

Article Information

Author: Kathryn Walker

Service: Environmental Compliance, Planning & Environment

Sector: Energy & Resources

Climate risk mitigation and adaptation a key focus for the Environmental Sustainability Victoria: State of the Environment report 2018

The impacts of population growth on climate risks is a key take away from the report. Only 18 of the 169 measured indicators have been identified as improving and it remains to be seen how policy will respond to the recommendations.

We discuss the key points of the Environmental Sustainability Victoria: State of the Environment report 2018.

On 19 March, the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Victoria, Dr Gillian Sparkes tabled the Victorian State of the Environment (SOE) 2018 (**report**) in Victorian Parliament.

The report, produced under the *Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Act (Vic)* (**the Act**) contains 170 indicators with 13 themes. Trend summaries have been tracked for 169 of the indicators revealing only 18 as improving. 70 scientific indicators were used to assess the health of the Victorian Environment with the report, for the first time, aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

A key theme in the report is the pressure population growth (predicted to be 1.5% per annum over the next 10 years) and a changing climate (an increase in volatile weather and sea level rise) will put on the environment. These pressures include climate change impacts, air quality, biodiversity, land development, forests, fire, marine and coastal environments, water resources and quality, energy and transport.

To protect the environment from these pressures, 20 recommendations have been identified aimed at supporting improvement in the environment over the next 10 years. The recommendations are based on what the report refers to as “mega trends” which have been identified as having significant impact on Victoria’s future. These trends are:

- Physical impacts of climate change;
- Reducing our carbon footprint;
- “clued up” citizens;
- Disruptive technology; and
- Natural resource trends.

These “mega trends” informed the alignment of the recommendations with the key environmental themes in five strategic capability groups:

- Science impact - knowing what we need to know;
- Coordination and governance - improving the clarity in roles and responsibilities;
- Delivery - new policies;
- Data, monitoring and spacial information analysis - improving data capability om DELWP and portfolio agencies; and
- Citizen science and education - building community awareness.

The Act requires the Minister to provide a statement of response on behalf of the Government in response to what, if any, action is proposed to be taken on the recommendations within 12 months of them being tabled. Watch this space for updates!

A full report can be found [here](#).