

# THE COOK ISLANDS TE KAVEINGA NUI

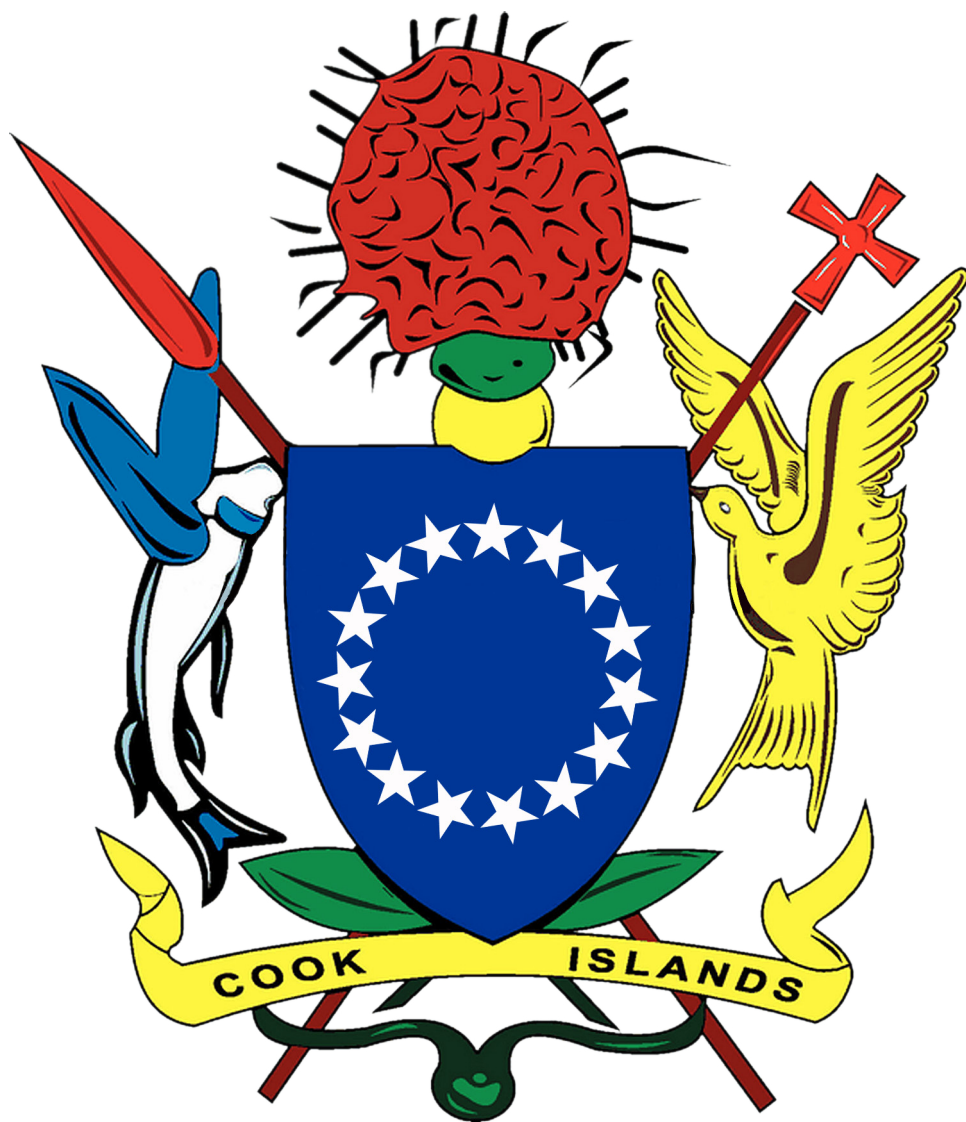
## National Sustainable Development Plan 2011 - 2015



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**Layout of Booklet - Cook Islands Tourism Corporation**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

As we undertake the next leg of our Te Kaveinga Nui journey, it is fitting that the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2011-2015 is the result of widespread consultations with stakeholders right across the Cook Islands, as it embodies the kinds of positive conversations that we must have if we are to express our concerns one to another, define our common goals and identify pathways toward achieving them.

NSDP 2011-2015 builds upon the gains made in NSDP 2007-2010 and the sacrifices of past generations. To take our development to the next level, the eight overarching national goals speak to a vibrant Cook Islands economy, supported by good infrastructure development and energy security; where our people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential; are resilient to the disasters and climate change impacts; live in a healthy environment; and where our progress is underpinned by the principles of good governance and law and order.

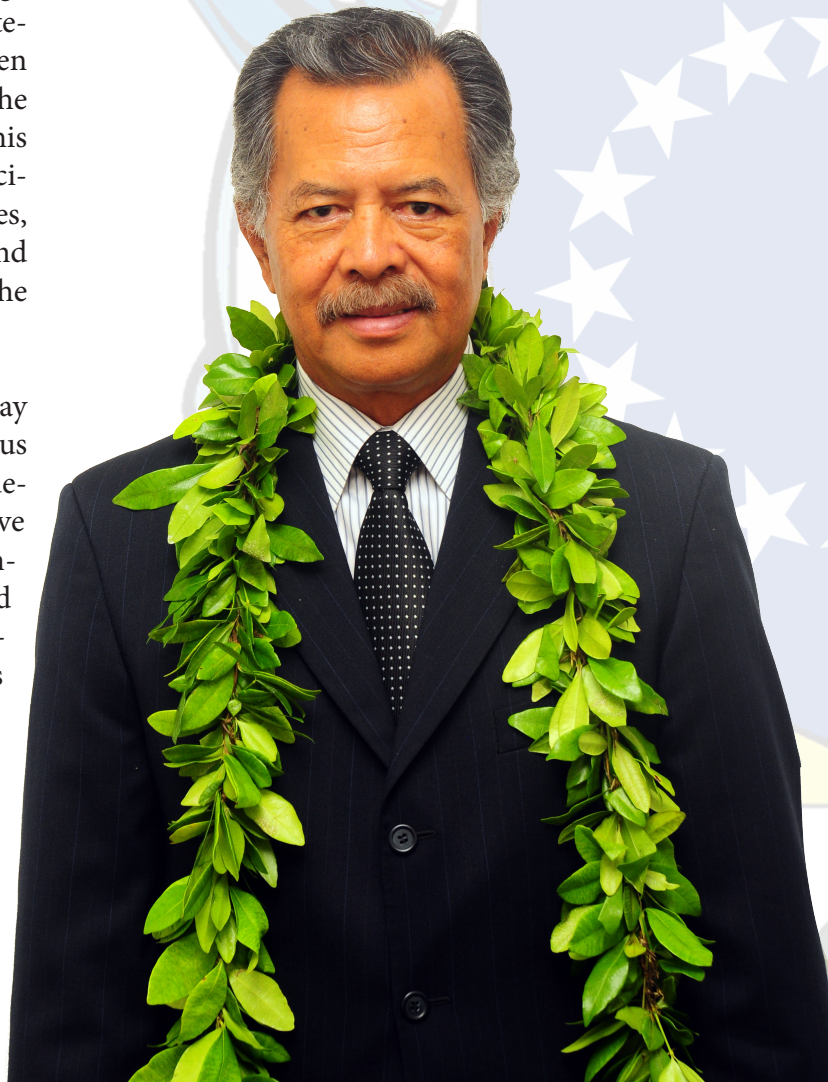
Our success in achieving our national goals will hinge on sustaining and strengthening the public-private-community partnerships and dialogue that have been critical in the formulation which has allowed the NSDP 2011-2015 to be a truly national output. This planning process has bridged all sectors in our society, including Government ministries and agencies, private sector, civil society, academia, civil society and our wider community to harness and incorporate the range of technical expertise, experiences and skills.

To all who will be directly involved in the day to day implementation of NSDP 2011-2015, I challenge us to be more efficient and effective in serving with devotion and integrity and to improve our collective capacity to deliver. To our private sector, non-government, civil society organisations and our regional and international partners, I appeal for your continued support during this implementation phase. There is much work to be done. The Government cannot do this alone; the support of the entire country is needed. This partnership approach is the essence of NSDP 2011-2015.

I am determined to  
lead the imple-  
mentation

process to build a country where our people enjoy the highest quality of life consistent with the aspirations of our people, and in harmony with our culture and environment as articulated by our National Vision.

**Hon. Henry Puna**  
Prime Minister



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2011-2015, as the second leg in our Te Kaveinga Nui journey, was prepared with the invaluable contribution, dedication and commitment of the Cook Islands people towards the achievement of our National Vision – ‘To enjoy the highest quality of life consistent with the aspirations of our people, and in harmony with our culture and environment’.

Specifically, the Central Policy and Planning Office (CPPO) of the Office of the Prime Minister thanks all those who contributed their resources, time and intellect to initiate, prepare and finalise the Plan, including the Government of the Cook Islands and the Opposition which mandated the process; the Ministries and Agencies; the many stakeholders including students, academia, the private sector, non-government organisations, civil society, and the people in our communities who assisted in crafting and providing the scope and direction for the NSDP 2011-2015.

The CPPO pays special tribute to the late Dorice Reid, Te Tika Mataiapo and the Koutu Nui who have been valuable partners in reviewing NSDP 2007-2010 and engaging with our communities across our islands to determine our national development priorities for 2011-2015. Special ata wai wolo is also extended to the Chairpersons and members of the various Task Forces (including the Economic Development Task Force) drawn from the public and private sectors and civil society who generously gave their time, technical and creative ideas, and worked diligently in identifying our development directions for this NSDP.

Na te Atua tatou e arataki ma te tauturu i te akatupuanga i tatou i moemoea.

Meitaki Maata, Ata wai wolo e ye maneke

## TE KAVEINGA NUI

In 2007 the Cook Islands launched our country’s 2020 visionary framework - Te Kaveinga Nui, articulating the National Vision and Development Outcomes desired by the Cook Islands which would be realised through a three phase medium term planning approach.



Te Kaveinga Nui was accompanied by the first National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2007-2010, a strategy on how to progress towards the 2020 outcomes during the first phase, then to be followed by NSDP 2011-2015 and finally 2015-2020.

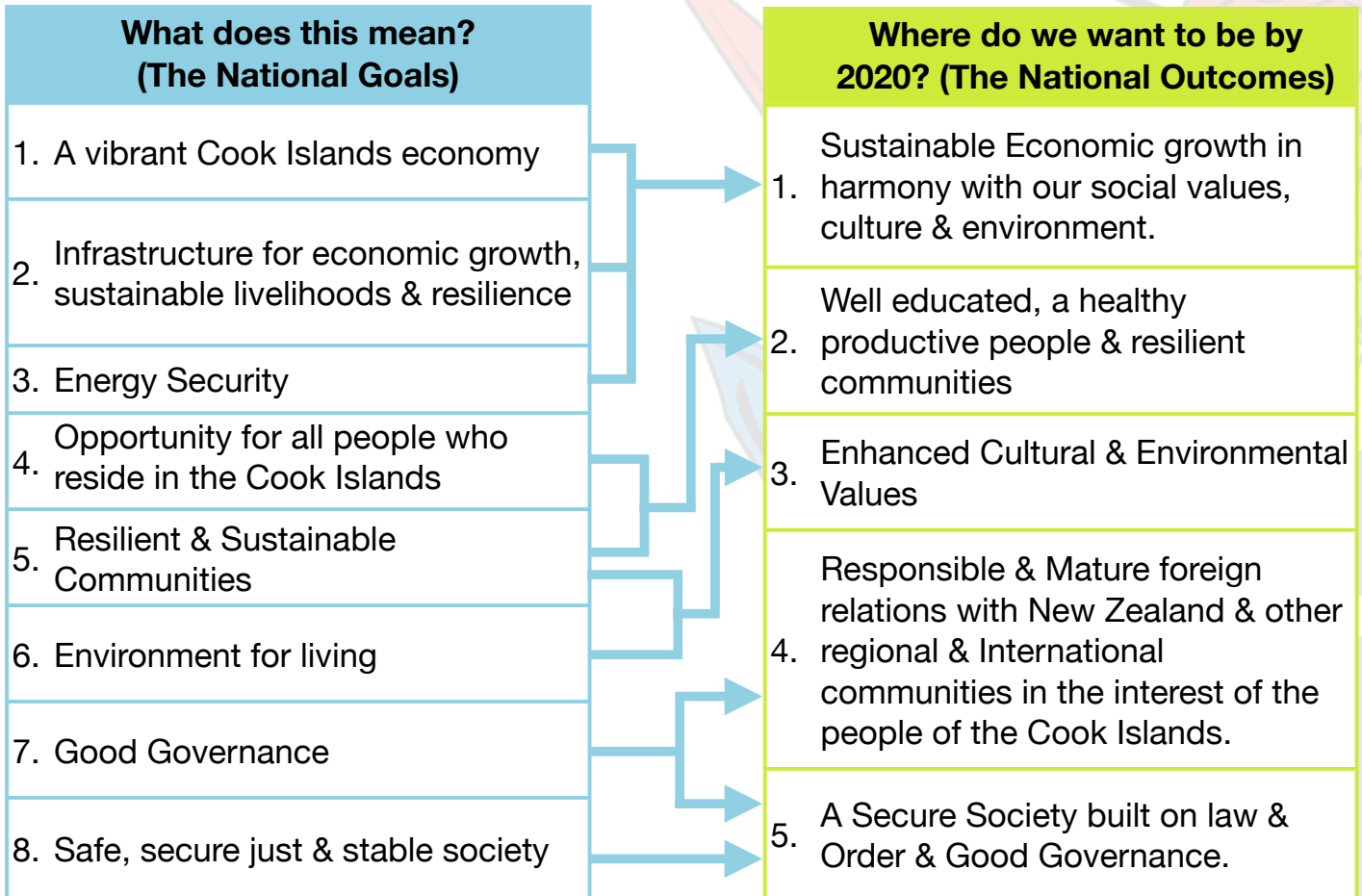
The purpose of the NSDP is to set national goals, the expected results and effective strategies to guide policy decisions over the medium term in order to realise the 2020 Development Outcomes that aim to deliver on Te Kaveinga Nui National Vision. The National Vision and 2020 Development Outcomes demonstrate an approach that brings together social, economic and environmental priorities underpinned by good governance, culture and effective partnerships.

# OUR VISION, OUTCOMES AND GOALS

## NATIONAL VISION

“To enjoy the highest quality of life consistent with the aspirations of our people in harmony with our culture and environment”

“Te oraanga tu rangatira kia tau ki te anoano o te iti tangata, e kia tau ki ta tatou peu Maori e te aotini taporo-poroia o te basileia”



## INTRODUCTION

The NSDP 2011-2015 is the second planning phase in our journey of Te Kaveinga Nui towards the achievement of desired 2020 development outcomes and our National Vision - *'to enjoy the highest quality of life consistent with the aspirations of our people, and in harmony with our culture and environment'*.

For us to be successful in realizing our National Vision, we must all become excited about the challenges and opportunities to lift our development to a higher level in 2011-2015. We must focus on positive action through our shared vision that is realistic and relevant to us as individuals, families and as a society.

The NSDP 2011-2015 integrates the thoughts, ideas, hopes and dreams of a broad cross-section of our society, both in Rarotonga and the Pa Enuā. It is the culmination of many community based consultations, brain storming and focus group sessions, perusing past reports, and numerous public, private and community sector meetings to review our progress on NSDP 2007-2010 and formulate this NSDP.

In outlining how we will achieve our National Vision and 2020 development outcomes, NSDP 2011-2015:

- Identifies our medium term goals and objectives;
- Presents national and sector strategies for achieving these goals and objectives;
- Proposes outcome indicators to measure performance over the medium term;
- Identifies actions for the medium term; and
- Presents a framework for its implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

To ensure implementation of the NSDP, the strategies and actions identified will be filtered through medium term sector and specific agency plans. It is at the sectoral and agency levels that the NSDP will be costed. As a living document, the NSDP will undergo constant monitoring and alteration as deemed appropriate to reflect any changes to the implementation environment.

To be successful the NSDP must deliver right across the Cook Islands. Whilst the goals, objectives and strategies of the NSDP apply across the Cook Islands, there is recognition that they must also be brought together at the local level, in the Pa Enuā. Therefore, as

part of our Te Kaveinga Nui planning process, we will do further work with our communities in the Pa Enuā to identify the major challenges in their area and the actions that would make a real difference in the lives of our local communities. This will ensure that where initiatives are rolled out under the NSDP, our Pa Enuā will receive its equitable share of development.

## CONTEXT FOR NSDP 2011-2015

The Cook Islands consists of 15 small islands scattered over 2 million square kilometers of the Pacific Ocean. They lie in the centre of the Polynesian Triangle, flanked by Fiji 2,300 km to the west, Tahiti 1,140 km to the east, Hawaii 4,730 km north and New Zealand 3,010 km southwest. The climate of the Cook Islands is sub-tropical and tropical oceanic moderated by trade winds.



