



**GASCOYNE**  
**DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
Creating the climate for growth

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-26

24 January 2022

A photograph of several purple brushheath flowers (Leptocarpus tenax) in a natural, outdoor setting. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing the characteristic cylindrical, brush-like structure. The background is a soft-focus natural environment with trees and foliage. The lighting is natural, suggesting a bright day.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND COUNTRY**

The Gascoyne Development Commission (the Commission) would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners from the Yinggarda, Baiyungu, Malgana, Thadgari and Thalanyi groups. We pay our respects to elders past, present and future.

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# 1

## MESSAGES FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

### Chair message

The Commission Strategic Plan 2022–26 (Plan 26) is a broad framework that supports our vision – a commitment to deliver the best future for the Gascoyne region.

attached to the region’s natural attractions, rangeland and catchment management and indigenous culture and business development.

Plan 26 builds on previous Plans and more recent interactions



*Vision: Create an internationally-recognised region where people love to live, learn, work, contribute, retire and visit.*

Plan 26 has been developed within a new context of five key themes agreed by the overall Western Australian Regional Development portfolio. These are:

- the growth of non - renewable resources and related industries;
- growing new, alternative industries;
- normalising regional living standards;
- increasing aboriginal (participation in) economic development; and
- organisational excellence.

This said, Plan 26 is firmly focused on outcomes for the Gascoyne region. It pays attention to existing GDP generators such as horticulture, tourism and mining, as well as newer opportunities

at the local and regional levels. It will be the compass for how we prioritise, implement and measure what we do in the Gascoyne over the next few years. There is an expectation that this will be regularly reviewed.

The Gascoyne’s future will be built on strong, resilient and vibrant communities. This requires sustainable businesses; local education and training pathways that lead to local jobs; continued investment and innovation; functioning community groups and active leaders; and best practice social services and infrastructure.

Plan 26 requires the Board and executive of the Commission to lead on these and other items. To do so means maintaining a knowledgeable and networked Board, high performing and capable staff, and excellent

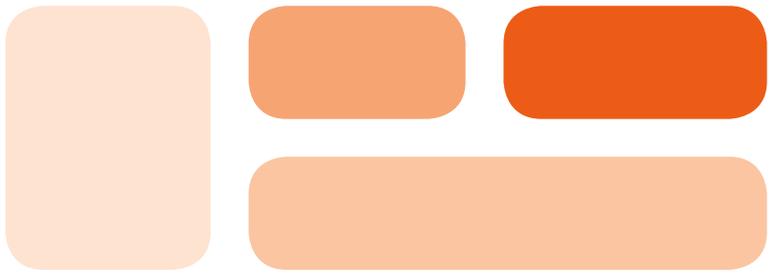
standards of governance and performance.

It also means turning our Plan 26 framework into actionable initiatives and projects, each of which must ‘return’ locally and regionally. For these to be truly effective, we will necessarily collaborate and partner across the community, business, and industry sectors, as well as between all levels of Government.

At the end of the day, we would like to make a real and lasting difference to the economic and social character of the Gascoyne.



Andy Munro  
Chair



## CEO foreword

Plan 26 identifies the range of strategies and initiatives to drive economic and social development in the Gascoyne region over coming years. It is consistent with similar plans for the other eight regional development commissions in the State.

Plan 26 is also well-aligned with Western Australia's Economic Development Framework, Diversify WA, which provides an economic blueprint for collaboration between government, industry and the community, and supports the government's focus on creating secure, quality jobs, growing and diversifying the economy, and attracting investment.

Staff are committed to deliver the Commission's vision to create an internationally recognised region where people love to live, learn, work, contribute, retire, and visit. Commission staff have a clear sense of purpose to guide our work and we are progressively repositioning the Commission to be influential in the key regional processes that will help shape the future of the Gascoyne region.

A strong economy and local and regional prosperity require the creation of sustainable jobs. For example, our Regional Economic Development Grants contribute to agriculture, tourism

and aboriginal economic development projects and operations. Also, our support of new initiatives, such as production of rare earths and mineral sands, has the capacity to assist the growth and diversification of the local economy.

The Commission continues to work closely with all levels of local government as evidenced by our work on the re-opening of Carnarvon One Mile Jetty project. Over the coming years, other key collaboration efforts include the 2023 Solar Hybrid Eclipse, development of new horticulture land, carbon farming and catchment management and greater involvement and self-determination of traditional owner managed body corporates.

The development of green hydrogen projects is also an emerging and exciting opportunity for the region.

The Gascoyne has higher unemployment than the State average yet, as exacerbated by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, relies heavily on transient labour. This challenge will require a combination of improving workforce accommodation and liveability to attract skilled labour and facilitating local training and local content. Addressing social disadvantage underpins these endeavours.

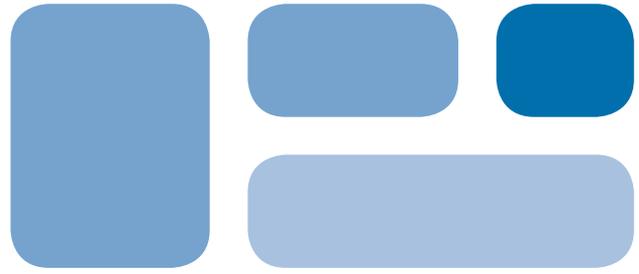


I would like to acknowledge the contribution of knowledge, experience and strategic direction provided by our Board and recognise the Commission's staff who are to be commended on their continued professionalism and commitment to working towards better outcomes and a brighter future for the region.

Tym Duncanson  
CEO

# 2

## OUR PURPOSE AND OUR VALUES



### 2.1 The purpose of the Gascoyne Development Commission is to promote sustainable economic and social development

The Commission is one of nine statutory authorities established by the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993 (WA)*. The Commission reports directly to the Minister for Regional Development.

Our purpose is connecting communities, industry, and the environment to generate sustainable economic and social development outcomes. This occurs through our strong project delivery, enabling and advocacy roles, each of which are focused on leveraging the Gascoyne's unique blend of environmental and cultural assets, social capital, small business and primary production capabilities.



Hon. Alannah MacTiernan MLC, Minister for Regional Development with GDC CEO Tym Duncanson and staff at the Carnarvon Office.

