



# Eyre Peninsula Strategic Plan December 2018



Draft for Comment

DRAFT

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## ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used in this report:

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DEWNR	Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources
DIDO	Drive-in-drive-out
EPICCA	Eyre Peninsula Integrated Climate Change Agreement
EPLGA	Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association
EPNRM	Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management Board
FIFO	Fly-in-fly-out
GRP	Gross Regional Product
LGA	Local Government Association
LGASA	Local Government Association of South Australia
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NRM	Natural Resources Management
RDSA	Regional Development South Australia
RDAWEP	Regional Development Australia Whyalla and Eyre Peninsula
TAFE SA	Technical and Further Education South Australia

## FOREWARD

Eyre Peninsula is a vast and varied region and this diversity is reflected in its cities and towns. There will be no single future for Eyre Peninsula, which means that we will need to consider multiple plausible strategies to help prepare our home for the future.

This EPLGA publication, Eyre Peninsula Strategic Plan 2018, presents a set of priorities and strategies for living, working and investing in Eyre Peninsula. It is an important resource to help anticipate the economic and social trends likely to affect Eyre Peninsula over the coming years.

It demonstrates that social, economic and technological changes will continue to challenge the existing structures in our region. These changes will affect the way in which people live, work and invest in Eyre Peninsula. Change can also drive opportunity. In the future, people will be employed in enterprises yet to be imagined, generated by technology yet to be invented.

This publication is the outcome of work undertaken by the EPLGA, RDAWEP, government, academics and stakeholders. It is informed by data and robust analysis of the megatrends influencing regional Australia. The scenarios shape strategies that will help us to determine how best to connect Eyre Peninsula through investment in infrastructure, communications and trade relationships. They will also help us to consider the training and education needs for the jobs and industries of the future.

Local Government across Eyre Peninsula has been an enthusiastic collaborator in this work. I look forward to working with my colleagues across government and with other regional stakeholders to consider how we can best grow our regional economies to continue to make a solid contribution to Eyre Peninsula's wellbeing and deliver high quality jobs and strong communities.

LGA President



Mayor Sam Telfer  
[District Council of Tumby Bay](#)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association (EPLGA) is a lead agency in the Eyre Peninsula region. It has region-wide planning responsibilities.

The preparation of a new Regional Strategic Plan is critical to the advancement of the region. The Plan will enable the EPLGA and other regional organisations to advocate collectively with a single voice, and take a collaborative approach to achieve more effective long-term regional development outcomes.

The Plan proposes whole-of-region strategies to support the regional governance arrangement. The priorities and strategies are presented with summary rationale about their purpose and need, along with actions required to achieve the outcomes.

### Strategy Identification Process

The strategies were derived by identifying priority alignment at a workshop held on Thursday 28 November 2018 attended by EPLGA, RDAWEP and EPNRM representatives. The lead planning documents of the three organisations – i.e. the RDAWEP *Regional Plan 2014-18* and *Business Plan 2016-17*; EPNRM *Strategic Plan for the Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management Region 2017-2027*; and EPLGA *Corporate Plan 2016-19* have also been used to develop the plan. These plans were determined by extensive stakeholder engagement processes.

The Plan is structured in the following themes Community and Social Development, Economic Development, Governance and Operational Development, and Natural Resources Management.

### Strategic Plan Implementation

This *Draft Regional Strategic Plan* is prepared for consideration by the EPLGA in the first instance and then for the RDAWEP and EPNRM Boards and other key stakeholder parties.

Once the Plan is adopted by the three Boards an Implementation Plan will be developed – with action timeframes, budgets and resource requirements to implement the Plan. It is proposed that the three organisations will use a single format to report on the implementation progress. The reporting timeframes will comply with existing arrangements for each organisation.

The Plan will be reviewed every 5 years. This will synchronise with ABS Census timeframes and ensure that the latest demographic data are used to inform planning decisions.

The social, economic, environmental, technological and institutional trends that have played out in Australia, and internationally, in past decades and which affect the regions and their development can be grouped as five megatrends – major influences that have driven change in the past and are expected to shape change into the future.

### Five megatrends

#### Defeating Distance

Overcoming long distances has shaped development in the regions and continues to be a major influence on the way people live and work in regions, and on the performance of regional businesses. Improvements in physical transport and telecommunications infrastructure along with emerging digital technologies have converged to improve connectivity and to defeat the effects of distance.

### Global Exposure

Global markets will continue to shape economic activity in Australia's regions as communities and businesses become increasingly exposed economically, politically and culturally. In the Asia-Pacific region, the growing market for goods and services produced in regional Australia offers significant opportunities, and demands higher educational attainment and cultural engagement.

### Diverging Places

Larger towns and cities and high amenity areas continue to draw population growth and economic activity away from many smaller towns. Rising income inequality within and between places and declining trust in 'distant' decision-makers are challenging governance arrangements. New land owners and land managers are recognising a more diverse suite of environmental, cultural and lifestyle values in regional places.

### New Economies

The Australian economy, like other economies globally, is in transition. Two major aspects of the transition are the generation of value through knowledge, innovation, and new services; and the changing mix of energy demand and sources of energy generation. Together, these changes could energise new forms of regional development.