Our islands became a British protectorate in 1888. By 1900 administrative control was transferred to New Zealand. In 1965 Cook Islanders chose self-government, in free association with New Zealand. About 70% of the population of approximately 20,000 are domiciled on the largest of the Cook Islands, Rarotonga. Rarotonga is the capital and main commercial and government centre, and hence the country's dominant driver of economic growth. Around 20% of the population lives in the eight islands of the Southern Group. Five are elevated fertile volcanic islands, while the rest are atolls, except Mitiaro, which is raised coral. These Pa Enea are within 300 km of Rarotonga. The remote Northern Group of Pa Enea, more than 1,250 km from the capital, is made up of seven low lying, sparsely populated, coral atolls and sand cays, with little arable land. A commonly held view is that the size of the populace of Cook Islanders living in the Diaspora is approximately four times the resident population. Continuing depopulation is a significant threat to the development of the Cook Islands by Cook Islanders.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – A SNAPSHOT

ECONOMIC INDICATORS			
Economic Activity	2009 -10	2010-11	2011-12
	Act/Est	Est	Proj
Nominal GDP (\$'000)	345,380	356,960	377,540
% Change	4.20%	3.40%	5.80%
Real GDP (at constant 2006 Prices, \$'000)	285,310	293,450	303,040
% Change	4.10%	2.90%	3.30%
GDP per capita	15,282	15,795	16,705
<b>Inflation</b>			
Consumer Price Index (base Dec 2006=100)	117.7	118.3	121.3
% Change	1.80%	0.50%	2.50%
<b>Construction/Capital Investment</b>			
Commercial Building Approvals (\$'000)	3,300	2,700	2,900
Residential Building Approvals (\$'000)	8,500	9,600	10,600
<b>Productive Sector Indicators</b>			
Visitor Arrivals	99,400	106,000	111,500
% Change	2.60%	6.60%	5.20%
Estimated Visitor Expenditures (\$'000)	209,900	225,100	241,500
Total Exports (\$'000)	5,827	5,746	5,717
Total Imports (\$'000)	349,936	361,674	382,526
<b>SOCIAL INDICATORS (2006 CENSUS)</b>			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
Total Population	19,342	9,816	9,526
Resident Population	15,324	7,822	7,502
Urban Population (Rarotonga)	13,890	7,030	6,860
<b>Mortality</b>			
Life expectancy	72.8	69.5	76.2
<b>Labour Force</b>			
Employed Population	44.30%	47.80%	40.70%
Unemployed	4.30%	4.40%	4.20%
<b>Non-labour force</b>			
Students	820	423	397
Retired	923	499	424
Home duties	1,417	358	1,059
Labour force participation rate	70.2	76.1	64.2
Employment-population ratio	63.1	68.7	57.5
Unemployment rate (%)	6.90%	6.70%	7.30%
<b>Education</b>			
School enrolment rates of 5-15 years	97.40%	96.40%	98.50%
Proportion of population aged 15+:			
· Trade and business certificate		10.9	3.8
· Professional and higher certificate		0.4	0.9
· Teachers and members of professional societies		0.6	1.8
· Tertiary qualifications		12.6	16

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - A SNAPSHOT

Our implementation of NSDP 2007-2010 has in general resulted in good progress towards our socio-economic development. Our economy contracted in the 2008/2009 and the 2009/2010 fiscal years. This downward movement reflects the effects of the global financial crisis. There is a slight recovery for the 2010/2011 fiscal year and further improvement projected for 2011/12. Tourism remains the key economic driver of the economy. Direct receipts account for 50% of GDP but indirectly, tourism is driving the demand and activity of over 90% of the economy.

The country's primary dependence on tourism makes it extremely vulnerable to external shocks. For example, the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 fundamentally altered the demographic of the tourism market, with the contraction of the North American tourist market leading to the reduction of flights to and from the US and Canada. This increased the country's reliance on the New Zealand market, thereby resulting in lower yields across the industry.

The cost of business is considered to be high due to numerous factors. The country's small size and isolation mean the majority of inputs for production are imported. The high cost of finance is also seen as a major challenge to business investment and development (ANZ commercial base lending rate in the Cook Islands as at June 2011 was 9.95% vs. ANZ in New Zealand 6.24%).

Another impediment to economic growth is the limited labour force in the country. The accessibility of New Zealand and Australia by way of the Cook Islands relationship with New Zealand has meant that there has, and continues to be, considerable outward migration. The last decade has seen an influx of foreign labour from Fiji, Tonga and the Philippines working predominantly in the lower paying jobs. The need for business to import labour to supplant the outward migrating local labour force has added to the cost of business in the Cook Islands.

Well over 90% of the country's economic activity is generated on the main island of Rarotonga, with Aitutaki - the second most populous island, making the only other significant contribution to GDP.

The Cook Islands has succeeded in raising the overall standard of living as measured by some of its key social indicators, and is on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. Life expectancy, which was 72.8 years in 2006, is comparable to that of developed countries. Enrolment in primary and secondary schools are near universal. Pass rates in literacy and numeracy in our primary schools have improved with the majority of our children working at or above the appropriate level for their chronological age. At college level, the pass rate target of 50% for National Certificate of Education Achievement has been surpassed. Furthermore, scope of subjects and teaching modalities have improved to cater for the different needs of learners. The challenge to provide quality and equitable education opportunities for our Pa Enua learners, comparable to their Rarotonga peers, continues due to declining Pa Enua school roles. This is one of our key challenges in NSDP 2011-2015.

There have been improvements in our health indicators particularly those relating to maternal, infant and under 5 years mortality rates. Yet there are serious concerns over the increased prevalence of lifestyle related non-communicable diseases and obesity.

## WHERE ARE WE NOW

The first leg of NSDP 2007-2010 has laid the foundations for our Te Kaveinga Nui journey. We have made some good progress but many challenges remain. This NSDP 2011-2015 will take our development to a new level of sustainability. We continue to face the challenge of diversifying our economy by building productivity in all our sectors; further empowering our people to achieve their full potential; ensuring that our infrastructure matches our aspirations for economic and social development; improving governance; strengthening law and order; building our people's resilience to the threats of disaster and climate change, and ensuring that our environment remains healthy for our future generations.

## THE COOK ISLANDS: A SWOT ANALYSIS

A summary of the context for our path to achieve our vision, based on our country's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, is presented below.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
· Talented people	· Geographical isolation
· Unique cultural assets	· Dispersed islands
· National pride	· Narrow economic base
· Political stability	· Unreliable, irregular and high cost transportation
· High life expectancy	· Reliance on imported goods
· Unique environment and natural resources	· High dependence on imported petroleum
· High educational achievement	· High energy costs
· Relatively good health outcomes	· Vulnerability to natural and man-made hazards
· Private sector led economy	· Low productivity across most economic sectors (except tourism)
· Peaceful society	· Increase dependence on foreign workers to meet the country's labour needs
· Relatively high standard of living	
· Good regional and international relationships	
· Vibrant civil society	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
· Expand the economic base by growing other economic sectors	· Depopulation – brain drain of trained and educated Cook Islanders
· Potential for import substitution	· Impact of fluctuations in global economy and capital, currency and commodity markets
· Growth in economic value of global cultural industries and markets	· Instability and unpredictability in the supply and price of imported petroleum
· Global advances in science, technology and innovation	· Vulnerability to the impacts of climate change
· Development of the Green Economy	· Increased likelihood of natural hazards
· Large Diaspora (our population living abroad and their potential to contribute to national development)	· Inadequate political will or social partnerships to implement transformation
· Strong relationships with regional and international partners	· Disparity between Rarotonga and the Pa Enua

NSDP 2011-2015 will look to utilise our strengths and opportunities whilst using innovation to overcome weaknesses and threats. We expect that taking a sustainable development approach on these issues will lead to more integrated and holistic outcomes. This in turn, should result in a quantum leap in the type of solutions we develop and undertake.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our development during 2011-2015 is based on seven guiding principles which put our people at the centre of the Cook Islands development. These are leadership, partnership, transparency and accountability, social cohesion, equity, sustainability and national development. They give priority attention to elements that are essential to providing the quality of life for our people, and reflect the key pillars needed to realise our national vision.

## *Leadership*

Leading the country to achieve its National Vision requires strong and decisive leadership at all levels of society. Champions of change and accountability within the various institutions of Government, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, must lead in achieving desired results. Ownership of the National Vision and the development planning process must reverberate at every level of Cook Islands society. We must all have a sense of the role that we are expected to play and take seriously our responsibility for the successful implementation of NSDP 2011-2015.

## *Partnership*

The opportunities envisaged under our National Vision require the promotion of our country's common good over vested interests and significant technical and financial resources, both of which are beyond the scope of our Government alone. We need to bridge the resource gap and remove obstacles that could undermine the success of NSDP 2011-2015. Our success requires the conscious collaboration of our Government, traditional leaders, the private sector and members of the community, in pooling the use of their expertise and resources in public private partnerships in pursuit of the goals of NSDP 2011-2015, supported where appropriate through cooperation between the Cook Islands and regional and international partners. Opportunities for such partnerships will include the input of the voluntary sector and faith based organisations in facilitating change in mindset and reinforcing the positive core values of our society; private sector capital investments in social and economic infrastructure; and our peoples' monitoring to ensure accountability and value-for-mon-

ey is realised from public investments.

Achieving our goals for NSDP 2011-2015 calls for every Cook Islander to participate in both the responsibilities and benefits of national development and this hinges on partnership as both being a fundamental value and adopted as a strategy.

## *Transparency and Accountability*

NSDP 2011-2015 recognises that transparency and accountability are essential for the efficient functioning of our economy and for fostering social wellbeing. As we embark on implementation, we must ensure timely access to information that can be used to measure performance and hold Government accountable for its actions.

## *Social Cohesion*

This guiding principle will engender a sense of belonging and pride in our people and generate the trust required to take us through both the good and challenging times as we journey towards a sustainable future. It will ensure that our people unite around a set of shared values and responsibilities and a common sense of nationhood.

## *Equity*

This guiding principle will facilitate and ensure equality of opportunity and equal rights for all our people including access to public goods and services such as education and health care. NSDP 2011-2015 will promote the human rights of our people, including the most vulnerable and marginalised groups. It will identify and address gender and other biases in our society.

## *Sustainability*

A sustainable future for our nation requires us to effectively integrate economic, social and environmental issues in order to make the wisest use of our capital stocks to meet the needs of current and future generations. We recognise that economic, social and environmental problems and solutions are inter-connected and that an integrated approach to address these issues, underpinned by good governance and fundamental cultural values to address these issues will ensure that our development is sustainable.

## *National Development*

This principle will encourage us to promote develop-

ment on a truly national scale, one that encompasses both Rarotonga and our Pa Enuā. It will allow for the inclusion of our Pa Enuā in decision making, optimal use of resources in all areas, and facilitate the development of multi-sectoral and spatial linkages.

## **CHANGING THE MINDSET**

At the heart of our National Vision and NSDP 2011-2015 is the transformation of our society to turn our National Vision into action. This transformation will only take place if there is a change in the mindset of the nation which addresses those traits that are likely to inhibit progress towards development. This change is vital if we are to capitalise opportunity in our size, our geographical makeup, our distance from markets and overcome our economies of scale.

We must harness our Cook Islands spirit and the respect for and prominence that we give to our positive societal values and attitudes and to our Christian beliefs. Core values include respect, honesty, truthfulness, forgiveness and tolerance. Attitudinal values such as trust, honour, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, integrity, good work ethic and punctuality are essential for transforming our society into a prosperous one. Our economy must be recast through the adoption and infusion of transformative values.

As a nation, we must choose to achieve sustainable prosperity to ensure a more promising future and the realisation of our NSDP 2011-2015 National Goals as well as our long term National Vision.

# NATIONAL GOALS 2011 - 2015

NSDP 2011-2015 is built on eight national goals for our country's development. The key underlying purpose of NSDP 2011-2015 is to turn our National Vision into Action. These goals are mutually reinforcing and synergistic in design, and their achievement cannot be realised in isolation from each other.

Our selection of goals, objectives and the design of strategies and actions to realise these goals, collectively represent our approach to development planning informed by our public and the review of the NSDP 2007-2010. This approach is relatively broad in scope, participatory in design and intended implementation - though medium term - will be long term in reach and transformational in nature. The NSDP thus provides a comprehensive framework within which the linkages amongst the pillars of sustainable development are made, and presents a broad strategic thrust for Te Kaveinga Nui journey towards sustainable development for the Cook Islands.

Our eight National Goals give greater articulation to our National Vision "to enjoy the highest quality of life consistent with the aspirations of our people, and in harmony with our culture and environment" and are pillars on which our focus for 2011-2015 for sustainable development rests.

## **PRIORITY AREA 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **GOAL 1: A VIBRANT COOK ISLANDS ECONOMY**

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE INGENUITY AND CONNECTION TO OUR CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT UNDERPINS THE ABILITY OF OUR PEOPLE TO BUILD BUSINESS AND ENTERPRISE TO CONTRIBUTE TO NATIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH'*

## **PRIORITY AREA 2: INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **GOAL 2: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS**

*'OUR INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE WILL MAXIMISE ECONOMIC RETURN, IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS AND BUILD RESILIENCE'*

## **PRIORITY AREA 3: ENERGY**

### **GOAL 3: ENERGY SECURITY**

*'RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR ENERGY SECURITY TO ENHANCE OUR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY'*

## **PRIORITY AREA 4: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **GOAL 4: OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL PEOPLE WHO RESIDE IN THE COOK ISLANDS**

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE ALL PEOPLE WHO RESIDE IN OUR ISLANDS CAN ENJOY OPPORTUNITIES TO FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL, PROSPER AND PARTICIPATE IN THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITIES AND NATION'*

## **PRIORITY AREA 5: RESILIENCE**

### **GOAL 5: RESILIENT & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE OUR PEOPLE ARE RESILIENT TO DISASTERS AND CLIMATE CHANGE TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS'*

## **PRIORITY AREA 6: ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY**

### **GOAL 6: ENVIRONMENT FOR LIVING**

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE WE SUSTAIN OUR ECOSYSTEMS AND USE OUR NATURAL RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY'*

## **PRIORITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE**

### **GOAL 7: GOOD GOVERNANCE**

*'A COOK ISLANDS THAT THRIVES ON GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES'*

## **PRIORITY AREA 8: LAW AND ORDER**

### **GOAL 8: A SAFE, SECURE, JUST AND STABLE SOCIETY**

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE THE RULE OF LAW ENSURES SAFE, SECURE, JUST, STABLE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES'*

## WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO IN 2011 - 2015?

### A vibrant Cook Islands Economy

*'A Cook Islands where ingenuity and connection to our culture and environment underpins the ability of our people to build business and enterprise for national economic growth'*

**Objective 1:** An energised and growing green economy through supporting our key economic drivers and encouraging environmentally sound innovation in potential areas of growth

**Objective 2:** Enterprise is enabled by establishing an innovative environment conducive for existing businesses to confidently grow and for new businesses to start, grow and thrive in our communities

**Objective 3:** Our Cook Islands environmental and cultural values are integral to business decision making and practice

#### National Strategies:

- Ensure our tourism excellence
- Unlock our potential from our marine resources
- Unlock our potential from our agricultural production
- Identify and exploit trade opportunities
- Build our financial services
- Ensure that our cultural and creative Industries are a key force in job and wealth creation and nation building
- Sustain macro-economic stability
- Ensure proactive economic development policies

### Infrastructure for Economic Growth, Sustainable Livelihoods and Resilience

*'Our investment in infrastructure will maximise economic return, improve our peoples livelihoods and build resilience'*

**Objective 1:** Our investment in infrastructure will foster economic growth, sustainable environment and livelihoods and increase the resilience of our communities to disasters and the impacts of climate change

**Objective 2:** Our delivery and ongoing management of infrastructure will be improved significantly

#### National Strategies

- Improve access to water for our communities
- Improve our facilities for waste management
- Improve our transport infrastructure
- Improve telecommunications
- Strengthen our asset management
- Enable robust construction
- Build capacity in the infrastructure sector

ISLANDS

## WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO IN 2011 - 2015?

### Energy Security

*'Renewable energy for energy security to enhance our economic growth, social development and environmental integrity'*

**Objective 1:** Secure and reliable energy services

**Objective 2:** Enhanced efficiency and improved affordability of energy

**Objective 3:** Investment for renewable energy development fostered

**Objective 4:** Energy standards and compliance will be upheld by a well-regulated energy sector

#### National Strategies

- Strengthen the institutional framework of the energy sector
- Utilise only proven renewable energy technologies
- Provide incentives for renewable energy
- Upgrade existing energy infrastructure
- Promote energy efficiency and conservation
- Build our capacity in the energy sector

### Opportunity for all People who Reside in the Cook Islands

*'A Cook Islands where all people who reside in our islands can enjoy opportunities to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of our communities and nation'*

