Greater Whitsunday Communities

Stronger Together

Strategic Plan

2022 - 2027





Message from our Chair and Executive Officer

In 2021, Mackay Regional Council for Social Development embarked on a transformative program to review the structure and leadership of the organisation. This program included a transition to a new name and corporate branding. Established in August 2020 the Structure Review Committee progressed the organisations' transformation by focussing on the principles of strong sustainable governance and participatory community development.

Greater Whitsunday Communities is proud to share this Strategic Plan which builds on the strengths of the 2021 transition whilst setting targets to hold in our core objective of participatory community development. This plan reflects the honest and bold feedback from our Members, Board and Staff, providing valuable insight into our purpose, foundation mission and vision.

We know that any transformation is difficult, and this together with the impact of the pandemic on the way in which we conducted our work during this time tested our organisation's resilience. However, our response to the challenges taught us to be agile, responsive, creative, and innovative, and we have used these learnings to define our priorities for the next five years.

Participatory community development is core to our work, however financial sustainability through fee for service programs will support bridging the gap for us to achieve work that otherwise would not be possible. We recognise the importance the role of individuals, communities, the Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors, their respective councils, State and Federal Government, business, and industries (Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS), Tourism, Construction, Agriculture, Health And Allied Services and Education) will play in achieving many of the strategic pillars outlined in this strategic plan.

Looking into the future, our commitment to the socio economic and environmental wellbeing of the Greater Whitsunday region is unwavering. To achieve our vision, we will be action oriented, we will cultivate, we will be attentive, we will have a collective focus, we will strive for excellence and above all, we will be inclusive.

We are excited to share our organisations' new beginnings, building on the strengths and achievements of the past to lay the foundations for new possibilities in our region.



Karen May

Chair



Carol Norris

Executive Officer



Table of Contents

1.	Executive Summary		4
2.	Our Strategic planning Framework		5
3.	Driving accountability to our Strategic Plan		6
4.	Our Strategic framework		5
5 .	Our Values and the principles that guide our work		6
6.	Our Program Logic		8
7.	Our Strategic Pillars		
	l.	Financial Sustainability	11
	2.	Elevate Community Voice	12
	3.	Collaboration and Strategic Alliances	13
	4	Enhance people and organisational capability	14
	5.	Promote Socio-Economic Development and Inclusive Growth	15
8.	Greater Whitsunday Communities statement of commitment to the UN 17 SDGs		16
9.	How can Greater Whitsunday Communities support Global Sustainability?		

1. Executive Summary

Greater Whitsunday Communities is a strategic regional social and community development organisation in the Whitsunday, Isaac and Mackay region. We work with people to enhance their capacity and quality of life within their community. Our work is primarily underpinned by participatory community development practice, a concept that supports communities to have a voice in the development of sustainable practices. These sustainable practices include social responsibility, environmental stewardship, political participation, and economic stability.

As a trusted, independent voice, we work with individuals, community, businesses, industry and government to create positive social change. This work enables our communities and regions to:

- **1.** Enhance the foundation for economic development.
- **2.** Support people to exercise their rights and responsibilities.
- **3.** Improve access to resources for our communities.
- **4.** Strengthen the capacity of local businesses and institutions.
- **5.** Glves everyone the chance to contribute to a better society.

By supporting community development in this space, Greater Whitsunday Communities has enabled people to achieve their local objectives. Our participatory community philosophy has supported our regional communities in achieving the following successful outcomes for the region:

- The Neighbourhood Hub in Mackay
- Lowanna House, a women's shelter in Mackay
- Facilitating partnership of women's services to create Mackay Women's Services as a single entity in a shared facility
- Supporting Glendon residents to come together as a community, sit at the table with key regional stakeholders, have their say and be heard
- Facilitating the Youth Out Loud project which gives young people a voice so they can raise their concerns and be heard
- Supporting the Australian South Sea Islander community to be recognised as a separate entity
- Supporting the state-wide campaign to advocate for fair insurance processes for community service organisations
- Council of Mayors Suicide Prevention Taskforce project to co-design a model to support community members to access and navigate services
- Support the Bowen Collinsville Health Group and the Bowen Interagency Network Group merge into the collaborative network Bowen Collinsville Community Alliance (BCCA). This merger enabled streamlined community groups and priorities, improved capability through collaboration and facilitated a strong community voice due to broader community representation.