### 2.2 Our core values help us achieve our function

The way we interact with our community and business stakeholders, our partners and our co-workers is underpinned by our value set.

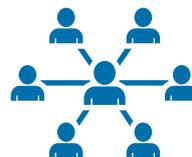
We value:



**Integrity** – We act with openness, fairness and honesty. We mean what we say and we deliver on commitments.



**Leadership** – In the State's smallest region by population we acknowledge the important leadership role expected of us by the community. We are grounded and outcomes focussed.



**Collaboration** – Collaboration is the primary way in which we operate, working respectfully together and with other stakeholders.



**Innovation** – We learn from the past to build the future, actively seeking opportunities to generate creative and sustainable solutions

An aerial photograph of a coastal area. In the foreground, there's a large, shallow lagoon with light-colored sand and water. To the left, a sandy beach is dotted with small green bushes. The background shows a larger body of water, possibly the ocean, and a distant landmass with a bay. The sky is clear and blue.

*The purpose of the Gascoyne  
Development Commission is to  
promote sustainable economic  
and social development*

# 3

## OUR STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### 3.1 Gascoyne is a uniquely positioned region with significant opportunity

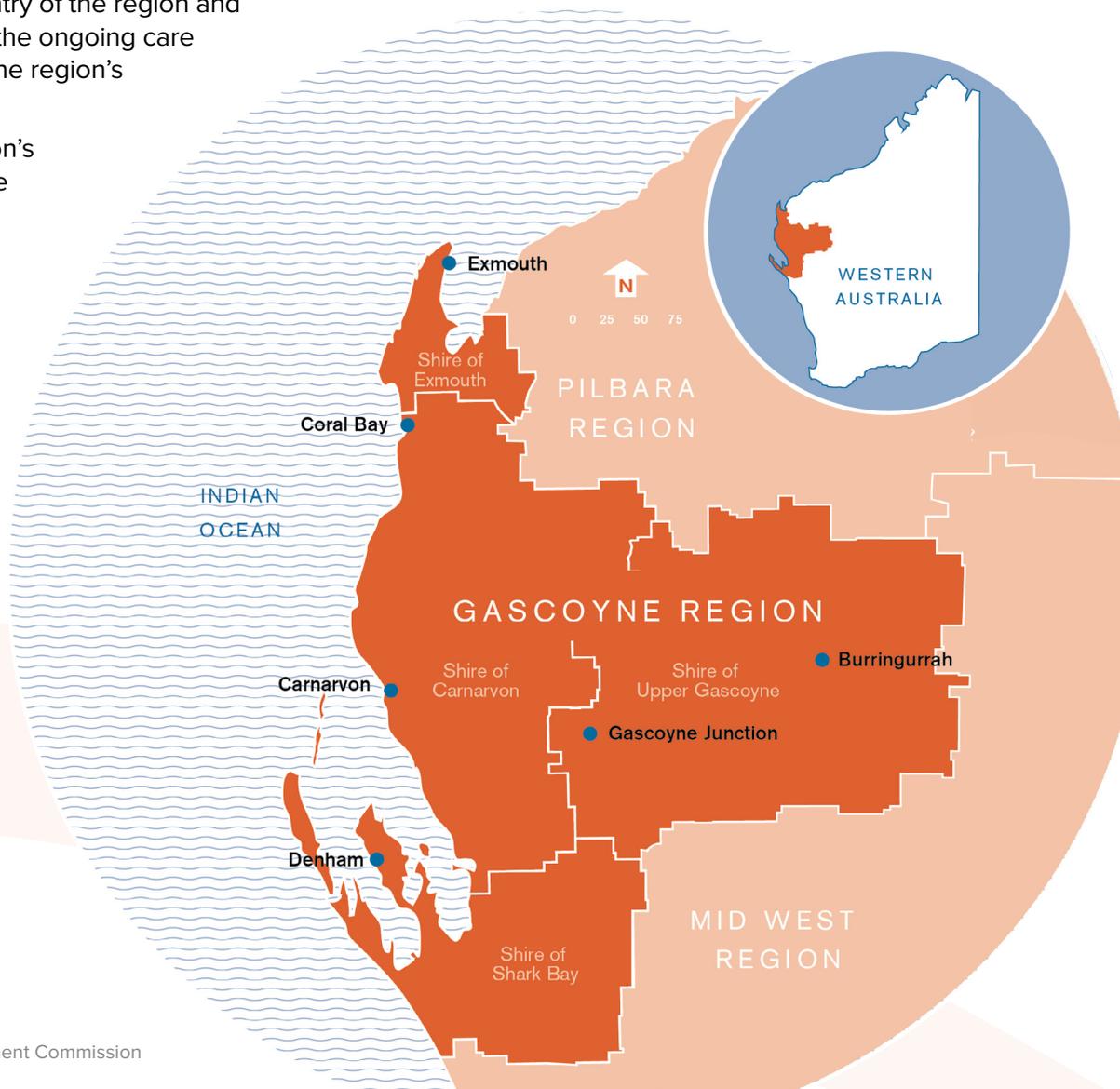
The Gascoyne region spans approximately 135,074 square kilometres, a little larger than the size of Greece, and includes the Shires of Carnarvon, Exmouth, Shark Bay and Upper Gascoyne. The region is bordered by more than 600 kilometres of coastline.

Aboriginal people have lived in the Gascoyne for tens of thousands of years. The Baiyungu, Malgana, Thadgari, Thalanyji and Yinggarda, language groups have an enduring connection to the land and sea country of the region and have a central role in the ongoing care and management of the region's natural assets.

Carnarvon is the region's largest town and is the major administrative

and service hub. Smaller regional towns include Exmouth in the north, Denham in the south and Gascoyne Junction in the east. The region has a total population of 9,262, with 14% identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

In 2020/21 the Gascoyne's Gross Regional Product was estimated at \$1.29 billion. Mining, tourism, horticulture and pastoralism are the region's major employers and economic drivers.



# ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

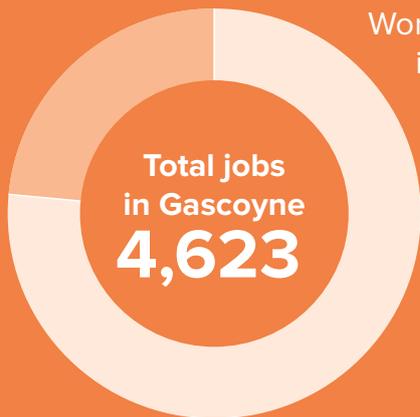


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## Regional Overview



### Employment



Works and lives in Gascoyne  
**3,536**

Lives elsewhere, works in Gascoyne  
**1,087**

**Population** **9,262**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

**14%**

Average Age



**39**

Highest WA Average Daily **Solar Exposure**

**84%** of Land is Covered by Pastoral Leases

Home Ownership  
**5418**

School Enrolments  
**1439**

# ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT



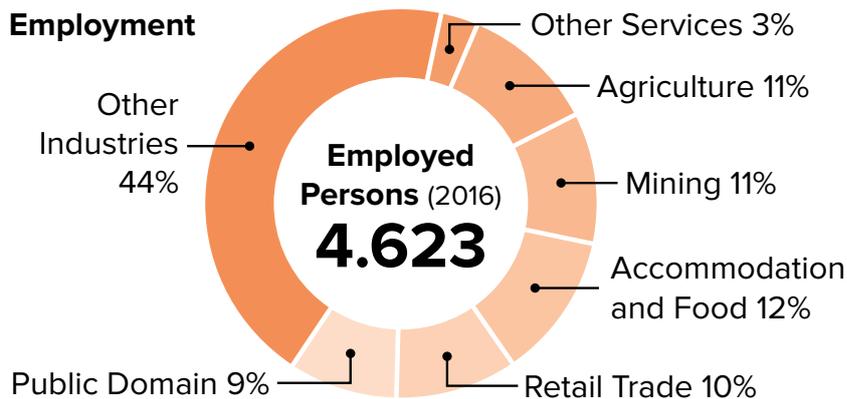
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## Major Industries

### Value of Economic Output (millions \$)

Resources	712
Construction	221
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	214
Transport Postal and Warehousing	170
Tourism and Hospitality	141
Public Administration and Safety	128
Health Care and Social Assistance	53
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	52
Education and Training	51
Other	522

### Employment



WA's Largest Prawn Fishery - **Shark Bay**



Main Mined Commodity - **Salt**

### Tourism

Overnight Visitors (2020)



**268,500**

Total Visitor Nights (2020 ■ millions)

**1.75**



Average Annual Spend (2015-18 ■ millions)

**\$171**



**The Gascoyne's Ningaloo Reef contributed \$110 million in value added to the Western Australian economy in 2018-19, supporting more than 1,000 full time jobs.**



# SOCIAL SNAPSHOT



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Population **9,262**

Percentage of people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander **14%**

Population density **0.068 sq km**

Pres school-aged enrolments **101**

January 2022 jobseeker benefit recipients **729**,  
down **16%** from January 2021.

High school and primary enrolments **1439**

Trainees and apprentices **110**

Air travel 2020-2021, Passengers 10469, aircraft movements **3267**

2021 Gascoyne regional price index **102.3**

Median weekly household income (2016)

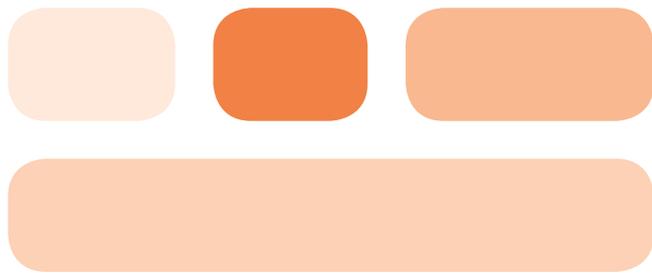
Carnarvon	<b>\$1,242</b>	Denham	<b>\$917</b>
Exmouth	<b>\$1,740</b>	Gascoyne Junction	<b>\$962</b>

**Social Marital Status (2016)**

Married in a registered marriage	2,358	
Married in a de facto marriage	1,086	
Not married	2,384	
Not applicable	3,650	

**Persons (2016)**

Two persons in family	1,107	
Three persons in family	425	
Four persons in family	408	
Five persons in family	149	
Six persons in family	75	
Not applicable	4,699	



### 3.4 Overview of opportunities and challenges

#### 3.4.1 Opportunities

The Gascoyne Region is strategically placed to support new mineral, resource and renewable industry projects. Exmouth and Carnarvon already play a key role in the resource sector supply chain, supporting offshore oil and gas in the Carnarvon Basin, high-value salt operations at Useless Loop in the Shire of Shark Bay and Lake MacLeod in the Shire of Carnarvon. Rare earths, gypsum, limestone, and other basic raw materials also present significant opportunity as part of the region's resource base.

The Carnarvon area is a prime location for renewable hydrogen. Carnarvon has among the State's best locations for wind and solar energy generation, with consistent wind and sun. Carnarvon is strategically placed to deliver on the WA Governments target to achieve 10 per cent green hydrogen in the Dampier-Bunbury pipeline by 2030.

Major projects represent a significant opportunity to leverage upstream service provider capacity and capability for example in construction, maintenance and community engagement and to support local business participation. Supporting upstream capacity is also an essential step in attracting new industries to the region.

Tourism plays a significant role in driving the Gascoyne economy. An average of 292,000 people visited the region annually in the years 2016-18, with 31 per cent of visitors in 2019 being international visitors. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic international and domestic border disruption, Western Australian tourists now account for most regional visitors to the region's two major tourist drawcards: the Ningaloo Coast and Shark Bay World Heritage area. Accommodation and hospitality operators have been prime beneficiaries. Extending the tourism season to

