

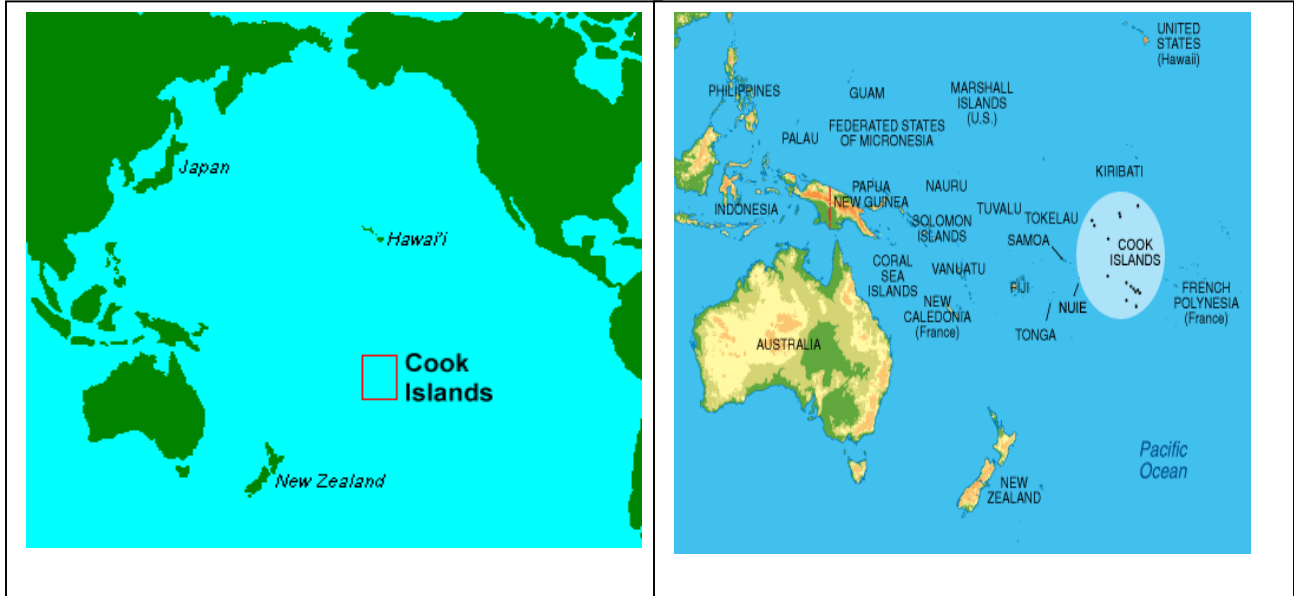
# COOK ISLANDS



## NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006-2010

*'To enjoy the highest quality of life consistent with the aspirations of our people, and in harmony with our culture and environment.'*  
*National Vision - 1997*

## MAP OF THE COOK ISLANDS



*The Cook Islands consist of 15 islands scattered over some 2 million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean. They lie in the centre of the Polynesian Triangle, flanked to the west by the Kingdom of Tonga and the two Samoas and to the east by Tahiti and the islands of French Polynesia*

## FOREWORD

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## ACROYNMS

ACCC	Aid Capital Coordinating Committee
ACP	African Caribbean and Pacific
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Commission
AusAID	Australia Aid
CHARMS	Comprehensive Hazard and Risk Management Strategy
CIIC	Cook Islands Investment Corporation
CISNOC	Cook Islands Sports and National Olympic Committee
CROP	Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific
DIB	Development Investment Board
DNHRD	Department of National Human Resource Development
EIA	Environment Impact Assessment
ERP	Economic Reform Programme
EU	European Union
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FEMM	Forum Economic Ministers Meeting
FSC	Financial Supervisory Commission
FTRA	Financial Transactions Reporting Act
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFAI	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration
MFEM	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
MMR	Ministry of Marine Resources
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoCD	Ministry of Culture Development
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoW	Ministry of Works
MP	Member of Parliament
NDF	National Development Forum
NEMS	National Environment Management Strategy
NZAid	New Zealand Aid
NGOs	Non Government Organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIDGF	Outer Islands Development Grant Fund
OMIA	Office of the Minister for Island Administration
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PERCA	Public Expenditure Review Committee and Audit
PICTA	Pacific Islands Countries Trade Agreement
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PSC	Public Service Commission
SBEC	Small Business Enterprise Centre
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SPTO	South Pacific Tourism Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAT	Value-Added Tax



## **SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS**

### **THE CONTEXT**

The Cook Islands is a unique small island developing state in the Pacific. It is an independent island nation comprising 15 islands, which cover a total land area of 240 sq. km and are scattered across an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 2 million sq. km. In 1965, the Cook Islands exercised its right to self-determination and entered into a relationship of free association with New Zealand.