### Environment as Risk

Regional Australia's communities and businesses have long known the environment as a source of both livelihood and risk. However, the declining condition of natural assets, loss of biodiversity, global climate change, extreme events, and biosecurity risks are presenting new or expanded challenges for our regions.

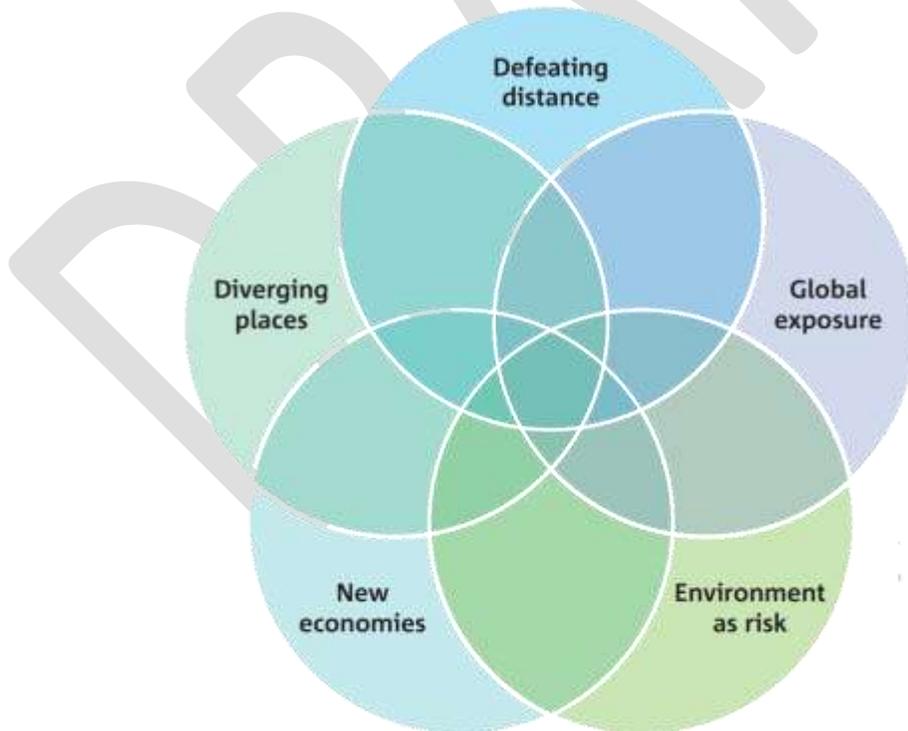


Figure 1 Megatrends

## Trend drivers

The key drivers of the five megatrends on which to build four scenarios that describe plausible futures for Eyre Peninsula are portrayed as a quadrant, with each axis of the quadrant representing the key drivers of change for Eyre Peninsula but where the outcomes are uncertain – in terms of how and where people will live and work, the competitiveness and sustainability of businesses, and how investment will occur. The scenarios are simple models of complex realities from which we can explore and understand inferences for living, working, and investing. In the final step of the strategic foresight process, we identify implications for decision-makers.

### **TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS AND CONNECTIVITY** (– The Vertical Axis).

The vertical axis relates to the extent of technological progress and connectivity in the regions, covering everything from the adoption of new technological platforms, materials, and automation through to transport systems and digital access and capability. Both ends of the axis describe a future where technological progress and connectivity has changed from today. However, at one end of the axis is a future where technological progress and improvements in connectivity have been vast, while at the opposite end is a future where change has been limited, with technology and connectivity being somewhat similar to today.

### **ECONOMIC DIVERSITY AND HUMAN CAPITAL** (– The Horizontal Axis).

The horizontal axis relates to the regions' human capital and the diversity of their economic engine. It includes population size and demographic profile, the labour market, levels of educational attainment and skills, the type and mix of regional industries, enterprise ownership, business models, and the character of supply chains. Human capital includes those attributes that contribute to earning a living and strengthening a community, as well as people's capacity to adapt to social and economic change.

## Four scenarios

With the two axes, there are four quadrants representing four scenarios:

1. Global niche
2. Fast and flexible
3. Natural advantage
4. Holding ground.

Each scenario describes what it would be like to live, work, and invest in Eyre Peninsula. The scenarios can also be read as futures that different types of regions in different parts of the country may experience.