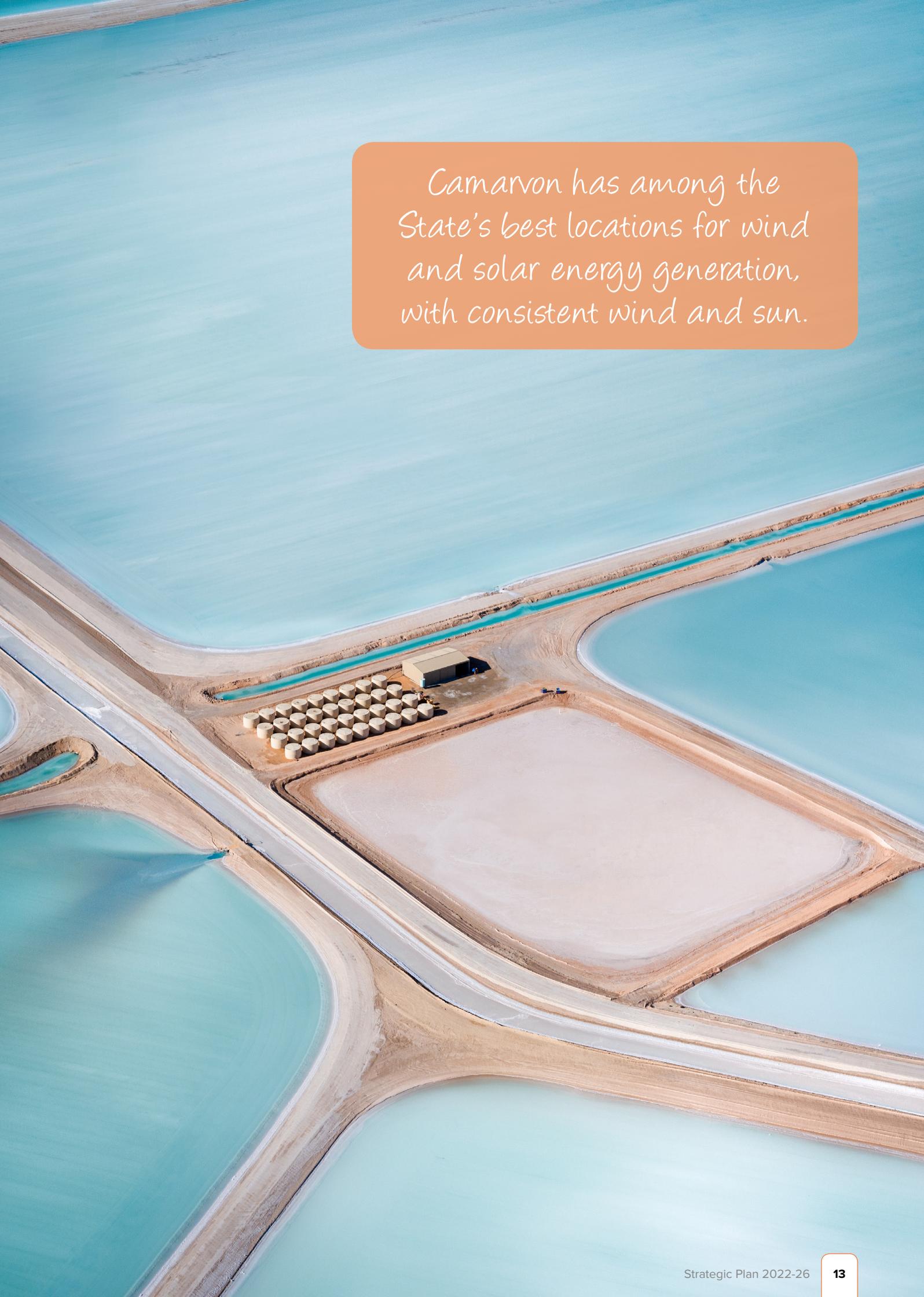
become year-round is a significant development opportunity, as is new tourism experiences. Astrotourism and Aboriginal cultural tourism are key opportunities.

Agriculture and fisheries are also important economic drivers. The Carnarvon horticultural district is supported by rich alluvial soils on the Gascoyne River floodplain. More than 150 horticultural farms produce more than 45,000 tonnes of summer and winter season produce valued at over \$100 million, primarily for the Perth market. The district will expand significantly with the 300 ha of new horticultural land released in 2021. New products, processing opportunities and food and beverage production are important development opportunities.

Pastoralism occurs across vast tracts of the Gascoyne and makes a significant contribution to the regional economy. The carrying capacity of the sub-region's pastoral areas varies from season to season as a function of rainfall and pasture cover. An increase in productivity in the pastoral sector relies on continuous improvement in land management practices. Restoring native vegetation cover in degraded areas, improving soil water content through slowing surface flows and other regenerative practices are key to the sustainable development of this sector.

Diversification, specifically in food production and tourism and related industries is a key opportunity. The region is superbly placed to increasingly benefit from the transition to a lower carbon intensity future, especially as a producer of renewable hydrogen and offering bio-sequestration services. The region leads by example increasingly relying on renewables for its own energy needs. Sustainable food production, tourism and reduced carbon emissions are increasing intertwined and are emerging as the region's strategic advantage.

The Gascoyne region's commercial fishing and aquaculture sector contributes \$55 million to the



*Camarvon has among the State's best locations for wind and solar energy generation, with consistent wind and sun.*

# ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT



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## Housing Overview



### Building Approvals (2020 - 2021 FY)

Number of Residential Approvals

**48**



**840ha**

of land available for further residential development

### House Sales (12 months - 30/5/2021)

Number of Sales

**233**

Median Price

**\$396,319 to \$440,473**

% Price Change

**32%**

### Rentals (12 months - 30/5/2021)

Number of Rentals

**114**

Median Price Per Week

**\$417**

% Price Change

**12%**

*Attracting and retaining resident populations helps regional centres thrive.*



regional economy. Wild shellfish and finfish are key to the region's fisheries. The Exmouth Gulf Prawn and Shark Bay Prawn fisheries valued at \$35 million, were the first two WA fisheries to be Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified under the WA Government's MSC plan for fisheries. Other Gascoyne fisheries with MSC accreditation in place or underway include Shark Bay Scallop, Demersal Scalefish, Inner Shark Bay Scalefish and Shark Bay Blue Swimmer Crabs. Aquaculture opportunities in the production of pearls, giant clams, freshwater aquarium fish, edible oysters and beta carotene production have also been trialled.

With close to one thousand businesses in the Region, small and medium business development is crucial to the region's economic prosperity.

Attracting and retaining resident populations helps regional centres thrive. The opportunity is to work with operators across all sectors to create local jobs, and to attract people to live and work in the region. Normalising regional living standards is critical to growing regional populations.

Social infrastructure and services underpin the health and wellbeing of the Gascoyne's diverse communities. Essential services including education (including early childhood), medical services, aged care and social services, make an important contribution to the liveability of the region. These services are key to attracting and retaining new residents to the Gascoyne.