**Objective 1:** Our people fulfil their potential through equitable access to quality learning opportunities across the full spectrum of human endeavour

**Objective 2:** Our people fulfil their potential through access to quality and affordable health care

**Objective 3:** Our people fulfil their potential because they are empowered and have strong families and communities

**Objective 4:** Our people fulfil their potential because they participate in leisure, recreation and competitive sports activities

### Resilient and Sustainable Communities

*'A Cook Islands where our people are resilient to disasters and climate change to achieve sustainable livelihoods'*

**Objective 1:** Our people are prepared for disasters and climate change impacts

**Objective 2:** The impacts of disasters and climate change are reduced

**Objective 3:** Our people are resilient to all forms of hazards

#### National Strategies

- Ensure strong governance arrangements for disaster risk management and climate change adaptation
- Ensure that high quality risk information is available to inform planning and implementation
- Enhance effective preparedness, response and recovery
- Build resilience through effective disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation

### Environment for Living

*'A Cook Islands where we sustain our ecosystem and use our natural resources efficiently'*

**Objective 1:** The use of all our natural resources are managed well to ensure their sustainability

**Objective 2:** Our scarce and degraded natural resources are effectively monitored and restored

**Objective 3:** The pollution of air, water, and land resources is managed so that impacts are minimised and community and ecosystem health is not adversely affected

**Objective 4:** Irreversible loss and degradation of biodiversity (marine, terrestrial, aquatic ecosystems) is avoided

## WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO IN 2011 - 2015?

**Objective 5:** Cook Islanders share a strong national identity and sense of belonging

### National Strategies

- Ensure that parents and communities have confidence in our education system and support quality learning and development for the very young
- Ensure that every child is literate and numerate by the end of year 8 and that literacy and numeracy skills for continuing education are provided
- Enable every young person to have access to the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to gain qualifications that they need to contribute to the development of the Cook Islands
- Ensure equitable access for all learners to quality learning programmes
- Ensure that the Education Sector is responsive to the training needs of the wider community through collaboration and partnerships with other agencies
- Ensure optimum health for our children and young people
- Provide quality health services for all
- A multi-sectoral approach to combat non-communicable diseases (NCDs)
- Ensure gender equality and empower our women
- Guarantee that our children are safe and well-cared for; that our youth are given the opportunity to grow as valuable members of society; our persons with disabilities are valued and included in our development and our elderly are acknowledged for their contributions to society and are looked after
- Ensure we have strong families and communities
- Our people can access an adequate range of different opportunities for leisure, recreation and competitive sports
- Ensure the promotion and preservation of our unique culture, languages and social heritage

**Objective 5:** Our actions to protect and manage our ecosystems and natural resources will include climate change adaptation and emissions reduction measures

**Objective 6:** Taking care of our natural environment is everybody's business where all stakeholders will actively play their part in protecting and managing our fragile ecosystems

### National Strategies

- Improve the management and quality of our water resources through an integrated approach
- Improve water quality through better sanitation measures
- Implement waster minimisation programmes and provide appropriate facilities and incentives to support these with the purpose of achieving zero waste
- Implement an ecosystem approach to the management of marine resources
- Develop and implement interventions to ensure that land use is sustainable
- Protect our biodiversity and ecosystems

## WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO IN 2011 - 2015?

### Good Governance

*'A Cook Islands that thrives on good governance principles'*

**Objective 1:** Our general public has confidence in the systems of government

**Objective 2:** A machinery of government focused on strategic direction, progressive partnerships and service satisfaction

**Objective 3:** Increasing the value of existing taxpayer dollars through systems that deliver effective development outcomes

**Objective 4:** A general public that is continuously informed of the return on investment for their taxpayer dollar and as a result actively contributes to development decision making and actions

**Objective 5:** Regional and international relations to contribute effectively to Cook Islands sustainable development

#### National Strategies

- Strengthen the role of parliament to hold managers to account for performance
- Strengthen electoral systems and processes
- Ensure that Government service delivery is efficient and effective
- Promote partnerships with civil society and the private sector
- Strengthen information and data collection, analysis and management for informed decision making
- Ensure access to information
- Improve accountability and transparency of public financial management
- Establish and strengthen external relations that will benefit the Cook Islands

### A Safe, Secure, Just and Stable Society

*'A Cook Islands where the rule of law ensures a safe, secure, just and stable society'*

**Objective 1:** Clear, coherent and relevant laws; fair, accessible and efficient courts and institutions for the administration of justice

**Objective 2:** Free access to our Cook Islands laws

**Objective 3:** Quality policing services to our communities and visitors

**Objective 4:** Control of our borders is efficient and effective

**Objective 5:** Quality enforcement of our laws

#### National Strategies

- Ensure that our legislative and regulatory frameworks reflect our sustainable development goals and objectives
- Ensure quality enforcement of our laws
- Improve access to Justice
- Improve our land management and land information systems
- Reduce reoffending through offender rehabilitation
- Ensure that our communities and visitors are safe, secure and stable through the provision of quality policing
- Ensure our border security both with respect to the movement of goods and persons through the introduction and operation of effective laws and systems

## PRIORITY AREA 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A strong economy allows us to provide quality services such as healthcare, education, policing and infrastructure. However, prioritising economic development should not be at the cost of social and environmental processes. Implicit in the quality of growth that we are seeking will be the integration of economic, social, cultural and environmental pillars of sustainable development. Sustaining a high quality environment, as well as building our social and cultural base, is critical for our economic development. Our choice of economic policy instruments will be influenced by their interactions with social, environmental and cultural factors. Our economic growth will be 'green growth' centred on the protection, conservation, restoration and management of our environment. Our brand of green growth will have a distinctive Cook Islands mark that reflects our cultural values. BRAND COOK ISLANDS will be introduced to the world as the umbrella for all outward facing interaction on the global stage. The changing landscape of information technology also offers us endless opportunities to promote BRAND COOK ISLANDS its products and experiences. Our economic growth will be achieved through strong partnerships between private sector, government and our communities.

### OUR GOAL

#### A VIBRANT COOK ISLANDS ECONOMY

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE INGENUITY AND CONNECTION TO OUR CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT UNDERPIN THE ABILITY OF OUR PEOPLE TO BUILD BUSINESS AND ENTERPRISE FOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH'*

### OUR KEY OBJECTIVES

1. An energised and growing green economy through supporting our key economic drivers and encouraging environmentally sound innovation in potential areas of growth.
2. Enterprise is enabled by establishing an innovative environment conducive for existing businesses to confidently grow and for new businesses to start, grow and thrive in our communities.
3. Our Cook Islands cultural and environmental values are integral to business decision making and practice.

## HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?

To achieve our objectives we will embark on strategies that:

### 1. *Ensure our Tourism Destination Excellence*

We will embark on strategies that ensure that the Cook Islands achieve its full potential as a leading sustainable tourism destination. Tourism is our primary economic driver and will continue to be so for the long term. To ensure its continued success, it is necessary to focus not only on volume, but also yield and dispersal beyond Rarotonga to the Pa Enea.

In recognition of this, Government has committed to underwrite key airline routes between Rarotonga, Los Angeles and Sydney and to allocate marketing funds to support the success of these routes over the next three years. We will continue to explore opportunities for further airline access between the Cook Islands and its markets while delivering a targeted strategy of market stimulation which ensures growth in market share, yield and dispersal to the Pa Enea.

Our Destination Development Strategy will strongly underpin the green image that we seek. At the same time, our strategy will make tourism 'everybody's business' by encouraging collaboration and inter-linkages aimed at integrated sustainable growth across all sectors. This will be evident in the development of an alternative port in Rarotonga for our cruise industry and in the long term upgrading our ports in the Pa Enea. Complimenting these efforts, will also be the upgrade of airports across the country.

Small business growth will be targeted to showcase our fashion, arts, crafts, pearls, food and produce. We shall provide places where our people can showcase their creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, while adding to the distinctive character of the Cook Islands.

Integral to our Destination Development Strategy is the promotion of our cultural and sporting events, creative industries, and educational facilities and services. Green standards will underpin every element of business within the tourism industry and across the nation ensuring that this

important economic sector delivers long term sustainable growth measured against the nation's commitment to a green future. Central to this will be holding all tourism operators to these standards as part of the National Tourism Accreditation Programme.

To achieve long term sustainability for the industry, it is necessary to plan for future growth ensuring that infrastructure and tourism development are integrated, and that any new developments are delivered against criteria that ensure cultural, environmental and community integrity in order to deliver an optimal Cook Islands tourism experience to both our visitors and our communities. The long term purpose is to grow our country's economy through tourism without compromising our country's unique qualities.

## ***2. Unlock our Potential from our Marine Resources***

We have 2.2 million square kilometers of ocean and this offers great potential for economic growth in the short, medium and long term. However, any activities in our oceans must be conducted in a sustainable manner underpinned by the principles of precaution, conservation and effective management, and shared responsibility.

In the medium term there are seven key strategies to increase our economic return from our marine resources. Firstly, is to expand income earning opportunities from sustainably managed offshore fisheries through capacity building, infrastructure and market development. Secondly, is to achieve a profitable and sustainable pearl industry by improving productivity, marketing and environmental management. Thirdly, is to improve income generating opportunities for the private sector particularly in the Pa Enua, through increased provision of technical and scientific assistance. Fourth, is to ensure sustainable fishing and conservation practices resulting in traditional subsistence practices and long term food security. Fifth, we will strive to protect and conserve our natural marine biodiversity, its affiliated customary practices and knowledge. Sixth, explore potential sustainable commercialisation of marine resources, such as, marine eco-tourism and other innovative marine business enterprises. Lastly, to ensure that we wisely utilise our seabed mineral resources for economic development, maxi-

mise the long term benefits from money generated, while minimising the impacts to the environment caused by extraction.

## ***3. Unlock our Potential from our Agricultural Production***

We were once an economy based on agriculture, yet currently we import far too much produce. We have the potential to reduce our imports of agricultural products. Therefore, first and foremost, we will revitalise our agriculture industry - particularly in the southern islands of the Pa Enua as not only an import substitution strategy, but also one that will assure food security in the face of climate change, economic earning opportunities and encourage the consumption of healthy food to ensure good health outcomes.

In revitalising agriculture we will strive for better partnerships between government and our farmers, exporters, markets and our airline and shipping services.

Our efforts in revitalising agriculture will be based on the principles of biological, organic production and best agricultural practices aligned to our desire for green growth. These efforts will be complemented by research, education and vocational training to ensure that production, marketing and trade facilitation are aligned to 'green agriculture' international standards.

## ***4. Identify and Exploit Trade Opportunities***

With our open economy and longstanding approach to international trade and other economic relations, our attention will continue to be given to identifying and exploiting regional and international trade opportunities, including through the negotiation of agreements to promote our sustainable development objectives. This will include trade in both goods and services.

In pursuing this strategic approach, there will continue to be regular consultations between government entities and other relevant stakeholders.

## ***5. Build our Financial Services***

In past years we were the leaders in international financial services in the Pacific but we have not kept pace with our competitors. This industry has the ability to make far more significant contributions to our economy with zero impact on our environment. To do this, we will firstly upgrade the legislative frame-

work relating to financial services. This will create a new competitive advantage by improving existing services and creating new products and services. Secondly, we will enhance our marketing through targeted advertising to increase our threshold of exposure to raise the profile of the jurisdiction and create new client markets. Thirdly, we will increase our presence in the international marketplace to promote the industry, demonstrate our commitment, and eliminate any negative perceptions about the Cook Islands' jurisdiction.

## ***6. Ensure that Cultural and Creative Industries are a Key Force in Job and Wealth Creation and Nation Building***

The Cultural and Creative Industries (publishing, film, broadcasting, music, visual and performing arts, journalism, museums and art exhibitions, retail, architecture, design, advertising, software, etc) are committed to the creation of wealth through the application of ideas and individual creativity. Our people's creativity is renowned and should be harnessed as powerful engines for economic growth and trade development – not only in terms of direct economic impact from the marketing and the sale of goods and services, but also as a multiplier in other sectors.

The government is committed to creating the enabling environment for cultural and creative industries to start, thrive and grow including the endorsement of the necessary policy and legislative frameworks.

In the medium term we will pursue efforts to develop a culture of creativity and enterprise through our education system; develop and strengthen partnerships; promote national and international recognition for our people's creativity; increase exposure of our creativity and cultural strength including our Maori language; and improve research and development in cultural and creative products.

## ***7. Sustain Macro-Economic Stability***

Sound fiscal management makes a major contribution to achieving economic growth by providing confidence to the business sector and potential investors. Government, since the mid 1990s, has maintained a relatively prudent macroeconomic stance guided by principles of fiscal responsibility as outlined in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management Act 1995-96.

In its role, the government will maintain macroeconomic stability as an essential prerequisite for sustained growth. Macroeconomic policies will be geared towards maintaining fiscal discipline, whilst at

the same time promoting investments that will support sustained economic development. In doing so, government will ensure that it limits the diversion of resources away from the private sector through its tax policy, controls expansion in the size of the public sector while also maintaining affordability, and keeping national debt within a sustainable level. Government has established fiscal responsibility ratios to quantify its performance in managing the macroeconomic environment and will closely align its decisions towards upholding these ratios.

## ***8. Ensure Proactive Economic Development Policies that are Underpinned by Environmental Sustainability Principles***

The public and the business sector have indicated that government should take a more proactive role in creating the environment that will stimulate business and enterprise. It is acknowledged that a comprehensive regulatory reform agenda, aimed at building a seamless national economy encouraging competition, promoting opportunities and creating positive impacts on productivity is required. This shall be pursued through a continuous programme that ensures policy consistency and maintains regulatory certainty and clarity. Areas such as labour relations, foreign investment, intellectual property, competition, immigration and trade have been identified as priorities for policy and regulatory reform. The regulatory framework must be aligned with changes in the global regulatory tools, agreements, processes and approaches, including new best practices and standards. Complimenting regulatory reform will be the streamlining and simplifying of licensing.

Whilst the Cook Islands hope to attract foreign investment that will be beneficial to the country this will be achieved by maintaining a balance with appropriate protection for domestic players.

Empowering our small scale entrepreneurs and micro enterprises is fundamental for economic development and for sustaining families. Therefore, the provision of business support, including access to financial resources and services, capacity development in business management, vocational training and bridging the skills gap through human capital development, will be targeted.

As part of its efforts in promoting local business, government will re-engineer its role in the economy to one which supports rather than competes with the private sector by outsourcing functions which could be better performed by the private sector and entering into public private partnerships where efficiency and service satisfaction gains can be made.

Alongside the creation of an environment that stimulates private sector growth, government will develop policies to introduce incentives to minimise impacts on the natural environment. Incentives will ensure that businesses that meet environmental standards are rewarded and those businesses that pollute and degrade pay the cost of their actions.

The potential to grow our economy is dependent on our people's productivity. Government will pass the necessary regulatory and legislative frameworks to protect the rights of both our employees and employers, including the promotion of gender equality in the workplace and the rights of persons with disabilities, to participate in the economy.

## HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?

1. Real GDP growth averages 2.5 % per annum
2. Private sector employment growth averages 2.5% per annum
3. Growth in total visitor numbers over 120,000
4. Growth in contribution to the economy as a % growth of GDP from our tourism industry
5. Growth in contribution to the economy as a % growth of GDP from our marine resources
6. Growth in contribution to the economy as a % growth of GDP from our agricultural production
7. Growth in contribution to the economy as a % growth of GDP from our Offshore Financial Industry
8. Government tax revenue to GDP maintained within 25% over the medium term
9. Personnel to total revenue is reduced and maintained within 40% over the medium term
10. A National Trade Policy will be adopted and trade agreements entered into where they offer opportunities and benefits to the Cook Islands



## **PRIORITY AREA 2: INFRASTRUCTURE**

Infrastructure is central to improving livelihood opportunities and delivering critical goods and services. Therefore, with ecological sustainability, provides the foundation for economic and social development. Our efforts will be geared towards increasing the productivity of environmentally sound infrastructure as an important step towards sustaining overall economic growth, improving livelihoods and building the resilience of our communities to disasters and climate change impacts.

### **OUR GOAL**

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AND RESILIENCE

*'OUR INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE WILL MAXIMISE ECONOMIC RETURN, IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS AND BUILD RESILIENCE'*

### **OUR KEY OBJECTIVES**

1. Our investment in infrastructure will foster economic growth, sustainable environment and livelihoods and increased resilience for our communities to disasters and the impacts of climate change.
2. Our delivery and ongoing environmentally sound management and maintenance of infrastructure will be improved significantly.

### **HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?**

To achieve our objectives we will embark on strategies that:

#### ***1. Improve Access to and Quality of Water to our Communities***

To improve the access to water for our communities, our efforts will include the rehabilitation of water intakes, upgrade water galleries, advance work on our ringmain and distribution lines, increase water harvesting and storage. Furthermore we will promote and implement the most viable options to ensure the safety and improved quality of our water supply.

