



Moreland
Energy
Foundation

Strategic Plan 2010–2015

*An active, inspired community tackling climate
change with sustainable energy solutions*

July 2010

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Cover photo: Impact Digital General Manager, Tony Parker shows off the company's rooftop solar panels.

Executive summary

The Moreland Energy Foundation Limited, or MEFL, was established in December 2000 by the Moreland City Council with a mission to continue local action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the Moreland community. MEFL acts as a nexus between the Moreland community and the broader climate change action movement.

Since our establishment 10 years ago, MEFL has developed and delivered a range of sustainable energy outcomes in the Moreland community. These programs have included the provision of direct sustainable energy advice to local households, businesses and community organisations, as well as undertaking technical research and training on sustainable energy solutions. We have also been focused on bringing a community perspective to the broader sustainability debate.

**Our vision is that Moreland will be:
An active, inspired community tackling climate change with sustainable energy solutions.**

Our values include innovation, honesty, respect, resilience and teamwork.

The strategic directions underpinning our 2010-2015 Strategic Plan are:

- 1. We deliver community based solutions on sustainable energy.**
- 2. We build partnerships and alliances for sustainable local communities.**
- 3. We grow and share energy knowledge with the community.**
- 4. We are influential and provide leadership in an urgent transition to a sustainable energy future.**
- 5. Our business is sustainability and our business is sustainable.**

In this Strategic Plan each of these directions is expanded upon through the articulation of objectives, actions to be taken and evaluation measures. Together with budgets and program plans, these key strategic directions will form the basis of our annual business plans over the coming years.

Our focus will continue to be on driving the urgent transition of our community to a sustainable energy footing, whilst also ensuring that the Moreland community benefits from this transition - socially, economically and environmentally.

Significant challenges will need to be overcome in the coming years, from ensuring that we have adequate resources to deliver our vision, to being able to effectively influence the institutional arrangements and political processes that can prevent effective climate change action.

Strategic directions in summary

1. We deliver community based sustainable energy solutions

Objectives

Drive a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from Moreland over the period 2010–2015. This is a milestone on the path to a “zero carbon” Moreland by 2020.

Evolve our current program to encompass emerging issues and lead innovation in community-based greenhouse solutions.

Use our knowledge of and access to the Moreland community to design tailored programs that recognise social circumstances, address equity and benefit the community while reducing emissions.

Ensure our projects open up local economic opportunities.

KPI Total emissions levels in Moreland

KPI Emission reductions attributable to MEFL’s activities

KPI Number of residents, households, businesses and community organisations participating in MEFL programs and campaigns

2. We build partnerships and alliances for sustainable local communities

Objectives

Partner with community groups and organisations within Moreland to maximise our reach into the community and increase the impact of our projects.

Partner with relevant organisations beyond Moreland that can enhance our ability to achieve sustainable change.

Increase the quality and effectiveness of partnerships.

KPI Number of partnerships

KPI Partner satisfaction

3. We grow and share energy knowledge with the community

Objectives

Maintain and expand MEFL’s knowledge of up-to-date technical, regulatory, financial and social solutions for sustainable energy.

Increase the community’s awareness and understanding of sustainable energy options and solutions.

Increase the community’s willingness and ability to take up sustainable energy choices and solutions.

KPI Number of MEFL members compared with growth targets

KPI Number of visitors to our website and accessing our information services

4. We are influential and provide leadership in an urgent transition to a sustainable energy future

Objectives

Build a positive and compelling vision that engages the diversity of the Moreland community towards fundamental change.

Leverage our knowledge of sustainable energy solutions and our practical understanding of community climate change action to influence urgent action by decision makers.

Build MEFL’s profile and reputation as a source of practical, community-based information about ways to reduce emissions quickly.

Model innovative and effective approaches for Australian and international communities.

KPI Number of policy, program or regulatory changes aligned with MEFL’s advocacy work

5. Our business is sustainability and our business is sustainable

Objectives

Build MEFL as a dynamic, supportive and sustainable workplace.

Ensure excellence in organisational governance and business standards.

Build our business by developing new approaches and business models for sustainable energy solutions.