The Carnarvon Health Campus is the region's largest health infrastructure, providing higher services including inpatient and outpatient services, emergency care, residential aged care, community child health, allied health, mental health and drug and alcohol services. A new purpose-built 38 bed residential aged care facility named Gnullingoo Mia opened in 2021. The facility is collocated with the Carnarvon Health Campus.

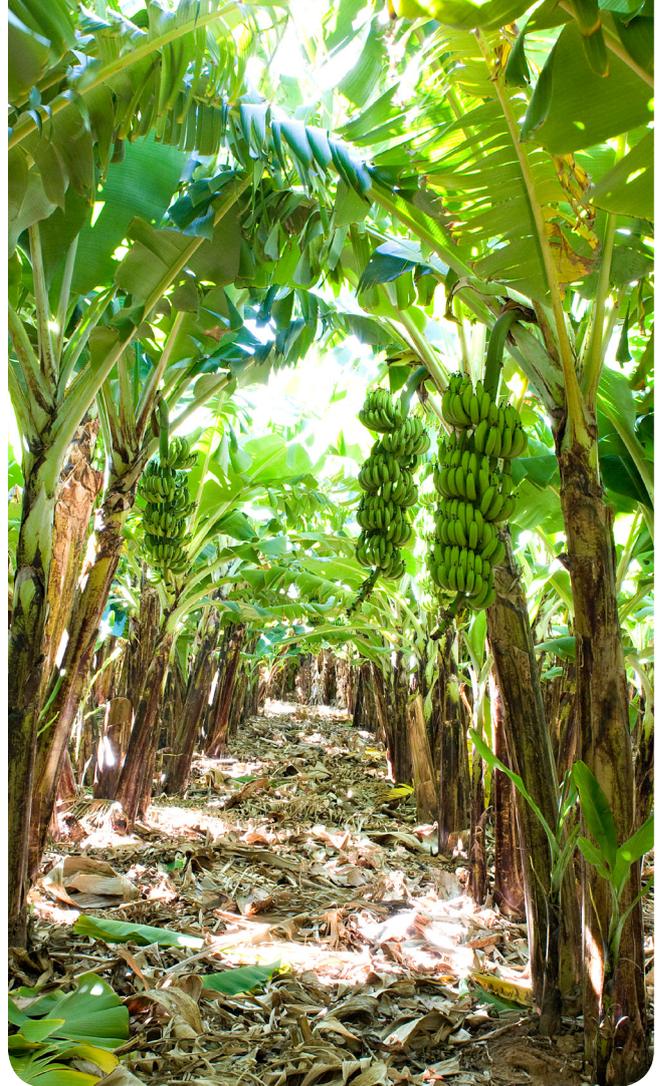
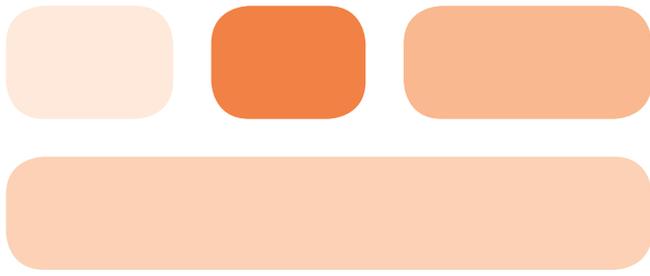
A district health campus provides services the Exmouth community including emergency care,

general practitioner appointments, allied health, community child health, mental health, residential aged care and home and community care. Nursing posts are maintained at Denham and Coral Bay.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) also provides an important service to communities in the region. The RFDS's aircraft, medical infrastructure and flight crew are based outside the region; with the nearest base being located at Meekatharra. Increasing visitor numbers travelling to the region's remote destinations is placing greater emphasis on the continued need for this service.

The Carnarvon Aboriginal Medical Service is an Aboriginal Community controlled health services. It offers primary, secondary, and tertiary health and medical services to the Aboriginal people of Carnarvon and Mungallah Village, and Gascoyne Junction (Wodgemia community).





### 3.4.2 Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to continue having a major impact on each of the Gascoyne's key industry sectors and communities for the duration of Plan 26, including:

- Changes to the movement of people over international, domestic, and regional borders. This has impacted the availability of seasonal workers in the horticulture and tourism sectors. The Gascoyne has also enjoyed unprecedented tourist visitation from Western Australians, particularly in accommodation and hospitality sectors.
- Supply chain impacts. This has impacted the availability of imported and value-added domestic products, with major disruption to the availability of building and construction materials, coupled with significant demand in the construction sector arising from unprecedented government stimulus.

Whilst the Gascoyne's tourism industry is expected to continue growing, ongoing uncertainty around the return of international and interstate visitors is a challenge for experiential tour operators, as well as for investment decision making.

The Gascoyne's small population remains a key challenge. Efforts to improve living standards are central to attracting people to live and work in the region. Government services, accessibility via road and air infrastructure, amenity, and employment opportunities for resident populations are key. Membership and leadership of community groups is often difficult.

Securing and retaining a suitable workforce will continue to be critical for most industries and employers. The shortage of residential housing across the region is a major barrier to development in all the Gascoyne's key industry sectors. Cost of living and access to high quality essential public services including health care and education

(including early childhood education) are key challenges.

Household cost of living has increased. Housing costs and availability remain key challenges across all centres.

Carnarvon, Exmouth, and Denham have access to (pre-school aged) early childhood education services, although demand exceeds the availability of places at all locations.

While medical services are on offer in all major towns, residents remain concerned about the wait times to access GP services, access to tertiary and specialist care and the cost of travel to access such services. Meeting demand for medical services at the Region's key tourist nodes is a key challenge, with unprecedented numbers of visitors.

The social disadvantage in the Aboriginal community is a national and regional priority. Aboriginal people in the Gascoyne continue to experience poorer health and wellbeing outcomes than non-Aboriginal people. Access to adequate government services and economic opportunities remain key challenges. A lack of understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage values and connection to country among the non-Aboriginal community is also a key challenge.

# ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT



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## Local Profiles

Carnarvon

Population  
**5077**

Gross Regional  
Product  
**\$915**  
million

Exmouth

Population  
**2935**

Gross Regional  
Product  
**\$293**  
million

Snark Bay

Population  
**960**

Gross Regional  
Product  
**\$72**  
million

Upper Gascoyne

Population  
**290**

Gross Regional  
Product  
**\$14**  
million

# 4

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### 4.1 Grow existing, and find and develop new, non-renewable resource and related industries

Research undertaken by the Regional Development Portfolio demonstrates that the path to diversification should leverage current strengths, including in the non-renewables industries. Greater focus on 'up-stream' industries (i.e., inputs into the non-renewables industries) could help to drive greater economic diversification.

Our focus is to maintain existing salt and gypsum production (Useless Loop and Lake McLeod) noting salt production is largely a renewable extractive industry, sand extraction for construction within the region, and provide business and workforce support for neighbouring industries, including offshore and Pilbara based projects. The focus

is also to help develop new operations such as Coburn Mineral Sands Project and Yangibana Rare Earths Project.

The identification and development of new non-renewables should also be seen as an opportunity. Assisting an understanding of the underlying regional mineral base and linking with companies active in the exploration and early project development phases will be important.

We contribute by advocating and planning for supporting infrastructure and facilitating local employment and workforce development and access to local businesses. We work across governments to coordinate public effort and maximise social and economic benefits for the region.



The focus in this theme is to support diversification of the non-renewables industry in the region and to support local businesses to participate in the industry by providing services and support to the mining industry. Success also relies on attracting new workers to the region by ensuring the Gascoyne is a great place to live and work (see section 4.3).



Strategic initiative(s) / objectives	Projects / deliverables	Measures of success	Approach
1.1 Attract non-renewable industries to the region.	Investigate functional land and housing market constraints, identify and prioritise the source of market failures and advocate to implement corrective action.	Sufficient land available for residential development in major towns. Market failures identified.	Collaborate
	Implement strategies to address workforce accommodation shortages in all centres.	Building approvals increased.	Collaborate
	Identify economic infrastructure needs and logistics chain opportunities (including regional flights). Attract funding for new infrastructure and new supply chain opportunities to the region.	Developments are not constrained by land, infrastructure and services. Increased infrastructure investment.	Coordinate
	Advocate and support the region as a source of labour and services for industry and businesses. Work with education and training service sectors to provide appropriate skill pathways.	Partnerships between training providers and industry supported.	Collaborate
	Encourage a strategic approach to workforce development and accommodation.	Workforce development and accommodation plans developed by industry early in the project cycle.	Collaborate
	Investigate development of a regional mining hub at Carnarvon.	Develop a mining and community collaboration forum.	Coordinate
	1.2 Advocate for policy that leverages the resource sectors' social license obligations & ensures practical fulfillment.	Promote non-renewable industries as active participants and partners in regional social and economic activity.	Chambers of Commerce and related groups are viable and actively supported by non-renewable industries.
1.3 Support the diversification of the non-renewable resource sector.	Identify new non-renewables industry opportunities and support project proponents through early phase development.	Exploration initiatives and projects are supported.	Coordinate
1.4 Maximise local content outcomes within the non-renewable sector.	Maximise the participation of regional businesses in regional contracting opportunities leading to employment and economic growth. Facilitate and influence local content very early in the project life cycle.	Maintain a local content advisory service dedicated to the region.	Collaborate
	Support the development of business capability and capacity to supply to government and private sector (capacity and capability).	Chambers of Commerce are supported. The value of local content in government and private sector contracts increases.	Collaborate



#### 4.2 Grow existing, and find and develop new, other alternative industries

The research undertaken by the Regional Development Portfolio identifies the importance of economic diversification. This includes diversification away from non-renewable industries, as well as from dominant local industries.

For the Gascoyne, this means strengthening the tourism and primary industries sectors, ensuring their resilience and sustainability. It also means providing a pathway for upstream opportunities in these sectors.

In tourism, the focus is on leveraging nature-based tourism to support new and expanded high spend hospitality and overnight accommodation developments at each of the region’s tourist nodes. Parts of the Gascoyne have highly mobile

populations. The tourist towns of Exmouth, Coral Bay and Denham see populations swell during peak season. Seasonal primary industries including Carnarvon’s horticultural district also rely on a transient workforce. Appropriate accommodation for seasonal workers is key to ensuring the success of these sectors.

For primary industries, this means looking closely at supply chains and strengthening the natural resource base. In horticulture, the focus is on reducing risk through collaborative approaches to pest management, water security and market access. In pastoralism, this means protecting natural capital through regenerative land management practices while leveraging new opportunities in carbon farming. In fisheries and aquaculture, the focus is on research and development.

Economic diversification also relies on leveraging new and emerging industries. Renewable hydrogen is a significant opportunity for the Gascoyne’s economic future and the Commission is also uniquely placed to facilitate development of this sector by providing access to central government and local scale stakeholders including suppliers.

Development of industries that also leverage the natural capital of the region such as arts and culture, the knowledge economy, education training and research are also opportunities for the future. Exmouth’s marine research laboratory, new training opportunities in rural health in Carnarvon are opportunities. Supporting Aboriginal cultural knowledge sharing through cultural tourism and land management opportunities is also a pathway towards economic diversification (see section 4.4). Built and non-built infrastructure are key enablers.

Strategic initiative(s) / objectives	Projects / deliverables	Measures of success	Approach
2.1 Digital infrastructure to develop and sustain remote, highly skilled workforces.	Work with central agencies to plan and prioritise improvements in digital connectivity and facilitate delivery of upgrades.	All planned projects successfully delivered. Telecommunications service quality is improved.	Collaborate
2.2 Support large scale renewable energy projects with the potential to transform regional communities.	Position the Gascoyne as a significant renewable energy producer.	Gascoyne as recognised as a potential renewable energy hub.	Coordinate

