited Advisor is a member of the Future-Fit Asia Pacific Alliance which meets monthly to share learnings and experiences, as well as work collaboratively to improve the Future-Fit tools. This will ensure that the EMRC will be at the forefront, advocating for innovation in the local government sector.

7.4 MEMBER COUNCIL PARTICIPATION

Two of the EMRC's four member councils have committed to undertaking a benchmark review of the SDGs in 2024/2025. This will include undertaking the Risk Assessment and Positive Activities review.

LEARNINGS

Learning from others helps to improve processes as well as striving for continued progress. Engaging with others helps to share experiences, insight, and expertise and helps build skills, avoid mistakes, and avoid duplication of effort.

SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals emphasises the importance of global collaboration and partnerships in achieving sustainable development. It recognises that addressing complex challenges requires collaboration and working with stakeholders and sharing challenges and successes.

8.1 CHALLENGES

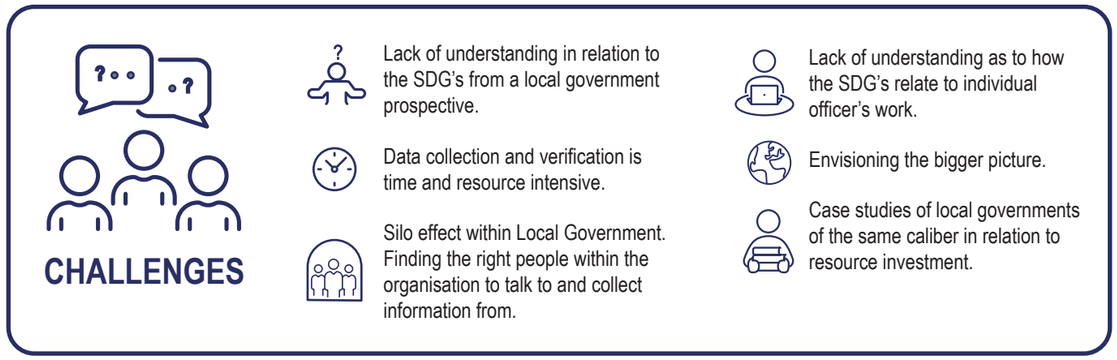

Diagram 14 – Challenges from implementing framework.

Learnings include:

- There are very few SDG reviews that have been undertaken at a local government level. Those that have been presented are for large capital cities which have the necessary finances, resources, and access to university research to undertake this type of work.
- The term 'sustainability' is still very environmentally focused as a word, both to internal and external stakeholders. A challenge has been trying to get people to refocus their attention that sustainability is more than just an environmental issue and that we all play a role personally and professionally.
- The EMRC is the first local government to use the Future-Fit Benchmark to review progress against the SDGs. As the first to embark on this review, using this methodology comes with a level of uncertainty.
- Data collection is always a massive challenge with any task that requires monitoring. One major challenge is locating the right people who have the data (if it exists) and the second is maintaining consistent information over time.
- Future-Fit Benchmark, as well as the SDGs are complex concepts for people to comprehend and this adds an additional layer of complexity to what is already considered a wicked problem.
- Local Governments tend to operate in silos within their own organisation. There is also the additional difficulty of breaking downs those barriers and getting different departments to

8.2 SUCCESS

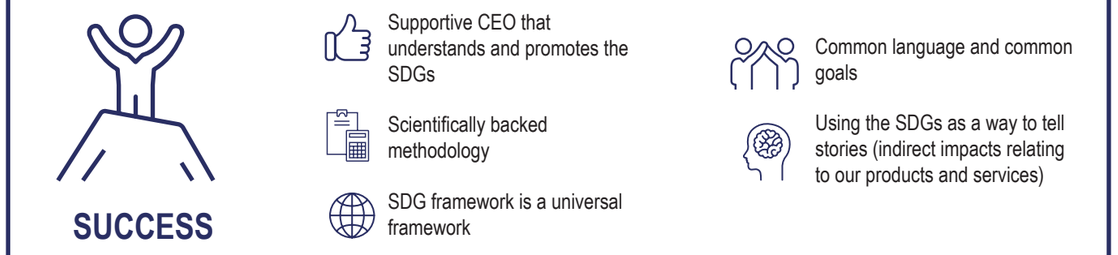

Diagram 15 – Successes from implementing framework.

Learnings include:

- The Future-Fit Business Benchmark is backed by scientific research.
- The Sustainable Development Goals are an international framework that allows for standardisation and consistency within sustainability reporting. It allows for global collaboration, resource sharing, marketing collateral and common terminology shared throughout all levels of organisations.
- The EMRC's CEO is a strong supporter of the Sustainable Development Goals. He promotes the SDGs both internally and externally with a wide array of stakeholders. This has led to both commitment for change internally but also allowed for the education of member Councils CEOs and Councillors as well as their upper management teams. As a result, the EMRC has a bottom-up as well as top-down approach in place.
- Work slowly and educate staff before seeking information from them. The EMRC has fully embraced the SDGs and have been using the language over the past 3 years so that all staff are aware of the SDG framework. The EMRC has SDG decals in all meeting rooms at its three sites as well as embedding the SDGs within reports. This has embedded, as a minimum, a basic level of understanding for EMRC staff.
- Collecting information for the analysis via one-on-one interviews with staff was a great success. This attributed to broader communication about the SDGs and what it meant to staff and their roles. By focusing on the Positive Activities that they and their staff undertake, gives meaning and real tangible examples for the SDGs. At the conclusion of the interviews, interviewees felt the experience was positive and informative and this will build further buy-in when the action plan is implemented.
- By undertaking the Future-Fit Benchmark, the EMRC has been able to gain a deeper understanding that making a positive impact in one area, doesn't mean it is truly sustainable as it could be negatively impacting another area. Therefore, this holistic approach has allowed the EMRC to further understand the full impact of its actions which will improve over time as knowledge improves.