Consciously seeking to work within the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (*Page 16*) Greater Whitsunday Communities' strategic plan sets our vision, aspirations, and objectives for the next 5 years, and is our principal strategy document. This means that this strategic plan governs all the work the organisation undertakes, both through community development, advocacy for our community, or fee for service work (either through direct service delivery or through partnership arrangements).

The direction set through this strategic plan will position the organisation to continue to work towards a future where the communities we work with will achieve and enjoy a high standard of social wellbeing.

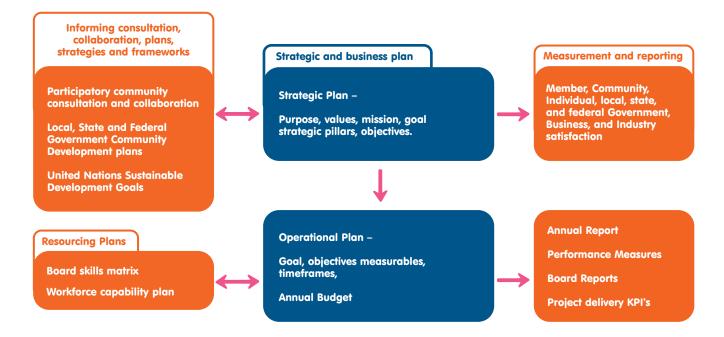
2. Our Strategic Planning Framework

Our planning and reporting framework provides individuals, local, state and federal governments, businesses and industries a roadmap for translating socio/economic development priorities and aspirations into operational objectives and facilitates a tracking progress to deliver on these objectives.

Underlying principles of our strategic planning and reporting include:

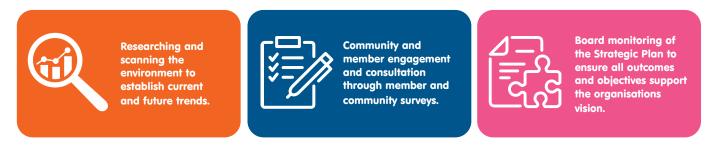
- Understanding the drivers for socio/economic reform and what our communities aspire to.
- Setting our direction within our resource capability.
- Monitoring our performance for accountability and adaptability.
- Applying a holistic and innovative approach to ensure impactful outcomes.

In recognition of the importance of Strategic and Organisational planning, the diagram below outlines how core plans both inform and are informed by our planning and reporting.



3. Driving accountability to our Strategic Plan

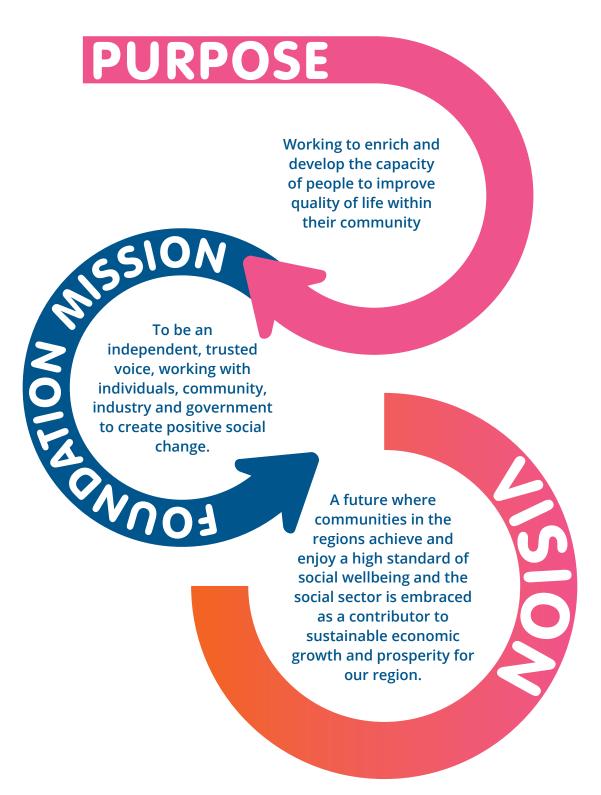
Greater Whitsunday Communities is committed to ensuring our Strategic Plan is relevant and effectively delivers to ensure the Greater Whitsundays region is one of the most sustainable and resilient regions in Australia. Our strategic plan will be continually reviewed to ensure its relevance in a dynamic regional, national and global environment. Reviews will be undertaken through the following process:



4. Our Strategic Framework

Greater Whitsunday Communities value our independent voice in the regions. We embrace the challenge of a bottom – up participatory approach to community, business, and regional development. Our work over several decades has demonstrated that the important part of the process is the journey, as transformational change occurs when innovation and vision is owned by the impacted participants.