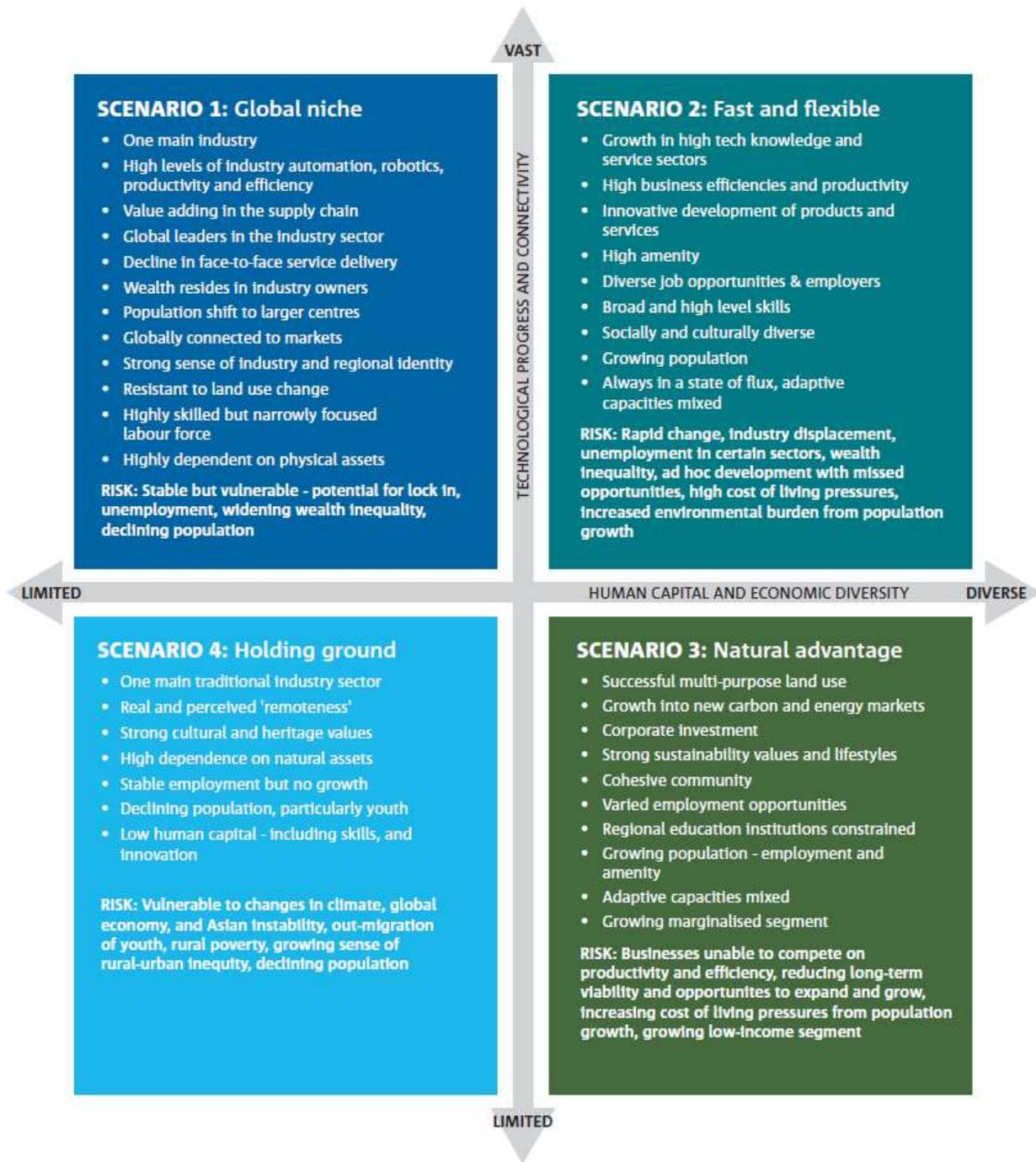


Figure 2 Four plausible future scenarios for Eyre Peninsula

### Key messages for decision-makers

Eight key messages inform policymakers and decision-makers about the possible futures facing Eyre Peninsula. These messages focus on enabling or securing future benefits and opportunities for regions, given the influence of the megatrends and the future realities explored in the four scenarios. The messages also focus on reducing the likelihood of risks to regional livelihoods and infrastructure and are intended to encourage further deliberation among the multiple stakeholders involved in determining the future of Australia's regions, including local communities, regional entities, higher levels of government, and international stakeholders.



Figure 3 The implications of Eyre Peninsula's possible futures for policy and decision-makers

## Regional Development Australia Whyalla and Eyre Peninsula

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is an Australian Government initiative that brings together all levels of government to enhance the development of Australia's regions. A national network of 52 committees made up of local leaders who work with all levels of government, business and community groups to support the development of their regions.

It is funded by the Australian Government and by state, and local governments in South Australia. It is administered by the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities. Regional Development Australia (RDA) committee members are local people developing local solutions to local issues. They build partnerships to develop strategies and deliver sustainable infrastructure and services to their regions.

They also work with each other to identify issues that cross regions. As the regional development voice of their communities, RDA committees:

- consult and engage with communities
- promote and participate in regional programs and initiatives
- provide information and advice on their region to all levels of government, and
- support informed regional planning.



Figure 4 RDAWEP – Areas for Partnerships

## 2. REGIONAL PRIORITIES & ACTIONS

### 2.1 Community and Social Development

**KEY TERMS:** Skills training, workforce development, employment creation, Aboriginal development, workforce attraction, migration, decentralisation of government services, liveability, amenity, community infrastructure, NDIS, tertiary education, telecommunications.

#### Employment and Skills

##### *Support labour force participation and workforce development.*

- Training programs are needed to provide human capital with the skills and capabilities required by industry for current operations and future growth.
- The employment in some industries is predominantly part-time, seasonal and short-term. There is consequently a need to provide under-employed people with cross-industry and transferable skills to increase their employment hours across multiple industries.
- The region has a relatively small population and an ageing workforce. Due to the pending retirement of 'baby boomers' and migration of young people to Adelaide for study and employment, the region does not have a sufficient population to provide the workforce needed for anticipated industry and economic growth. There is a pool of under employed and unemployed people within the region.
- Growth is limited by the difficulty in attracting a skilled workforce to the region.

