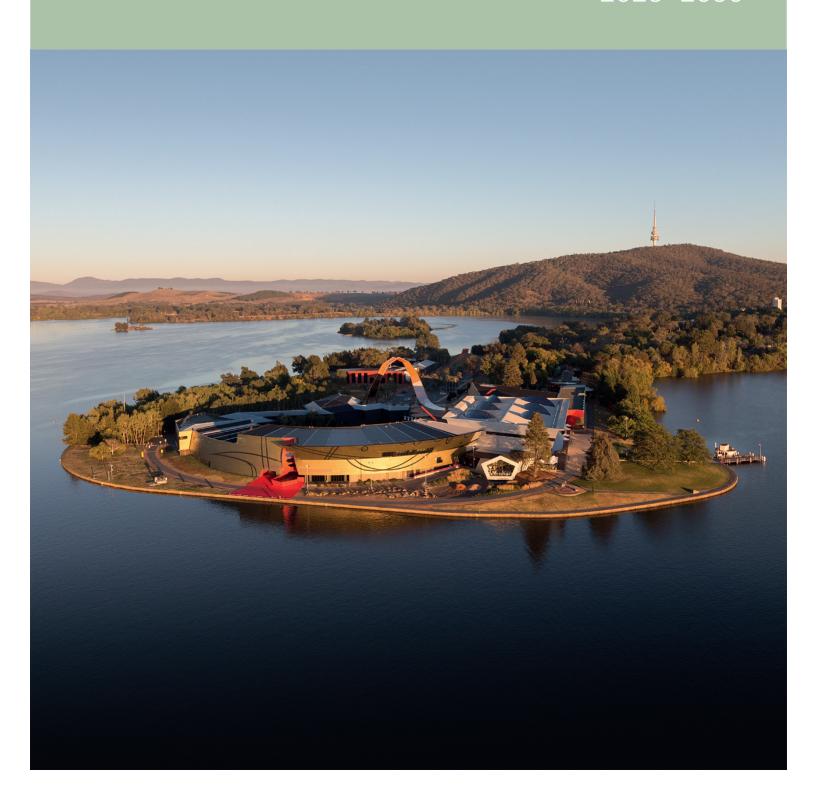


environmental sustainability **action plan** 2023–2030



It is special to teach others ... how we live now, and always have, in this Country.

This Country is us. We need to share it, and talk about it, and protect it ... keep it strong.

Martumili women artists, 2013, Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters (National Museum of Australia, 2017)

(from left) Ngamaru Bidu, Kumpaya Girgirba and Ngalangka Nola Taylor in front of *Yarrkalpa (Hunting Ground)*, 2013 Photo: Gabrielle Sullivan, Martumili Artists © the artists/Copyright Agency, 2023



contents

a message nom me chair	4			
a message from the director	5			
our vision	7			
our commitment	9			
legislative and policy context	11			
approach and principles	13			
streams and the UN SDGs	14			
environmental sustainability actions				
stream 1 — audience and community				
stream 2 – staff engagement				
Stream 2 — Stan engagement	10			
stream 3 — energy and materials	19			
stream 4 — partnerships and governance	21			
reporting and monitoring	23			
further information	23			

We are grateful for the opportunity to share and celebrate the stories of First Nations peoples at the Museum's site on Acton Peninsula, on the lands of the Ngunnawal, Ngunawal and Ngambri peoples, the Traditional Owners of the Canberra region.

a message from the chair

On behalf of the Council of the National Museum of Australia, I am pleased to acknowledge the Museum's achievement in the launch of its inaugural Environmental Sustainability Action Plan.

The Council is committed to the Museum's environmental sustainability journey and was delighted by the recent reaching of a major milestone in that journey, the opening of the Great Southern Land gallery and the Tim and Gina Fairfax Discovery Centre by the Honourable Tony Burke, Minister for the Arts.

I was honoured to officiate at the opening and to join with the Minister, the Museum Director, members of the Museum's Council and Indigenous Reference Group, as well as with staff and members of the public, to open these galleries which represent the continuing evolution of the stories of Australia's engagement with environmental sustainability.