KPI Financial performance targets met

KPI Staff satisfaction

KPI Number of new projects established and associated income

The organisation



MEFL's longest serving staff member Khadiga Hamed waves the MEFL flag.

"I think you are doing a fantastic job! I do not want to see MEFL over-reach and lose ability to focus on what you are currently doing so well."

– Community member

The Moreland Energy Foundation Limited (MEFL) was established in December 2000 by the Moreland City Council with the purpose of continuing local action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the Moreland community. The Council's commitment to establish MEFL was shaped by a long and strong local history of leading community based sustainable energy action, including the provision of energy efficiency services and advocacy for sustainable political, economic and social change.

During the 1980's the council-owned Brunswick Electricity Supply Department provided innovative programs to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy to local residents. In the mid 1990's, following the privatisation of the electricity industry, council was forced to sell its electricity supply companies. The sale provided substantial funds, some of which were used by the Moreland Council to establish MEFL as a community organisation.

MEFL acts as a nexus between the Moreland community and the broader climate change action movement. It is the first organisation of its kind and, while we strongly support other council areas establishing similar approaches, MEFL has a distinctive leadership position as a driver of local climate action and has developed a reputation for bold, innovative and effective projects.

MEFL currently employs around 20 staff, with a 2009/2010 budget of over \$4 million. Current staffing and budget levels are substantially higher than in previous years, primarily because of the influence of a large Federal Government grant secured through the Solar Cities program.

Over the last ten years, amongst other achievements, MEFL has:

- worked with thousands of local households, key community groups and a range of businesses in Moreland to increase their energy efficiency;
- played a lead role in developing and delivering a range of diverse flagship programs such as EcoSmart Electricians, Kinda Cooling and our current lead program, Moreland Solar City;
- hosted hundreds of events, workshops and training programs focused on sustainable energy solutions;
- developed effective information resources about practical ways to reduce emissions that are now used by communities across Australia;
- worked in partnership with a diverse range of organisations from local government, environment and social justice groups, universities and industry associations;
- developed a strong local presence and established itself as an informed, credible and reliable source of sustainable energy knowledge, experience and advice.

Moreland City Council has long been regarded as a leader in local government sustainability and is MEFL's primary partner and stakeholder. Our relationship with Council provides an opportunity for both Council and MEFL to push the boundaries of local climate change action. We continue to work together to create opportunities for new technical, financial, social and political approaches to energy sustainability.

While we are proud of our achievements, the next five years will be critical in establishing an effective local response to the challenges of climate change. MEFL will strive to maintain and grow the skills, resources and capacity required to rise to this challenge, in partnership with our community and our other key stakeholders.

Vision, mission & values

Vision

An active, inspired community tackling climate change with sustainable energy solutions.

Mission

- To inspire communities with innovative and effective sustainable energy programs.
- To work as part of our local community and with a wider vision.
- To be a community leader, delivering successful programs and influencing change.
- To address broader environmental challenges while also ensuring positive social outcomes and local economic development.
- To live our vision in the way we work, providing an inspiring, fair and sustainable workplace, and working collaboratively and thoughtfully with others.

Values

- Innovation: We think 'outside the box', seeking to be innovative, inspiring, enquiring, responsive and creative.
- Honesty: We believe in speaking directly and providing independent, well-researched and clear advice.
- Respect: We treat everyone with respect and dignity, appreciating individual and cultural diversity.
- Resilience: We recognise that change doesn't happen overnight, but requires flexibility, dedication and determination.
- Team work: We work collaboratively as a team, in our own workplace and in our dealings with the wider community and our partners.



Moreland resident Sarita Ryan speaks at the Zero Carbon Moreland, *Next Steps* community forum.

Organisational governance

Constitution

MEFL is a company limited by guarantee, and is therefore governed by the rules of our Company Constitution (available from our website).

MEFL board

The highest decision-making body within MEFL is the Board of Directors. The board is responsible for ensuring good corporate governance and taking a strategic view to guide MEFL's activities.

Board committees

The MEFL Board currently runs three committees:

1. Community and Stakeholder Engagement
2. Business Sustainability and Risk
3. CEO Performance Assessment Committee

People with particular skills and an interest in MEFL can be co-opted onto board committees. Monique Conheady and Stuart Reeh are currently co-opted onto the board's Business sustainability and risk committee.