##### *Actions*

- Maintain industry-based skills and employment networks to monitor and assess the skills needs of employers.
- Provide targeted training through skills and workforce development programs.
- Align the training provision with State Government employment creation priorities to enhance access to funding from government programs.
- Work with Skilling South Australia to help people get skills and qualifications to build careers and meet the workforce needs of industry.
- Pursue opportunities to attract and retain a skilled and underutilised workforce.
- Develop human capital from within region – fill gaps with migration strategy from within Australia and overseas.

#### Indigenous Development

##### *Implement proactive strategies to enhance Aboriginal well-being, labour force participation, and economic development.*

- In 2016, Aboriginal people comprised 5.6% of the regional population, which is notably above the proportions in South Australia (2.0%) and Australia (2.8%) The greatest concentration was in Ceduna, where Aboriginal people comprised 21.7% of the district population.
- The region's Aboriginal profile is consistent with studies about Aboriginal disadvantage which indicate that, compared with the non-Indigenous population, Aboriginal well-being is adversely affected by lower levels of educational attainment, lower labour force participation, higher levels of entrenched unemployment, and a disproportionately high percentage of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the labour force.
- Proactive strategies are required to reverse Aboriginal disadvantage, and improve the well-being of Aboriginal people.

##### *Actions*

- Support initiatives to improve Aboriginal community development, organisational development and governance.

- Provide opportunities to develop Aboriginal business enterprises, with a focus on tourism, cultural and land-related initiatives.
- Develop caring for country projects for Aboriginal people and communities.
- Support native title groups, traditional owners and Aboriginal communities to co-manage public land, manage natural resources, and record and manage sites of Aboriginal cultural significance.
- Support awareness raising activities about Aboriginal cultural knowledge and law.
- Improve digital connectivity.

## Social and Community Development

### *Develop social and community infrastructure and services.*

- Improve the functionality and quality of recreational and cultural infrastructure.
- Improved community infrastructure and services will enhance the liveability and amenity of townships and help to attract workforce.
- Resolve Internet and mobile connectivity blackspots in the region. The lack of digital communication in some areas is impeding community functioning and access to online government and other services – including emergency services – and is preventing the use of social media platforms by the community and tourists
- Improve the access to fast, efficient, reliable digital technology. The speed and simplicity of digital connectivity is changing how we communicate and do business. By investing in our digital capability, we can better capitalise on the opportunities emerging technologies present.
- Improve digital connectivity and digital competition.

### *Actions*

- Assist groups to prepare business cases and grant applications for capex funding from government infrastructure programs.
- Encourage the development of multi-purpose community facilities providing civic, recreation, information, tourism, arts and cultural heritage services.
- Initiate partnerships to improve the functionality and amenity of regional towns including street scaping, signage, foreshore development, walking trails and the upgrade of town entrances.
- Work with government and telecommunications providers to improve mobile and Internet connectivity across the region.
- Encourage and support the delivery of strategic community events and activities, particularly in areas with high levels of tourism attraction.

## Education

### *Pursue opportunities to grow innovation education facilities and expand course provision.*

- There is a trend to centralise education facilities and courses at the expense of the regions. The consequence is that more regional students now need to travel to Adelaide to study some courses and regional educational facilities are being underutilised. This is potentially detrimental to building regional capability because it is generally understood that regional students have much higher retention and pass rates when they do not need to travel to Adelaide for study.
- The provision of better education facilities and greater course diversity will enhance the region's tertiary education participation rates, which are low in comparison with the Adelaide population.
- Improved ability to undertake tertiary courses locally, or online, may also help stem the migration of young people from the region.
- Support an Education and Innovation Precinct in Whyalla aimed at providing tailor-made candidates for jobs of the future across Eyre Peninsula.

### **Actions**

- Liaise with Universities and training providers about options to expand education facilities and course provision in Whyalla.
- Collaborate with education and training providers in Whyalla to facilitate international student enrolment.
- Liaise with training providers about opportunities to provide employment-related, NRM and other training in smaller regional towns.
- Liaise with tertiary institutions about options to expand remote access to courses online.
- Collaborate to form integrated education pathways with an industry focus to align pathways from high school through vocational training and university.

## **Health Services**

### ***Maintain and grow equitable Community Health Services.***

- Issues impacting on the delivery of health, aged care, child care and disability services need to be addressed, especially for disadvantaged sectors of the community.
- This should include proactive initiatives to support community groups, facilitate increased community participation in decision making, and drive preventative health programs.
- The formation of Disability Workforce Hubs in partnership with the State Government and other RDAs should be pursued as part of the NDIS roll-out to create employment and investment opportunities.
- Work to maintain professional healthcare services – necessary for equitable access, maintaining and attracting population as well as sustainability of the region.
- Ageing population is putting pressure on the health system.