The Museum is a place to celebrate Australia's unique environment, land and cultures. It is also a place for the intertwining of the extraordinary story of Australia's First Peoples, who have cared for this country for thousands of generations, with broader stories of today and stories that will be told in generations to come.

The Museum plays a vital role in helping us imagine what Australia might be like in the future and encourages us all to ask big questions about the environmental sustainability challenges we face. With the launch of this Plan, the Museum has charted a roadmap to address these challenges as they relate to its own endeavours and those of its audiences. The Museum is looking to meet these challenges in ways that will continue to enrich the lives of Australians by building their knowledge and capacity to take action in response to climate change.

I commend the Director and all Museum staff for the delivery of the Plan and undertake, on behalf of the Council, to encourage the continued development of the Plan to ensure it achieves its goals.

Baguire.

Mr Ben Maguire

Chair of Council February 2023

Council of the National Museum of Australia (from left) Tony Nutt, Sandra Chipchase, Peter Walker, Tracey Whiting, Clare Wright, Bernard Salt, Natasha Bowness, Ben Maguire (Chair), Fiona Jose, Sarah Davies (Deputy Chair), Mathew Trinca (Director). Absent is Mike Haywood.



a message from the director

Since opening to the public in 2001, the National Museum of Australia has been on a journey towards environmental sustainability across its many endeavours. Through its role as Australia's premier national repository of objects and stories that encompass the Australian experience, the Museum is in the unique position of being able to record and reflect the escalating cycles of fire, flood and drought, the changing relationships between people and their lands, and Australians' increasing respect for long-held traditions of caring for Country.

Alongside the Australian Government's Powering Australia plan and the recently enacted Climate Change Bill, the Museum is taking the next step in its journey, with the launch of its inaugural Environmental Sustainability Action Plan. The Plan recognises the imperative that is incumbent upon us all to take immediate and decisive action in response to climate change.

The Museum takes great pride in setting out its vision of building audience capacity to sustain Australia's rich natural environment and cultural heritage. Through this Plan, the Museum commits to achieving its goals of carbon-neutral certification, reducing its impact on the environment, and engaging audiences with knowledge to promote a sustainable future.

The Plan enhances the Museum's offering to all Australians to connect to Country, to invite Country into your family and to care of its lands, its waters, its skies and its peoples — to know its stories, so that we can say we truly belong here.

The Museum looks forward to deepening its connections with audiences and other institutions to work with them – and with its many partners and communities nationally and internationally – on progressing towards the targets that have been established by the United Nation's Sustainability Development Goals.

I applaud all Museum staff in the development of this Plan and for committing to undertake the action that will see the Museum join with audiences on the journey towards environmental sustainability.



Dr Mathew Trinca AM
Director, National Museum of Australia
February 2023

Senior traditional owner and lawman Bernard Newberry talks about the significance of the Kungkarrangkal site on Ngaanyatjarra lands with curators Christiane Keller (out of picture) and Sita McAlpine for the Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters project, 2016



our vision

Create actions that care for Country and build hope and capacity to sustain life and cultures.

We live in a time of major human-driven challenges to our planet's natural and cultural systems. It has never been more important for the National Museum of Australia, as a highly trusted voice in the Australian community's national conversation, to look truthfully at the attitudes and actions that have brought us to this point and to mobilise our collections, relationships and activities to address these challenges.

The Museum's efforts to protect natural and cultural heritage will flow through two interrelated areas of action: first, to engage and collaborate with our audiences to create and sustain a viable and culturally rich future; and second, to apply our expertise to the Museum's own ecological footprint, including its building and services.

We will bring together the knowledges of Australia's First Nations peoples with other traditions of cherishing nature from cultures across the world to connect the energy of the Australian people to the urgent and vital work of regenerating Country. We will also harness the endeavours of staff across the Museum to embed sustainability into every part of what we do.



Wiradjuri man Adam Shipp of Yurbay Consultancies presents Tastes of the Bush to a young audience, 26 January 2022

A focus on monitoring and reducing our ecological footprint, taking responsible custodianship of the National Historical Collection



our commitment

Achieve carbon-neutral certification while caring for our nation's heritage and telling its stories in ways that benefit the environment and promote a sustainable future.