Strategic initiative(s) / objectives	Projects / deliverables	Measures of success	Approach
2.3 Capture opportunities from the new 'low carbon' economy	Enable pastoral industry participation in carbon farming.	The economic value of carbon farming has increased.	Collaborate
	Fund and complete existing solar power installations and battery systems to reduce energy costs and carbon footprints. Collaborate with partners in complementary industry sectors including the knowledge economy, research and science.	Percentage of renewable energy is increasing.	Collaborate
2.4 Streamline land use planning/ industrial land assembly to reduce start-up costs and to incentivise regional investment.	Work with lead agencies to facilitate industrial land assembly.	Developments are not constrained by land, infrastructure and services	Collaborate
2.5 Streamline critical infrastructure for services and supply chains to reduce costs and improve competitiveness.	Implement strategies to deliver new quality workforce accommodation in all centres.	New construction of quality workforce accommodation.	Collaborate
	Tourism infrastructure plan developed for the Gascoyne. New private and public sector funding supports tourism infrastructure investment.	Tourism infrastructure needs are clearly communicated to all stakeholders. New investment realised.	Coordinate
	Advocate and support Carnarvon to Muchea road upgrade to reduce freight costs for primary producers, increase reliability and reduce the cost of living. Support local governments to strategically upgrade the local road network.	Develop a strategic framework of regional and local road investment.	Collaborate
2.6 Build natural capital.	Support the pastoral industry to adopt regenerative land management practices.	Deliver a Gascoyne River catchment project.	Coordinate
	Investigate carrying capacity (sustainable yield) of natural assets that enable tourism and upstream industries on the Ningaloo Coast.	Carrying capacity of the Ningaloo Coast is understood and communicated to decision-makers and the community.	Collaborate
2.7 Inform government policies that prioritise regional investment.	Provide economic and social snapshots that are consistent across the portfolio and inform policy development.	Quarterly housing, workforce and tourism snapshots are published and shared with stakeholders.	Coordinate
	Build relationships with stakeholders to raise the profile of the Gascoyne as a food and trade hub.	Food and trade development constraints are removed.	Collaborate
	Build capacity and capability of the private sector in the agriculture and food sector.	Agriculture and food GRP is increased.	



### 4.3 Normalise regional livings standards

Our focus is also on attracting and retaining skilled and talented people to the region, which relies on continuously striving to make the region a great place to live and work for all age groups and demographics. While employment opportunities are key to attracting and retaining people, location factors or liveability play a key part. Health services, education, cost of living, amenity and lifestyle and connection to community are fundamental society building blocks, and enablers of economic development.

Our focus is to leverage new projects and industries to ensure the greatest impact on regional liveability. Our approach is to understand local

and regional demographics, living standards and to work closely with the agencies that are accountable for service delivery and infrastructure improvements where these are required.

Our opportunity is to promote the health and education opportunities, reduce living costs, support amenity and lifestyle, and strengthen community connections. We also support events that profile fairness and inclusivity through small but strategic investments.

As the Gascoyne region meets its potential resulting from its unique combination of natural environment and lifestyle, population could grow strongly. The Commission envisages the population could double by early next decade.



Strategic initiative(s) / objectives	Projects / deliverables	Measures of success	Approach
3.1 Advocate for end user service levels parity with the metropolitan area.	Work with lead agencies to identify gaps and barriers in quality health care, aged care, education and childcare services to inform policy.	Service gaps are identified and addressed.	Collaborate
	Work with lead agencies to attract private and public investment in health, aged care and childcare infrastructure.	New infrastructure investment for health services.	Coordinate
	Work with lead agencies to address skills and worker shortages, increase access to training and education.	Education/ TAFE pathways accessible. Job vacancy rates decline.	Collaborate
	Work with unemployment support organisations to facilitate greater participation in the workforce.	Unemployment and underemployment rates decline.	Collaborate
3.2 Improve liveability in regional WA.	Identify opportunities to reduce the cost of goods and services in regional centres, with a focus on household energy costs. Supporting lower cost renewable energy technologies including rooftop solar and battery energy storage.	Household energy costs reduced in real terms.	Collaborate
	Implement strategies to deliver new quality affordable residential accommodation in all centres.	New construction of quality workforce accommodation.	Collaborate
	Advocate and promote the region's liveability and lifestyle, including its access to green space and world class natural environments.	Communication strategy delivered promoting the liveability of the region.	Coordinate
	Track key liveability indicators and communicate to stakeholders.	Social indicator snapshots are published and shared with stakeholders.	Coordinate
	Identify and advocate for early childhood education facilities and infrastructure.	Investment in new infrastructure projects.	Collaborate
Leverage key industry, tourism, community and sporting events to promote the region as a place to live and work, with a focus on the Ningaloo Eclipse 2023.	Community grants and sponsorship funding is used to raise the profile of the region to an external audience.	Collaborate	



#### 4.4 Increase the economic participation of Aboriginal people

The region is rich in Aboriginal culture and history. Diverse language groups, cultures, knowledge of country and economic development aspirations are central to expanding the participation of Aboriginal people in the economic framework of the Region.

Recent Native Title determinations across the region have given added recognition to Traditional Owners.

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap sets the tone for working together to overcome the inequality experience by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island (ATSI) people, and to achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians. Its priority reforms centre on partnerships, building the ATSI community-controlled sector, transforming government organisations to work better for ATSI people and informing communities through improving access to data and information.

This is especially important in the Gascoyne where more than one in seven residents identify as being ATSI.

Our focus is on genuine employment and partnership opportunities. Our outlook is to continue working with individuals and groups to help create sustainable businesses and employment opportunities. Central to this strategy is to further support Gwoonwardu Mia as a key economic development hub for the region.

Strategic initiative(s) / objectives	Projects / deliverables	Measures of success	Approach
4.1 Foster genuine co-design of and participation by Aboriginal people in business, economic and service delivery initiatives and opportunities.	Lead by example to maintain high levels of ATSI employment.	Percentage of ATSI employees and Board members increases.	Align
	Maintain a work culture that encourages participation, truth telling, recognition and understanding.	Reconciliation Action Plan developed and implemented.	Align