We are guided by a social purpose and will embed commercial and financial sustainability strategies to improve our financial and social governance wellbeing. This strategic plan will support the delivery of fee for service work that supports sustainable development. This work will derive revenue streams that will allow Greater Whitsunday Communities to fully resource the non-commercial "theory of change" concept that addresses community issues, enables the community voice, and addresses social injustice.



5. Our Values and the principles that guide our work

At Greater Whitsunday Communities, we define a value as an emotive statement that we believe is important in demonstrating how we work. Our values are...



Action Oriented







Collective Focus





Operating principles flow from our values, as an enactment of that value. The operating principles more clearly define what behaviours we will choose in alignment with that value. Examples of principles include to listen, collaborate, advocate, valuing the community voice, experience, knowledge and private issues and concerns.

The operating principles that guide our work are outlined below.



We are trusted, respected, and always act with integrity

- We are a team, and work together towards the same purpose
- We trust and communicate with each other
- Our community and strategic alliance see us as the trusted, independent voice in the regions
- We are on the ground, listening, talking, and collaborating with the locals to facilitate collaborative social change



We approach our work with a Can do / Curious attitude

- We are creative
- We encourage curiosity
- We have a growth mindset embedded in social change
- We are open-minded and innovative



The way we do our work ensures our organisation will be a sustainable and reliable entity for generations to come

- We will be here to collaborate with communities in the long-term
- Business can have confidence in us
- We are financially sustainable so we can have a long-term impact
- We enrich people's capacity to develop resilience over the long-term



We actively promote a socially just world where every person is worthy of dignity and respect, and experiences political, social, and economic equity

- Our work is based on prinicples of equity, inclusion, and humility
- We are collaborative
- We are culturally responsive
- We listen, engage and advocate with the community

Our Program Logic

GWC'S VISION

A future where communities in the regions achieve and enjoy a high standard of social wellbeing and the social sector is embraced as a contributor to sustainable economic growth and prosperity for our region

GWC'S COMMUNITY **IMPACT**

Citizen led change through participatory community development to ensure the economic and social sustainability of our region.

Our Board and Staff are equipped with the skills to enrich and develop the communities in our region.

Community inspired innovation and strong, diverse relationships will lead to impact-oriented results that will support the liveability and resilience of our regions.







GWC'S OUTCOMES

Transition from an organisation reliant on Government funding to a social enterprise that monitors sustainable operations and investigates and secures appropriate revenue streams.

Build a strong internal community that challenges and inspires our fellow Board and staff members to do the work they love and be themselves.

Create opportunities to honour and elevate the voices and lived experiences of community members.





Oriented





Cultivate



Attentive







GWC'S FOUNDATION MISSION

To be an independent, trusted voice, working with individuals, community, industry, and government to create positive social change



Leverage the strengths of each strategic alliance and apply it strategically to the issue at hand. Build strong partnerships, relationships, shared understanding, and collective focus to make lasting progress.

Individuals, communities, businesses respect the organisation's capability, ability to innovate and to respond to changing community needs.

A society which combines economic activity with community benefit, and where communities have equitable access to sustained, impartial and reasonable distribution of regional growth.







Partner effectively with individuals and organisations -- both inside and outside the community – leaning into networks and leverage relationships to build authentic stories and mutually beneficial alliances.

Maximise organisational capability to align people, systems and culture to ensure effectiveness and sustainability.

Recognition as the region's leading social development organisation

















Inclusiveness









7. Our Pillars

Strategic Pillars



Operational Approach



7. Our Strategic Pillars



1. Financial Sustainability

Greater Whitsunday Communities has a responsibility to maintain financial sustainability over the longer term. Our Financial Sustainability Strategy is an essential tool that will guide our transition from an organisation reliant on local, state and federal government funding to a social enterprise that monitors sustainable operations and investigates and secures appropriate revenue streams which will ultimately support our participatory community development philosophy to ensure the social and economic resilience of our region.