### **Actions**

- Develop a regional health and ageing strategy that plans for change.
- Deliver targeted projects to support health, aged care, child care and disability services.
- Support the implementation of Regional Public Health Plans to address emerging health issues, facilitate preventative health programs, and promote community connectivity and well-being.
- Support the implementation of the Australian, State and Local Government Healthy Communities Programs to promote the health and well-being of communities.
- Facilitate collaborative approaches for the development and delivery of health, aged care, child care and disability services.
- Explore new opportunities for health
- Attract health professionals and be commercially viable.

## 2.2 Economic Development

**KEY TERMS:** Resource development, transport and communication infrastructure development, market access, industry and product diversity, value-adding, business sustainability.

### Infrastructure

#### *Promote investment to develop strategic infrastructure and foster sustainable business.*

- The provision of improved and new transport and communications infrastructure is essential to ensure that business operations are globally competitive and sustainable.
- Substantial government and private sector investment is necessary to make supply chain infrastructure efficient and effective, provide access to new markets, and create new export opportunities.
- Improved communication infrastructure is essential to enable business to develop online markets and operate competitively in the digital economy.
- Attract and grow high value industry
- The quality of Eyre Peninsula's infrastructure is an indicator of the region's current and potential economic, social and environmental wellbeing and viability.

#### *Actions*

- Facilitate infrastructure investment with government agencies and private sector companies.
- Implement an Infrastructure Report Card every 3 years.
- Prepare a regional transport strategy to develop road, rail, port and airport infrastructure
- Facilitate the development of a multi-user Cape-class port facility.
- Facilitate the provision of container facilities in strategic locations.
- Connect the Eyre Peninsula to the national standard gauge rail network.
- Prepare a road infrastructure strategy to enhance road-train market access, and improve road safety for the community and tourists as part of an broader Eyre Peninsula Infrastructure Plan.
- Progress the upgrade airports to provide increased connection capability for passengers and exports.
- Work with telecommunications providers and government to improve mobile and Internet connectivity and enhance online business operations.

### Industry and Business Diversity

#### *Strengthen, foster and promote business diversity and productivity.*

- The regional economy is extremely diverse, with numerous industries contributing to employment, exports and GRP. Greater diversity should be pursued to enhance and promote the region's comparative advantages, provide resilience to global price impacts, and minimise the challenges of climate change.
- This should include activities to strengthen the viability of existing industries – such as agriculture and manufacturing – and the development of new enterprises to showcase distinctive regional attributes - such as niche grain products; Aboriginal businesses; land and sea nature-based tourism initiatives; premium seafood and wines; and quality mineral resources.
- Collaborate with Department Planning Transport and Infrastructure South Australia on Eyre Peninsula projects.

#### *Actions*

- Pursue solutions to improve business innovation, skills development and viability.
- Introduce new businesses and product diversity and reduce economic dependence on traditional key industries.
- Support business, community and environmental value-adding initiatives.

- Pursue niche market opportunities with business and industry sectors.
- Facilitate and promote shared procurement initiatives to reduce recurrent operational costs and enhance competitiveness.
- Strengthen whole-of-region branding to promote the region's diversity and unique characteristics.
- Attract and grow new high value industries

## Tourism

### *Facilitate sustainable development of the visitor economy.*

- The opportunity for the Eyre Peninsula is to capitalise on its pristine nature, immersive wildlife experiences and coastal lifestyle, to drive increased overnight stays from international and domestic visitors. A whole of tourism approach is needed across marketing, events, product development, council collaboration and investment.
- The tourism industry is substantially driven by the attraction of the coastline, sea and parks.
- The demand for nature-based experiences by tourists and local people provides opportunities for commercial development, however increasing user pressure risks degrading the condition of natural resources.
- There is a need to proactively manage the use and development of natural resource destinations to ensure they remain attractive and in excellent condition.
- Commercial development of the coast and parks needs to be sensitive and balanced with conservation, to ensure that natural resources are sustained in prime condition for future enjoyment by the community and visitors.

### *Actions*

#### Marketing

- Increase promotion of the region's competitive strengths (immersive wildlife experiences, pristine nature and fresh seafood).
- Promote unique seasonal wildlife and nature occurrences.
- Capitalise on the region's appeal and growth potential from international markets including China.
- Promote and grow cruise visitation and onshore regional spend.
- Improve the region's digital presence and align this with South Australia Tourism Commission's digital strategy

#### Events

- Events can attract new visitors, increase length of stay and visitor spend.
- Create a regional event strategy reflective of the region's Seafood Frontier brand. Grow existing signature events such as Tunarama, and create new events.
- Build regional event resourcing to support this event strategy.

#### Collaboration

- Develop the region's network of visitor information services to meet changing consumer behaviour. Embrace new technologies and encourage increased visitor dispersal and spend.
- Build on existing collateral and partnerships to drive dispersal to inland and outback Eyre Peninsula.
- Increase flows along the Seafood Frontier touring route and foster dispersal from the route to other parts of the region.
- Work with aviation partners to improve access to the region for corporate, business and leisure travellers.

#### Industry capability

- Raise industry capability in the areas of digital marketing, business operations, event management and event promotion.
- Support Aboriginal tourism operators across all areas for business growth.