Its relatively unspoilt natural environment, combined with its vibrant Cook Island Maori culture and tradition and the friendliness of its people, has been a major attraction for foreign tourists from Europe and North America, as well as the traditional tourist markets of New Zealand and Australia. The economy is based primarily on the tourism industry, which generates receipts of about 40 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), or around \$120 million, annually. Tourism also contributes significantly to a number of other industries, including retail trade, agricultural production for the domestic market and construction activity. The other major export industries are offshore financial services, the offshore tuna fisheries and the black pearl industry, with the latter two together generating about 5 percent of GDP annually.

The Cook Islands has one of the better performing private sector led economies in the region following implementation of targeted economic reforms. The economy is, however, based on a few industries and is highly susceptible to external fluctuations. The pearl industry in particular has experienced large fluctuations and more recently, a downward decline in its gross value due to increases in international supply along with the declining quality of Cook Island pearls caused by poor water quality in pearl farming areas. The industry was once valued at \$18 million prior to 2002 but has declined to its current level of about \$2-3 million annually. The offshore tuna fishing industry, based on distant water fishing fleets, is influenced by the health of the regional tuna stock as well as the migration of tuna through the Cook Islands EEZ. The migratory pattern of tuna is influenced by sea surface water temperatures, which is subject to the effects of climate change and associated El Nino and La Nina events.

The Cook Islands has limited scope to expand or diversify its economic base although there may be potential for deep-sea mining of manganese nodules. The potential for agricultural development to expand has been restricted due to, amongst other things, limited market access, the high costs of local production combined with high shipping costs and competition from international producers. The Cook Islands, as do other small and isolated Pacific island economies, face an uphill struggle in developing a comparative advantage in agricultural and other natural resource based commodities due to high transport and production costs. Nevertheless, there is significant agricultural production for the local and tourist market, and there is some potential to expand this further.

The Cook Islands is a signatory to the Pacific Islands Trade Agreement (PICTA) and the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER). These regional agreements, while offering opportunities for market expansion, may result in further erosion of traditional export markets and reduced competitiveness for domestic industries engaged in import substitution if the Cook Islands fails to strengthen its economic competitiveness. In 2000, the Cook Islands joined with the members of the African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) region in signing the Cotonou Agreements with the European Union. The Cotonou Agreement provides for the negotiation of new trading arrangements in the form of Economic Partnership Agreements between the ACP region and the EU. These new trading arrangements, which will span 20 years, will come into force in January 2008. The Cook Islands is participating actively in these negotiations to ensure that benefits are secured for the country into the future.

The country is also highly vulnerable to natural disasters, which is expected to not only increase in frequency but also intensity due to climate change effects. In 2005, five cyclones in a span of two months caused over \$10 million worth of damage. Such incidences, no doubt, undermine the country's resilience to natural and man made hazards/risks that require sound and effective preparedness, mitigating as well as response, strategies.

With the country's unique political and cultural relationship with New Zealand, Cook Island citizens have unrestricted migratory access to both New Zealand and Australia. The continued economic prosperity of the country is highly dependent on the impact of the outward migration of Cook Islanders to New Zealand and Australia. The free movement of skilled and unskilled labour, together with a net migration of outer islanders into Rarotonga, poses particular challenges for national and outer island development. More importantly, policies that make it more attractive to remain in the Cook Islands need to be maintained and enhanced.

The large Cook Islands population residing in New Zealand, and elsewhere, and their strong family ties back in the Cook Islands, could also provide a solid foundation for building stronger economic partnerships between local and 'expatriate' Cook Islanders. These partnerships could be mobilized to promote private sector led developments in the Cook Islands.

The Cook Islands operates on a Westminster Parliamentary system and the central government operates out of Rarotonga, its Capital. Some services on the outer islands are administered by an Outer Island Administration, which runs parallel with the elected Island Councils or '*Konitara*'.