These efforts will complement those identified under our ecological sustainability goal to further implement our integrated approach to water resource management and also to ensure water security as articulated

in our goal to build resilience to disaster and climate change impacts.

We anticipate that cost recovery for the delivery of water resources will be implemented in 2011-2015.

#### ***2. Improve our Facilities for Waste Management***

To complement our strategy for ecological sustainability through improved waste management, we will transform the way we use our waste facilities in Rarotonga and Aitutaki to Resource and Recovery Centres where waste is transformed so that it may be reused – for example, crushing glass to use for construction.

Additionally, we will implement the National Waste Strategy utilising the best options to address waste management in the remaining islands. Fundamental to our approach to transform the management of waste will be the use of public private partnerships.

#### ***3. Improve our Transport Infrastructure***

Our work on improving our roads will be done in conjunction with the improvements of our water, energy and telecommunication distribution networks. We will establish public private partnerships in road management and take into consideration road safety and the impact of disasters and climate change in all engineering specifications.

We will continue to improve our airports in our Pa Enua to complement our economic development efforts beginning in 2011-2015 with improvements to Aitutaki, Atiu, Manihiki and Mangaia airstrips and terminals. We will also continue upgrading our ports in our Pa Enua completing development in Mauke and Mitiaro in 2011-2012 and rolling out the upgrade of Manihiki, Rakahanga and Aitutaki ports in 2012-2015. Efforts in Aitutaki will be focused on widening the harbour, developing a marina and upgrading the island centre. Improvements to our airports and ports will include disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures.

Transportation to the Pa Enua is a challenge and can hinder the planned development initiatives in those islands. Therefore, efforts will be made to ensure improvements to transportation to, from and between the Pa Enua, Rarotonga and other markets. These efforts will focus on cooperation between Government and the private sector

to improve transportation efficiency and connectivity to the Pa Enua and with the economy. Incentives will be introduced to encourage shipping that adopts green transportation technology.

#### **4. *Improve Telecommunications***

Telecommunications can increase the efficiency of the economy; facilitate commercial and administrative activities; improve effectiveness of social and emergency services; and distribute the social, cultural and economic benefits of the development process more equitably throughout the country. Furthermore, telecommunications is also a prerequisite for participation in an increasingly competitive global economy and for attracting new investment.

In 2013 we will be connecting to the O3B Network of medium Earth orbit satellite constellation. It is anticipated that this will significantly increase the speed and quality of our telecommunication services.

We will commit to strengthening our telecommunications regulatory framework and develop and implement policies and regulations that will result in improved telecommunications infrastructure and services. Changes to our telecommunications regulatory framework will be complimented by the most appropriate institutional arrangements to monitor telecommunications development and compliance, carry out regulatory responsibilities, drive policy development, and identify areas for capacity building to improve efficiencies in other productive sectors.

#### **5. *Strengthen our Asset Management***

We will strengthen the management of our public assets. As a matter of priority we will develop and implement asset management planning frameworks in 2011-2015.

#### **6. *Enable Robust Construction***

As a matter of priority we will review the Building and Standards Act and its associated regulations in 2011-2012 to ensure that these reflect our development aspirations by including standards and compliance to water harvesting, sanitation, energy efficiency, environmental assessments, extreme events benchmarks and climate change adaptation measures. We will strengthen our capacity in Geographical Information Systems and satellite imag-

ery to better inform our development and land use planning.

#### **7. *Build Capacity in the Infrastructure Sector***

Building capacity is crucial for improving delivery of infrastructure development. Local capacity will be fostered by providing access to up-to-date technical skills to our people through vocational education and training, and developing community and private sector organisations capable of planning, implementing and overseeing infrastructure development. With the support of our development partners, we will jointly select and manage technical cooperation and promote the provision of technical cooperation by local and regional sources, including South-South cooperation. Special attention will be paid to build the capacity of our people in the priority areas of water, sanitation and renewable energy.

#### **HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?**

1. Percentage of households having access to water is increased
2. All 12 water intakes will be rehabilitated
3. Volume of waste at landfills declined
4. Telephone connection increased
5. Cellular subscribers increased
6. Internet usage increased
7. Number of certified trades professionals increased
8. Percentage of infrastructure projects implemented by local contractor increased

## PRIORITY AREA 3: ENERGY

The Energy Sector in the Cook Islands has been dominated by the importation and consumption of fossil fuels, particularly in the diesel-based generation of electricity and the petroleum powered transport industries. Included also in the Energy Sector are industries distributing and consuming LPG gas, benzene and other oils, as well as a small number of players utilising renewable energy sources.

Whilst energy security has always been viewed as an essential element for economic growth and sustainable livelihoods, the sector has lacked a robust overarching framework to effectively and efficiently coordinate collective efforts towards the achievement of energy security. Consequently, regulatory oversight of the Energy Sector has been weak with deficiencies in policy development, compliance and management capacity. Though the Cook Islands has had in place a National Energy Policy since 2007, the problems outlined above have contributed to inadequacies in implementation of energy security, fuel and gas pricing, shipping and transportation and electrification management responsibility, particularly in the Pa Enuu.

The recent commitment by Government to fulfil 50% of the country's energy needs from renewable sources by 2015 (50/15), and 100% by 2020 (100/20) has brought a sharp focus on renewable energy to ensure energy security. Additionally, it has also highlighted the need to bring together the key stakeholders in the Energy Sector, with a stronger sectoral approach to planning, coordination, research and development, implementation and management – a transformation of the sector to achieve the country's renewable energy targets by implementing our Cook Islands Renewable Energy Chart (CIREC) and instil a greater degree of environmental integrity, while placing the country in a better position to realise its economic and sustainable livelihoods goals.

## OUR GOALS

### ENERGY SECURITY

*RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR ENERGY SECURITY TO ENHANCE OUR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY*

## OUR KEY OBJECTIVES

1. Secure and reliable energy services.
2. Enhanced efficiency and affordability of energy.
3. Investment in renewable energy development will be fostered.
4. Energy standards and compliance will be upheld by a well regulated energy sector.

## HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?

To achieve our objectives we will embark on strategies that:

### *1. Strengthen the Institutional Framework of the Energy Sector*

To ensure the implementation of our Cook Island Renewable Energy Chart (CIREC) we will transform the institutional framework of our Energy Sector. The Renewable Energy Development Division of the Office of the Prime Minister will play the lead role in coordinating and steering the implementation of the CIREC. Policy and regulatory frameworks will be strengthened as well as financial management, raising awareness, building capacity and increasing participation of our communities for the achievement of our renewable energy targets.

### *2. Utilise only Proven Renewable Energy Technologies*

Recognising the quickly changing landscape of renewable energy technologies, we will take a cautious approach to ensure that the technologies we employ will definitely enable us to achieve our renewable energy targets. We will only adopt and utilise technologically, commercially and environmentally sound proven technologies that are relevant to our context such as utility scale wind, small scale embedded wind, utility scale solar photovoltaic and embedded solar photovoltaic. Our efforts in renewable energy adoption will initially focus on our islands in the North before rolling out utilisation in the Southern islands. Programmed studies into benefits of renewable energy and the development of long term storage options will be conducted to inform actions towards the achievement of our 50/15 and 100/20 targets.

### ***3. Provide incentives for renewable energy***

We will build upon our current enabling initiatives such as Te Aponga Uira's net metering policy to encourage private sector and private citizens' participation in harnessing renewable energy sources. The Te Aponga Uira will continue to manage its net metering arrangements for Rarotonga, with the potential of expansion to grid connected renewable energy generation where appropriate in the Pa Enuā. Business models that are appropriate for changing the energy landscape will be investigated and the most viable options will be implemented.

To encourage uptake of renewable energy we will explore other viable and economically sound incentives. We will explore sound incentives with particular emphasis on low-income earners and the most vulnerable in society. These could be supported by development partners.

Incentives to encourage energy efficiency and conservation will also be implemented including those that promote energy efficient vehicles. Energy inefficient vehicles come at significant economic and environmental cost and typically have large engines that are challenged at low speeds presenting safety issues on our roads.

### ***4. Upgrade Existing Energy Infrastructure***

We will continually upgrade our energy infrastructure with maintenance and balanced investment programmes for power systems, including grid networks throughout the country, renewable energy facilities and petroleum farms. This will be pursued in the context of the concerted effort to pursue our renewable targets while recognising that new developments will need to be integrated alongside ongoing maintenance and upgrades to guarantee the delivery of reliable power supply and security.

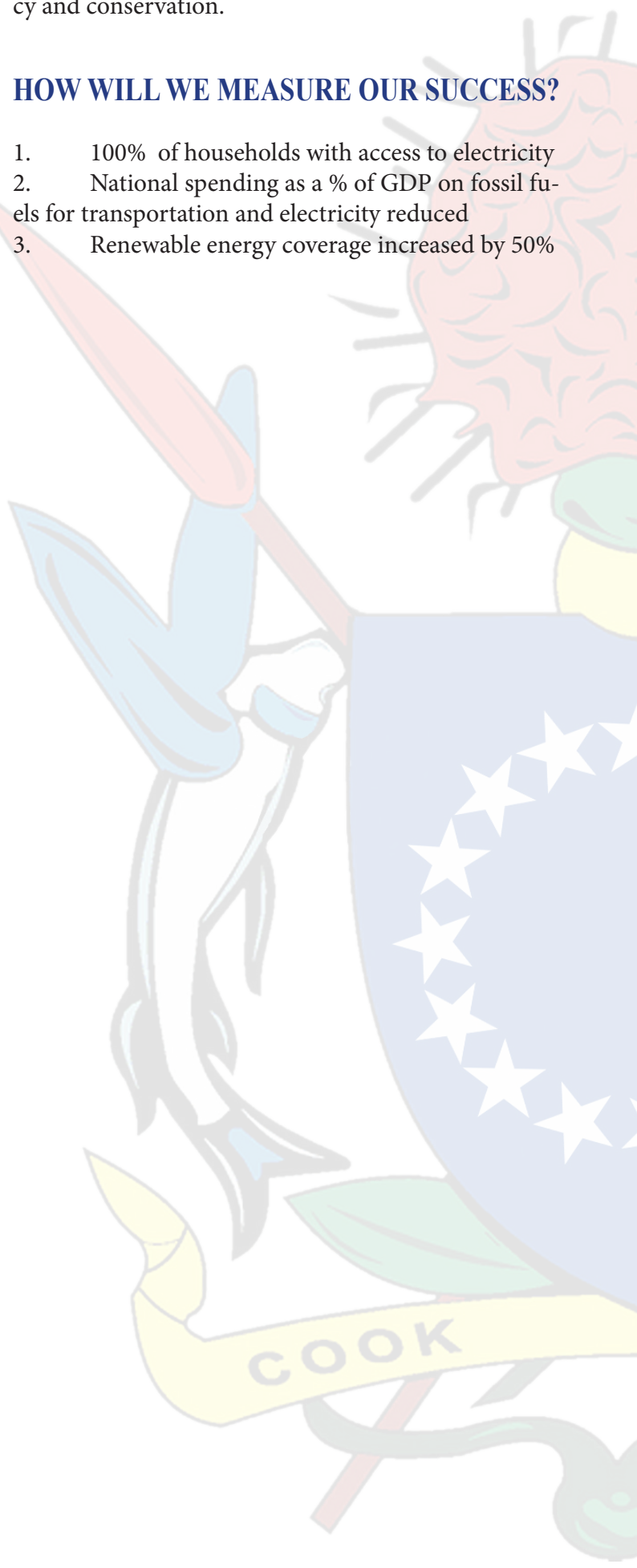
#### **5. Build our Capacity in the Energy Sector**

We will build our capacity and develop expertise in the production, installation, operation, and management of technically and economically proven renewable energy systems. This will be

complemented by awareness and educational programmes including the promotion of energy efficiency and conservation.

### **HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?**

1. 100% of households with access to electricity
2. National spending as a % of GDP on fossil fuels for transportation and electricity reduced
3. Renewable energy coverage increased by 50%



## **PRIORITY AREA 4: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Economic growth on its own will not deliver continuing improvements in the quality of life for Cook Islanders. Investment is needed in social development to promote opportunities for all and ensure social inclusion. The aim of social investment is to create a 'virtuous circle' grounded on family and community unity. Our investment in social development will result in a healthier, better educated, employable and productive population. This in turn contributes to economic development, environment sustainability and the continued prosperity of the Cook Islands and its people. If we live in a healthy physical and social environment, in a nation with a strong economy, our people will enjoy greater opportunities to live well.

### **OUR GOAL**

#### **OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL PEOPLE WHO RESIDE IN THE COOK ISLANDS**

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE ALL PEOPLE WHO RESIDE IN OUR ISLANDS CAN ENJOY OPPORTUNITIES TO FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL, PROSPER AND PARTICIPATE IN THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITIES AND NATION'*

### **OUR KEY OBJECTIVES**

1. Our people fulfil their potential through equitable access to quality learning opportunities across the full spectrum of human endeavour.
2. Our people fulfil their potential through access to quality and affordable health care.
3. Our people fulfil their potential because they are empowered and have strong families and communities.
4. Our people fulfil their potential because they participate in leisure, recreation and competitive sports activities.
5. Cook Islanders share a strong national identity and sense of belonging.

### **HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?**

To achieve our objectives we will embark on strategies that:

#### ***1. Ensure that Parents and Communities have Confidence in our Education System and Support Quality Learning and Development for the Very Young***

Early Childhood Education (ECE) has been one of the three main foci of the Ministry of Education in recent years and will remain a focus through to 2015. Although enrolment rates nationally suggest a high uptake of education at this level, disaggregation shows pockets of the population where ECE is not being accessed. 2011-2015 will focus on increased access to ECE. The Ministry of Education will seek to address this through parental education programmes (Te Kakaia – parents as leaders in their child's education), specific media campaigns and individual community based responses, as well as setting targeted funding for ECE.

#### ***2. Ensure that Every Child is Literate and Numerate by the End of Year 8 and that Literacy and Numeracy Skills for Continuing Education are Provided***

Like ECE, national literacy and numeracy results are pleasing, however, disaggregation shows geographical areas of lower achievement which require attention. Improving literacy and numeracy remains a fundamental target for 2011-2015. The Ministry of Education will enhance its Lead Teacher programme as well as continue to develop assessment tools to improve learning to compliment its work on utilising best practice models for literacy and numeracy for the Cook Islands. Increased resourcing targeted towards improving literacy in the Maori language will also occur.

Disaggregation has shown areas of low achievement, not only geographically, but also by gender. The literacy rate for boys is well below that of girls. An increase in literacy requirement for national qualifications from 2011 will only exacerbate this issue further. Addressing this will be a priority for the Ministry of Education with targeted programmes for boys.

Concrete literacy and numeracy skills underpin the ability of learners to access other learning opportunities and

qualifications. The Ministry will develop strategies to ensure that support for literacy and numeracy is available to all learners who require it in order to be successful across the full range of qualifications and programmes offered in-country.

### ***3. Enable Every Young Person to have Access to the Opportunity to Develop Knowledge and Skills and to Gain Qualifications that they Need to Contribute to the Development of the Cook Islands***

The Ministry will continue its Inclusive Education Policy to ensure that children with particular learning and physical needs are in school, and, where practicable, mainstreamed into classrooms. The Ministry is cognizant of its role in supporting the economic development of the country by ensuring that the programmes offered also help to develop enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Increasing subject scope to meet the interests of students to provide young Cook Islanders with the skills and qualifications needed to contribute to the national workforce and towards green economic growth will also be a focus. Complimenting these efforts will be programmes such as “Dual Pathways” where students can gain credits towards both school based and vocational qualifications simultaneously. Alternative Pathways will ensure that the learning needs of all students are met. A priority for the Education sector will be increased access for students in isolated communities. The use of online learning programmes provides an opportunity to reach isolated students. The provision of quality support and information on career opportunities and decision making will be enhanced in 2011-2015.

### ***4. Ensure Equitable Access for all Learners to Quality Learning Programmes***

Our approach to education and tertiary vocational training is one of lifelong learning. We will continue in 2011-2015 to ensure that the tertiary vocational education and training programmes continue to meet the priority training needs of the country and our learners. Focus on in-country

training will continue to ensure that training providers maintain accreditation standards with recognised institutions. At the same time, we will continue to ensure that our training facilities in-country are adequately resourced to meet the learning needs of all learners. A focus in 2011-2015 will be to provide second chance learning opportunities to increase employment potential in a green economy, particularly for our ‘at risk’ and ‘in risk’ young people. It is evident that vocational training has led to improving individual self esteem and responsibility, a reduction in crime rates and a more cohesive society.