#### Accommodation

- Build the region's accommodation yields by aiming to develop 117 new rooms and upgrade 141 rooms (from 3 to 4-star) by 2020.
- Encourage development of an outstanding 5 or 6-star accommodation in a national park or iconic natural location.
- Support improvements to motels in smaller locations.
- Experience development
- Create compelling new visitor experiences across coastal, wildlife, seafood and soft adventure areas.
- Embrace the Seafood Frontier brand for those experiences related to coastal Eyre Peninsula.
- Increase commissionable products for sale via travel intermediaries that help build the region's profile domestically and internationally.

#### Visitor infrastructure

- Maintain and enhance key coastal infrastructure and national parks. The region has approximately 100 State, National and Conservation Parks, 10 State Marine Parks, and 3 Commonwealth Marine Reserves.
- Invest in infrastructure that supports the drive market and encourages overnight stays.
- Address reliability of water and energy supply for regional tourism related businesses.

## **Water Resources**

### ***Manage and develop water resources to provide abundant quality supply for community and economic use.***

- Water security is a key issue for the Eyre Peninsula due to limited supply from ground water basins and the River Murray.
- There is a need to develop and manage water allocation plans to provide water supply security
- Water allocation planning should exceed the demand thresholds needed for survival, and aim to supply a sufficient quantity of water to catalyse economic development and population growth
- Utilise innovative water solutions to create unique and competitive businesses and industry

#### ***Actions***

- Pursue water resources monitoring, planning and management via the Eyre Peninsula Water Security Group.
- Support investigations to assess the technical viability and economic feasibility of augmenting the Eyre Peninsula's water supplies.
- Taskforce.
- Liaise with government and private sector companies about water efficiency measures and alternative water supply solutions and technologies.
- Identify strategic water supply options to maximise economic, community and environmental benefits
- Pursue synergies by linking water supply solutions with regional energy planning strategies.
- Form partnerships on urban stormwater and waste water planning and implementation

## Energy

### *Pursue solutions to provide a cost effective and secure power supply, and develop a low carbon economy*

- Energy security is a critical issue on the Eyre Peninsula. Ageing distribution and transmission systems will need to be upgraded to unlock energy, mining and agribusiness projects in the pipeline.
- Numerous energy solutions are being explored, with preference for renewable generation and storage systems using solar, pumped hydro, wave, wind and hydrogen energy.
- Leverage EP's renewable energy resources to create long term jobs for high value professionals
- Build export pathways for energy

#### **Actions**

- Prepare a regional energy strategy.
- Facilitate the replacement of the Eyre Peninsula power transmission system.
- Liaise with government and private sector companies about power supply solutions and alternative energy technologies.
- Support the development of renewable energy projects in strategic locations to maximise economic, community and environmental benefits and identify investment opportunities.

## Mining

### *Mineral, Oil and Gas Resources: Facilitate the development of strategic mineral, oil and gas resource projects.*

- The region has plentiful deposits of high quality mineral resources including magnetite, graphite, zircon and kaolin. Oil and gas exploration is also being undertaken on the land and sea. Mineral, oil and gas projects provide opportunities to diversify the regional economy, create employment, and bring flow-on economic and community development benefits to businesses and townships.
- Mineral, oil and gas resource projects need careful assessment to ensure they do not pose irrevocable risk to the sustainable management of ecosystems and natural resources, or negatively impact on the productivity of industries that depend on pristine environmental conditions for their viability – e.g. agriculture, fishing, aquaculture and tourism.
- Assist to support the retention and growth of steel manufacturing

#### **Actions**

- Assess the impact and benefits of proposed mineral, oil and gas projects.
- Inform the Agenda of the Eyre Peninsula Mineral and Energy Resources Community Development Taskforce
- Prepare submissions as required to the Australian and South Australian Governments about the impact and benefits of mineral, oil and gas projects on the economy, community and the environment.
- Facilitate the improvement of supply chain, energy and water infrastructure to support resource projects that will bring long-term development benefits to the region.
- Make the health of the region's ecosystems a primary consideration in economic development planning
- Attract copper, graphite and other high value mineral processing.

## 2.3 Governance and Operational Development

**KEY TERMS:** Regional Planning Board, Regional Strategic Plan, partnerships, collaboration, joint projects, advocacy, value-adding services, effective regional development outcomes.

### Regional Governance:

#### *Implement regional governance initiatives to achieve better and longer-term regional development outcomes*

- Existing modes of government services delivery do not adequately address the development needs of South Australia's regions.
- Regional areas are typically comprised of numerous LGAs with an RDA responsible for regional economic development planning.
- However, most of the Councils have small populations and thereby lack the critical mass and policy leverage to influence State and Australian Government decision-making. The consequence is that regional aspirations are often not heard, and regional development needs are not being met.
- This dilemma is exacerbated in Councils with shrinking populations.
- The intention of the regional governance initiative is to form a single Planning Board to drive the collective and agreed priorities of RDAWEP, EPLGA, and EPNRM and the 11 Councils and 58,000 people that occupy the Eyre Peninsula.
- This will enable the region to advocate collectively with a single voice; better exploit its comparative advantage, and develop synergies to achieve more effective and longer-term regional development outcomes.

