

# Sustainability Action Plan 2019–2021



AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM





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The Australian Museum acknowledges and respects the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, who are the traditional owners of the land on which the Museum stands and pays respect to the custodianship of the land and waterways by the Gadigal people.

# Director and CEO's Message

Climate change is one of the key issues of our times and the protection and management of our natural heritage has never been more important. As a leading natural history and cultural institution, the Australian Museum (AM) has a responsibility to educate, inspire and act on environmental sustainability.

Changes to the world's climate are of particular concern and require coordinated international action. The Australian Museum Research Institute (AMRI) uses the AM's collections to better understand the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and how best to implement conservation strategies for those ecosystems and species impacted. The AM's collections of 21 million objects and specimens tell us a great deal about the changes to Australia's biodiversity over time.

The Paris Agreement of 2015 has set out a framework for a zero-emissions future and the Australian Museum will play an active role in our nation's transition. This will occur firstly, through sound sustainability practice and secondly, through our scientific research, collections management, education, programming and exhibitions to improve public awareness of climate change science and its cultural context.

I am pleased to present the Australian Museum's Sustainability Action Plan 2019–2021, a plan that will make a positive impact into the future.



**Kim McKay AO**

Director & CEO, Australian Museum



Director and CEO, Kim McKay opening  
Crystal Hall entrance in 2015



# Our Commitment

The Australian Museum's commitment to sustainability is demonstrated through four strategic priorities:

1. Reducing operational impacts on the environment
2. Future-proofing the infrastructure
3. Engaging our people
4. Educating visitors and stakeholders

Key actions from the Sustainability Action Plan include:

- Achieving 4 Star Green Star rating or higher rating for the performance of the Australian Museum buildings.
- The efficient use of energy, water and other resources.
- Implementation of an environmental management system to monitor, record and communicate AM environmental performance.
- Aiming for carbon neutrality by 2020.
- Communicating climate change science and advocating for behavioural change.

All targets in the Sustainability Action Plan are aimed at assisting AM Staff to optimise performance of buildings and operations.



Solar panels on the roof that help offset the energy use of Crystal Hall





Dr Jenny Newell, Manager of the East Pacific Collection  
with a Woven wall hanging from the Marshall Islands

## Past Achievements

Sustainability is central to the Museums purpose, as collections are stored and preserved for future generations. The Museum whilst being a heritage site has achieved significant milestones in implementing sustainable practices and solutions. Examples include:

- Crystal Hall the AM's new entrance opening in 2015 receiving acclaim for its environmental design. The innovative, elegant building with double glazed façade allows sunlight in but reflects infrared heat. It has a temperature controlled floor and a 12.5KW solar system on the roof. In 2016 Crystal Hall received the NSW Architecture Award for Best Public Architecture and was recognised in the Association of Consulting Structural Engineers (ACSE) annual awards.
- The AM's Climate Change Strategy run by Dr Jenny Newell, is activating museums to bring powerful insights to broad audiences, locally and internationally. The AM recently launched Oceania Rising: a series of talks, exhibitions and workshops that demonstrated and debated the effect of climate change across the Pacific.
- In 2018 the AM secured a loan from the Government to upgrade over 2000 fluorescent lights to energy efficient LED's as part of the AM's ongoing energy reduction commitments.
- The AM's FrogID is a national citizen science initiative. Over 60,000 citizen scientists have begun recording frog calls using smartphone technology. This data is helping the Australian Museum to learn more about Australia's frogs which are amongst the most endangered animals on the planet.
- The AM has eight recycling waste streams including: fluorescent lights, print cartridges, batteries, mobiles, soft plastic, organics, cardboard and paper, plastic/glass and aluminium as well as general waste.
- The AM has achieved a 23% reduction in electricity consumption following the implementation of a chiller upgrade.



The Australian Museums new chiller and power pack installed as part of an energy upgrade in 2012–2013

## Legislative and Policy Framework

The NSW Government endorses the United Nations Paris Agreement on climate change ratified by the Federal Government and has committed to take action.

The AM recognises the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The AM's Sustainability Action Plan will contribute to ten of the seventeen goals.

As a NSW Government agency, the Australian Museum is responsible for implementing and reporting on the Government Resource Efficiency Policy (GREP).

The GREP aims to reduce the operating costs of NSW Government agencies and ensure that they provide leadership in resource productivity.

The GREP requires agencies to:

- incorporate resource-efficiency considerations in all major decisions.
- focus on the challenge posed by rising costs for energy, water, clean air and waste management.
- seek to leverage their purchasing power when procuring resource-efficient technology and services.
- publish annual statements of performance against the policy.



# Environmental Strategy

## Outcome 1: Reducing Operational Impacts

The Australian Museum is committed to working towards carbon neutrality by 2020.