### ***5. Ensure that the Education Sector is Responsive to the Training Needs of the Wider Community through Collaboration and Partnerships with other Agencies***

Collaboration and partnership within the sector and with the community is critical for responding to the training needs of the wider community. The Education Sector will work with key stakeholders to identify specific programmes that respond to community and market-based needs, as well as develop partnerships to maximise utilisation of resources for the provision of formal and non-formal learning opportunities. These include the mainstreaming of key sustainable issues such as human rights, gender, disaster risk management, climate change, environment management, and inclusiveness learning programmes.

### ***6. Ensure Optimum Health of our Children and Young People***

Health can have a cumulative effect on life outcomes – poor child health is linked to poor adult health and also to broader poor outcomes including unemployment and crime. Therefore ensuring the good health of our children and young people, is a priority. We will continue to maintain a quality maternal health service and high levels of immunisation for our children, while at the same time continue our efforts to ensure low child mortality rates. We will enhance our efforts to address issues of teenage pregnancy, unprotected sex, alcohol, cigarette and drug use, and unhealthy lifestyles by working in collaboration with other agencies and our communities.

### ***7. Provide Quality Health Services for All***

Quality health is critical to wellbeing and therefore

we will continue to focus on improving the delivery of quality health service for all our people. Providing equitable access to quality health across our islands remains a challenge. However, there are opportunities for telemedicine using information technology and improved telecommunications and supporting infrastructure. We are also challenged by the lack of specialist services in-country. To address this we will continue to engage with New Zealand to provide specialist health programmes. The capacity of our people to deliver health services will also require attention in 2011-2015 through continuing professional development, increased training, and providing employment opportunities for Cook Islanders in the health sector through the re-opening of the Cook Islands nursing school and awarding and retaining employment of Cook Islands doctors in-country. We will continue our Men's Health and Women's Health clinics which target the specific health issues of men and women. Other groups in our community that require specialised attention will also be targeted including our children who may be at risk of becoming NCD patients in the future due to changes in lifestyle and the effect of increase consumption of imported fatty food. We will work in partnership with our community service providers to address the health issues of those with mental illness, disabilities, our elderly and those requiring palliative care services.

### ***8. A Multi-Sectoral Approach to Combat Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)***

NCD remain a challenge and if not addressed will create a huge demand for remedial health. NCD have significant social and economic consequences at all levels of society. Between 1999 and 2007, the proportion of local residents diagnosed and registered as hypertensive and/or diabetic increased from 14% to 24.8%. Cerebrovascular disease, ischemic heart disease and hypertension were the leading causes of death in 2007. The Cook Islands NCD risk factors Steps Report printed in April 2011 states that 77% of Cook Islanders are at risk at developing NCD. As a matter of priority we will concentrate on both primary and secondary prevention activities to both prevent and control the incidences of NCDs. We will pay special attention and focus interventions on NCD risk factors – tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical activity and harmful use of alcohol and drugs. We will step up our efforts to effectively and efficiently implement the Cook Islands National Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control NCD including the promotion of

individuals taking responsibility for their own good health.

### ***9. Ensure Gender Equality and Empower our Women***

Our vision for gender equality and women empowerment is based on our national vision where all individuals in our society are able to live with dignity, enjoy their human rights, achieve their full potential and contribute to the development and the wellbeing of society; where women and girls have equal access to and benefits from the development of the country; and where women and girls are protected from all forms of discrimination and violence. Our efforts will focus on developing gender responsive programmes and policies; the equitable participation of women and men in decision-making and governance systems; creating an enabling environment for the full participation of women in economic and social development; improving the capacity of men and women to contribute to disaster risk management and climate change adaptation strategies; improve the capacity of women and men to address health issues; and eliminating violence against women.

### ***10. Guarantee that our Children are Safe and Well Cared for; that our Youth are given the Opportunity to Grow as Valuable Members of Society; our Persons with Disabilities are Valued and Included in our Development and where our Elderly are Acknowledged for their Contributions to Society and are Looked After***

Meeting the needs of our children, youth, persons with disabilities and elderly requires coordinated inter-agency support and a strong partnership between government, civil society and communities. Government will commit to develop and implement robust policy interventions to address the needs and capacities of those groups and legislation that will protect and ensure their human rights and wellbeing. Our policy interventions will focus on inclusiveness, valuing the contributions that these groups make to a cohesive society, and to our sustainable development. Interventions targeting children, youth, persons with disabilities, mentally ill, the displaced in our communities and our

elderly will be mainstreamed into the national policy environment. These interventions will also serve to fulfil our regional and international obligations to ensure that our children, youth, persons with disabilities and elderly are valuable members of our society.

### ***11. Ensure that we have Strong Families and Communities***

Government, the private sector, civil society organisations, communities, families and individuals working together will be fundamental in building our strength of character and unity which will result in strong families and communities. To complement interventions focusing on certain groups in our communities, government is committed to passing the Family Law Bill which will ensure the protection of the rights of individuals within a family and strengthening the family unit as a whole. Efforts will be made to identify ways to provide family support to those who need it, such as counselling, respite care and outreach, and implement the most appropriate options.

### ***12. Our People can Access an Adequate Range of Different Opportunities for Leisure, Recreation and Competitive sports***

Leisure and recreational activities are important for development because physical activity provides considerable health and other social benefits; and arts, sports, cultural activities and access to the natural environment offer opportunities for inspiration, creativity and spiritual renewal. Government will work in collaboration with other key stakeholders and our communities to develop and implement a comprehensive national policy that will promote, encourage and support physical activity and recreation in the Cook Islands.

### ***13. Ensure the Promotion and Preservation of our Unique Culture, Language and Social Heritage***

Culture, language and heritage have value in their own right and contribute to a common sense of nationhood and national development. Culture can act as a catalyst for economic growth, environmental protection, sense of

self worth, belonging, pride and achievement. We will promote the preservation of our unique culture, Maori language (and all its dialects) and social heritage through the integration of relevant programmes into our education curriculum. Our culture and social heritage will be incorporated into our strategies for economic and social development and ecological sustainability.

### **HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?**

1. Enrolment rate for Early Childhood Education is 95% across all islands.
2. 65% Year 4 Literacy results in Cook Islands Maori at or above expected levels.
3. 60% Year 4 Literacy results in English at or above expected levels.
4. 90% NCEA Level 1 Numeracy rate.
5. 90% NCEA Level 1 Literacy rate.
6. 62% achievement in NCEA Level 1 qualification.
7. 70% retention rate from Year 11-12.
8. Increase by 50% rate of tertiary qualified Cook Islanders.
9. Increase by 50% rate of vocational education and training achievement.
10. Greater than 90% antenatal care coverage for all mothers.
11. Low infant (under 5 years) and maternal mortality rates.
12. Greater than 90% immunisation coverage.
13. Reduce by 10% incidence rates of NCDs.
14. Reduce by 30% rates of teenage pregnancy.
15. Reduce by 30% rate of sexually transmitted infections.
16. Maintain nil or low rate of HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis (TB) infections.
17. Reduce by 50% the number of overweight children
18. Increase in the % of women in business and professional occupations.
19. Increase in the % of women in local and national government.
20. Decline in the rate of domestic violence.
21. Decline in the rate of crimes committed against children.
22. Decline in the rate of crimes committed by youth offenders.
23. Reduction in unemployment rate.
24. Increase by 50% the employment rate for persons with disabilities.
25. Increase in levels of funding for non-government and civil society organisations providing social services.

## PRIORITY AREA 5: RESILIENCE

The Cook Islands is highly vulnerable to natural and man-made hazards that can lead to disasters. Disasters can result in short and long term devastating social, economic and environmental consequences which can set back the country's hard won development progress. We are of course no strangers to this having over the years experienced the impacts of cyclones. Coupled with this is the ever present threat of the adverse impacts of climate change. As a small island nation, climate change has the potential to significantly undermine our future as Cook Islanders living fulfilling lives in our islands and even the very survival of our islands. Furthermore, it is now recognised that development processes themselves can lead to the creation of new hazards if these processes are not 'risk-proofed'. In addition, there is the ever-present threat of technological and health disasters such as oil spills, aircraft accidents, pandemics etc. Therefore, for the Cook Islands, disaster risk reduction and management and climate change are development issues which cannot be viewed independently of the economic, social, environmental and cultural components of development.

Our approach therefore, combines a high state of preparedness from our emergency services to respond to disasters (disaster management) with an on-going investment in activities that reduce the risk and vulnerability of our economy and our communities (disaster risk reduction) by learning to adapt to the changing climate and building our resilience to natural and man-made hazards. This approach seeks to integrate Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) with Disaster Risk Management (DRM) so as to maximise synergies and avoid overlaps.

To achieve this we will implement an 'all hazards', 'whole of government', 'no regrets' approach with key agencies coordinating closely with relevant stakeholders and our communities.

### OUR GOAL

#### A RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE COOK ISLANDS

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE OUR PEOPLE ARE RESILIENT TO DISASTERS AND CLIMATE CHANGE TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS'*

## OUR OBJECTIVES

1. Our people are prepared for disasters and climate change impacts
2. The impacts of disasters and climate change are reduced
3. Our people are resilient to all forms of hazards

### HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?

To achieve our objectives we will embark on strategies that:

#### *1. Ensure Strong Governance Arrangements for DRM and CCA*

Our strategies are to strengthen and integrate governance arrangements for DRM and CCA through strengthening and consolidating policies, plans and institutions; establishing sustainable financing mechanisms; strengthening capacity of government agencies, island councils and civil society organisations; and strengthening DRM and CCA planning at the local level. Moreover, our strategy will seek to mainstream DRM and CCA into national and sectoral planning, policies, legislation and budgeting as well as into development planning regulations.

#### *2. Ensure that High Quality Risk Information is Available to Inform Planning and Implementation*

For risk reduction and adaptation to be effective we have to have strong and reliable risk information and monitoring systems in place. Our strategy therefore is to monitor and assess the risks and vulnerabilities linked to natural and man-made hazards, including those associated with climate change. This will include the strengthening of spatial mapping technologies and risk exposure databases, modelling of sea-surge and areas susceptible to inundation, monitoring of water quality, and so forth. In addition, the focus will also be on learning from our communities through the documentation and use of traditional knowledge and through conducting participatory vulnerability assessments for all inhabited islands. In consulting and planning with our communities, we will be alert to the special needs of women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups in our society.

### ***3. Enhance Effective Preparedness, Response and Recovery***

With the dramatic increase in our risk profile as a result of climate change (stronger and more frequent cyclones, more and worse droughts, sea level rise, etc) it is imperative that we maintain and strengthen our systems for preparedness, emergency response and recovery so as to minimise the impact of hazards on the social and economic well-being of our communities. This will involve ensuring high levels of community awareness and preparedness at all times. Emergency management agencies, including health and welfare, will also need to maintain a high level of preparedness which will require on-going training, inter-agency planning and holding operational drills. The Cook Islands Red Cross is an important partner in this regard and coordination with government will need to be improved. The installation of effective early warning systems and a system of emergency shelters also form part of our strategy.

### ***4. Building Resilience through Effective Disaster Risk Reduction and CCA***

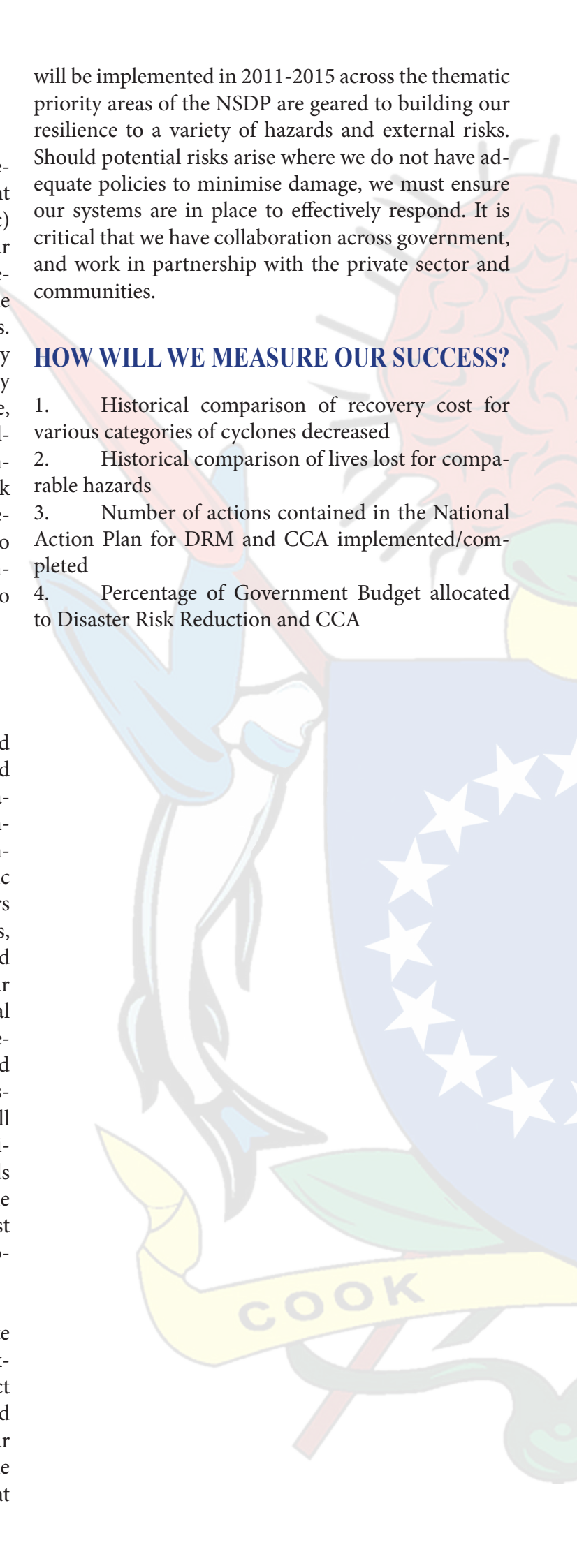
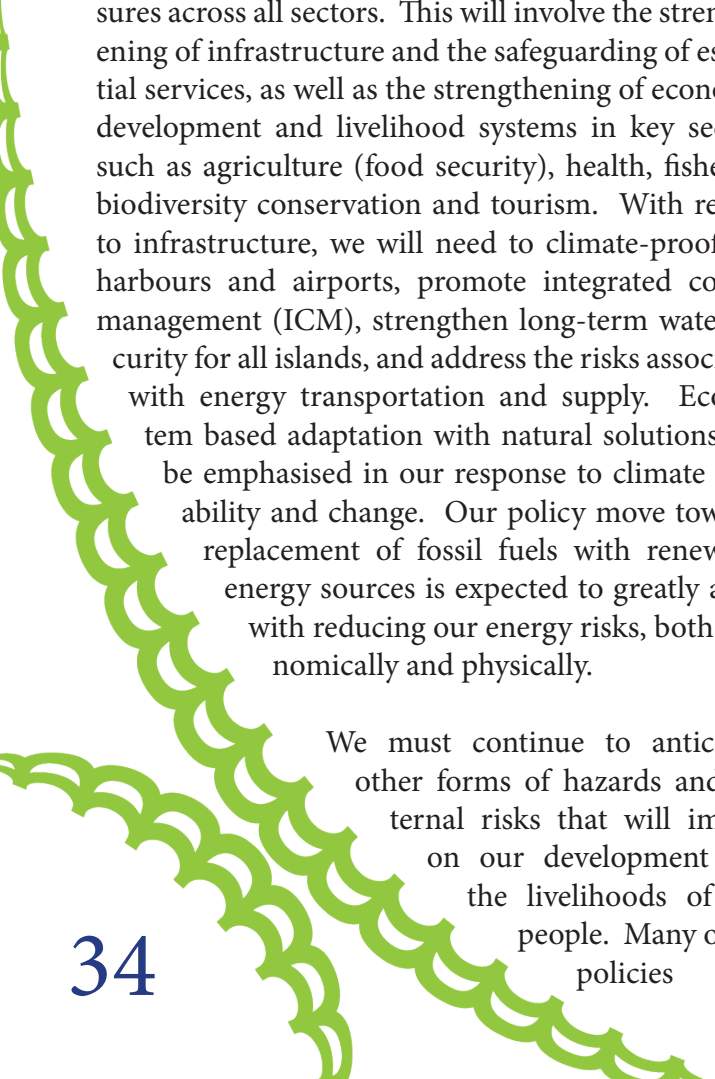
A key strategy in our response to the threats posed by natural and man-made hazards to our society and economy is to invest in Disaster Risk Reduction measures across all sectors. This will involve the strengthening of infrastructure and the safeguarding of essential services, as well as the strengthening of economic development and livelihood systems in key sectors such as agriculture (food security), health, fisheries, biodiversity conservation and tourism. With regard to infrastructure, we will need to climate-proof our harbours and airports, promote integrated coastal management (ICM), strengthen long-term water security for all islands, and address the risks associated with energy transportation and supply. Ecosystem based adaptation with natural solutions will be emphasised in our response to climate variability and change. Our policy move towards replacement of fossil fuels with renewable energy sources is expected to greatly assist with reducing our energy risks, both economically and physically.