Limited economic opportunities have restricted the achievement of equitable development in the outer islands. This challenge has been further compounded by the inadequate coordination between the various administrative arms of government, effects of political influence, policy inconsistency, poor parliamentary oversight and other related factors.

Despite these challenges, the economy has grown at an average rate of 6 percent over the decade largely due to the rapid growth in the tourism industry coupled with the Economic Reform Programme (ERP) that introduced stringent fiscal and structural reform measures in 1996. It is generally recognised that for the economy to continue to grow, it must strengthen its private sector-led development with the Government providing a conducive macroeconomic environment, providing critical physical and social infrastructure, maintaining law and order and providing institutional and political stability.

The Government has also taken some positive steps to improve its management of the environment and has adopted a more focused approach to its social development goals consistent with its various international and regional commitments, including under the Millennium Declaration and various regional instruments endorsed by Forum Leaders. Moreover, the Government also recognizes that if the needs and the aspirations of the people are to be met, key stakeholders in the private sector and community need to

be involved and that support from development partners and Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies need to be, amongst other things, better targeted and more effectively coordinated. The Cook Islands Government recognizes that, with respect to the latter, the Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration provides a regional mode of goods and services delivery and increased potential for greater regional collaboration and cooperation, which would be harnessed to achieve its national priorities.

The Cook Islands Government has acknowledged the importance of incorporating in its national development efforts the key guiding principles articulated in its various international and regional commitments. The challenge remains as to how these can be achieved and appropriately reflected in its resource allocation and aid management strategies. Compounding such challenges is the number of agencies that have overlapping interests and responsibilities, with little coordination of effort amongst them and at times little, or in some cases no, sharing of information. This is particularly evident in cross cutting areas of natural resource and environment management.

The country also constrained by limited capacity, both at individual level as well as organizational /institutional level, to deal with the complex issues that require cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary approaches. Limited availability of quality information further compounds the difficulties faced in identifying appropriate responses needed to address its development goals.

Given the above, it is clear that opportunities exist to achieve national development priorities through more systematic national efforts complemented by harmonized and coordinated development partner and CROP support. The Cook Islands Government believes that this National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) for 2006-2010 provides the platform for doing so.



# NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this NSDP is:

*‘To build a sustainable future that meets our economic and social needs in partnership with government, the private sector and local, regional and international stakeholders, without compromising prudent economic management, environmental integrity, social stability and the needs of future generations’.*

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1. Sustainable Development Is A National Responsibility For All Cook Islanders**
  - *means that all people of the Cook Islands have a responsibility to ensure that the three pillars of sustainable development – economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection – are given balanced treatment to guide the future development of the Cook Islands*
- 2. Democratic Principles, Basic Human Rights, Respect for Cultural, Religious and Ethnic Diversity And The Rule Of Law**
  - *means that every Cook Islander has fundamental rights, which should be respected*
- 3. Equitable Economic Development And Universal Access To Basic Health And Education And Environmental Sustainability Are Essential Prerequisites For Poverty Alleviation, Social Harmony And National Security**
  - *means that only when every Cook Islander has an equal opportunity to benefit from economic development, basic public services, and environment sustainability, can we expect to live a peaceful existence free of hardship, conflict and instability*
- 4. Special Needs of the Outer Islands and Disadvantaged Groups Are Recognised**
  - *means that special consideration is necessary to address the development needs of the outer islands and disadvantaged groups*
- 5. National Development That Reflect Appropriate Regional And International Commitments**
  - *means that development should respond to the needs and aspirations of all people of the Cook Islands, while at the same time, be mindful of commitments that have been made by the Government at the regional and international levels*
- 6. Good Governance Promoted Through Participatory Decision-Making Process At All Levels Involving Key Stakeholders, Including Community, Non-Government Organizations, and Government Agencies**
  - *means that decisions made, and actions taken, by all levels of Government and community are transparent and accountable*
- 7. Coordinated And Harmonized Access To, And Effective Use Of, National Resources And Development Partner Support From Bilateral, Multilateral Development Partners And Regional Organizations**
  - *means that national resources and development assistance are efficiently and effectively used*

**8. International And Regional Foreign Relationships And Partnerships Must Be Based On Mutual Respect In The Interest Of The Cook Islands**

- *means that relationships with other nations are based, first and foremost, on what's in the best interest of the Cook Islands*

These guiding principles, together with the 6 priority areas identified during the 2003 National Development Forum (NDF), post-NDF consultations, the Cook Islands Constitution and regional and international commitments, have led to the formulation of the following **9 National Development Goals (NDPs)**. The NSDP identifies a set of strategies required to achieve each of the following goals, key outcome targets to measure progress within the period of the Plan, and the government agencies responsible for coordinating the activities required to achieve these targets.