Outcomes

Corporate organisations financially support the promotion of equitable growth and socioeconomic practices in the community, business, METS, tourism, construction, agriculture, health and allied services and education sectors.

Promote a culture of corporate philanthropy, by encouraging CSR sponsorship.

A "fee for service" framework that will underpin the organisation as a social enterprise.

Individual Corporates, (METS, tourism, construction, agriculture, health and allied aervices and education sectors) financially partner in projects that are relevant to their long-term sustainability and resilience.

Actions

Regional Issues mapped and projects aligned to funding opportunities, and funding cycle calendar developed.

Development and circulation of a Corporate Social Responsibility prospectus

Strong project partnerships established with corporate organisations

Organisational sponsorship

Local, State and Federal Government funding is balanced by a portfolio of fee for service works that activates the social, economic development of the regions.



2. Elevate Community Voice

Greater Whitsunday Communities seeks to honour the voices and lived experiences of community members. By elevating the community voice, we create opportunities for our community to better understand their impact to effectively enable change and innovation. By strengthening diverse relationships between individuals, governments, businesses and industries, impact-oriented results will support the liveability and resilience of our regions.

Outcomes

Greater Whitsunday Communities brand is the "go-to-organisation" to elevate the community voice

Connect to individuals, community, governments, business, METS and agricultural sector through social media and surveys.

Recognised as the critical delegation participant, alongside community to local, state, federal and other decision makers/people of influence

Empower community leadership, enable co-design and facilitate input into the Regional Social Development Plan, and undertake projects / programs that work alongside the community.

Actions

Relevant regional issues and needs are captured and carried forward into the systems that can address them through a range of sectors and government:

- Face to face and on-line engagement.
- Social Media engagement.
- Community forums, bringing together individuals, community, governments, business, METS and tourism, construction, agriculture, health and allied services and education sectors to address regional social issues in a coordinated manner.
- Hearing the voices of our members by providing opportunities for feedback
- Include people with lived experience in discussions with sectors and government.



3. Collaboration and Strategic Alliances

"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much"

Outcomes

Individuals from all races, genders, demographics, ages, physical abilities, and backgrounds are enabled to communicate respectfully together, through inclusive collaboration.

Collaborate with strategic structure which share similar objectives to effect social and economic change

Strengthen existing relationships, and embed strategies to engage and build strong, positive partnerships.

Greater Whitsunday Communities works within relationship marketing strategy that is values based and personalised.

Enable people with lived experience to be part of the collaboration.

Actions

Board and Staff have developed relationships through in-person connection with members, community, business, local, state and federal governments

Documented partnerships and MOU's.

Active participation in diversity and inclusion working groups, committees, and forums which include people with lived experience.

Develop and adopt policy and procedures that enable collaboration and strategic alliances.

Using the International Association for Public Participation 2 (IAP2) Framework, Greater Whitsunday Communities collaborative partners are identified.



4. Enhance people and organisational capability

Greater Whitsunday Communities is an organisation whose people are given the opportunity to learn and translate their learnings into actions that will build a reliable, dependable and credible organisation that creates value and impact for our communities.

Through personal and professional development, Greater Whitsunday Communities will build a strong internal community that challenges and inspires our fellow Board and staff members to do the work they love, be themselves, and make an impact in the lives of the communities we serve. We are committed to our purpose, our values, diversity, and inclusion and supporting one another in a positive team culture.

Outcomes

Develop theoretical knowledge and skills required for leadership in the community sector by delivering and facilitating appropriate training courses.

Board and Staff are enabled and work as a team to excel in community and social economic development effectiveness, performance and organisation governance best practices

New Board members understand the governance processes which includes an understanding of how the primary objectives of the constitution is enacted through a participatory community development method of practice.

Ensure the organisation is seen as resilient and sustainable in the community by building a strong identity in the region - recognisable premises and branding

The organisations 'risk appetite is aligned to its constitution and strategic plan

The organisation is aligned to the object of the consultation and strategic plan

Actions

Deliver participatory community development training and leadership programs.

Board and Staff's professional opportunities are identified, and Board and staff participate in at least 3 professional development opportunities per annum.