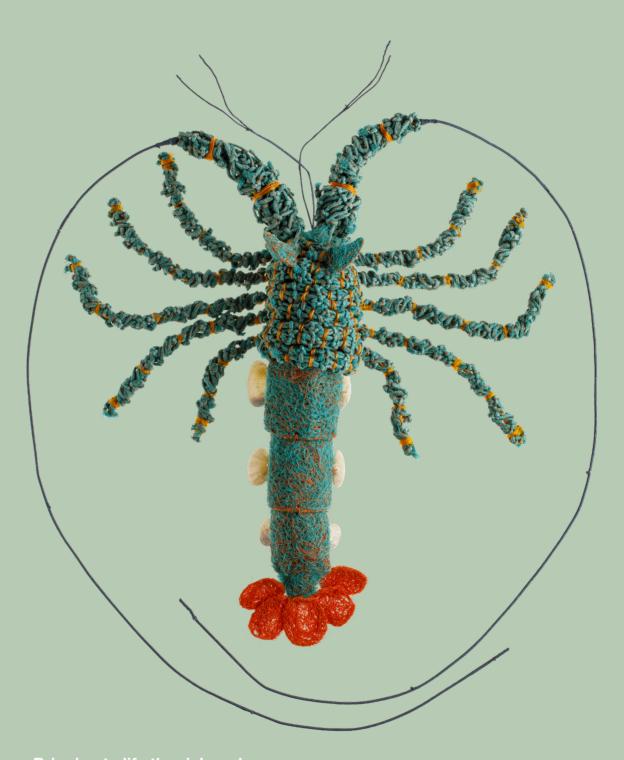
The National Museum of Australia will focus on monitoring and reducing our ecological footprint, taking responsible custodianship of the National Historical Collection, and delivering engaging, participatory activities that contribute to the sustainability and regeneration of Australia's cultural, social and biological communities.

Working in partnership with government, industry and other collecting and cultural institutions, and in dialogue with our audiences and the Australian people, the Museum commits to:

- continually develop its collections and programs in support of our cultural and natural heritage
- communicating with and empowering staff, partners and audiences to work towards a more sustainable future
- reducing the environmental impact of our operations and improving the efficiency of resource use and greater resource recovery
- achieving certified carbon-neutral status of its building and business practices by or before 2030.



Lucas Proudfoot performs in the Gandel Atrium at the Family Day event, 26 January 2022



Bringing to life the rich and diverse stories of Australia .. including our relationship to the natural environment and the connection to Country of the First Australians

legislative and policy context

Under the *National Museum of Australia Act 1980*, the Museum develops and maintains the National Historical Collection and brings to life the rich and diverse stories of Australia. Central to this function is the Museum's commitment to sharing the stories of Australia's peoples and places, including our relationship to the natural environment and the connection to Country of the First Australians.

The Museum is subject to the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act, and through it to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, which sets out the Australian Government's statutory reporting requirements on the Museum's environmental performance and how it accords with and contributes to ecologically sustainable development. The Museum meets these requirements through numerous environmental activities that occur throughout the institution, as described in the 'Taking care of our environment' section of its Annual Report.

The Museum is required to comply with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and to reference the National Waste Policy and the Sustainability Procurement Guide, which includes the requirement to consider environmental sustainability when purchasing goods and services. The Museum is also required to comply with the Powering Australia Plan's emissions reduction program, APS Net Zero, which requires Commonwealth entities to reduce their carbon emissions to net zero by 2030.