## **NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

### ***GOAL: WELL MANAGED PRIVATE SECTOR LED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT***

Macroeconomic Management and Private Sector Development

### ***GOAL: WELL EDUCATED, HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE***

Education, Health, Human Resource Development, Youth, Gender, Social Welfare and Sports

### ***GOAL: SUSTAINABLE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT***

Marine, Land, Agriculture, Environment, Waste and Water

### ***GOAL: STRENGTHENED AND AFFORDABLE BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT AND UTILITIES TO SUPPORT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT***

Information, Communication and Technology, Energy, Road, Sea and Air Transport, Airports and Harbours

### ***GOAL: A SOCIETY BUILT ON LAW AND ORDER AND GOOD GOVERNANCE AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE SECTOR AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES***

Parliamentary and Government Governance, Outer Island Development, Public Finance Governance, Law and Order

### ***GOAL: STRENGTHENED NATIONAL COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION***

Information Systems and Statistics, Institutional Coordination

### ***GOAL: A SOCIETY THAT TREASURES CULTURAL HERITAGE, VALUES AND IDENTITY WHILE RESPECTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY***

History, Culture, Language, Heritage Sites, Traditional Knowledge and Practices

### ***GOAL: AN EFFECTIVE FOREIGN AFFAIRS POLICY THAT MEETS THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE COOK ISLANDS***

International Relations, Aid Effectiveness, Council of Regional Organizations (CROP) Effectiveness

### ***GOAL: A SAFE, SECURE AND RESILIENT COOK ISLANDS***

All Hazard Risk Management, Immigration and Border Control, Transnational Security

## GOAL: WELL MANAGED PRIVATE SECTOR LED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Over the sixteen years to 2003, the economy has grown at an average rate of 3.9% per year. There have been three distinct phases during this period:

- Between 1988 and 1994 economic growth averaged 5.5% per year. While growth partly reflected strong increases in visitor arrivals, it was also fuelled by unsustainable growth in government spending.
- Between 1994 and 1998, the economy contracted by an average 1.7% per year. The economy went into recession in 1995 and a package of economic reforms was instituted commencing in 1996.
- From 1998 to 2004 the economy grew by 6.2% per year. After very strong growth in 2000 reflecting a period of catch-up following the recession, the economy has now returned to more sustainable growth rates.

Following the Economic Reform Program commenced in 1996, the economy has changed markedly from one in which government expenditure was a key driver of economic growth to one where growth is led by the private sector.

Government must provide consistent and effective support for a competitive and healthy economic environment to allow the private sector to continue to lead the economy into the future, and promote equitable economic development.

Government will assist the Tourism Corporation to complete the Tourism Master Plan by the end of 2006. This will form the platform for strategic tourism development over the next decade. Emphasis will also be placed on strengthening tourism infrastructural support to ensure that tourism development is integrated with other sectors.

Government will continue to assist the Development Investment Board (DIB) in improving the management and monitoring of foreign enterprises and concessions. Government will also help the DIB identify particular growth areas for trade, development and investment within and outside of the Cook Islands.

The Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC) will continue to promote and facilitate the commercial focus of statutory authorities.

### CHALLENGES:

- Continuing population migration
- Inefficient public investment programmes
- Limited access to entrepreneurial financing
- Non-transparent provision of Community Service Obligations
- Increased demand of limited infrastructure services

Key Baseline Indicators	Value
Human Development Index	0.822
Real GDP growth	3.0%
Real GDP per Capita	\$10,000
Inflation	2.0%
Visitor Arrivals	88,300
Visitor Expenditures	\$115.1m
Total Exports	\$10.8 m
Total Government Revenue (% GDP)	29.0%
Total Government Tax Revenue (% GDP)	24.6%
Total Government Operating Expenditure	27.4%
Operating Balance	\$4.5m

