



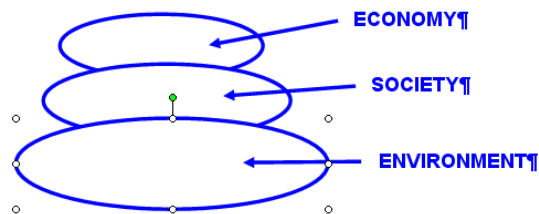
THE ENTRANCE COMMUNITY
PRECINCT COMMITTEE

Wyong Shire Council's Manager - Sustainability, Greg White's presentation on 21 July, 2009 on "Sustainability in Wyong Shire"

Greg advised of his extensive engineering background and his dual degrees in engineering and science that brought a practical perspective to his new position of Manager – Sustainability with Wyong Shire Council.

Greg began his presentation by advising that sustainability brought a third element into play in all our decision making: That of the environment. Traditionally only two factors were considered when making decisions; the economy and our society. These socio-economic decisions were the basis of all decision making and the long term impacts on the environment were not considered. i.e. it was not considered if these decisions were environmentally sustainable. Greg gave the example of the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge as a typical example of the type of project that was based on socio-economic grounds with no consideration at all given to the environmental impact. He went on to give the example of Wyong Shire's \$46million Estuary Management Plan as another result of past decisions that were made that did not consider the sustainability of the environment. Today we are having to pay huge sums to correct the impacts that these long past developments had on the Tuggerah Lakes system.

Greg explained that sustainability of the environment underpinned the sustainability of our society. Today decisions have to be made giving weighting to three elements; the economy, our society and the environment.



Greg advised that these three elements had to be linked to ensure sustainability. Society's sustainability relates to the future, our culture, quality of life and our children to sustain the population. It impacts on everything we do such as eating healthy foods to sustain our health. The economy is manufactured out of society's needs, however the environment underpins everything in our society, from the air we breathe to the water we drink. It was all about meeting the needs of today without compromising the future.

Then Greg mentioned a fourth element – time. Time is an important element because it impacts on how long we can sustain something. Some things are only sustainable for a period of time. For planning purposes a 100 year horizon for sustainability is being used. A changing climate is one example of why some of the things that are sustainable now may not be sustainable in the future.

Greg explained that his Section's aim was to ensure Wyong Council Staff had the resources at hand to make more sustainable decisions in day to day activities. By ensuring everyone in Wyong Shire Council is aware to ensure that sustainability is included in decision making, from everyday tasks like printing, ordering stationery and turning off computers, printers and lights to large decisions around planning multi million dollar projects, road construction and the management of Council assets. They have developed a set of guiding principles for sustainable decision making. His new unit is tasked with helping staff integrate these into their work.