#### *Actions*

- Facilitate and support the establishment and operation of the Eyre and Western Region Joint Planning Board.
- Develop and manage partnerships with regional organisations, Local Government, and the Australian and State Governments
- Facilitate collaborative regional planning initiatives with government, business and community stakeholders
- Align the region's development needs with Australian and State Government planning and economic priorities to improve access to funding from government programs.
- Implement collaborative project initiatives.
- Maintain and develop regional communication and engagement via marketing strategies, consultation plans, and performance measurement

#### *Advocate regional governance principles to government, business and community sectors*

- The regional governance approach for community and economic development proposes a new method of service delivery that may be challenging for some stakeholders
- The establishment process will require ongoing advocacy and marketing to increase understanding of the need for, principles and benefits of adopting regional governance.

#### *Actions*

- Provide presentations about the benefits of regional governance and regional planning at EPLGA, RDSA and LGASA meetings, conferences, and meetings with individual Councils.
- Give regional governance presentations to industry, business and community groups
- Provide regional governance information and performance reports via links on the RDAWEP, EPNRM and EPLGA websites.

- Implement collaborative procurement and shared services.

### **Develop value-adding Council services in liaison with LGASA.**

- South Australia has six Regional Local Government Associations with different needs. The LGASA *Value Added Services Program* aims to accommodate tasks, address issues and achieve objectives that are particular to each Local Government Association.
- The program requires Local Government Associations, Councils and the LGASA to work collaboratively and introduce new services to produce more effective outcomes in each region.

#### **Actions**

- Support improved regional delivery of services to LGA member Councils including procurement, education, training and risk services, and Local Excellence Reform initiatives.
- Councils and LGA to identify and scope new services to achieve efficiencies and more effective long term outcomes.
- Facilitate stronger Council collaborative projects.
- Coordinate and manage shared services initiatives including research, proposal development, and preparation of funding applications and joint tenders.
- Support the delivery of regional strategic and business plans to enhance regional decision making.

### **Pursue regional funding opportunities through a dedicated cross-agency grants and investment team.**

- Organisations and Councils in regional areas are experiencing a long-term trend of increasing operational costs and growing dependence on government support from grants and subsidies. Government funding dependence is heightened with larger development projects, because regional areas typically lack the population base to raise sufficient revenue to cover project capex. Regional organisations are consequently competing against each other for limited funding from government programs.
- However, access to government funding is highly competitive and becoming increasingly more difficult. Thresholds for evidence-based supporting documentation are being raised, and partner funding contribution requirements are being tightened.
- To have any chance of funding success from government programs, organisations are now required to invest considerable human and financial resources into the preparation of high quality, professional grant applications.
- There is a need to support stakeholders to obtain funding from government programs and increase the level of investment in the region. The provision of a cross-agency team will broaden the expertise base and maximise opportunities for investment attraction.

#### **Actions**

- Establish a dedicated cross-agency grants and investment team.
- Identify grant funding opportunities and communicate grant program information to stakeholders.
- Implement a pipeline reporting mechanism to monitor and promote projects.
- Assess the grant readiness of project proposals.
- Provide advice to stakeholders about options to make projects grant ready.
- Support access to government funding programs through assistance with business cases, project management plans and grant applications.
- Provide feedback and advice to government departments about options to improve grant program processes.

## 2.4 Natural Resources Management

**KEY TERMS:** Natural resources management, ecosystem sustainability, conservation, climate change, economic productivity, change practices, monitoring and evaluation, community understanding and participation.

### *Facilitate sustainable management and use of land and sea ecosystems by balancing conservation and economic development needs*

- Healthy and functioning ecosystems underpin the regional economy and the quality of life of regional communities. A pristine natural environment is also a critical component of the regional brand, and needs to be safeguarded
- New economic and employment initiatives – such as housing and tourism developments, mining, transport and energy projects – are needed to drive the regional economy. However, the region's ecosystems have been substantially modified by past practices through land clearance, altered hydrology, changed fire regimes and introduced species. This has decreased species diversity and impacted on habitats
- Proactive conservation actions are necessary to reverse these trends and ensure that new development projects do not pose irrevocable risk to the sustainability of natural resources.

#### **Actions**

- Make the health of the region's ecosystems a primary consideration in economic development planning and deliberations of the Eyre Peninsula Mineral and Energy Resources Community Development Taskforce.
- Maintain and manage partnerships between government, environmental and economic agencies to achieve synergies and more effective economic and environmental development outcomes.
- Implement collaborative economic and environmental approaches in the planning and implementation of development projects.
- Utilise biodiversity mapping and research to support project and land development applications.
- Ensure that new development proposals, particularly in coastal areas, give appropriate consideration of the potential impacts of climate change and include adaptation initiatives to minimise risks.

### *Support landholders and industry to sustainably manage natural resources while improving productivity*

- There is need to support landholders and industry to continuously improve operational practices in the face of ongoing and emerging challenges. These include economic constraints which are reducing profitability, and environmental challenges of soil degradation, pest impacts, rising salinity levels and climate change
- The facilitation of change practices should include the provision of information and technical expertise with the application of research and new technologies to maximise production and minimise environmental impacts

#### **Actions**

- Facilitate and promote change practices to restore, improve and manage dryland salinity, soil acidity, soil erosion, water quality, habitat protection, native vegetation and enhance drought readiness.
- Provide practice change information, technical expertise and biodiversity research via EPNRM and DEWNR through workshops, meetings and other stakeholder forums.
- Support research and development at Minnipa Agricultural Centre and tertiary educational institutions into broad scale practices to improve natural resources management and sequester carbon.