The AM will achieve this by focusing our efforts to:

- Reduce energy, emissions, waste and water.
- Embed sustainable procurement in purchase behaviours.
- Encourage and use sustainable transport options.

	Action	Target	Responsibility	Timeframe
Energy and emissions				
1.1	Develop and implement a carbon neutral strategy.	Strategy identifies the most cost efficient method to reduce and/or offset greenhouse gas emissions.	Projects Coordinator	March 2019
1.2	Attain carbon neutral certification against the National Carbon Offset Standard.	Certification achieved.	Projects Coordinator	December 2020
1.3	Prepare business case for energy metering and monitoring. Enable data collection to better manage energy consumption.	Business case presented for metering of buildings unaffected by the Master Plan and energy efficiency opportunities identified.	Projects Coordinator	March 2019
1.4	Assess what energy efficiency projects are feasible relevant to lighting, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, refrigeration.	Complete analysis and financial proposal for consideration for future investment.	Manager, Facilities	Dec 2019
1.5	Develop a collections energy management plan.	Plan implemented with recommendations and targets.	Manager, Materials Conservation and Manager, Facilities	March 2019
1.6	Increase on-site renewable energy production. Secure funding/loan.	Reduce non-renewable electricity consumption.	Manager, Facilities	June 2020



The Australian Museums Science Festival Team using one of the soft plastic recycling bins



	Action	Target	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.7	Undertake cost analysis for purchase of 100% renewable energy.	Cost analysis completed.	Projects Coordinator	June 2019
Waste				
1.8	Undertake a waste audit to inform actions to increase diversion rate.	Reduction of waste to landfill and specific targets in place.	Projects Coordinator	June 2019
1.9	Implement Operational Waste Management Plan and Waste from Refurbishment Management Plan.	Plan is implemented successfully.	Manager, Facilities and	March 2019
			Manager, Exhibition	March 2019
Water				
1.10	Prepare business case for water metering and monitoring. Enable data collection to better manage water consumption.	Business case presented for quality data to be collected and water efficiency opportunities identified.	Manager, Facilities	June 2019
Procurement				
1.11	Develop a sustainable procurement framework to guide purchasing decisions across the AM.	Framework in place and embedded.	Manager, Finance	Ongoing
1.12	Ensure all new and renewed tenders and contracts include environmental sustainability requirements and deliverables.	Sustainability has a weighting of 10% in all procurement decisions.	Chief Financial Officer	March 2019
Transport				
1.13	Explore what is the most economic options for reducing the carbon footprint associated with the AM’s use of transportation.	Develop investment proposal for consideration.	Manager, Finance	June 2021
1.14	Promote and encourage the use of public transport to AM sites as per the Green Travel Plan.	Reduced the number of staff working at the AM travelling by private vehicle and encourage visitors to the AM to use public transport.	Projects Coordinator	March 2019



The Production team installing an exhibition. They go to great lengths to reuse exhibitions cases, plinths and recycle all other materials



Young visitors in the Westpac Long Gallery

## Outcome 2: Future-proofing buildings

The Australian Museum is committed to achieving 4 Star Green Star rating or higher rating as measured by the Green Building Council of Australia for the performance of the Australian Museum site.

The AM will achieve this by focusing its efforts on:

- Buildings and Masterplan.
- Environmental Management System.

	Action	Target	Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>Buildings and masterplan</b>				
2.1	Conduct a recognised occupant satisfaction survey and prepare a plan of improvement.	Survey undertaken which identifies areas of improvement for indoor air quality, thermal and acoustic comfort, lighting and cleanliness.	Projects Coordinator	March 2019
2.2	The current AM building achieves 4 Star Green Star Performance rating by 2020.	Minimum 4 Star Green Star performance achieved	Projects Coordinator	December 2020
2.3	All current and future building works will incorporate sustainability principles to minimise building, maintenance, environmental and social impacts.	Sustainability principles will be imbedded into all building works.	Manager, Facilities and Master Plan Team	Ongoing
<b>Environmental management system</b>				
2.4	Design and implement an Environmental Management System (EMS).	Environmental Management System (EMS) in line with ISO 14001 is fully implemented and enables AM to identify, manage and report environmental risks and performance	Projects Coordinator	March 2019
2.5	Imbed sustainability into policies/procedures and plans.	Sustainability is imbedded into relevant Green Star Plans	Projects Coordinator	Ongoing





The Production Team installing the Mud Men masks from Papua New Guinea

## Outcome 3: Engaging our people

The AM is committed to inspiring, engaging and involving our people, contractors and suppliers in our sustainability goals. The AM will do this by:

- Building awareness and action.
- Developing skills and training.
- Embedding sustainability into HR systems and processes.