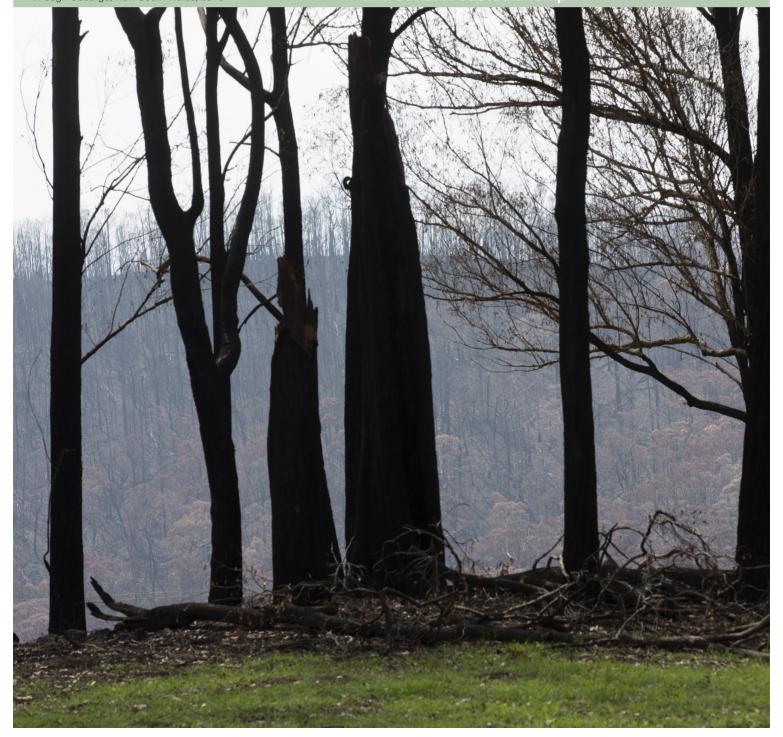
Under the Australian Capital Territory Government's *Environment Protection Act 1997* each person in the ACT is required to take all practicable and reasonable steps to prevent environmental harm and is legally obliged to report significant environmental harm caused by their actions. While the Museum is subject to Federal legislation, its location within the ACT allows it to benefit from the ACT Government's Waste Management Strategy and electricity derived from 100% renewable sources. The Museum may also benefit from its Environmental Management System documentation which was developed in accordance with the international standard for the achievement and certification of environmental performance, ISO 14001.

In order to draw together national and local legislative and policy requirements and align with the international commitments on climate change, such as the 2015 Paris Agreement, the Museum has adopted the United Nation's Sustainability Development Goals (UN SDGs) as its overarching environmental sustainability framework. The UN SDGs provide a roadmap for countries and organisations to adopt practices that will directly improve climate change and sustainability outcomes as well as leading to improved social equity and inclusion in respect of health, education and employment.

In the adoption of the UN SDGs, the Museum accords with other Australian and international cultural institutions and with the Council of Australasian Museum Directors and the International Council of Museums (ICOM), which established a working group in 2018 that adopted the UN SDGs and identified that the protection and promotion of cultural and natural diversity as a major focus for ICOM members in the 21st century.

Aftermath of the firestorm that swept through Cobargo, New South Wales, 2019

Business decisions made through the lens of environmental regeneration and cultural custodianship



approach and principles

Since opening to the public in 2001, the National Museum of Australia has shown leadership and championed the values of excellence, respect and integrity in achieving its purpose of collecting and sharing objects and stories of Australia's peoples and its natural environment. From the perspective of environmental sustainability and the promotion of First Nations cultures, the principles underlying the Museum's purpose and endeavours share the same ambitions of many of the United Nation's Sustainability Development Goals (UN SDGs) — particularly those that relate to education, community, equity, climate action and partnerships.







































Underpinning the approach to the Museum's Environmental Sustainability Action Plan are the following environmental sustainability principles that will guide the Museum to ensure adherence to best practice:

- public engagement initiatives that aim to enable economic and cultural benefits, particularly for First Nations communities
- business decisions made through the lens of environmental and social regeneration and cultural custodianship
- sector leadership undertaken through advocacy and establishment of a national network of cultural and collecting organisations contributing to sustainable development goals.

The Museum will do this by:

- maintaining an effective and continually improved data management system for ongoing monitoring, reporting and evaluation
- embedding sustainable purchasing and program practices, with a particular focus on emissions reduction, resource and waste circularity, minimising the release of pollutants, and using sustainable products, suppliers and practices
- taking into account the views of our communities and audiences, including appropriate community engagement aligned to our work
- continually reviewing and taking action on our environmental impacts and risks and implementing continuous improvements to our Plan.

streams and the UN SDGs

In developing the Plan, the Museum has developed an approach that has four streams of activity, which reflect key areas of the Museum's endeavours that impact on environmental sustainability. The Plan's streams are described below and the alignments of the streams and the UN SDGs are shown on the following page:

1. audience and community

Collecting, developing and delivering content that inspires and encourages audiences to join our sustainability ambition and take individual action.