Selection process

Board members are nominated in different ways. Moreland Council has responsibility for nominating a Councillor and a Council officer to the board. The members of MEFL elect another member. The CEO is a member of the board. The additional four positions are selected by the board based on their skills and qualities.

Current board

Mike Hill - Chair

Roger Collins - Council officer nominated by Moreland Council

Rosemary Bissett - Board member

Paul Murfitt - CEO of MEFL

Peter Flanagan - Board member

Jeremy Romanes - Elected by MEFL members

Catherine Gibson Roy - Board member

Ian Thomas - Secretary

Travis Neal - Board member

Cr Toby Archer - Councillor nominated by Moreland Council



2000 - 2010 MEFL Chair, Mike Hill (left), talks to local residents at the Sydney Road Festival.

Context

MEFL's operational context is constantly changing and we must understand these changes and be clear about the implications for our programs and our community. The future context will bring both opportunities and challenges for MEFL, and we must ensure that we are flexible enough to respond to the emerging conditions and to influence them where we can.

When developing this Strategic Plan, a number of contextual factors were taken into consideration and these are outlined briefly below.

Climate science must be a foundation upon which MEFL's activities are built. The science points to increasingly grave climate change scenarios, and confirms that rapid and deep cuts in emissions are necessary to avoid these scenarios. We may also have a role in working with the community to adapt to impacts that may prove to be unavoidable.

Community attitudes directly influence the level of support for our programs, and thus their success. The majority of Victorians express a concern for the environment and a desire to combat climate change, and this is partially reflected in behaviours. This confirms a need for MEFL programs related to education, information, advocacy, training and incentives for action.

Governments at all levels demonstrate broad agreement that action must be taken to reduce emissions and avoid dangerous climate change. However, uncertainty continues over what form that action will take. Some regulation is already in place: for example, building codes are becoming more stringent. Moreland City Council remains committed to strong action on climate change and continues to be supportive of the work of MEFL. MEFL will continue to develop our alliance with governments at the federal, state and local levels, for example through NAGA (Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action).

Social justice is central to our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we will continue to take account of the social and economic impacts of sustainable energy options, as well as the environmental outcomes. The need for equity is a critical consideration in determining the focus of our programs.

New areas for action are emerging, through for example, improved or more accessible energy efficiency technologies, the use of renewable energy sources and community involvement in new business models that capture the value of sustainable energy. These point the way for MEFL to undertake new types of actions and programs. Areas for investigation include sustainable urban development, green jobs and 'carbon offsetting'.

Our organisation is changing. With the injection of funds from the Federal Government Solar Cities program, MEFL has grown to a staff of around 20 and a multi-million dollar budget over recent years. How we continue this level of activity after the Solar Cities grant winds down at the end of 2010/11 is an important challenge and opportunity.

These issues and their relevance to MEFL's strategic context are expanded upon on page 16 under Challenges and Considerations.



"It's increasingly important to incorporate adaptive responses (coping with heat stress etc) into mitigation programs, to help communities understand how to adapt to a changed climate without adding to the emissions burden."

– MEFL member

Stakeholder feedback



Zero Carbon Moreland members share their vision.

As part of the process of developing this Strategic Plan, an extensive survey of stakeholders was conducted, via an open invitation to comment (advertised locally), targeted questionnaires and interviews. The stakeholder groups consulted were:

- Moreland City Council
- MEFL members
- Moreland community groups
- Moreland business groups
- Moreland residents
- environmental professionals and specialists
- Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Executive and members
- Sustainability Victoria and officers from other government departments

The consultation produced rich feedback on MEFL's activities and possible future directions. While there is clearly a high level of satisfaction with and support for our current program and activities, there were some consistent messages and issues raised, including that MEFL should:

- strive to remain a leader and innovator;
- remain focused and not spread MEFL 'too thinly';
- continue our advocacy role by partnering with other organisations (especially with those who implement actions) as a means to strengthening and promoting MEFL's programs and messages;
- maintain advocacy and education as key roles;
- continue to focus on the importance of energy efficiency and renewable energy into the future;
- consider urban development, transport and food security as key future climate change issues in our program;
- engage with those in the community not currently active or interested in climate change;
- engage further with non-English speaking communities;
- develop more programs targeted at the rental market;
- promote ourselves more and be more visible in the community;
- measure and quantify whether our programs are making a difference;
- develop metrics for measuring and benchmarking people's efforts to reduce their impact; and
- develop programs and information for those who have already 'done the basics'.