A Board assessment tool has been developed and is in use.

Annual risk assessment is completed.

Development of a marketing plan, capability plan and investment prospectus with tiered options to promote the organisation and attract funding

An adopted succession planning framework to underpin the organisations 'sustainability

Relocation to premises that are aligned to the organisations image

The Board possesses the capacity and structures to promote and carry a participatory development programme.



5. Promote Socio-Economic Development and Inclusive Growth

Greater Whitsunday Communities is recognised as the region's leading social development organisation in a society which combines economic activity with community benefit, and where all people in our community can have equitable access to sustained, impartial and reasonable distribution of the benefits of regional growth.

Outcomes

A region that is educated and embraces inclusive growth and undertakes projects that actively encourage the principle in the region

Greater Whitsunday Communities' reputation and profile is such that it is invited to discussions and decision making related to social and economic issues across the region

Establish and maintain a socio-economic regional collective that works collaboratively (community of practice)

Continue to strategically build key relationships with organisations such as Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia (SEGRA), Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3), Yunus Griffith University, Community Services Industry Alliance (CSIA)

Actions

Inclusive opportunities that support and uphold communities and community organisations

Strategic alliance with businesses to promote inclusive growth in their strategies

Greater Whitsunday Communities is invited to promote socio economic development through advocating and presenting at workshops, forums and conferences

Greater Whitsunday Communities statement 8. of commitment to the UN 17 SDGs

What are the sustainable development goals?

Launched by the UN in 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals aimed at transforming our world by 2030. Through goals such as eradicating poverty, reduced inequality, and responsible consumption and production, the SDGs make the route to a better world more tangible and actionable. The SDGs demonstrate a unique opportunity for business to accelerate social impact and make a lasting impact on our world, with the ability to start today.

Why would Greater Whitsunday Communities support the sustainable development goals?

We live in a beautiful region, which is home to the magnificent Great Barrier Reef, one of the natural wonders of the world. Our region is shaped with regional centres, and natural ecosystems. Whitsundays, Isaac and Mackay is the place we so thankfully can call our home. However, our region is a sub-system of a national and international system that that is becoming increasingly complex and is challenged by political, economic and environmental instability. These are daily issues that affect individuals, communities, governments, business, and industries (METS and tourism, construction, agriculture, health and allied services and education sectors) in our regions. By ingraining the 17 SDGs in the way we operate and the way we do our work, Greater Whitsunday Communities through our business and personal endeavours, will impact the sustainable development of our planet. Greater Whitsunday Communities 'participatory community development approach can enable grassroots transformative change which is led by local communities and businesses and can offer a promising approach for achieving sustainability tailored to the unique conditions of each of the 17 goals. See page 8





































9. How can Greater Whitsunday Communities support Global Sustainability?



End poverty in all forms everywhere

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

By applying community participation practices and enabling the voices of those with lived experience Greater Whitsunday Communities will promote the active engagement of individuals working in collectives to change problematic conditions, as well as influence policies and programs that affect the quality of their lives or the lives of others

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Work with individuals, communities, local, state and federal governments, industry and businesses to engage communities, facilitate funding and lead projects that address a broad range of problems that affect communities, such as the promotion of good nutrition and health (regional health days), support networks for good working conditions and sustainable livelihoods for migrant workers and engage the community for innovation in fair, sustainable and diverse food systems.

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Ensure healthy lives and promote health and well-being for all at all ages

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Identify funding for and deliver projects to promote community health and wellbeing such as the Mayors Taskforce Suicide Prevention project. Ensure the ongoing sustainability and resilience of the not-for-profit sector by facilitating collaborative strategic alliances, community governance and management capability, regional socio-economic practice, regional voice and connectedness, peak body representation and community leadership skills.

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Key Result Area

Greater Whitsunday Communities recognises the principles of life - long learning starts with engaged and supported youth and will with our youth as they champion projects that ensure "at risk youth "remain in the education system.



Socio



Economic



Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Through our work Greater Whitsunday Communities will petition local, state and federal governments, industry and businesses to co-design strategies that promote active and inclusive leadership, holds accountability for a gender equality process, follows a transparent governance process, and goes beyond gender equality to consider other elements of inclusion and diversity (race, sexual orientation, gender diversity, age, religion and disability).