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D2023/11289 – TEMPLATE – Future-Fit Progress Calculator – Main – Product Information

D2023/11290 – TEMPLATE – Future-Fit Progress Calculator – Governance

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D2023/11292 – TEMPLATE – Future-Fit Progress Calculator – Procurement

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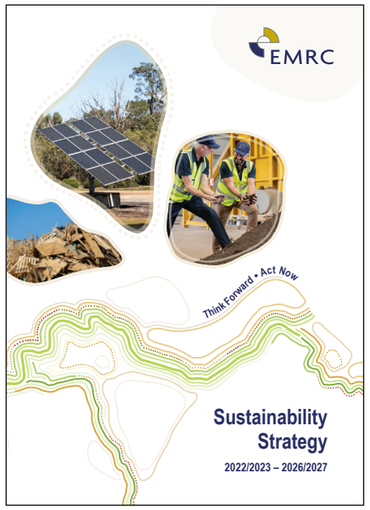
10 APPENDICES

10.1 APPENDIX 1 - EMRCS SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2022/2023 – 2026/2027



10.2 APPENDIX 2 – BREAK-EVEN GOALS AND LINKAGES TO THE SDGS

In a Future-Fit Society…	Break-Even Goals that every business must strive to reach	SDG alignment
Energy is renewable and available to all	Energy is from renewable sources	7, 13
Water is responsibly sourced and available to all	Water use is environmentally responsible and socially equitable	6, 12, 14, 15
Natural Resources are managed to safeguard communities, animals and ecosystems	Natural resources are managed to respect the welfare of ecosystems, people and animals	1, 2, 8, 12, 14, 15
The environment is free from **pollution**	Operational emissions do not harm people or the environment	3, 6, 11, 12, 14, 15
	Operations emit no greenhouse gases	13
	Products emit no greenhouse gases	13
	Products do not harm people or the environment	3, 6, 11, 12, 14
Waste does not exist	Operational waste is eliminated	11, 12, 14
	Products can be repurposed	11, 12, 14
Our **physical presence** protects the health of ecosystems and communities	Operations do not encroach on ecosystems or communities	1, 6, 11, 13, 14, 15
People have the capacity and opportunity to lead fulfilling lives	Community health is safeguarded	11, 16
	Employee health is safeguarded	2, 3, 5, 6, 8
	Employees are paid at least a living wage	1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11
	Employees are subject to fair employment terms	5, 8
	Employees are not subject to discrimination	5, 10
	Employee concerns are actively solicited, impartially judged and transparently addressed	5, 10, 16
	Product communications are honest, ethical, and promote responsible use	12
	Product concerns are actively solicited, impartially judged and transparently addressed	12, 16
Social norms, global governance and economic growth **drive** the pursuit of future-fitness	Procurement safeguards the pursuit of future-fitness	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
	Financial assets safeguard the pursuit of future-fitness	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
	Lobbying and advocacy safeguard the pursuit of future-fitness	16
	The right tax is paid in the right place at the right time	9, 10
	Business is conducted ethically	16

https://benchmark.futurefitbusiness.org/mg-be.html

10.3 APPENDIX 3 – POSITIVE PURSUITS AND LINKAGES TO THE SDGS

In a Future-Fit Society…	Positive Pursuits that any business *may* undertake	SDG alignment
Energy is renewable and available to all	Others depend less on non-renewable energy	7
	More people have access to energy	7, 9
Water is responsibly sourced and available to all	Others contribute less to water stress	6, 8, 9, 12
	More people have access to clean water	6, 9
Natural Resources are managed to safeguard communities, animals and ecosystems	Others depend less on inadequately-managed natural resources	2, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15
The environment is free from **pollution**	Others generate fewer greenhouse gas emissions	13
	Greenhouse gases are removed from the atmosphere	13
	Others generate fewer harmful emissions	3, 6, 11, 12, 14, 15
	Harmful emissions are removed from the environment	3, 6, 11, 14, 15
Waste does not exist	Others generate less waste	8, 11, 12, 14
	Waste is reclaimed and repurposed	8, 11, 14
Our **physical presence** protects the health of ecosystems and communities	Others cause less ecosystem degradation	2, 6, 11, 13, 14, 15
	Ecosystems are restored	2, 6, 11, 13, 14, 15
	Others cause less damage to areas of high social or cultural value	2, 11, 15
	Areas of high social or cultural value are restored	11, 15
People have the capacity and opportunity to lead fulfilling lives	More people are healthy and safe from harm	3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 16
	People's capabilities are strengthened	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
	More people have access to economic opportunity	1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 14, 15
	Individual freedoms are upheld for more people	3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16
	Social cohesion is strengthened	9, 10, 11, 16
Social norms, global governance and economic growth **drive** the pursuit of future-fitness	Infrastructure is strengthened in pursuit of future-fitness	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
	Governance is strengthened in pursuit of future-fitness	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
	Market mechanisms are strengthened in pursuit of future-fitness	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
	Social norms increasingly support the pursuit of future-fitness	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17

https://benchmark.futurefitbusiness.org/mg-pp.html

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