These themes have been central considerations in developing the objectives and actions outlined in our Strategic Plan, as well as informing our approach to the evaluation of our impact.

Strategic directions 2010–2015

Our strategic directions for the period of this Strategic Plan are:

- 1. We deliver community based sustainable energy solutions**
- 2. We build partnerships and alliances for sustainable local communities.**
- 3. We grow and share energy knowledge with the community.**
- 4. We are influential and provide leadership in an urgent transition to a sustainable energy future.**
- 5. Our business is sustainability and our business is sustainable.**

In the following pages, we ask, for each of these directions:

What do we want to achieve?	→	Objectives
How will we do it?	→	Actions
How will we know we've done it?	→	Evaluation

These, together with identifying projects, partners, budgets and program plans, will form the basis of our annual business plans over the 2010–2015 period.



MEFL staff members (L-R) Jessica Steinborner, Jenneke Kylstra, Emma de Campo and Brad Shone get involved in the Zero Carbon Moreland 'Invite a Friend' campaign'.

Strategic direction 1



Mick Harris from EnviroShop delivers a lighting workshop to Zero Carbon Moreland participants.

"In a lower carbon future you would expect more pressure on community groups to provide services that are no longer supplied centrally. Helping community groups see that coming and setting up pilot programs would make sense."

– Community group member

We deliver community based sustainable energy solutions

Our focus is on practicality, implementation and outcomes. We use our knowledge of and access to the Moreland community to design projects specific to this locality. We use up-to-date knowledge of technology, policy, behaviour change and communication to design projects that will work.

Objective 1.1

Drive a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from Moreland over the period 2010–2015. This is a milestone on the path to a 'zero carbon' Moreland by 2020.

Priority actions:

- Deliver energy efficiency programs targeted at households, community groups and businesses.
- Establish low greenhouse energy generation infrastructure across the municipality.
- Work to resolve data collection issues and improve data accuracy in order to establish clear emission reduction targets for our community and for our programs.

Objective 1.2

Evolve our current program to encompass emerging issues and lead innovation in community-based greenhouse solutions.

Priority actions:

- Harness our networks and research program to stay abreast of emerging issues.
- Leverage partnerships to combine capabilities and drive innovation.
- Communicate successes to the media and broader networks.

Objective 1.3

Use our knowledge of and access to the Moreland community to design tailored programs that recognise social circumstances, address equity, and benefit the community while reducing emissions.

Priority actions:

- Foster and leverage close links with the Moreland community, and with community organisations focused on social well-being and health.
- Design programs that are specific rather than generic and extend our reach to a range of communities within Moreland.
- Be a hub of green skills training to build local job opportunities.

Objective 1.4

Ensure our projects open up local economic opportunities.

Priority actions:

- Establish criteria to build and promote economic outcomes into project design.
- Support Moreland businesses to become more sustainable and drive local economic development.

Evaluation

Key Performance Indicators:

- Total emissions levels in Moreland
- Emission reductions attributable to MEFL's activities
- Number of residents, households, businesses and community organisations participating in MEFL programs and campaigns

Activity measures:

- Number of household, business and community organisation sign-ups to the Zero Carbon Moreland campaign, including:
 - number that have completed their carbon footprint
 - number that have completed their action plan (compared to targets, quarterly)
- Level of Moreland Council Carbon Management Strategy emission reductions achieved
- Number of community members using MEFL's information and program services
- Renewable and/or low greenhouse generation capacity installed in Moreland due to MEFL programs
- Diversity of community contacts distributed by postcode
- Actions undertaken (and emissions achieved) by MEFL program participants



"Once I have done all the basics I'm not sure what I can do next – what are the next steps for the already engaged?"