We must continue to anticipate other forms of hazards and external risks that will impact on our development and the livelihoods of our people. Many of the policies that

will be implemented in 2011-2015 across the thematic priority areas of the NSDP are geared to building our resilience to a variety of hazards and external risks. Should potential risks arise where we do not have adequate policies to minimise damage, we must ensure our systems are in place to effectively respond. It is critical that we have collaboration across government, and work in partnership with the private sector and communities.

### **HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?**

1. Historical comparison of recovery cost for various categories of cyclones decreased
2. Historical comparison of lives lost for comparable hazards
3. Number of actions contained in the National Action Plan for DRM and CCA implemented/completed
4. Percentage of Government Budget allocated to Disaster Risk Reduction and CCA



## PRIORITY AREA 6: ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

Our process of development is very much ingrained in the principle of ecological sustainability which recognises firstly that the maintenance of healthy ecosystems and natural resources, are preconditions for human wellbeing, and secondly, that there are limits to the goods and services which they can provide. Our approach acknowledges that human beings and our culture are part of nature and not separate from it. Furthermore, we recognise that the environment we live in is changing due to human interference and climate change, and that we need to ensure that development options and our responses for safeguarding our ecosystems contribute to maximising our adaptive capacity and minimises our green house gas emissions. For the Cook Islands, sustainable development implies the selection and implementation of development options which allows for the achievement of appropriate and justifiable social and economic goals without compromising the natural system on which it is based.

### OUR GOAL

#### ENVIROMENT FOR LIVING

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE WE SUSTAIN OUR ECOSYSTEMS AND USE OUR NATURAL RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY'*

### OUR KEY OBJECTIVES

1. The use of all our natural resources are managed well to ensure their sustainability.
2. Our scarce and degraded natural resources are effectively monitored and restored.
3. The pollution of air, water and land resources is managed so that impacts are minimised and community and ecosystem health is not adversely affected.
4. Irreversible loss and degradation of biodiversity (marine, terrestrial, aquatic ecosystems) is avoided.
5. Our actions to protect and manage our ecosystems and natural resources will include CCA and emissions reduction measures.
6. Taking care of our natural environment is 'everybody's business'.

## HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?

To achieve our objectives we will embark on strategies that:

### *1. Improve the Management and Quality of our Water Resources through an Integrated Approach*

Our approach to improving the management and quality of our water resources is to promote the principle of integration where 'water is everybody's business' where all key stakeholders are involved in decision making processes, and where consideration is given to the various conflicting users and allocations of water resources in the context of climate and environmental changes affecting rainfall and water quality and demand. Our interventions will include developing a robust national policy and plan for the management of water resources embracing catchment, supply and demand management; providing the necessary legislative and regulatory framework; improving the institutional and administrative structures also involving information sharing; building our capacities and capabilities for integrated water resource management, including education and awareness to change behaviours and increasing the frequency of water sampling to monitor water quality. Other key initiatives which will be progressed include the monitoring of stream and lagoon water quality as well as improving our data collection and analysis related to water resource management. Our initiatives will ensure that our approach to water resource management is integrated where all use of water is connected from the time it falls from the sky till it reaches the sea.

### *2. Improve Water Quality through better Sanitation Measures*

Our inadequate sanitation measures in the past have incurred a significant negative impact on the quality of our lagoons and our marine life, particularly in Rarotonga. As our livelihoods and our economy are very much reliant on the condition of our lagoons and marine life, we must safeguard these resources. We will work to rectify the shortcomings of the past and implement initiatives that will improve our sanitation through strengthening our regulations and compliance; upgrading poor sanitation systems and installing more efficient domestic and commercial systems;

improving our sanitation and waste water treatment systems; changing our farming practices; and improving the coordination of efforts across government and our communities. Significant human resource capacity will be built to enable this to happen.

### ***3. Implement Waste Minimisation Programmes and Provide appropriate Facilities and Incentives to Support these with the Purpose of Achieving Zero Waste***

Solid waste management is a critical issue which we will continue to address in 2011-2015. As a starting point, we will establish the necessary institutional arrangements to better manage our solid waste, including the privatisation of services. We will also develop and implement the appropriate policy, legislative and regulatory environment to ensure that all waste including hazardous and e-waste is minimised and better managed, while exploring the costs and benefits of other options of waste disposal with the purpose of achieving zero waste. Additionally, we will step up our efforts in education and awareness, and provide incentives to encourage recycling. We will strengthen public private community partnerships in waste management.

### ***4. Implement an Ecosystem Approach to the Management of Marine Resources***

Our view of our marine resources is that we hope to accommodate competing interests for the resources while sustaining productive, resilient, healthy marine ecosystems. We anticipate that this will allow us to address the long term consequences of today's decisions by thinking of the various resources and inter-related parts of systems rather than as individual components to separately manage. Therefore, our approach to ecosystem management of marine resources is aligned with our strategies to utilise our marine resources sustainably for economic development and provide for the protection of our biodiversity and ecosystems. We will develop and implement integrated management plans for utilising our marine resources in consultation and collaboration with our communities. Additionally, we will strengthen our monitoring

and research of our marine resources.

### ***5. Develop and Implement Interventions to Ensure that Land Use is Sustainable***

Sustainable land use recognises the inter-linkages between land and our actions on land as part of the whole process of managing our national resources effectively. Land use will not be addressed in isolation, but rather through the coordination between key sectors and stakeholders, particularly land-owning families and alignment to the efforts that we will pursue in managing our use of other natural resources. Our key strategies to ensure that land use is sustainable include establishing and implementing policies and legislation that supports sustainable land use practices including the use of appropriate tools such as environmental impact assessments. Additionally, we will explore the potential to create a portal to ensure the exchange of environment related data and information to inform our state of the environment and decision making.

### ***6. Protect our Biodiversity and Ecosystems***

In 2011-2015 we will intensify our efforts to protect our biodiversity and ecosystems. We will identify key biodiversity areas for conservation and extend the number and area of protected areas including the establishment of a significant component of our exclusive economic zone as a marine park. Additionally, we will legislate for the protection of endangered flora and fauna species, while stepping up our efforts to actively control invasive species. As in other areas impacting on our natural resources, we will establish a more integrated biodiversity management system to ensure collaboration across sectors and with our communities. Furthermore, we will incorporate in the appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks, access to genetic resources, its associated traditional knowledge to provide for the equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

## **HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?**

1. Water demand and use per capita is reduced.
2. Increased and improved water storage.
3. Catch from offshore fisheries per effort is maintained at an ecologically sustainable level.
4. Percentage of organic agricultural production is increased.
5. Loss of soil through erosion is reduced.
6. Percentage of land covered by forest increased.

7. Percentage of population with sanitation systems upgraded to approved standards of sanitation increased.
8. Stream, lagoon water and in-land water intake quality improved to within approved thresholds.
9. Importation of ozone depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants declined.
10. Tonnage of waste going to landfill declined.
11. Tonnage of recycled materials increased.
12. Percentage of total land areas under protected status increased.
13. Area of protected lagoons and seas increased.
14. Numbers of endangered species, animals and plants as a percentage of described species decreased.

## **PRIORITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE**

Good governance is an essential element of sustainable development. Good governance is based on the principles of participation in decision making built on freedom of association and speech; consensus orientation; strategic vision with the understanding of historical, cultural and social complexities; responsiveness in serving all stakeholders; effectiveness and efficiency where results meet our people's needs while making best use of resources; accountability to our stakeholders; transparency through the free flow of information; equity; and the rule of law. The Cook Islands will make every effort to strengthen the role of parliament, improve electoral systems and processes, promote effective partnerships, intensify the management of public finance and embrace public service philosophy that is responsive, collaborative and client focused.

### **OUR GOAL**

#### **GOOD GOVERNANCE**

*'A COOK ISLANDS THAT THRIVES ON GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES'*

### **OUR OBJECTIVES**

1. The general public has confidence in the systems of government.
2. A machinery of government focused on calculated strategic direction, progressive partnerships and service satisfaction.
3. Increasing the value of existing taxpayer dollars through systems that deliver effective development outcomes.
4. A general public that is continuously informed of the return on investment for their taxpayer dollar and as a result actively contributes to development decisions and actions.
5. Regional and international relations contribute effectively to Cook Islands sustainable development.

### **HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?**

To achieve our objectives we will embark on strategies that:

## ***1. Strengthen the Role of Parliament to hold Managers to Account for Performance***

The Standing Orders for the Parliament of the Cook Islands set out the scope and procedures for budget and financial scrutiny by Parliament where a body would scrutinise financial information in detail. In practice this does not happen. Similarly, while the Audit Office submits audit reports (including special reports on performance) to Parliament, these have not been examined (with the exception of recent fuel farm purchase) to any great extent. Under Rule 316(2) (c) of the Parliament Standing Orders, the Financial and Expenditure Select Committee should provide this oversight. Currently the lack of Parliamentary oversight potentially reduces the effectiveness and credibility of external scrutiny and risks affecting the quality of transparency and public accountability. We will strengthen this oversight by activating the Financial and Expenditure Select Committee in 2012/2013 as identified in the Public Financial Management Roadmap.

## ***2. Strengthen Electoral Systems and Processes***

Our MDG Goal 9 talks of implementing electoral reform. We will revisit the recommendations of previous reports on electoral reforms and identify appropriate measures to undertake in 2011-2015.

## ***3. Ensure that Government Service Delivery is Efficient and Effective***

Government has embarked on a functional review to realign its functions to better reflect our legislative mandates and development aspirations. From 2012 onwards, we will commence the implementation of the whole of government review, including governance improvements in the Pa Enuu.

Leadership tools including the Public Service Manual, Performance Management and Human Resource Framework will also be strengthened to embed good governance and public service values. As part of improving service delivery, we will better coordinate and strengthen planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation.

## ***4. Promote Partnerships with Civil Society and the Private Sector***

The NSDP is a national document formulated through consultations with our traditional leaders, the private sector, civil society and communities. Therefore it is only fair that these key stakeholders are also included in the decision making processes required to implement the NSDP. To this end, the government will ensure that there is representation from these key sectors in the institutional arrangements required to implement the NSDP. Government will broaden the composition of the National Sustainable Development Commission (NSDC), the body charged with ensuring the implementation of the NSDP, to include representatives from the private sector, civil society and communities. Additionally, all Cabinet appointed committees will include representatives from our key stakeholders with particular attention paid to the representation of women and youth.

## ***5. Strengthen Information and Data Collection, Analysis and Management for Informed Decision Making***

Reliable information and data are critical to inform decision making and also for measuring progress. Currently our information and data collection, analysis and management systems are deficient. In 2011-2015 we will improve our data and information collection, analysis and management by developing and implementing a sound framework for statistics.

The use of information technology provides us with many opportunities to improve governance by automating processes, sharing information, making information accessible and reaching those who are difficult to reach. We will strengthen E-Government to better deliver public services.

## ***6. Ensure Access to Information***

Government will ensure that the public is better informed on its policies and activities, as well as improving participation in government decision making processes. This will ensure that government and the public sector are accountable and transparent in the spirit of the Official Information Act (OIA) and provide accurate, accessible and relevant information in a timely and efficient manner.

## ***7. Improve Accountability and Transparency of Public Financial Management***

Transparent reporting to the general public on government's undertakings is critical to demonstrate how taxpayer dollars are being managed to achieve associated development outcomes.

In 2011, the government undertook a Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Assessment (PEFA) that provides a rating of how transparent and accountable the government's public financial systems are. It was determined that the systems are reasonably sound however, various facets, including the timeliness of financial reporting, weak public debate on financial reports and budgets, and the absence of sector plans are major impediments to public engagement in decision making and thus accountability.

From the PEFA government has developed a Public Financial Management Roadmap. The Roadmap is a plan that seeks to improve such systems over the planning period with the overall aim that by 2015, the Cook Islands increases the return on each dollar collected from taxpayers and development partners towards achieving development results in areas identified as priorities; the general public is better engaged in the annual budget process and debate; and development partners are confident in the soundness of the public financial management systems that enable the receipt of official development assistance through general budget support modalities.

The roadmap intends to facilitate actions focused on improved measures of accountability across government; a reduction in systemic vulnerabilities to corruption; better transparency and more regular provision of key fiscal information to the general public; greater involvement of the legislature in scrutinising public finances; improved control in budget execution; and improved financial management capacity across government. Our success will be measured by PEFA 2015.

### ***8. Establish and Strengthen External Relations that will Benefit the Cook Islands***

Our relationships within the Pacific region and internationally are very important for the achievement of our sustainable development goals and objectives. We will continue to implement a foreign policy that adopts a proactive approach to strengthening the Cook Islands in its dealings with the wider world and increases its ability to make external economic, trade, security and other arrangements that support its development objectives. To this end, we will reinforce

our relationships with our traditional development partners and organisations while seeking to establish beneficial diplomatic relationships with other countries. We will work towards full United Nations membership, targeting in the shorter term full membership of the Commonwealth and establishing overseas representation where it is in the Cook Islands best interest. We will continue to fulfil our regional and international commitments and assume new rights and obligations when which will support the Cook Islands national development outcomes.

### **HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?**

1. A functional review implementation framework which enhances service delivery is executed.
2. Implement leadership and development programmes that reinforce strategic directions and fosters innovation and service excellence across the Public Service.
3. As the "Employer of Choice", strategies that enhance the recruitment and retention of a competent workforce will be implemented.
4. PFM Roadmap fully implemented and PEFA assessment in 2015 demonstrates planned improvements in PFM systems in accordance with the Roadmap goal scores.
5. Personnel to GDP reduced and maintained within 40% over the planning period.
6. Majority of the general public are informed and aware of the performance of Government through public opinion polls, with actions facilitating this being
  - a. The introduction of an annual Parliament calendar by 2012
  - b. Reinstating Parliamentary Select Committees responsible for scrutinising performance of the public service including the Public Finance and Expenditure Select Committee
  - c. Introducing one point of access for information relating to all aspects of Government operations.
7. Adoption of a National Foreign Policy.

## **PRIORITY AREA 8: LAW AND ORDER**

The rule of law and maintenance of order compliment good governance as necessary foundations to achieve sustainable development. Deficiencies in the rule of law have devastating consequences on the confidence of economic actors. This in turn slows economic growth and consequently deprives the government of the resources to invest in education, safety nets and sound environment management, all of which are critical for sustainable development. Likewise, the maintenance of order through effective border management and quality policing services provided to local communities are fundamental for sustainable communities that are safe, secure and stable. Therefore our approach to establishing law and order will be closely aligned to that of our other priority areas where we will ensure that activities towards law and order will be based on the impact of these activities on the wider social, economic and environmental factors and how these interact to achieve sustainable development.

### **OUR GOAL**

*A SAFE, SECURE, JUST AND STABLE SOCIETY*

*'A COOK ISLANDS WHERE THE RULE OF LAW ENSURES SAFE, SECURE, JUST, STABLE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES'*

### **OUR OBJECTIVES**

1. Clear, coherent and relevant laws; fair, accessible and efficient courts and institutions for the administration of justice
2. Free access to our Cook Islands Laws
3. Quality policing services for communities and visitors
4. Control of our borders is efficient and effective
5. Quality enforcement of our laws

### **HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?**

To achieve our objectives we will embark on strategies that:

#### ***1. Ensure that our Legislative and Regulatory Frameworks Reflect our Sustainable Development Goals and Objectives***

Our sustainable development goals and objectives require the strengthening of legislative and regulatory frameworks, either through amendments or the development of new legislation and regulations. This will be the Crown Law Office's focus in 2011-2015. Additionally, we will strengthen the Law Reform Commission to oversee our legislative and regulatory initiatives including public consultations on new legislation or legislative reviews.

Furthermore, we will ensure that our laws are accessible to the general public and that our people understand their rights as articulated by our legislative frameworks.

#### ***2. Ensure Quality Enforcement of our Laws***

We will build our capacity to enforce our laws. In 2011-2015 we will develop the relevant tools and processes to ensure compliance and enforcement of our legislation.

#### ***3. Improve Access to Justice***

Improving access to Justice requires continual efforts in ensuring increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the civil, administrative, family justice and criminal justice systems. We will work towards an accessible justice system that provides support where it is needed. This includes programmes on increasing awareness of legal rights and services available, provision of legal advice to the public, and expanding the scope of Legal Aid to include civil matters.

#### ***4. Improve our Land Management and Land Information Systems***

Improving our land management and land information systems has been identified as a priority. This will require collaboration between agencies to ensure that land information is as accurate as possible and that its accessibility is well managed.

#### ***5. Reducing Reoffending through Offender Rehabilitation***

We will work in collaboration with other agencies and stakeholders to develop rehabilitation programmes

such as training and skill building to ensure that offenders get a second chance at being productive members of society. As identified under our priority for social development, particular attention will be paid to our young offenders. We will ensure that our prison system and facilities comply with international standards and best practice.