*Source: 2005-06 Half Year Economic and Fiscal Update, UNDP Pacific Human Development Report, 2005*

**GOAL: WELL MANAGED PRIVATE SECTOR LED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010</b>
<b>MACROECONOMIC MANAGEMENT</b>	
Ensure sound macroeconomic management of the Cook Islands economy that promotes equitable and sustainable economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economy responsibly managed over the medium term by maintaining economic growth rate over the medium term of at least 3.5%.</li> <li>• Prudent fiscal management by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ maintaining an Operating surplus of at least 1% of GDP over the medium term.</li> <li>○ maintaining a Government Debt to GDP ratio of no more than 40% over the medium term.</li> <li>○ maintaining tax to GDP ratio of no more than 25% over the medium term.</li> <li>○ achieving a ratio of personnel expenses in the general government sector to GDP of no more than 12.5% by 2010.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Annual national budget reflects key strategies listed in the NSDP and linked to the sectoral priorities strengthened by the 2007/2008 Budget. <i>(Ministry of Finance and Economic Management)</i></li> </ul>
<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>	
Promote the development of a vibrant financial services industry that is compliant with international and regional standards for financial stability and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Financial Services Industry Strategic Plan adopted and implemented by 2007 to provide a framework for its further development consistent with OECD, FATF and other relevant international and regional laws and commitments. <i>(Financial Supervisory Commission)</i></li> </ul>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Promote sustainable private sector led equitable development by improving the enabling environment for growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Private Sector Development Strategy adopted and implemented by 2007 to provide a framework for the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ creation of an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and investment, including strengthening the Development Investment Board (DIB) and the reduction of regulatory barriers to doing business;</li> <li>○ the strengthening of the Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC) and the establishment of a transparent approach to identifying, costing and funding the provision of subsidies to public enterprises;</li> <li>○ promoting environmentally sustainable development through corporate social responsibility;</li> <li>○ strengthening of programs to promote small business entrepreneurship and access to business funds;</li> <li>○ maximizing the Cook Islands membership of the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO). <i>(Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce)</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Promote and enhance private sector led development of the tourism industry that recognizes the importance of natural environment and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A prioritized National Tourism Strategy developed in partnership with relevant stakeholders by the end of 2006, consistent with the Regional Tourism Strategy that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ emphasizes private sector led tourism growth of 5% by 2010; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**GOAL: WELL MANAGED PRIVATE SECTOR LED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010</b>
cultural heritage of the Cook Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ recognizes the importance of natural environment and cultural heritage of the Cook Islands.</li><li>● The endorsement and the implementation of the National Tourism Strategy commenced by mid 2007. <i>(Cook Islands Tourism Corporation)</i></li></ul>

## **GOAL: WELL EDUCATED, HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE**

A well educated and healthy people is a fundamental national asset. The Government's commitment to quality education and service delivery is demonstrated in its increasing expenditure on education, and the provision within the budget for additional funding to all schools including private schools. The establishment of the Department for Human Resources Development (DHRD) to address post secondary training and further strengthen the link with the New Zealand Correspondence School (NZCS) and the University of the South Pacific centre for the provision of *distance learning* to the outer islands reiterates this commitment.

To maintain and improve the well being of the Cook Islanders require a continuous budgetary support and the MOH is committed to the provision of quality preventative health care and building the confidence of our people in its health system. The ERP led to a major restructuring of essential medical services, equipment and personnel. Small user charges were introduced for prescriptions, consultations and overnight stays. Dental services on Rarotonga were privatised and investigations into privatising further services were undertaken. With the changing lifestyles and an increase in non-communicable diseases such as obesity, Type II diabetes and other illnesses, improving the general health and well being of the Cook Islanders and minimizing hardship is a real challenge.

A major challenge for the Cook Islands is to sustain momentum for several national institutions and local communities ongoing intervention programmes focusing on gender equality-related training, women welfare and activities promotions, education and awareness as well as institutional strengthening exercises. Government acknowledges the development of young people as a very important area for strategic consideration. This involves getting them to believe in themselves, utilising their strengths and wisdom for ideals and initiatives of benefit to themselves and the society and living in harmony with their environment.