2. staff engagement

Championing an inclusive approach to improving business practices, knowledge, skills and delivery of sustainability activities.

3. energy and materials

Improving levels of energy efficiency and the use of ethically sourced and renewable materials in our buildings, services, project outcomes and consumables.

4. governance and partnerships

Embedding environmental sustainability, implementing best practice and developing mutually beneficial partnerships.



(from left) Tjanpi field officer Annieka Skinner, curator Sita McAlpine and Tjanpi Desert Weavers artist Dorcas Bennett leading a workshop at the Museum, 2017

streams and the UN SDGs













































Developing stronger links with environmental artists, practitioners, academics and communities

environmental sustainability actions

The tables below list the streams, activities and actions that the National Museum of Australia is committed to commencing in Year 1 of the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan. Future years' actions will be developed during Year 1.

stream 1 — audience and community

Collecting, developing and delivering content that inspires and encourages audiences to support sustainability and take individual actions.

Objective	Activities	Actions
The Museum shall: Protect and safeguard Australia's natural and cultural heritage. Educate and inspire audiences to have the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development and to adapt to crises. Promote sustainable tourism, local culture and products.	1.1 Strengthen collections of objects and stories related to environmental sustainability and cultural capacity.	 1.1.1 Activations around the Great Southern Land gallery and the Tim and Gina Fairfax Discovery Centre. 1.1.2 Promote and collect objects and stories that engage visitors with caring for Country as part of ongoing collections, exhibition, digital and program development.
	1.2 Increase engagement with audiences and communities on environmental sustainability and cultural capacity.	 1.2.1 Review and amplify existing natural and cultural heritage related content in current exhibitions, visitor engagement, programs and events. 1.2.2 Grow the number of programs and events with content related to sustainability and the themes of the Great Southern Land gallery and the Tim and Gina Fairfax Discovery Centre. 1.2.3 Produce content that develops stronger links with environmental artists, activists and academics, whose work focuses on environmental sustainability and caring for Country, with a particular emphasis on improving community representation and involvement. 1.2.4 Develop guidance notes for staff and volunteers to encourage conversations with visitors in galleries and programs. 1.2.5 Prepare documentation and explore certification requirements for sustainable events. 1.2.6 Make visible the Museum's environmental sustainability journey, via online channels, information screens and signage, ticketing, bookings and correspondence.
	1.3 Improve cultural capacity by engaging with First Nations organisations to strengthen employment and caring for Country.	 1.3.1 Review and leverage the Museum's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan, including to increase the number of First Nations staff in public-facing roles and programs. 1.3.2 Continue to build strong relationships and engagement with First Nations communities and engage community representatives to develop programs. 1.3.3 Engage with cultural knowledge ideas and advice regarding sustainability and environmental management. 1.3.4 Develop a business case that partners with First Nations and other communities and heritage centres through education and conservation assistance, and by creating a position for a local traditional owner to deliver a program that offers stories, arts, foods, plants and tours.

stream 2 — staff engagement

Championing an inclusive approach to improving business practices, knowledge, skills and delivery of sustainability activities.

Objective	Activities	Actions
The Museum shall: Build institutional capacity to promote sustainable development and respond to climate change. Adopt sustainable practices. Ensure all staff are actively engaged with environmental sustainability.	2.1 Embed practices of sustainability in staff recruitment, training, performance and awards.	 2.1.1 Prepare and deliver change management program to staff. 2.1.2 Update recruitment, training, performance, workplace conversations and awards documentation. 2.1.3 Provide training on sustainability awareness. 2.1.4 Inform staff via monthly MyMuseum updates, Corporate Management Group and All-staff presentations.
	2.2 Establish a core staff group to advocate for and take action on sustainability initiatives and activities.	 2.2.1 Set up a 'Green Team' to resource sustainability activities. 2.2.2 Establish 'Green Days at the Museum' — a program of staff activities, including sustainability checks, improvement challenges, planting, bio-diversity enrichment and knowledge production.
	2.3 Improve levels of active and shared transport.	 2.3.1 Promote options for active travel, car-pooling and shuttle services — between Acton, Civic and Mitchell 2.3.2 Increased use of digital solutions in lieu of business travel for conferences, exhibition installs and between sites.
	2.4 Improve workplace arrangements.	2.4.1 Baseline and review options to increase staff participation with sustainability practices in their workplaces.



