

1.0 Introduction.

This State of the Environment Report is prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993 & Local Government (General) Regulation 1993*, which requires Council to report as to the state of the environment in the area, and in particular in relation to the following environmental sectors:

- **LAND**
- **AIR**
- **WATER**
- **BIODIVERSITY**
- **WASTE**
- **NOISE**
- **ABORIGINAL HERITAGE**
- **NON ABORIGINAL HERITAGE**

State of the Environment reporting is a key mechanism for assessing progress towards Ecological Sustainable Development.

State of the Environment Reporting incorporates not only information collated at a Local Government level, but also by other tiers of Government. The information gathered is designed to provide data to assist the public, three tiers of Government and others in the public sector in their decision-making processes.

The State of the Environment Report is a dynamic document and will change and evolve as environmental issues, large or small, are resolved and other issues arise. As Council is acting for the community the general public have a role to play in identifying issues that affect the environment. The public will also be involved in the formulation of policies and plans that will play a role in rectifying or preventing damage to the environment now and in the future.

Much of the information contained in this report has been provided by or obtained from other sources. Council can accept no responsibility for the accuracy of such information.

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.

The aims and objectives of the Inverell Shire Council's State of the Environment Reporting include: -

- (a) To provide comprehensive information on the current state of the environment within the shire. This reporting year covers the period 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007.
- (b) To provide information to help government departments and the community to gain a comprehensive picture of the local environment and to assist in decision making, education and identifying future needs.
- (c) To ensure that the environment is protected and enhanced, facilitating a healthy and safe lifestyle for all, and to promote biodiversity. This aim however must be achieved while ensuring an equitable balance between the environment and social and economic development.
- (d) To provide the necessary foundation for strategic environmental planning, and the development of environmental rehabilitation, restoration and protection initiatives.

While the above aims are long term, the short-term objectives of this and future reports are to identify environmental issues, to identify relevant information that can be retrieved easily and to identify gaps in the information that will require further research. This information can then link into Council's Management Plan and budgeting process

The information gaps should be filled over subsequent years so that over time an adequate reference and database can be compiled.

This report and subsequent reports will highlight progress towards goals set in previous State of the Environment Reports and set goals for the future where necessary.