### ***6. Ensure that our Communities and Visitors are Safe, Secure and Stable through the provision of Quality Policing***

In 2011-2015 we will continually work to ensure that policing services reflect the needs and expectations of individuals and communities so that public confidence is improved, satisfaction with services increases, and public involvement with policing is enhanced. Our efforts will focus on crime and crash prevention; intelligence led policing; increased police presence in communities; and working with communities and other key stakeholders to reduce crime.

Furthermore, we will continue to implement intelligence led processes and reports to assist law enforcement agencies in combating money laundering, terrorism, financing and other serious crimes.

### ***7. Ensure our Border Security***

We will work collaboratively as a sector to ensure the security of the Cook Islands is not compromised. We will build our capacity to work together and harmonised our processes to implement a sector approach to border security for cross-over border movement of both goods and persons. As part of this, we will establish a computerised system that links across various agencies concerned with border management. Furthermore, we will enhance our maritime policing efforts in partnership with our regional and international partners.

### **HOW WILL WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?**

1. Percentage of community that 'feel safe both at home and public places' increased
2. Percentage of community 'satisfied with the level of police visibility in public areas' increased
3. Reporting of family violence increased
4. Crime rate decreased
5. Number of motor vehicle accidents decreased
6. An effective, automated border management system meeting the needs of relevant agencies, especially both customs and immigration, is established and supported by modern legislation

## MONITORING AND EVALUATING OUR PROGRESS

Monitoring and evaluating our progress will be informed by the targets and indicators below. These will be monitored on an annual basis where possible, appropriate and given information availability.

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
<b>GOAL 1: A VIBRANT COOK ISLANDS ECONOMY</b>	
<b>A Cook Islands where all our people can build business and enterprise to contribute to national economic growth while respecting our environment and culture</b>	Real GDP growth averages 2.5% per annum
	Private Sector employment growth averages 2.5% per annum
	Growth in total visitor number over 120,000
	Growth in contribution to the economy as a % of GDP from our tourism industry
	Growth in contribution to the economy as a % of GDP from our marine resources
	Growth in contribution to the economy as a % of GDP from our agricultural production
	Growth in contribution to the economy as a % from our offshore financial services industry
	Government tax revenue to GDP maintained within 25% over the medium term
	Personnel to total revenue is reduced and maintained within 40% over the medium term
	A National Trade Policy will be adopted and trade agreements entered into where they offer opportunities and benefits to the Cook Islands

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
<b>GOAL 2: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AND RESILIENCE</b>	
<b>Our investment in infrastructure will maximise economic return, improve livelihoods and build resilience</b>	<b>% of households having access to water is increased in the medium term</b>
	All 12 water intakes are rehabilitated in the medium term
	Volume of waste at landfills declined annually
	Telephone connections increased in the medium term
	Cellular subscribers increased
	Internet usage increased
	Number of certified trade professionals increased
	% of infrastructure projects implemented by local contractor increased

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
<b>GOAL 3: ENERGY SECURITY</b>	
<b>Renewable energy for energy security to enhance our economic and social development and environmental integrity</b>	<b>% of households with access to electricity increased</b>
	National spend as % of GDP on fossil fuels for transportation and electricity declined
	Renewable energy coverage increased by 50%

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
<b>GOAL 4: OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL PEOPLE WHO RESIDE IN THE COOK ISLANDS</b>	
<b>A Cook Islands where all people who reside in our islands can enjoy opportunities to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of our communities and nation</b>	Enrolment rate for Early Childhood Education is 95% across all islands
	65% Year 4 Literacy results in Cook Islands Maori at or above expected levels
	60% Year 4 Literacy results in English at or above expected levels
	90% NCEA Level 1 Numeracy rate
	90% NCEA Level 1 Literacy rate
	62% achievement in NCEA Level 1 qualification
	70% retention rate from Year 11-12
	Increase by 50% rate of tertiary qualified Cook Islanders
	Increase by 50% rate of vocational education and training achievement
	Greater than 90% antenatal coverage for all mothers
	Low infant (under 5 years) and maternal mortality rates
	Greater than 90% immunisation coverage
	Reduce by 10% incidence rate of Non Communicable Diseases
	Reduce by 30% rates of teenage pregnancy
	Reduce by 30% rate of sexually transmitted infections
	Maintain nil or low rate of HIV/AIDS and TB infections
	Reduce by 50% the number of overweight children
	Increase the % of women in business and professional occupations

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
	Increase the % of women in local and national government
	Decline in the rate of domestic violence
	Decline in the rate of crimes committed against children
	Decline in the rate of crimes committed by youth offenders
	Reduce the unemployment rate
	Increase by 50% employment rate for persons with disabilities
	Levels of funding for NGOs and CSOs providing social services increased

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
<b>GOAL 5: RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES</b>	
<b>A Cook Islands where our people are resilient to disasters and climate change to achieve sustainable livelihoods</b>	Historical comparison of recovery cost for various categories of cyclones decreased
	Historical comparison of lives lost for comparable hazards
	Number of actions contained in the National Action Plan for DRM and CCA implemented/completed
	% of Government Budget allocated to Disaster Risk Reduction and CCCA

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
<b>GOAL 6: ENVIRONMENT FOR LIVING</b>	
<b>A Cook Islands where we sustain our ecosystems and use our natural resources efficiently</b>	Water demand and use per capita reduced
	Increased and improved water storage per litre
	Catch from offshore fisheries per effort at an economically sustainable level
	% of organic agricultural production increased
	Loss of soil through soil erosion reduced
	% of land covered in forest maintained/increased

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
	% of population sanitation systems upgraded to approved standards of sanitation increased
	Stream, lagoon water and inland water intake quality improved to within approved thresholds
	Importation of ozone depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants declined
	Tonnage of waste going to landfill reduced
	Tonnage of recycled materials increased
	% of total land areas under protected status increased
	Area of protected lagoons and seas increased
	Number of endangered species, animals and plants as a % of described species decreased

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
<b>GOAL 7: GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>	
<b>A Cook Islands that thrives on good governance principles development</b>	A functional review implementation framework which enhances service delivery is executed
	Implement leadership and development programmes that reinforce strategic directions and foster innovation and service excellence across the Public Service
	As the “Employer of Choice”, strategies that enhance the recruitment and retention of a competent workforce will be implemented
	PFM Roadmap fully implemented and PEFA assessment in 2015 demonstrates planned improvements in PFM systems in accordance with the Roadmaps goal scores
	Personnel to GDP reduced and maintained within 40% over the planning period
	Majority of the general public informed and aware of the performance of Government through public opinion polls, with actions facilitating this being:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The introduction of an annual Parliament calendar</li> <li>· Reinstating Parliamentary Select Committees responsible for scrutinising performance of the public service including the Public Finance and Expenditure Select Committee</li> </ul>

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
	· Introducing one point of access for information relating to all aspects of Government operations
	Adoption of a National Foreign Policy

GOAL	TARGET/INDICATOR
<b>GOAL 8: A SAFE, SECURE, JUST AND STABLE SOCIETY</b>	
<b>A Cook Islands where the rule of law ensures safe, secure, just, stable and sustainable communities</b>	% of community that ‘feel safe both at home and public places’ increased
	% of community ‘satisfied with the level of police visibility in public places’ increased
	Reporting of family violence increased
	Crime rate declined
	Rate of reoffending declined
	Number of motor vehicle accidents declined
	An effective, automated border management system meeting the needs of relevant agencies, especially both customs and immigration, is established, supported by modern legislation



## DELIVERING THE PLAN

The following matrix summarises the key strategies for achieving our NSDP goals and objectives. Its implementation is based on the current structure of Government. Implementing and supporting agencies may change depending on the outcomes of the Public Service Functional Review.

### PRIORITY AREA 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### GOAL: A VIBRANT COOK ISLANDS ECONOMY

A Cook Islands where ingenuity and connection to our culture and environment underpin the ability of our people to build business and enterprise for national economic growth

#### OBJECTIVES

1. An energised and growing green economy through supporting our key economic drivers and encouraging environmental innovation in potential areas of growth.
2. Enterprise is enabled by establishing an environment conducive for existing businesses to confidently grow and for new businesses to start, grow and thrive in our communities.
3. Our Cook Islands cultural and environmental values are integral to business decision making and practice.

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
<b>Ensure our Tourism Destination Excellence</b>	Underwrite key airline routes to Los Angeles and Sydney		
	Explore other options for connecting the Cook Islands with key markets		
	Improve promotion and marketing in key markets to ensure growth in market share, yield and dispersal to the Pa Enua	CITC	CITC Board, Industry members
	Implement the Destination Development Strategy that underpins our green image and makes tourism 'everybody's business	CITC	MMR, MOA, MOC, MOIP, Island Councils, NES, BTIB, CIIC, NHRD, USP
	Develop an alternative port for cruise ships in Rarotonga	MOIP	CITC, Aronga Mana
	Provide places for our people to showcase their creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship while adding to the distinctive character of the Cook Islands	CIIC, BTIB	BTIB, CITC, MOA, MOC
	Promote our cultural and sports events	CITC	MOC, Sports Federation, CISNOC,

	targeting cultural and sports clientele				BTIB
	Promote our educational and cultural facilities and services to target those willing to learn in the Cook Islands			MOE, NHRD, CITC, MOC	
	Establish green standards for our tourism accreditation programme			CITC	NES, Tourism Industry, Chamber of Commerce
	Ensure integration of tourism and infrastructure development			CITC	CIIC, MOIP
<b>Unlock our potential from our Marine Resources</b>	Expand income earning opportunities from sustainably managed offshore fisheries through capacity building, infrastructure and market development			MMR	
	Improve productivity, marketing and environmental management of our pearl industry			MMR	Island Councils, Pearl farmers
				CIPA	
	Increase the provision of technical and scientific assistance to improve income generating opportunities for the private sector particularly in the Pa Enua			MMR	Island Council, Fishing Associations
	Ensure sustainable fishing and conservation practices through subsistence practices and long term food security			MMR	NES, Aronga Mana, Island Council
	Protect and conserve our natural marine biodiversity, its affiliated customary practices and knowledge			MMR, NES, MOC	Aronga Mana, Island Council
	Explore potential sustainable commercialisation of marine resources, such as, marine eco-tourism and other innovative marine business enterprises			MMR, BTIB	
	Utilise our non-living marine resources (such as manganese nodules) wisely for sustainable economic development, maximise the long term benefits from money generated, while maintaining the impact to the environment caused by extraction			Seabed Mining Authority,	NES, MFAI, CLO, OPM-CPPO, MFEM, BTIB
				MMR	

<b>Unlock our potential from our agricultural production</b>	Revitalise our agriculture especially in the southern Pa Enua for import substitution, food security, income generation, and consumption of healthy food	MOA	Growers Associations, BTIB, NES, NHRD, MOE, MOH, Island Council, Chamber of Commerce, Farmers, Private Sector
	Build partnerships in the agriculture sector to support revitalisation of agriculture	MOA, Growers Associations	NHRD, CITC, NES, MOE, Island Councils, BTIB, Chamber of Commerce, Farmers
	Promote biological and organic production to support green growth	MOA, Growers Associations	NES, Farmers, Island Councils
	Encourage research and vocational training in 'green agriculture	MOA, NHRD, MOE	
<b>Identify and exploit trade opportunities</b>	Identify and exploit regional and international trade opportunities, including the negotiation of agreements	MFAI	
	Continue regular consultation between government and relevant stakeholders		
<b>Build our Financial Services</b>	Upgrade legislation to improve existing services and create new products and services	FSDA, FSC	CLO, Financial Services Industry, FIU
	Enhance marketing and targeted advertising to increase exposure, raise profile and attract new clients		
	Increase presence in the international marketplace to promote industry, demonstrate commitment and eliminate negative perception of our jurisdiction		
<b>Ensure that Cultural and Creative Industries are a key force in job and wealth creation and nation building</b>	Create the enabling environment for cultural and creative industries to start, thrive and grow through the necessary policy and legislative frameworks	MOC, BTIB	OPM, BTIB, CITC, Chamber of Commerce, Artists
	Develop a culture of creativity and enterprise through our education system	MOE, USP, NHRD, MOC, BTIB	Culture and Creative Industries Council
	Develop and strengthen Cultural and Creative partnerships	MOC	Culture and Creative Industries Council, CITC, BTIB
	Provide recognition of our people's creativity	MOC	Culture and Creative Industries Council
	Increase exposure of our creativity and cultural strengthen with special emphasis on Maori language	MOC	CITC, Culture and Creative Industries Council

	Improve research and development in cultural and creative products	MOC	MOE, USP, NHRD, BTIB
<b>Sustain macro-economic stability</b>	Maintain prudent macroeconomic stance guided by principles of fiscal responsibility as per MFEM Act 1996-97	MFEM	Cabinet Ministers, Parliament, Line Ministries
	Promote investments that will support economic growth	MFEM, OPM, PSC	Line Ministries, Chamber of Commerce
	Limit diversion of resources away from the private sector through tax policy	MFEM	
	Control size of the public sector within responsibility ratio	PSC	
<b>Ensure proactive economic development policies</b>	Maintain affordability and national debt within sustainable level	MFEM	
	Review and reform the policy and regulatory frameworks related to business including labour relations, foreign investment, intellectual property, competition, trade, etc to reflect international best practices and standards	BTIB	CLO, Relevant Line Ministries, Chamber of Commerce, Private Sector
	Streamline and simplify licensing	BTIB	CLO
	Maintain balance between foreign investment and appropriate protection for domestic players	BTIB	
	Provide business support to small-scale entrepreneurs and micro-enterprises including access to financial resources and services, capacity development in business management, vocational training and bridging skills gap	BTIB	NHRD, MOE, Chamber of Commerce
	Re-engineer Government's role in the economy by outsourcing functions and entering into PPPs	PSC	
	Establish the necessary regulatory and legislative frameworks to protect the rights of employees and employers in the workplace	MOIA	Workers unions
	Introduce incentives to businesses to minimise environmental impacts while penalising those businesses that pollute and degrade the environment	BTIB, NES	MFEM, Chamber of Commerce, Private Sector

## PRIORITY AREA 2: INFRASTRUCTURE

### GOAL: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AND RESILIENCE

Our investment in infrastructure will maximise economic return, improve livelihoods and build resilience

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Our investment in infrastructure will foster economic growth, sustainable environment and livelihoods and increased resilience for our communities to disasters and the impacts of climate change.
2. Our delivery and ongoing environmentally sound management and maintenance of infrastructure will be improved significantly.