Ngurrara 1 1996, painted at Pirnini, northern Great Sandy Desert, Western Australia, by Juwaliny, Mangala, Manjilarra and Wangkajunga traditional owners, is prepared for display in the Gandel Atrium, 2009

stream 3 — energy and materials

Improving levels of energy efficiency and the use of ethically sourced and renewable materials in our buildings, services, projects and consumables.

Objective	Activities	Actions
The Museum shall: • Develop measures	Museum's earless	3.1.1 Confirm baseline, including emission boundaries and most representative year.
of progress on sustainable footprint.	footprint.	3.1.2 Define which activities will be measured within the scope of the Museum's carbon emissions footprint.
development. • Improve its use of		3.1.3 Undertake a staff survey on existing transport modes and consider visitor transport.
resources. • Reduce the		3.1.4 Confirm carbon accounting treatment of the ACT's 100% renewable electricity provision.
generation of waste.		3.1.5 Review suitable certification options for buildings, services, tourism and business operations, and apply for relevant certification(s).
6 MANAGEMENT PRODUCTION OF THE		3.1.6 Prepare a business case to audit and certify the baseline and to offset the Museum's carbon footprint.
	3.2 Improve data collection of	3.2.1 Install metering, sensors and controls, via business case if required.
	real-time measurement of energy and water consumption.	3.2.2 Verify annual consumption data.
16 not time and time	3.3 Reduce and offset energy consumption in buildings, equipment and vehicles.	3.3.1 Schedule computers and non-essential equipment to power-off when not in use, where possible.
		3.3.2 Review densities and environmental parameters in storage areas and comfort conditions in staff areas.
		3.3.3 Prepare for the transition of fleet vehicles to electric/hybrid, installation of EV charging stations and increasing the use of shipping and rail in lieu of air and road transport.
		3.3.4 Promote non-fossil-fuel methods of transport to major Museum events.
		 3.3.5 Prepare business cases for: photovoltaic system installation building equipment upgrades facade insulation installation building and gallery lighting upgrades low-volume water fixture upgrades non-potable water storage and use electric vehicle fleet and charging stations carbon offset programs.

The Museum shall: **3.4** Improve the **3.4.1** Commence review of the whole-of-life material efficient use of processes that currently apply to building, grounds, gallery, Develop measures materials and the exhibition and conservation activities. of progress on selection of sustainable **3.4.2** Establish KPIs to minimise use of harmful materials healthy materials. development. and improve the re-use and upcycling of end-of-use materials, including those generated by the cafe and shop. Improve its use of resources. **3.4.3** Review options to reduce impact of operations, i.e. scheduling exhibitions for longer, and donating Reduce the exhibition furniture, images, hardware and packaging generation of materials. waste. **3.4.4** Prepare business cases for more efficient operations: • purchase of long-life pallets and crating • creating 2D and 3D renders of galleries, through purchasing scanning and measuring technology for greater accuracy • increased use of re-useable or modular exhibition and mounting systems. 3.5 Reduce the 3.5.1 Undertake waste audit. impact and the 3.5.2 Establish anoxic pest treatment processes. use of 3.5.3 Re-use and leasing of crates consumables. **3.5.4** Review shop suppliers and cafe tender documents in relation to vegetable protein, local producers, upcycling, consumables and ethical suppliers and sourcing. **3.5.5** Provide paper recycling receptacles in the Gandel Atrium, in ticketed galleries and at events, and throughout the Museum's buildings and grounds. **3.5.6** Explore provision of re-useable crockery and cutlery for team meetings and morning teas. **3.5.7** Upgrade the collateral, including maps, brochures, products and packaging, that is provided for visitors, Friends, teachers and professional learning. 3.5.8 Prepare business cases for: • increased use of low-water and bio-safe detergent and equipment, including pre-wash equipment for cafe · elimination of single-use plastics · transition from physical to digital • improved materials upcycling, including separation and re-use or collection of organic material · batteries and e-waste · ferrous and other metals soft and hard plastics · cloth, including old uniforms · chemicals and oils · plastic/glass containers · on-site composting.

stream 4 — partnerships and governance

Implementing best practice for business processes and developing mutually beneficial partnerships.