Cook Islands communities can benefit from improved sporting facilities that are readily accessible by young and old alike. The Cook Islands will host the Mini South Pacific Games in 2009 and this provides a valuable opportunity to not only upgrade its existing sporting facilities but to ensure that other communities have access to their own facilities as well.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Continuing decline in the population of most outer islands resulting in the continuing attrition of school rolls, increase in unit cost of delivery and risk of lower quality delivery.
- Need to improve educational outcomes (e.g. literacy, numeracy, upper secondary retention and achievement).
- Labour shortage and skills shortage is chronic with many businesses importing workers from outside of the Cook Islands.
- Limited access to quality health services for women and young adults
- Lack of recognition of sport as an industry, which enhances opportunities for employment, education, tourism and basic human health.

Key Baseline Indicators	Value
Under-Five Mortality Rate (Per 1000 Live Births)	26
Infant Mortality Rate (Per 1000 Live Births)	31.3
Overall Dependency Ratio (aged between 15-59)	79
Proportion Of Births Attended By Skilled Health Personnel	70%
Prevalence (Incidence) Rates Associated With Tuberculosis (Per 100,000 Persons)	5.9
Death Rates Associated With Tuberculosis (Per 100,000 Persons)	5.3
Net Enrolment Rate In Primary Education	92%
Ratio Of Girls To Boys In Primary, Secondary And Tertiary Education	89
Share Of Women In Wage Employment In The Non-Agricultural Sector	45%
Proportion Of Seats Held By Women In National Parliament	8%
Literacy Rate For Youth (15-24 years)	93%
Human Poverty Index	6.1
<i>Source: Cook Islands MDG Report 2005, Cook Islands Government, 2006</i>	

**GOAL: WELL EDUCATED, HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

**EDUCATION**

Develop and implement Education Strategic Plan to ensure equitable access for all, enhance curriculum and learning and to strengthen quality systems and standards

- The National Education Strategic Plan is developed and implemented by the end of 2006 outlining key priorities including by 2010:
  - ensuring equitable access on all islands to quality education for primary and secondary school children of both sexes;
  - appropriate resourcing of all schools including Early Childhood Education Centres (ECECs);
  - quantitative targets developed for achievement outcomes for selected years of schooling, including at least 90% of children reaching Level 3 of Primary Education achieving internationally recognized numeracy, literacy and writing skills;
  - 70% of young people in the 15 to 17 year age bracket in all outer islands are enrolled at a school or continue their education and/or training through a recognised tertiary provider.
- Education quality and standards increased by 2010 to levels compatible with international standards, including:
  - increasing the number of teachers with professional qualifications by 25%.
- Cook Island relevant life skills, language, environmental and cultural material developed to support teachings in essential learning areas by 2010.



**GOAL: WELL EDUCATED, HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE**

STRATEGY	KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010
<i>(Ministry of Education)</i>	
<b>NATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<p>Enhance human resource development on all islands, focusing on providing foundational skills and where necessary specialized vocational and technical training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resource Development Strategy for the Cook islands continued to be implemented through public-private partnership and joint ventures with international providers, focusing on:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing basic foundational skills of all people of the Cook Islands; and</li> <li>• improving the quality and accreditation of non-formal education services targeting vocational and technical training needs of the country.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide targeted up-skilling of people with limited foundation skills, to increase their integration into, and retention in the workforce.</li> </ul> <p><i>(National Human Resource Department)</i></p>
<p>Establish an accredited program of vocational and technical training and Internship Program for ensuring the graduates have the quality of skills required in that trade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills of post secondary education and training providers Increased through increased professional training and accreditation from a recognized institution.</li> <li>• Locally relevant non-formal education and training material covering social, environmental and cultural aspects of the Cook Islands society, as well as technical and vocational education material with local content increased.</li> <li>• Internship program established in partnership with the private sector by 2008, for strengthening technical and practical skills of fresh graduates of the Trades Training Centre.</li> </ul> <p><i>(National Human Resource Department)</i></p>
<p>Increase targeted sectoral training to improve the effectiveness of government services</p>	<p>National training policy for the civil servants developed by 2007, focusing on improving sector specific analytical and management skills.</p> <p><i>(Public Service Commission)</i></p>
<b>YOUTH</b>	
<p>Encourage equitable participation of young people of all gender and cultural groups in the development of Cook Islands ensuring their special needs are reflected in each sector strategy and plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Youth Policy reviewed and National Plan of Action for the Youth developed, linking to other strategies, and implemented by the end of 2006 to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ensure that special needs of the young adults are met through sectoral and national programs;</li> <li>○ increase employment opportunities for the young by 25% by 2008; and</li> <li>○ provide easy access to youth friendly government services.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Cook Islands National Youth Council, with a revised Terms of Reference, reestablished by 2006 to facilitate better representation of the interests of the youth in sectoral and national development.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Youth Division)</i></p>
<b>GENDER</b>	
<p>Ensure national development addresses the needs of, and benefits, people of all gender,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Policy on Gender developed and adopted by the end of 2006, consistent with the commitments made in CEDAW endorsed by the Government.</li> </ul>