	Action	Target	Responsibility	Timeframe
Awareness and action				
3.1	Develop a culture of reduce, reuse, recycle across all areas of the AM.	Waste engagement program is ongoing and waste reduction results published.	Projects Coordinator	Ongoing
3.2	Create an annual staff survey to measure awareness, attitudes and behaviours towards sustainability.	Survey results collated and shared with Managers and staff as a benchmark for increasing engagement and informing communications plans.	Projects Coordinator	Annually
3.3	Develop and implement a communications plan to inspire and engage AM employees and the public.	A sustainability dashboard and regular communications are distributed twice yearly.	Manager, Marketing and Membership and Manager, Communications	March 2019
3.4	Establish a Green Champions voluntary group to drive environmental initiatives that encourage staff to take action to reduce their impact at work.	At least two staff engagement initiatives each year.	Projects Coordinator	Ongoing
Skills and training				
3.5	All AM staff are provided with sustainability training.	85% completion.	Projects Coordinator	Ongoing
3.6	Contractors on site for three or more days per week to complete AM Green Star awareness training.	100% completion.	Projects Coordinator	June 2019
HR systems and processes				
3.7	All new staff complete sustainability training as part of induction.	100% completion.	Manager, People and Culture	Ongoing
3.8	Incorporate sustainability KPIs into relevant Personal Development Plans.	KPI's embedded and reporting system established.	Manager, People and Culture	Bi-annually
3.9	Link sustainability into the existing rewards and recognition programme.	Sustainability recognition award allocated.	Manager, People and Culture	March 2019

## Outcome 4: Educating stakeholders

The AM is committed to being part of the global conversation on climate change and its consequences.

We will do this by:

- Telling the AM's sustainability story.
- Advocate awareness of the impact of climate change on people, and the natural world among visitors and stakeholders, particularly across Australia and the Pacific region.

	Action	Target	Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>Telling the AM's sustainability story</b>				
4.1	Develop an external communications strategy to celebrate and share AM's achievements.	Strategy developed and implemented.	Manager, Marketing and Membership and Manager, Communications	June 2019
4.2	Create opportunities within the AM to demonstrate efforts to reduce energy, waste, water and impact on the environment.	1 case study per annum showcasing sustainability actions and achievements.	Manager, Marketing and Membership and Manager, Communications	June 2019
4.3	Actively seek recognition for AM's sustainability projects through relevant awards and communication plans	Enter submissions for sustainability awards annually	Projects Coordinator	Ongoing
4.4	AM's current sustainability messaging is updated online with website redevelopment	Website is updated	Manager, Digital	Ongoing
<b>Advocating about the impacts of climate change on people and the natural world with visitors and stakeholders</b>				
4.3	Create a climate change display/AV experience in a permanent gallery to drive awareness of climate change.	Climate change display is installed as part of the permanent exhibition space.	Projects Coordinator	June 2019
4.4	Establish the AM as part of the community conversation on climate change and its impact on people and the environment.	Participate in climate change events annually.	Executive Leadership Team	Ongoing
4.5	Design and implement the AM's Climate Change Strategy	AM's Climate Change Strategy is developed.	Executive Leadership Team	December 2018



Kim McKay, CEO and Director launching Oceania Rising, a program of events focusing on climate change in our region



# Monitoring and Review

The Sustainability Action Plan Steering Committee will meet every two months and help drive the implementation of the plan. The Steering Committee is responsible for reporting on progress of the Action Plan.

The Sustainability Action Plan will be made available on the AM website and included in staff orientation packages. Procedures and updates will be given to staff via the AM intranet and at regular staff meetings.

## Implementation and Measurement of Progress

All AM staff are responsible for championing sustainability in their department and across the Museum. The Steering Committee and managers are responsible for ensuring that actions relevant to their area are budgeted for and implemented. Key targets will be included in staff personal development plans where applicable. The implementation of these actions will be reported to the AM's Executive Leadership Team.

The Sustainability Action Plan will be reported to the AM Trust bi-annually. An annual update of the Sustainability Action Plan will be also included in the AM's annual report.

The AM reports against the NSW Government GREP (Government Resource Efficiency Policy) yearly.

## Review

The inaugural Sustainability Action Plan (2019–2021) will be completed by December 2021. The Sustainability Action Plan will be reviewed in 2021 to enable a new plan for the following three-year period, 2022–2024.



The AM's Green Team next to the Native Beehive in the under-croft garden







Sheldon Tear from the conservation team reassembling 'Eric' the opalised pliosaur one of the Museum's most treasured and popular fossils





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**Cover image** Crystal Hall the Australian Museum's new entrance opened in 2015

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