– MEFL member

Strategic direction 2



Sussex Neighbourhood House calculate their carbon footprint.

"A wide variety of groups working together – it needs to be a movement not the work of one organisation."

- MEFL member

We build partnerships and alliances for sustainable local communities

The impact of our work can be maximised by working with groups within Moreland to extend our reach into the community, and by working with groups beyond Moreland that can enhance our ability to establish projects and drive broader change.

Objective 2.1

Partner with community groups and organisations within Moreland to maximise our reach into the community and increase the impact of our projects.

Priority actions:

- Strengthen our alignment and relationship with Moreland City Council on priorities, strategy, roles and delivery.
- Actively engage and form partnerships with multiple and diverse community groups within Moreland.
- Foster the development of our partners' capacity to enhance autonomous delivery of sustainability actions within their client groups

Objective 2.2

Partner with relevant organisations beyond Moreland that can enhance our ability to achieve sustainable change.

Priority actions:

- Leverage and encourage regional action, particularly through the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action and other alliances.
- Exchange information and expertise with other organisations to minimise duplication and improve the quality and impact of our efforts through combining capabilities.

Objective 2.3

Increase the quality and effectiveness of partnerships.

Priority actions:

- Use Memoranda of Understanding and develop clear criteria and mechanisms for establishing partnerships.
- Think broadly and innovatively when identifying potential partners and link partnerships to our strategic priorities.
- Capture and build upon lessons resulting from working in partnerships.

Evaluation

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of partnerships
- Partner satisfaction

Activity measures

- Number of repeat projects with current partners
- Diversity of partnerships
- Income achieved from partnership projects
- Membership of NAGA maintained

Strategic direction 3

We grow and share energy knowledge with the community

We will maintain and expand up-to-date knowledge in key areas of sustainable energy and climate change. We will share this knowledge with the community in accessible and powerful ways to facilitate their action on climate change.

Objective 3.1

Maintain and expand MEFL's knowledge of up-to-date technical, regulatory, financial and social solutions for sustainable energy.

Priority actions:

- Establish a targeted, strategic and coherent research program that builds on our project outcomes and integrates the best sources of external information.
- Implement an efficient and effective information management system that filters and adapts material to serve MEFL's strategic priorities and provides a basis to inform future project design.

Objective 3.2

Increase the community's awareness and understanding of sustainable energy options and solutions.

Priority actions:

- Keep abreast of the latest research on climate change communication and behaviour change techniques.
- Provide the community with simple and easy access to information.
- Deliver tailored marketing and communications activities that address the communication needs of specific groups.

Objective 3.3

Increase the community's willingness and ability to take up sustainable energy choices and solutions.

Priority actions:

- Implement our Membership Strategy so that membership grows in line with our targets and so that members are supported, informed and active on sustainable energy issues.
- Provide a variety of public forums and programs to inform and engage the community on sustainable energy action.
- Develop our training program to incorporate emerging opportunities and information needs.



MEFL staff member Jessica Steinborner at a household energy saving workshop.

"Would love to be able to access more information via the website, even podcasts."

– Community member

Evaluation

Key Performance Indicators:

- Number of MEFL members compared with growth targets
- Number of visitors to our website and accessing our information services

Activity measures:

- Number of public forums
- Number of training programs offered and participation levels
- Annual survey testing 'knowledge of MEFL as an organisation' and 'action taken as a result of MEFL advice'
- Number of participants at MEFL events
- Number of subscribers to MEFL publications

Strategic direction 4

We are influential and provide leadership in an urgent transition to a sustainable energy future

Climate science tells us that to avoid dangerous climate change we must act with a speed and scale that far exceeds action that is currently underway. MEFL's on-the-ground understanding of emissions reductions can position us as an influential leader in climate action. We will build our 'brand' to enable us to better engage the community and advocate to government. We will seek to bring about the structural, financial and regulatory changes that are central to rapidly moving our community to a sustainable energy footing.

Objective 4.1

Build a positive and compelling vision that engages the diversity of the Moreland community towards fundamental change.