Objective	Activities	Actions
The Museum shall: • Maintain accountability and transparency and ensure effectiveness. • Enhance policy coherence for sustainability. • Promote effective partnerships and resourcing strategies.	4.1 Develop partnerships to attract private funding and to progress environmental sustainability through advocacy within the cultural and collecting sector.	 4.1.1 Develop a funding strategy related to costs identified in business cases. 4.1.2 Identify and work with partners to fund abatement and offset activities and investment. 4.1.3 Work with stakeholders to assist with the Museum's investment in a sustainable future. 4.1.4 Lead and contribute to sector activities, including the establishment of a peak bodies national working group on environmental sustainability.
	4.2 Establish and maintain an appropriate oversight, delivery, reporting and continual improvement framework.	 4.2.1 Adopt and update this Plan. 4.2.2 Ensure Committee members are supported to be effective in the realisation of the Plan. 4.2.3 Update the Museum's current reporting and guidance material on environmental sustainability and align with mandatory reporting changes. 4.2.4 Develop specific KPIs, measurables and targets and reporting mechanisms. 4.2.5 Monitor and update activities and funding to ensure the Plan's targets are achieved. 4.2.6 Prepare a business case to fund the role of a Museum environmental sustainability officer and to enable staff to devote work time to Green Team activities.
	4.3 Embed environmental sustainability into teams' decision-making processes.	 4.3.1 Develop an ongoing improvement process for the Plan. 4.3.2 Update annual business plans and relevant procedures and policies to align with the Plan's activities and targets. 4.3.3 Update the Museum's procurement documentation to align with revised sustainable procurement guidance from the Department of Finance. 4.3.4 Update the Museum's project and business case documentation to include sustainability-related costs. 4.3.5 Add Environmental Sustainability as a quarterly update to the Corporate Management Group and Council.

Support a transparent and informative approach to reporting on sustainability outcomes and initiatives









reporting and monitoring

The National Museum of Australia has established an Environmental Sustainability Committee (Committee), which meets quarterly. The Committee is chaired by the Director, who is also the Museum's Sustainability Champion, and the activity of the Committee is overseen by the Museum's Executive Management Group and by the Council of the National Museum of Australia.

The Committee and the Museum's business units will prepare reports that measure progress against the objectives, activities and actions as noted in this Environmental Sustainability Action Plan, which will inform the Museum's corporate and annual reports. The Museum will also prepare reports to inform the carbon accounting and certification process and the mandatory reporting requirements of the Australian Government's APS Net Zero program.

The Museum will support a transparent and informative approach to reporting on sustainability outcomes and initiatives. In addition to posting the Museum's corporate and annual reports on the Museum website, reporting of the Museum's environmental sustainability journey will be publicly available on a dedicated page of the website, with links and articles on how the Museum's stakeholders can be involved in the journey.

The Plan will be updated at regular intervals to ensure the Museum's environmental sustainability journey continues to progress towards meeting the UN SDGs. The Plan will be further developed during Year 1 with the addition of specific KPIs, measurables or targets against each of the actions. Major reviews of and updates to the Plan will also be scheduled to occur in Year 3 and Year 5 as the Plan matures and as activities are progressed, or if the Museum needs to reset its objectives in response to changing circumstances.

further information

Queries in relation to this Plan should be directed to environment@nma.gov.au

The Australian Commonwealth Government's APS Net Zero program finance.gov.au/government/aps-net-zero-emissions-2030

The United Nation's Sustainability Development Goals sdgs.un.org/goals

This Version 01 of the Plan is dated 22 February 2023 and was prepared by the Museum's Environmental Sustainability Committee with input from Viridis Australasia.

national museum australia

