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GREEN PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision description
September 2012	1	
August 2013	2	Content Revised
August 2017	3	Format and Content Revised

1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Understanding and mitigating the impact of the Ministry of Education (MoE) and its institutions on the environment is a shared responsibility. The MoE seeks to lead by example and promote environmental awareness throughout Cook Islands schools and learning institutions.

'Green Practices' are guiding principles to minimise any negative influence by the MoE on the global and local environment, and the local community. They incorporate principles of sustainability into decision making and an enduring commitment to environmental principles including an awareness of natural resources and sustainable development.

2. PURPOSE

The MoE is committed to supporting sustainability and improving its environmental performance through:

- i.) 'Learning for Life' - Cook Islands Education Master Plan 2008-2023
Infrastructure and Support
Focus: The provision of appropriate legislation research, guidelines and standards which support and enhance opportunities for learning.
Goals:
 - High quality buildings, grounds and facilities
- ii.) 'Te Kaveinga Nui' - National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2020
Goal 3 – Promote sustainable practices and effectively manage solid and hazardous waste
Goal 4 – Sustainable management of water and sanitation
Goal 6 – Improve access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, modern energy and transport. This includes "electricity targets to be 100% renewable by 2020."
- iii.) JNAP II – Are we resilient?
The Cook Islands Second Joint National Action Plan – A sectoral approach to climate change and disaster risk management 2016-20
Strategy 2: Water and Food Security
Strategy 3: Environmental Sustainability
Strategy 9: Energy and Transport
- iv.) 'Greening Government – green guide for government workplaces
Calls on all Cook Islands government agencies to adopt practices which will reduce environmental impact and make people more aware of the impact of their actions.
National Environment Services.
- vi.) Environment Act, 2003, Government of Cook Islands
Part 7 - Control of Litter
Part 8 – Specific Areas of Concern
- vii.) Public Health Act, 2004, Government of Cook Islands
Part 6 - Waste

3. SCOPE

All parties who are bound by the requirements of the Education Act (2012).

4. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and OUTCOMES

- Promote the use of green practices in MoE buildings and environment and in Cook Islands schools and learning institutions including:
 - efficient management of energy, water and key material resources
 - minimisation of waste and emissions
- To act as a role model for sustainable practices and involve all staff in on-going improvement in MoE environmental performance
- To ensure all MoE staff:
 - understand green practices
 - recognise their role as stewards of the resources they use
 - take action to minimise impacts on the environment as a result of their activities
- Ensure the development of site specific green practices in all Cook Islands schools and learning institutions.

5. POLICY DETAIL

5.1. Sustainable Operating Practices

5.1.1. Sustainable Resourcing

- The MoE will include sustainability, reusability and energy usage ratings as considerations when making purchases or accepting quotations for internal and external expenditure.
- Sustainability principles will be considered in the design, building, refurbishment and operation of MoE buildings.

5.1.2. Natural Resource Management

Energy supply and associated greenhouse gas emissions are considered to be an important sustainability and economic issue - climate change as a result of greenhouse gas emissions is now widely accepted.

- Where available and economic, energy sources with lower greenhouse gas emissions are preferred eg. solar over coal powered energy sources
- All learning institutions will emphasise the importance of regular energy saving practices by all staff and users of their buildings
- The use of energy and utilities (eg. gas, electricity, water) will be actively managed in order to achieve a reduced level of user demand and more efficient usage of available resources.
- The use of sustainable modes of transport will be promoted through the use of practices such as car-pooling, and facilities to encourage the use of bicycles including bicycle stands and shower facilities.

5.1.3. Recycling and Rubbish Disposal

- Waste will be reduced by avoidance, recycling, reduction and re-use, and efficient use of finite resources where alternatives are not available.
- All learning institutions are to develop a system for recycling, reuse and waste disposal that will be enacted as standard practice.
- Institutions are required to dispose of waste materials in a manner suitable to the type of waste

5.2. Education

- The MoE will regularly reinforce the 'green practices' message through its established communication links with the all schools and learning institutions.
- Staff and institutions will be regularly updated on current recycling practices.

6. RISK and MITIGATION

The table below lists examples of possible consequences, along with mitigating actions, that relate to this policy not being adhered to:

Issue/Risk - examples	Mitigation - examples
Negative impact on local and global environment by MoE or its institutions eg. littering, burning of plastic waste, poor water resource management	MoE staff and its institutions to follow appropriate guidelines on solid waste management
	Regular education on current recycling practices
Purchase of resources or acceptance of quotes based on financial implications only	Include sustainability, reusability and energy level rating as a consideration for all purchases and quotes including those related to design and refurbishment of MoE owned buildings.

7. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

Party/Parties	Roles and Responsibilities
MoE	Promote and reinforce green practices.
	Maintain currency through liaison with other relevant government and non-government agencies.
Staff	Be aware of individual roles in understanding and adhering to MoE green practices
Schools/Learning Institutions	Awareness of MoE green practices and development of site specific guidelines to support this

8. MONITORING, EVALUATION and REVIEW

Monitoring is to keep track of the enactment of expectations outlined in this policy. It is a formal process, which involves checking whether the policy is referred and adhered too.

Evaluation of the policy is to provide feedback on the efficiency and effectiveness of the policy, with a review to include implementing any required changes to strengthen the policy.

This will include evaluation of the following:

- Natural Resource Management
 - progress on water harvesting
 - progress on access to filtered water
- Recycling and Rubbish Disposal
 - appropriate disposal of technology equipment
 - development of specific institutions green practices including recycling systems
- Evidence of education on current recycling practices

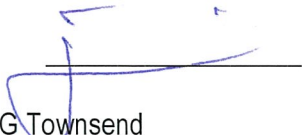
The Planning & Development Division will monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of this policy and report as required. The policy will be reviewed in one year, and then biennially after.

9. DEFINITIONS and ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Meaning
MoE	Ministry of Education
Environment	Ecosystems and their constituent parts, including, people and communities, and all natural and physical resources
Green Practices	Any deliberate choices made with the purpose of limiting the short and long term detrimental impacts to the environment of any action being undertaken or proposed.
Natural Resource Management	The management of natural resources such as land, water, soil, plants and animals, with a particular focus on how management affects the quality of life for both present and future generations
Recycling	Recycling is the process of converting waste materials into new materials and objects. It is an alternative to 'conventional' waste disposal
Sustainable development	Meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs
Sustainability	The management of human consumption of resources so as to reduce negative environmental impact. Sustainability integrates the concern for social, economic and environmental issues, and involves thinking broadly about objectives, considering long-term as well as short-term effects, assessing indirect as well as direct effects, and taking extra care when changes brought about by development might be irreversible.

10. APPENDICES

- Memorandum – Help Your Country Better Manage Solid Waste
WATSAN, Ministry of Infrastructure Cook Islands


G Townsend
Secretary of Education


Date

MEMORANDUM

To: Government staff
Re: Help your country better manage solid waste



WATSAN

Ministry of Infrastructure Cook Islands

Solid waste, otherwise known as rubbish is a serious problem here in the Cook Islands.

What is the government trying to achieve?

Goal 3 in the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) states:

“Promote sustainable practices and effectively manage solid and hazardous waste”

Did you know?

- That the Rarotonga landfill is almost full?
- That hazardous waste and even plastics contaminate the environment and endanger human health?
- That there are simple practices you can do to reduce the problems noted above?

We must work together to prolong the lifespan of the landfill in Rarotonga and Aitutaki and prevent contamination from burning and the dumping of solid waste.

How can you help?

Follow the four R's. Below are examples of how to practice the four R's.

Refuse: Say no to plastic bags; **Reduce:** Choose products with less packaging or paper based packaging, take a plate and cutlery to the market; **Reuse:** Food scraps can be fed to animals or composted (not meat), keep jars and bottles and reuse these; **Recycle:** Sort your rubbish

What can be recycled?

Separate, clean & put out for roadside collection:

- Plastics bottles PET 1 and 2
- Glass
- Aluminium cans and tin food cans
- All other non-hazardous items are general rubbish
 - No food or scraps
 - Remember to clean!

Drop off to Bluesky

- Cameras
- Phones

Drop off to General Transport

- Cleaned tin food cans
- Printer toner cartridges
- Steel, metal
- Electronic waste
- White ware
- Kitchen appliances
- Batteries

Drop off to Foodland

- Any light bulbs including fluorescent tubes
- Clean cardboard and plastic packaging wrap

Please store any bulky or hazardous items not mentioned above in a dry place until our Cook Islands Integrated Solid Waste Management Framework is operating.

How else can you help?

- Do not litter or dump rubbish. This is not our Kia Orana Values, and it is an offence under Section 48 of the Environment Act 2003.
- Do not burn plastics or rubber. Burning these items produces toxic smoke that can poison you, your family and neighbours, and it is prohibited under Section 38 of the Public Health Act 2004.
- Encourage your family, friends and colleagues to play their part – be an Environment Champion!

Want more information?

Visit www.ici.gov.ck/watsan/waste and WATSAN Cook Islands on Facebook or call the WATSAN office on 22648.

Meitaki maata from the team at Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI) for helping the nation achieve a cleaner environment to live in!