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Improve the access and quality of our water to our communities	Rehabilitation of water intakes	MOIP	
	Upgrade water galleries	MOIP	
	Work on our ringmain and distribution lines	MOIP	
	Increase water harvesting and storage	MOIP	
	Promote and implement most viable options to ensure safety and quality of water	MOIP, MOH	NES
Improve our facilities for waste management	Implement cost recovery measures for the delivery of water	MOIP, CIIC	MFEM
	Transform waste facilities in Rarotonga and Aitutaki to resource recovery centres	MOIP, Aitutaki Island Administration	NES
	Implement the National Waste Strategy	MOIP, NES	MOH
Improve our transport infrastructure	Improve our roads in conjunction with improvements of water, energy and telecommunications distribution networks	MOIP	TAU, Telecom CI
	Establish PPP in road management and take into consideration road safety and the impacts of disasters and climate change in all engineering specifications	MOIP	
	Improve our airports – terminals and airstrips beginning with Aitutaki, Atiu, Manihiki and Mangaia	MOIP, Airport Authority	Island Councils
	Continue upgrade of our ports beginning with Manihiki, Rakahanga and Aitutaki	MOIP	Island Councils
	Improve transportation to the Pa Enua focusing on cooperation between Government and Private Sector	MOT	

<b>Improve telecommunications</b>	Increase speed and quality of our telecommunications service Strengthen our telecommunications regulatory framework to support improved telecommunication infrastructure and services Establish appropriate and relevant institutional arrangements for the telecommunications sector	Telecom CI  CLO  OPM, CLO	Minister for Telecommunications
<b>Strengthen our asset management</b>	Develop and implement asset management frameworks	CIIC	
<b>Enable robust construction</b>	Review our Building and Standards Act and associated regulation Strengthen capacity in GIS and satellite imagery to better inform development and land use planning	MOIP, CLO  MOIP	OPM
<b>Build capacity in the infrastructure sector</b>	Provide access to up-to-date technical skills education and training Promote technical cooperation by local and regional sources, including Sth-Sth cooperation with the support of development partners	MOIP, NHRD  MOIP, AMD	

**PRIORITY AREA 3: ENERGY****OUR GOAL: ENERGY SECURITY**

Renewable energy for energy security to enhance our economic and social development and environmental integrity

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Secure and reliable energy services
2. Enhanced efficiency and affordability of energy
3. Investment in renewable energy development fostered
4. Energy standards and compliance will be upheld by a well regulated energy sector

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
<b>Strengthen the institutional framework of the energy sector</b>	Implement the Cook Islands Renewable Energy Chart	OPM	TAU, Industry
	Transform energy organisational mechanisms to better coordinate implementation of renewable energy	OPM	TAU, MOIA, MOIP, Industry
<b>Utilise only proven technology</b>	Strengthen policy and regulatory frameworks, financial management, raising awareness, building capacity and increasing participation of our communities in the achievement of renewable energy targets	OPM	TAU, Island Administrations, Island Councils
	Adopt and utilise technologically, commercially and environmentally sound proven technologies	OPM	TAU, Island Administrations, Island Councils
	Implement renewable energy rollout in the Northern Pa Enua	OPM	Island Administrations, Island Councils
	Implement renewable energy rollout in the Southern Pa Enua	OPM	Island Administrations, Island Councils
	Encourage studies into renewable energy and storage options	OPM	
<b>Provide incentives for renewable energy</b>	Build on TAU's netmetering policy to encourage renewable energy uptake for potential expansion to the Pa Enua	TAU	OPM, Industry
	Investigate and implement appropriate business models for the changing energy landscape	OPM, TAU	
	Explore and implement sound incentives to	OPM, TAU, MFEM	

	encourage renewable energy uptake		
<b>Upgrade existing energy infrastructure</b>	Continually upgrade and maintain energy infrastructure	TAU, Island Administrations	
<b>Build our capacity in the energy sector</b>	Build capacity and expertise in renewable energy systems Implement awareness and educational programmes for renewable energy, energy conservation and efficiency	OPM OPM, TAU, NES	NHRD

## PRIORITY 4: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### GOAL: OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE WHO RESIDE IN THE COOK ISLANDERS

A Cook Islands where all people who reside in our islands can enjoy opportunities to fulfil their potential, prosper and participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of our communities and nation

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Our people fulfil their potential through equal access to quality learning opportunities across a full spectrum of human endeavour.
2. Our people fulfil their potential through access to quality health care.
3. Our people fulfil their potential because they are empowered and have strong families and communities.
4. Our people fulfil their potential because they participate in leisure, recreation and competitive sports activities.
5. Cook Islanders share a strong national identity and sense of belonging.

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Ensure that parents and communities have confidence in our education system and support quality learning and development for the very young	Increase access and participation in Early Childhood Education	MOE	Parent Teacher Associations, Parents, Community
Ensure that every child is literate and numerate by the end of Year 8	Improve literacy and numeracy rates in our schools	MOE	
Enable every young person has access to the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills and gain qualifications that they need to contribute to the development of the Cook Islands	Implement the Inclusive Education Policy and where students are unable to participate in the classroom build partnerships with families, communities and civil society organisation to meet the needs of these students	MOE	CINDC, Civil Society Organisations, Communities
	Develop enterprise and entrepreneurship in our schools	MOE	Private Sector, BTIB
	Increase the subject scope to meet the interest of students including the implementation of Dual Pathways and Alternative Pathways programmes	MOE, NHRD	USP, Civil Society Organisation, Training Providers
	Improve the use of online learning programmes for Pa Enua students	MOE, NHRD	USP, OPM
	Enhance the support and provision of information relating to career opportunities and decision making	MOE, NHRD	USP, Training Providers
Ensure equitable access for all learners to quality learning programmes	Enhance tertiary training meet the priority needs of the country and learners	MOE, NHRD	USP, Training Providers
	Maintain accreditation standards with		

	recognised institutions and improve our training facilities in-country to meet the training needs of our students	MOE, NHRD	Chamber of Commerce, Private Sector, Communities
	Implement second chance learning for our 'at risk' and 'in risk' young people	MOE, NHRD	Civil Society Organisations, MOJ, MOIA
<b>Ensure that the Education Sector is responsive to the training needs of the wider community through collaboration and partnerships with other agencies</b>	Increase the scope of Community Education Programmes	MOE, NHRD	Line Agencies, Civil Society Organisations, Communities
	Improve the provision of Life Skills Programmes in communities	MOE, NHRD	Communities
<b>Ensure the optimum health of our children and young people</b>	Maintain accessibility to quality ante-natal and maternity care	MOH	Cook Islands Child Welfare Association
	Maintain high coverage of immunisation protection for our children	MOH	Cook Islands Child Welfare Association
	Maintain low infant and maternal mortality rates	MOH	Cook Islands Child Welfare Association
	Reduce rate of teenage pregnancy	MOH	MOE, Communities
	Reduce rate of sexually transmitted infections	MOH	MOE, Civil Society Organisation, Communities
	Reduce smoking, alcohol and drug use rate	MOH	MOE, Civil Society Organisation
	Enhance the use of telemedicine for equitable health services	MOH	OPM, TCI
<b>Provide quality health services for all</b>	Engage with New Zealand to provide specialist health programmes	MOH	
	Implement our Men's Health and Women's Health clinics program	MOH	
	Improve partnerships to address mental illness, disabilities, elderly and palliative services	MOH, MOIA	Civil Society Organisations
	Target services to encourage healthy living with our children to minimise future NCD risks	MOH	MOE, Civil Society Organisations
	Improve our training and capacity with emphasis on re-opening the Nursing School and retention of Cook Islands doctors	MOH	NHRD
<b>Combat NCD</b>	Implement the Cook Islands National Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control NCD	MOH	

<b>Ensure gender equality and empower our women</b>	<p>Promote healthier lifestyles through physical activity, nutrition and healthy living to reduce NCDs</p> <p>Develop gender responsive programmes and policies</p> <p>Promote the equitable participation of women and men in decision making and governance systems</p> <p>Create an enabling environment for the full participation of women in economic development</p> <p>Improve the capacity of men and women to contribute to disaster risk management and climate change adaptation strategies</p> <p>Improve the capacity of women and men to address health issues</p> <p>Eliminate violence against women</p>	<p>MOH</p> <p>MOIA</p> <p>MOIA</p> <p>MOIA, BTIB</p> <p>MOIA, OPM</p> <p>MOH</p> <p>MOIA, Punanga Tauturu, Police</p> <p>MOIA</p> <p>OPM</p>	<p>MOE, MOIA, MOA, CISNOC, Sports Federations</p> <p>CINCW, Punanga Tauturu, other Civil Society Organisations</p> <p>CINCW, Civil Society Organisations</p> <p>Civil Society Organisation</p> <p>Civil Society Organisation, Communities, Islands Councils</p> <p>MOIA, CINCW, Civil Society Organisations</p> <p>MOJ, CLO, CINCW</p> <p>OPM</p> <p>MOIA</p>
<b>Guarantee that our children are safe and well cared for; that our youth are given the opportunity to grow as valuable members of society; our persons with disabilities are valued and included in our development and where our aged are acknowledged for their contribution to society and looked after</b>	<p>Mainstream concerns of children, youth, persons with disabilities, mentally ill, the displaced in our communities and the elderly into national policy environment</p> <p>Fulfil our regional and international obligations to ensure that our children, youth, persons with disabilities and elderly are valuable members of our society</p> <p>Work in collaboration to build strong families and communities</p> <p>Pass the Family Law Bill</p>	<p>OPM</p>	<p>MOIA</p>
<b>Ensure that we have strong families and communities</b>	<p>Work in collaboration to build strong families and communities</p> <p>Pass the Family Law Bill</p>	<p>MOIA</p> <p>MOIA</p>	<p>CLO, Parliamentary Services</p>

	Identify ways to provide family support to those who need it	MOIA	
<b>Our people can access a range of different opportunities for leisure, recreation and competitive sports</b>	Develop and implement a comprehensive national policy to promote encourage and support physical activity, recreation and competitive sports	MOIA, OPM	CISNOC
<b>Ensure the promotion and preservation of our unique culture, language and social heritage</b>	Work in collaboration with our key stakeholders to promote and preserve our culture, language and social heritage	MOC	CITC, MOE, BTIB, MOA, OPM, Civil Society Organisations, Private Sector, Communities

## PRIORITY AREA 5: RESILIENCE

### GOAL: RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

A Cook Islands where our people are resilient to disasters and climate change to achieve sustainable livelihoods

#### OBJECTIVE

1. Our people are prepared for disasters and climate change impacts
2. The impacts of disasters and climate change are reduced
3. Our people are resilient to all forms of hazards

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Ensure strong governance arrangements for disaster risk management and climate change adaptation	Strengthen and integrate governance arrangements for DRM and CCA	OPM	All relevant agencies, NGO's
	Mainstream CRM and CCA into national and sectoral planning, policies, legislation and budgeting	OPM	All relevant agencies
Ensure that high quality information is available to inform planning and implementation	Monitor and assess risks and vulnerabilities using both modern technology and traditional knowledge systems	OPM	
Building resilience through effective DRR and CCA	Invest in DRR measures across all sectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Strengthen infrastructure and safeguarding essential services</li> <li>· Strengthening economic development and livelihood systems</li> <li>· Anticipate other forms of hazards</li> <li>· Collaborate across all sectors and in partnership with private sector and communities</li> </ul>	OPM	All relevant sectors



## PRIORITY AREA 6: ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

### GOAL: ENVIRONMENT FOR LIVING

A Cook Islands where we sustain our ecosystems and use our natural resources efficiently

#### OBJECTIVES

1. The use of all our natural resources are managed well to ensure their sustainability.
2. Our scarce and degraded natural resources are effectively monitored and restored.
3. The pollution of air, water and land resources is managed so that impacts are minimised and community and ecosystem health is not adversely affected.
4. Irreversible loss and degradation of biodiversity (marine, terrestrial, aquatic ecosystems) is avoided.
5. Our actions to protect and manage our ecosystems and natural resources will include CCA and emissions reduction measures.
6. Taking care of our environment is 'everybody's business where all stakeholders will actively play their part in protecting and managing our fragile ecosystems.

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Improve the management of our water resources through an integrated approach	Develop a national policy and plan for the management of water resources	MOIP, NES	OPM, Land owners, Islands Councils, Communities
	Develop the legislative and regulatory framework for the management of water resources	MOIP	CLO, OPM
Improve water quality through better sanitation measures	Improve the institutional and administrative structures for water resource management	PSC	
	Improve monitoring of stream and lagoon water quality	MOIP, MMR, MOH	
Improve water quality through better sanitation measures	Improve data collection and analysis for water resource management	MOIP, MMR, MOH	
	Strengthen our regulations and compliance	MOIP, MOH, NES	CLO, Communities
Improve water quality through better sanitation measures	Upgrade poor sanitation systems and install more efficient domestic and commercial systems, improve our sanitation and waste water treatment systems, change our farming practices, improving coordination of efforts across government and communities	MOIP, NES, MOH	Plumbing Industry, Communities

<b>Implement waste minimisation programmes and provide appropriate facilities and incentives to support these with the purpose of achieving zero waste</b>	Review the institutional arrangements to manage waste including public-private partnerships	MOIP, NES	Private Sector, Communities
	Develop and implement the national waste management policy	MOIP, NES	OPM, Communities
	Develop necessary legislative and regulatory frameworks to better manage waste	MOIP, NES	OPM, CLO, Communities
	Enhance education and awareness in waste management	NES	
<b>Implement an ecosystem approach to the management of living marine resources</b>	Develop and implement integrated management plans for utilising our marine resources	MMR	Island Councils, Communities
<b>Develop and implement interventions to ensure that land use is sustainable</b>	Develop and implement our National Land Use Policy	OPM	NES, MOJ, MOIP, Communities
	Develop the legislative and regulatory framework to implement sustainable land use	CLO	OPM, NES, MOJ, MOA, Communities
<b>Protect our biodiversity and ecosystems</b>	Extend the number and area of protected including the establishment of a significant area of our exclusive zone as a marine park	NES	MMR, Aronga Mana, Communities
	Protect endangered flora and fauna species	NES	Aronga Mana, Communities
	Control invasive species	MOA	NES
	Utilise marine park concept to implement and integrate conservation and management of land and marine resources	MMR, NES	House of Ariki, Koutu Nui, NGOs
	Incorporate in the appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks access to genetic resources and its associated traditional knowledge to provide equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the use of genetic resources		

**PRIORITY 7: GOVERNANCE****GOAL: GOOD GOVERNANCE**

A Cook Islands that thrives on good governance principles

**OBJECTIVES**

1. The general public has confidence in the systems of Government.
2. A machinery of Government focused on calculated strategic direction, progressive partnerships and service satisfaction.
3. Increasing the value of existing taxpayer dollars through systems that deliver.
4. A general public that is continuously informed of the return on investment for their taxpayer dollar and as a result actively contributes to development decisions and actions

**5. Regional and international relations to contribute effectively to Cook Islands sustainable development**

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
<b>Strengthen the role of parliament to hold managers to account for performance</b>	Activate the Financial and Expenditure Select Committee	CIPS	MFEM, PSC
<b>Strengthen electoral systems and processes</b>	Revisit recommendations of previous reports on electoral reform and identify appropriate actions to implement	CIPS	
	Develop and implement a Parliamentary Code of Conduct	CIPS	
<b>Ensure that Government service delivery is efficient and effective</b>	Implement the findings of the Review of the Functional Review of the Public Review including governance in the Pa Enua	PSC	Government Agencies
	Develop and implement Leadership tools including the Public Service Manual, Performance Management and Human Resource Frameworks	PSC	
	Better coordinate planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation	PSC, MFEM, OPM	
<b>Strengthen information and data collection, analysis and management for informed decision making</b>	Improve our data and information collection, analysis, and management by developing and implementing a sound framework for statistics	MFEM (National Statistics Office)	OPM, Line Ministries, Private Sector, Civil Society Organisations
	Use ICT to better deliver public services by strengthening E-Government	OPM, PSC	Line Ministries and Agencies
	Implement the Official Information Act for	Office of the	

Ensure access to information	accurate, accessible and relevant information in a timely and efficient manner.	Office of the Ombudsman	All of Government
<b>Improve accountability and transparency of public financial management</b>	Implement the PEFA	MFEM	
<b>Establish external relations that will benefit the Cook Islands</b>	Develop and implement our Foreign Affairs Policy with a focus on strengthening regional and international relations	MFAI	
	Strengthen our relationship with existing partners and establish beneficial diplomatic relationships	MFAI	
	Achieve our full status in the Commonwealth	MFAI	
	Progress our membership in the United Nations	MFAI	
<b>Promote partnerships with civil society and the private sector</b>	Broaden the composition of the NSDC to better reflect better representation of key stakeholders in decision making	OPM	
	Ensure that Cabinet Committees will include broad representation including the representation of women and youth	OPM	

## PRIORITY 8: LAW AND ORDER

### GOAL: A SAFE, JUST, SECURE AND STABILITY

A Cook Islands where the rule of law ensures safe, just, secure, stable and sustainable communities

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Clear and coherent laws, fair and efficient courts and effective institutions for the administration of justice
2. Free access to our Cook Islands Laws
3. Quality policing services to our communities
4. Control of our borders is efficient and effective
5. Quality enforcement of our Laws

STRATEGY	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
<b>Ensure that our legislative and regulatory frameworks reflect our sustainable development goals and objectives</b>	Strengthen legislative and regulatory frameworks to meet our sustainable development objectives	CLO	Sponsoring Agencies
	Strengthen the Law Reform Commission	CLO	
	Ensure that our Laws are accessible to the public	CIPS	
<b>Ensure quality enforcement of our Laws</b>	Build our capacity to enforce our laws	All relevant agencies	
	Strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of civil, administrative, family justice and criminal justice systems	MOJ	Police, CLO, Law Reform Commission
<b>Improve access to Justice</b>	Increase awareness of legal rights and services available	MOJ	Police, Civil Society Organisations
	Provide legal aid advice to the public including the expansion of legal aid to include civil matters	MOJ	CLO, Civil Society Organisations
<b>Improve our land management and land information systems</b>	Improve our land management and land information systems and better collaboration between agencies	MOJ	MOIP, OPM
<b>Reducing reoffending through offender rehabilitation</b>	Develop and implement 'Second Chance' learning giving particular attention to our young offenders	NHRD	MOE, Police, MOJ, Education Providers, Community
	Ensure that our prisons system and facilities complies with international standards and best practices	MOJ, CIIC	Civil Society Organisations
<b>Ensure that our communities and visitors are safe, secure, and stable through the provision of quality policing</b>	Intensify our efforts on crime and crash prevention	Police	Communities

	Intensify intelligence led policing	Police	Communities
	Increase police presence in communities	Police	Communities
	Improve coordination of all agencies involved in Border Control	Police	MFAI, Customs, MOA
<b>Ensure our border security</b>			
	Improve border control measures through the establishment of a computerised system linking all players in border control, supported by modern legislation	MFAI	MFEM, MOIA, MOA