Priority actions:

- In partnership with Moreland City Council and other key stakeholders, develop and hone this vision into a compelling presentation and shared strategy for our community.
- Develop proposals to advance the fundamental changes necessary to achieve a low carbon economy and a resilient community.

Objective 4.2

Leverage our knowledge of sustainable energy solutions and our practical understanding of community climate change action to influence urgent action by decision makers.

Priority actions:

- Increase the resources available to support our advocacy efforts and establish and deliver clear strategic advocacy priorities.
- Develop relationships with key individuals and groups that are influential in the community and with key decision makers.
- Keep abreast of the most effective advocacy techniques and approaches and link advocacy to our practical experience in projects.

Objective 4.3

Build MEFL's profile and reputation as a source of practical, community-based information about ways to reduce emissions quickly.

Priority action:

- Design and implement a media strategy to increase MEFL's profile and promote the outcomes of our activities.

Objective 4.4

Model innovative and effective approaches for Australian and international communities.

Priority actions:

- Capture what we learn about community climate change action and develop an understanding of best practice and benchmarks with regard to effective approaches to community climate change action.
- Promote our successes widely: disseminate lessons that may be useful to other groups through direct communication, media, journals, websites and conferences.

Evaluation

Key Performance Indicator:

- Number of policy, program or regulatory changes aligned with MEFL's advocacy work

Activity measures:

- Number of representations to decision making processes or forums
- Number of media reports on MEFL initiatives
- Number of conference presentations, journal articles and external publications promoting MEFL work
- Undertake an assessment of the recognition of MEFL's brand and the status of our reputation



MEFL staff member Kevin Fregon discusses carbon reduction actions with Peter Davey from Cantilever.

"From a business perspective it must keep the financial incentive relevant."

– Local business

Strategic direction 5

Our business is sustainability and our business is sustainable

MEFL will develop our business model and our operational model with environmental, social and financial sustainability at the core of our approach.

Objective 5.1

Build MEFL as a dynamic, supportive and sustainable workplace.

Priority actions:

- Continue to grow a creative workplace culture based on effective teamwork and a supportive operational environment.
- Provide a professional development program that supports staff to develop their skills and effectiveness, and supports them to achieve MEFL's strategic priorities and their own goals.

Objective 5.2

Ensure excellence in organisational governance and business standards.

Priority actions:

- Maintain systems that ensure careful financial management, including cost control and the efficient use of resources.
- Work with the MEFL Board to ensure that our allocation of resources is directed to programs with the greatest strategic impact.
- Operate a zero carbon, resource efficient workplace.

Objective 5.3

Build our business by developing new approaches and business models for sustainable energy solutions.

Priority actions:

- Create new business opportunities for MEFL through scanning national and international developments in community-based climate change action.
- Develop and secure new projects that attract resources to MEFL and deliver on our strategic priorities.

Evaluation

Commencing in the 2009/10 financial year, MEFL will produce a comprehensive sustainability report based on the Global Reporting Index as part of our annual report process.

Key Performance indicator:

- Financial performance targets met
- Staff satisfaction
- Number of new projects established and associated income

Activity measures:

- Annual review of governance undertaken
- Annual budget managed and financial targets met
- Diversity and resilience of income streams



Zero Carbon Moreland participant makes a sustainability pledge.

"MEFL should continue to provide leadership ... remain an innovator and leader."

– MEFL member

Challenges and considerations



MEFL staff meet with local faith leaders.

"People want to be properly informed and be able to make the connection between what they're doing and the positive impact it's having when it comes to climate change. The more people know, the more willing they are to accept new technologies and make positive changes."

- Results of a CSIRO study (March 2009)

Understanding of climate change science

As scientists improve their understanding of the effects of climate change they are predicting that the damage is likely to be more severe than previously thought, and that there is a need for greater cuts in greenhouse emissions to avoid such impacts.

Greenhouse gas emissions in Victoria increased by 13% between 1995 and 2005, much faster than other Australian states.

Residential sector energy emissions in Victoria increased by 20% between 1990 and 2005, and are projected to increase by another 11% by 2020.¹

Energy use in the residential sector is particularly greenhouse intensive because it is largely related to electricity use - and Victoria's electricity supply is based almost completely on brown coal, the most greenhouse intensive fuel.