- Partner with the agriculture, seafood, mining and civil construction industries to maximise biodiversity outcomes from business operations.

***Improve understanding and conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems in a changing climate***

- Healthy functioning ecosystems and natural resources are fundamental to regional amenity and livelihoods. However, past practices have negatively impacted ecosystem sustainability, and there is a need to focus on habitat protection and restoration and address threats to increase ecosystem resilience
- Conservation actions require ongoing monitoring and evaluation of natural resources condition to build new knowledge about ecosystem complexity
- Climate change, in particular, has the potential to negatively impact on the economy and liveability of the Eyre Peninsula - notably for industries which rely on pristine environmental conditions for production and sustainability e.g. agriculture, aquaculture, fishing and tourism
- Opportunities need to be pursued to better inform the community about the challenges of climate change and strategies needed to minimise potential impacts

***Actions***

- Develop holistic understanding of the region's complex ecosystems.
- Monitor and evaluate natural resources condition and trends to determine appropriate management actions.
- Improve data collection methods to identify and address ecosystem information gaps.
- Encourage community participation in ecosystem science initiatives to increase understanding of natural resources management.
- Facilitate the implementation of the EPICCA Regional Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the Eyre Peninsula.
- Communicate natural resources management and climate change information to the community and industry via forums, the RDAWEP, EPLGA and EPNRM websites, and regular articles in the media and Regional Newsletters.

***Create opportunities for active community engagement in natural resources management***

- Natural resources management is a shared responsibility and all of the region's communities, organisations, businesses and individuals have a role to play in maintaining and monitoring sustainable ecosystems. To do this effectively requires a knowledgeable, capable and committed workforce of both professionals and volunteers
- Support is needed to facilitate community participation and networking and build the skills, knowledge and capability to undertake NRM initiatives

***Actions***

- Undertake education initiatives to build knowledge about NRM issues and create network relationships between community and NRM stakeholders.
- Support volunteers and community groups to undertake NRM activities and engage in NRM decision making.
- Partner with schools to encourage children to learn about NRM issues and participate in NRM activities.
- Support traditional owners and Aboriginal communities to care for country.
- Monitor and evaluate trends in community NRM capacity and engagement

### 3. CONCLUSION

The RDAWEP, EPNRM and EPLGA collaborative initiative is proposing that a single *Regional Strategic Plan* is prepared to capture the aspirations of the Eyre Peninsula community. Numerous benefits will be achieved by this arrangement.

#### Improved Stakeholder Representation

RDAWEP, EPNRM and the EPLGA prepare their lead planning documents in consultation with relevant stakeholders and network groups. RDAWEP engages directly with industry and government agencies, and has advisory groups and a consultation network in place to gather intelligence. The EPLGA engages with the region's 11 Councils and the Local Government Association of SA, primarily about matters concerning Local Government service delivery. EPNRM, due to ongoing liaison with local Councils and government agencies, and proactive encouragement of grass-roots community participation in natural resources management, arguably implements a more inclusive stakeholder engagement process.

Collectively, however, the three organisations will engage with a much broader cross section of the community than if operating as individual organisations. This will provide a more comprehensive and balanced viewpoint about the development outcomes wanted by the Eyre Peninsula community.

#### Efficiencies and Cost Savings

The implementation of the collaborative model can be funded from the existing resources of the three organisations, so the initiative will not incur additional costs. On the contrary, the adoption of a single strategic plan and reporting format by the three organisations will generate cost savings and deliver greater efficiencies from a shared and smarter use of human resources.

#### Synergy

The collaborative approach has the potential to attract greater levels of development funding from government programs.

The underlying principle driving this initiative is that *the sum is much greater than the parts* – i.e. synergies will be created by representing the collective voice of the 58,000 people that live on the Eyre Peninsula. The region is already highly productive, generating GRP per capita of over \$72,300 and rising, which is well above that for other major population centres in South Australia.

Local Government Area	Population 2014	Gross Product (billion)	Regional (GRP)	GRP per Capita ('000)
Adelaide (C)	22,690	18,309		-
Salisbury (C)	137,310	5,864		42,706
Onkaparinga (C)	167,659	4,772		28,464
<b>Eyre Peninsula</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>4,195</b>		<b>72,327</b>
Marion (C)	82,292	3,091		37,561
Playford (C)	86,869	2,984		34,350
Port Adelaide Enfield (C)	122,206	2,909		23,804
Tea Tree Gulley (C)	98,575	2,343		23,769

**Table 1: Gross Regional Products for Selected LGAs across South Australia, 2013-14.**  
(Source: The SA Centre for Economic Studies, *Eyre Peninsula Economic Development Plan, Summary Report*, June 2016, p.4).

The collaborative approach will consequently create the population critical mass to exert policy leverage on government decision-making, and better position the region to have its development needs addressed.

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