Strategic initiative(s) / objectives	Projects / deliverables	Measures of success	Approach
4.2 Activate Aboriginal capital held through interests in land, culture and skills into the mainstream economy.	Ensure all GDC community and steering groups include representatives of the ATSI community. Aboriginal Traditional Owner representation is especially important for place-based community and steering groups.	100% of GDC's community and steering groups include Traditional Owner and/or ATSI representatives.	Align
	Advocate to project partners for increased representation of Traditional Owners and/or ATSI community representation on external groups and associations.	Representation request from all groups that GDC participates in.	Coordinate
	Develop and maintain strong relationships with all Traditional Owner groups in the region and ensure timely sharing of information about the Commission's strategic intent, new projects and participation opportunities.	Relationships with all Traditional Owner groups are established and strengthened over the life of this plan.	Coordinate
4.3 Better integration of ATSI procurement strategies with support programs to build capacity and capability.	Maintain and resource an Aboriginal Economic Development program.	Program milestones are achieved.	Coordinate
	Maximise the participation of ATSI businesses in regional contracting opportunities leading to employment and economic growth. Facilitate and influence local content very early in the project life cycle.	The number of ATSI businesses in the Gascoyne has increased. The value of contracts awarded to ATSI businesses has increased.	Coordinate
4.4 Support for Aboriginal people in mainstream businesses.	Ensure Gwoonwardu Mia remains open and remains the effective focus of Aboriginal economic development in the region.	Centre is open and operating effectively.	Coordinate
	Provide targeted support to expand existing and new ATSI businesses.	At least 10 ATSI businesses supported over at least a two-year period.	Coordinate
	Facilitate at least two new primary industry related enterprises by supporting ATSI people.	Businesses remain active for two years.	Coordinate
4.5 Activate Aboriginal capital held through interests in land, culture and skills into the mainstream economy.	Support Traditional Owners to access financial capital, enabling services and economic development opportunities through partnerships with agencies and other service providers.	Traditional Owner groups are linked with agencies and other stakeholders.	Coordinate
	Interest in land culture and skills are leveraged to enable economic development.	Traditional Owners oversee development of key infrastructure.	Collaborate
	Support Traditional Owners to establish at least two new Aboriginal cultural tourism enterprises.	Two businesses are supported and successfully operating.	Coordinate
	Recognise and celebrate the enduring connection to country of Traditional Owners across the region.	Support cultural recognition opportunities with strategic investment.	Coordinate

#### 4.5 Organisational excellence

As a key enabler for regional economic development, the Portfolio requires collaboration across regions and across Government, as well as effective governance, systems and processes.

Stronger use of evidence to inform recommendations for regional development opportunities is also required. Key to this is identifying, attracting, and retaining the talent, skills and experience necessary to collect and use relevant evidence, support investment recommendations and drive regional economic development.

Our role is coordination across government, to gather data and identify gaps and inconsistencies, and to provide strategic investment where possible. We contribute in unique ways as the most senior State government representatives, a leadership role that is more apparent in a region with a smaller population and direct access to fewer commercial and social resources.

*Most importantly to achieve our role, we maintain a highly capable and high performing team focused on local and regional outcomes but cognisant of national and global trends and influences.*

Strategic initiative(s) / objectives	Projects / deliverables	Measures of success	Approach
5.1. Create a unified Portfolio voice on regional development.	Actively engage and support the Regional Development Council and Regional Development Alliance.	Active engagement and support is provided.	Coordinate
	Develop and provide regularly produced, consistent and co-branded economic data.	Twice yearly economic and social indicator snapshots are published and shared with stakeholders.	Coordinate
5.2. Build collaborative and trusted partnerships across government, community, private sector, and ATSI people.	Support the Minister for Regional Development and other Ministers through providing timely information, advice, regional visits, and events.	Quality and timely advice provided.	Coordinate
	Provide effective support to the Commission Chair and Board members.	Regular Board meetings and timely supply of reliable information.	Coordinate
	Support local government to deliver strategic outcomes and advocate priorities for State support.	Maintain a register of local government priorities.	Align
	Build and maintain a reputation for developing quality and achievable business cases and deliver projects to a high standard.	Projects delivered on time and on budget. High quality businesses cases prepared with support from key stakeholders.	Coordinate
	Deliver the State's grant programs to a high standard – Regional Economic Development grants, election commitments, historic grant funding.	Proponents deliver grant-funded projects on time and meet agreed milestones and outcomes.	Align
	Ensure high standards of corporate governance.	No qualifications in Annual Report.	Coordinate
	Engage the community and industry in a genuine, efficient, effective, and contemporary manner.	Maintain and implement a Communication Plan.	Coordinate
	Ensure stakeholders' expectations of service delivery are met.	Achieve a stakeholder satisfaction rating of at least 80%.	Coordinate
Attract, develop and maintain employee talent.	Improving staff satisfaction measures.	Coordinate	

# 5

## IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION



### 5.1 Our approach is collaborative

We work with others to achieve the Commission's vision. Plan 26 is guided by the principles outlined in Western Australia's Regional Development Planning Framework and the Regional Development Portfolio planning documents. The guiding principles identify coordination of State-wide effort, collaboration where effort is applied at a regional level ensuring a high degree of consistency with other regions and alignment where bespoke effort is required in a targeted area of the State but is informed by State-wide objectives.

In some cases, and due to the region's relatively small population and strategic capacity, our role will extend to project delivery and facilitation of infrastructure management, within the constraints of our enabling legislation.

Plan 26 is intended to provide stakeholders with a clear understanding of where we are headed, our priorities, and the areas where we will concentrate our efforts. Plan 26 also creates a framework for measuring our impact. This will be achieved through an operational implementation plan including specific performance criteria.

The CEO and staff of the Commission are responsible for the delivery of this plan. The CEO is accountable to the Commission's Board, who have an overarching responsibility for the Commission's performance.

The Board and staff commitment is to work closely with those stakeholders and ensure the best outcomes are delivered for the Gascoyne region.

### 5.2 Monitoring and evaluation is fundamental to success

It is important for the Commission to measure and evaluate the progress in relation to strategic initiatives, deliverables, and actions. Central to this is: did we do what we said we would do and did that achieve the desired impact?

Performance monitoring and evaluation will be enabled through:

1. Development of an operational level implementation plan with key performance indicators.
2. Internal monitoring through the annual business planning process.
3. Annual client satisfaction surveys, the results of which will be published in the Annual Report.
4. Regular reporting to the Board.
5. Regular reporting to the public industry and community groups to inform policy, monitor progress and set the focus for future work.

As an important adjunct to its role in regional leadership, the Commission is committed to producing regular reports to the Board and where appropriate, the public, industry, and community groups to help inform policy, monitor progress and set the focus for future work.

A hiker with a yellow backpack and a white cap is walking away from the camera on a dirt path. The path leads towards a large, rugged red rock formation under a clear blue sky. The foreground is filled with sparse, dry vegetation.

*Monitoring and evaluation is  
fundamental to success.*



**GASCOYNE**  
**DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
Creating the climate for growth

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