There is an increased urgency for effective implementation of the types of programs delivered by MEFL both for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and adaptation to changing climate conditions. The challenge for MEFL will be to secure the resources and capacity to continually refine and ramp-up the scale and impact of our programs in the face of emissions growth and the increasingly dire climate impact scenarios.

Community attitudes and behaviours in relation to the environment and energy

MEFL's activities are dependent on the awareness, interest and willingness of the community to take action to address environmental and energy issues.

In 2009, 86% of Victorians expressed some degree of concern about the environment.² Further, 42% of Victorians were very concerned about the present state of the environment, an increase of 4% since 2008.³

Victorians are continuing to pursue a number of sustainable behaviours in their homes including taking short showers, growing their own fruit and vegetables and installing rainwater tanks and compact fluorescent light globes. Government programs have greatly increased take-up of solar energy in hot water production and electricity generation. They have also encouraged greater action to improve energy efficiency. Disclosure of house ratings will take effect in 2011 and may influence action by homeowners. Low housing affordability promotes greater renovation, with opportunities for energy improvements.

It is important for MEFL to help people understand that action on climate change is urgent and that there are many actions that are free, inexpensive, or cost effective.

A key challenge for MEFL will be to support the community to go further and strive for 'zero carbon' lifestyles. The climate science demands that we achieve radical changes in our approach to energy generation and energy use over the coming years, and it will be critical to support the community to take a lead on this transformative journey.

International, federal, state and local government responses to climate change and energy issues

International efforts will continue to focus on reaching an agreement involving firm commitments for emissions reduction. Australia has deferred national efforts to adopt mechanisms for carbon pricing, but action to reduce emissions will continue. International actions could increase pressure on Australia to accelerate its efforts. Community interest and awareness will also create a stimulus for government action.

MEFL is committed to expanding our advocacy efforts to promote greater government action on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The challenge for MEFL will be to ensure we have the resources to gather, analyse and effectively communicate the outcomes of our programs. This must underpin a clear and coherent advocacy program.



Our key partner, Moreland City Council, remains committed to a leadership position on climate change action with challenging zero emissions targets for both Council operations and for the broader community. This is a challenge for MEFL also. We will work closely with Council to align our capabilities and maximise the effectiveness of our joint efforts towards these goals.

Local government bodies in Victoria are continuing to increase their level of activity on energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. More communities are adopting targets for carbon neutrality by a specified date.

The outcomes of NAGA's *Towards Zero Net Emissions* project has created a foundation for co-operative action between MEFL and the NAGA member councils. MEFL will lead a range of NAGA projects, and provide support for NAGA members on others. The challenge for MEFL and for our NAGA partners will be to accelerate the implementation of projects that prove effective - locally, across the northern metropolitan region and beyond. Again, this will be an issue of achieving broad commitment and adequate resourcing and capacity.

Future context

In the past several years, action on sustainability has increasingly focused on the broader, integrated discipline of 'urban development'. The causes and impacts of climate change, as well as the range of sustainable energy solutions, emerge from choices made at a range of (related) scales. These span individual buildings, infrastructure development, and neighbourhood and precinct planning through to considerations of the future form of our cities and regions, and the development of resilient, active and informed communities.

MEFL is focused on understanding the sustainability of our municipality as a whole; as an integrated entity which evolves in the context of many competing interests.

This must be the canvas for understanding and designing all of our programs; from working with businesses and households to influencing the development of new community facilities, and the provision of sustainable energy generation infrastructure. Our training and information programs will be designed to address the key gaps in skills we identify as essential to progressing the sustainability agenda. We will also continue to bring the skills and expertise of the world's leading thinkers and practitioners to inform the Moreland community and to influence key decision makers.

The challenge will be to build this sophisticated understanding and convey it with simple, effective solutions.

¹ George Wilkenfeld & Associates Pty Ltd (2008) *Victoria's Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2005: End-Use Allocation of Emissions*, Report to the Department of Sustainability and Environment, February.

^{2 & 3} Sustainability Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment and EPA Victoria (2009), *2009 Green Light Report*.