**GOAL: WELL EDUCATED, HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

by encouraging participation of particularly girls and women in the development of the Cook Islands

*(Gender Division)*

- Gender consideration integrated into each sectoral strategy and /or plan of action and programs to ensure gender equality, including increase in access to economic development opportunities, in remuneration and career advancement by 20% and improvements in maternal by 50% by 2010.

*(National Policy Coordination Unit)*

**SOCIAL WELFARE**

Encourage increased community based support for people with disability, aged and young, while maintaining the Government's social welfare budget

- Prioritized National Policy for Social Welfare Beneficiaries developed by 2007 to:
  - ensure those in need can, and do, have access to the Social Welfare System;
  - encourage communities to accept greater social responsibility for their aged and young dependents and the people with disability; and
  - provide a more transparent and accountable process for supporting and monitoring of the Social Welfare Benefits Program.

*(Ministry of Internal Affairs)*

- National Strategy for the Disabled implemented by 2008, to ensure amongst other things special provisions are made for ease of access in the workplace and public places for the people with disability.

*(Ministry of Internal Affairs)*

**SPORTS**

Increase the general health and wellbeing of the Cook Islanders by providing national sports facility and training programs for use by young and old

- Mini South Pacific Games Master Plan completed by May 2006, and existing sporting facilities upgraded and new facilities built across the islands by November 2008;
- National training programs developed for strengthening the health and competitiveness of the Cook Island athletes in time for the Mini South Pacific Games in 2009; and
- Communication and Awareness Program on the health benefits of sports and regular physical exercise developed and implemented by 2007.

*(Cook Islands Sports and National Olympic Committee)*

**HEALTH**

Ensure equitable and cost effective access to quality health services

- Implementation of the National Health Strategy commenced by late 2006, which includes:
  - access to quality health services, particularly for women and young adults increased by 50% by 2010;
  - prioritized National Strategies/Plans of Actions for Non-Communicable Diseases, Public Health and Mental Health, and Drug, Alcohol, Tobacco and Gambling cessation, including awareness and basic understanding programmes and the adoption of appropriate management programmes for reducing their incidence by 20% by 2010; and
  - prioritized National Strategies/Plans of Action for Communicable Diseases focusing on vector borne diseases,

**GOAL: WELL EDUCATED, HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE****STRATEGY****KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

	<p>HIV AIDS, hepatitis, tuberculosis, and sexually transmitted illnesses (STIs) implemented and aimed at maintaining the HIV/AIDS-free status of the country, reducing the rate of increase in incidence of STIS by 20% and improving medical and social support by 2010.</p> <p><i>(Ministry of Health)</i></p>
Strengthen institutional capacity in the delivery of health services and health administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence based prioritized strategy developed and implemented for upgrading of the hospital facilities and the standards of services by 2007.</li></ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Health)</i></p>
Encourage consumption and production of quality food to sustain a healthy and productive life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A prioritized National Food Safety and Nutrition Plan of Action developed by 2007 for facilitating, through awareness raising and information, production and consumption of nutritious and safe food.</li></ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Health)</i></p>

## GOAL: SUSTAINABLE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Cook Islands natural environment provides the foundation for the long term economic and social well being of the people. Its key economic sectors, tourism, pearl industry as well as tuna fisheries, are directly dependent on a healthy and dynamic ecosystem that support these activities.

The physical beauty and the quality of the terrestrial and marine environments of the Cook Islands is one of the main attractions for tourists. To achieve and maintain the desired growth in tourism, and other sectors, the people of the Cook Islands also need to find ways in which the land and other resources can be easily mobilized for economic use, while recognizing the communal and property rights of the traditional owners and maintaining biodiversity and environmental quality. Whilst advocating economic development and environmental conservation on a national scale, an island specific management approach is important if expected outcomes can be realized.

