

# Green future strategies



Can proactive environmental actions today pave the way for a higher quality of life and stronger economic outcomes for future generations?

Environmental sustainability is essential for the well-being of future generations. By embracing sustainable practices, local communities can foster a cleaner, more prosperous future, benefiting both the environment and the economy. Businesses adopting green practices not only reduce their environmental footprint but also enhance their competitiveness and create economic growth.

One of the most impactful local sustainability initiatives is Sustainable is Attainable, which focuses on developing practical solutions for waste and by-products in food production. The program initiated by Venture Timaru, brings together businesses, universities, and research organisations to collaboratively address challenges with biological and plastic waste in the food manufacturing process. This initiative has expanded its reach, being adopted in the Hawkes Bay and Manawatu regions, and focusses on progressing circular economy, value extraction and waste minimisation opportunities.

The Powering Up initiative, developed through the RETA (Regional Energy Transition Accelerator) report, plays a key role in Timaru's efforts to decarbonize its industries. RETA focuses on transitioning Timaru's industries from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources. Biomass, sourced from local wood residues, has been identified as a renewable energy solution capable of meeting up to 40% of the region's energy needs. This shift towards renewable energy is a crucial component of the region's goal to reduce emissions by over 90% by 2036.

The RETA report was developed through collaboration between Venture Timaru, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), Alpine Energy, and several local energy providers and industries. The report outlines clear pathways for industrial decarbonization, helping Timaru's industries navigate their transition to a sustainable, low-carbon economy.

A study commissioned last year by Environment Canterbury revealed that the Timaru District Council area has a relatively high proportion of emissions from stationary energy in industry, second only to Christchurch and Selwyn in scale. This highlights significant potential for emission-reduction efforts in the region. The largest sources of emissions in rural economy-based districts like Timaru stem from industrial processes alongside pastoral agriculture and transport.

Local processing companies are progressing a variety of initiatives to proactively reduce their carbon emissions. TDC Climate Change Officer Rhys Taylor recently spoke with two of these - McCain Foods and DB Draught Brewery to understand the actions they've undertaken. Both companies demonstrate how industrial decarbonization can yield significant environmental and economic benefits.

McCain Foods, a global leader in food production, has implemented several sustainable practices. In 2022/2023, they introduced a fryer heat recovery system, saving 15,200 tonnes of CO2 annually. This solution has been adopted by six other McCain plants worldwide. The company also transitioned to electric forklifts, installed LED lighting, and is exploring solar PV generation. Additionally, McCain now sources wood pellets from Waimate, reducing transportation emissions and waste, with the company now producing much less boiler waste, composting it instead of sending it to landfill. McCains CO2 reduction efforts are the equivalent to taking over 10,000 cars off the road.

DB Draught Brewery has also made significant strides in sustainability. The brewery reduced its water usage per litre of beer from 6 litres to 3.18 litres by 2024 and 2.55 litres in their best month, lowering energy consumption across production processes.

With a \$5 million investment in wastewater treatment and the decommissioning of coal-fired boilers, the brewery cut 98% of its carbon emissions from heating. Additionally, DB Draught replaced fossil-fuel forklifts with electric models and use hybrid battery-petrol vehicles to reduce fossil fuel consumption in over 90% of their sales reps' fleet.

The success of these businesses highlights that sustainability is not only attainable but vital for the future. By prioritizing waste reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, Timaru's industries are creating a cleaner, greener community while driving economic growth. As the region continues to implement sustainable practices, it sets an example for others to follow, proving that proactive environmental efforts today can lead to thriving communities tomorrow.



Adrian Finlayson shows part of the Brewery refrigeration system, using ammonia as refrigerant in an outdoor-located unit. The chill is transferred by heat exchanger to less-hazardous glycol for piped circulation through the plant

## Let's shape Timaru's future together.

The Towards 2050 plan is about more than just infrastructure or workforce development —it's about building a community where everyone can thrive. From creating meaningful career opportunities and expanding local businesses to fostering social cohesion and environmental sustainability, this plan is designed to support every resident in Timaru.

**Your voice is key** to ensuring our district remains sustainable, innovative, and prosperous for generations to come. Take part in the survey and help us build a brighter future for all—now and for those who will call Timaru home in the years ahead.

## Help Develop: An Aspirational Vision for 2050.

Take the survey



Scan QR code or visit,  
[vtdevelopment.co.nz](https://vtdevelopment.co.nz/towards-2050)  
/towards-2050



"The Towards 2050 (and beyond) plan is not about me or you...its about US. Together lets be bold and innovative as we establish the foundations for our great district being the best it possibly can be and so much more. I encourage us all to take the time to feed into the plan – nows the time to 'Dream big, Plan well and Act now.'"

"Nigel Davenport  
CEO, Venture Timaru"



**Venture Timaru**  
DISTRICT - DEVELOPMENT AGENCY