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Inclusive growth



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Most residents in the Greater Whitsundays 'region enjoy high standards of cleanliness and sanitation by global standards. Greater Whitsunday Communities recognises its role as the independent community voice and can advocate on with concerned community members to ensure these standards are maintained and any deficiencies are corrected immediately.

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Natural Environment



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Greater Whitsunday Communities recognises Australian Federal Governments' net emissions 2050 target but acknowledges the challenges this vision presents to communities in the region. Greater Whitsunday Communities will actively seek opportunities to drive community influence in renewable energy projects that help decarbonise our electricity system. Community-owned renewable energy projects create social, environmental, and economic benefits because they are strengthening local economies.

Key Result Area



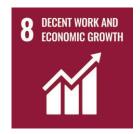
Socio



Inclusive growth



Natural Environment



Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Community and economic development are parallel: community development produces social assets for enhancing the quality of life and business climate, and economic development mobilises these assets to realise the benefits of the community" (Pittman etal.,2009). Greater Whitsunday Communities will actively consult and collaborate with economic development organisations to facilitate the linkage between community and economic development to ensure the survival of our communities.

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Inclusive growth



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Consult with businesses leaders to integrate sustainability and inclusiveness into their organisations to create meaningful change that benefits business, communities and the planet. Enhance collaboration with regional businesses to engage strategically governments and communities to reimagine, rebuild and transform our regional economies into one that benefits all.

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Inclusive growth



Reduce inequalities within and among communities

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Our communities are diverse, and Greater Whitsunday Communities will persist in actively seek opportunities to support social inclusion through a range of community programs and activities. Greater Whitsunday Communities recognises its role in facilitating social inclusion possibilities, and will continue to work in partnership with individuals, local, state and federal governments, not-for-profit sector, community groups, industry and businesses to achieve this goal.

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Governance



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Most residents in the Whitsunday, Isaac and Mackay regions enjoy a high standard of living. However, as the housing crisis intensifies and regional housing insecurity grows, Greater Whitsunday Communities will seek to collaborate and work with strategic organisations to co-design solutions to ensure our current and future communities are accommodated in settlements that are inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Inclusive growth



Responsible Production and Consumption

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Greater Whitsunday Communities understands that decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, increasing resource efficiency and promoting sustainable lifestyles will have an impact on some communities within the region. Greater Whitsunday Communities will collaborate with our partners to deliver socio / economic projects which promote circular economies, and support regions that are impacted by mine closures.

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Inclusive arowth



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Key Result Area

Greater Whitsunday Communities understands that decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, increasing resource efficiency, and promoting sustainable lifestyles will have an impact on some communities within the region. Greater Whitsunday Communities will collaborate with strategic organisations to deliver socio / economic projects which promote circular economies, reduce CO2 emissions and support communities in our region that experience impacts from decarbonisation, including potential mine closures



Socio



Economic



Inclusive growth



Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Key Result Area



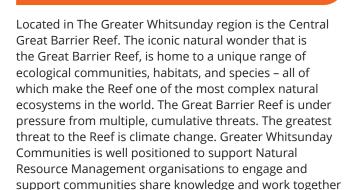
Socio



Economic



Natural Environment



15 LIFE ON LAND

Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainable manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

to sustain Reef resilience for future generations

Key Result Area



Socio



Economic



Inclusive growth

The Greater Whitsunday region encompasses a variety of ecosystems that require sensitive management to avoid degradation and biodiversity loss. Achieving this this goal requires a commitment and undertaking from our communities, and Whitsunday Communities will collaborate with strategic organisations to facilitate socio economic projects that support circular economies to create ecosystems that conserves natural reserves and protects vital soil, air and water bodies.



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

Key Result Area

Greater Whitsundays will continue to support and promote community groups and organisations to enhance capacity in improved governance, and importantly uphold the principle of participatory community development to underpin transparent decision making and ensure effective, accountable and transparent governance to promote justice and inclusion



Socio



Inclusive growth



Governance



Strengthen the means of implementation of partnership for sustainable development

Greater Whitsunday Communities role

building the capacity of communities and is committed to collaborating on environmental, economic, social

and health and wellbeing initiatives, to advocate for

resilient, sustainable communities

Key Result Area



Socio



Inclusive arowth



Governance based on social justice principles



"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much"