Compounding these challenges is the presence of different agencies with overlapping responsibilities with little, or in some cases no sharing of information, and or coordination of efforts. Critical issues are not addressed and if addressed, at times even duplication of efforts is found. Limited availability of quality information and empirical data further adds to the complex challenges of natural resource and environment management.

Overall, the lifelines of the national economy and the wellbeing of the current and future generations cannot be assured without the country developing national capacity and adopting an integrated and balanced and appropriately coordinated approach to economic and social development and environmental management and good governance practices, involving all stakeholders.

### CHALLENGES:

- Lack of a balanced ecosystem based marine resource management strategy.
- Lack of a stakeholder driven sustainable pearl industry and diversified inshore fishery.
- Reduced agricultural and livestock production thus increasing reliance on imports and reducing consumption of safe and nutritious foods.
- Limited promotion of conservation of biodiversity and natural resources on all islands.
- Increased risk of introduction and establishment of foreign plant and animal pests and diseases.
- Lack of coordinated intersectoral management of natural resources and environmental issues, including biodiversity conservation, wastes and water management, climate change mitigation and adaptation and coastal zone management.
- Lack of a national strategy to increase efficiency in energy use and the use of financially viable renewable energy sources.

Key Baseline Indicators	Value
Proportion of households with secure tenure owning their land outright	59.6%
Number of protected natural areas	39
Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area	15.3%
Pearl exports	\$3.5 m
Fish exports	\$5.1 m
Proportion of population with sustainable access to improved water source in Rarotonga	99.2%
Volume of wastes going to landfill	25 tonnes per week
Volume of aluminum cans, and plastic bottled recycles	20 tonnes per year
Proportion of urban and rural population with access to improved sanitation	80% of households have flush toilets
<i>Source: Cook Islands MDG Report 2005, Cook Islands Government, 2006</i>	

**GOAL: SUSTAINABLE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

**MARINE**

<p>Strengthen Cook Islands Marine Resources Strategy incorporating guiding principles and strategies agreed to in the Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy and other regional and international guiding fisheries management instruments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Marine Resource Corporate Plan reviewed taking into account the principles and strategies contained in the Marine Resources Act 2005, Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy and other regional and international instruments by the end of 2006, and increase the gross value of product from the marine sector by 30% by 2010. <i>(Ministry of Marine Resources)</i></li> </ul>
<p>Develop and implement Offshore Fisheries Management Plan in partnership with Tuna Industry Association and other stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offshore industry development plan prepared and implemented in partnership with fishing industry and stakeholders by the end of 2007, increasing industry value by at least 30% by 2010:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ through improved market access, higher quality and or increased license fees;</li> <li>○ improved infrastructure;</li> <li>○ increased local capacity building; and</li> <li>○ improved surveillance and monitoring of offshore fishing activities in national waters and supporting regional tuna management.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Marine Resources)</i></p>
<p>Increase profitability of pearl farming through effective industry organization, and the adoption of cost-effective, market-led approaches to pearl farming and marketing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Pearl Fishery Industry Development/Recovery Plan developed based on ecosystem management approach and implemented, in partnership with the pearl industry, by the end of 2007, including individual pearl farming community recovery plan, prioritized research and management programs and specific strategies identified for :             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ improving markets and value-adding increasing productivity and improving pearl quality; and</li> <li>○ increasing diver safety.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Marine Resources)</i></p>
<p>Sustainable ecosystem management of inshore fisheries, and increased community management of the resource</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inshore Fisheries and Integrated Coastal Zone Fisheries Management Plan developed and implemented in partnership with key stakeholders by 2008 including strategies for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ increasing the area of well managed community based Raii's by 25% by 2010;</li> <li>○ developing effective inshore fisheries information system; and</li> <li>○ developing and implementing inshore fisheries based policy and legislation by 2010.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Marine Resources)</i></p>
<p><b>AGRICULTURE</b></p>	
<p>Develop and implement the national sustainable land and other resource use policy that reflects resource ownership, economic needs of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Action Plan developed for sustainable land and other resource use by 2009, encouraging resource mobilization for economic development, taking into account:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ communal and private property rights over land;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**GOAL: SUSTAINABLE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

<p>people and environmental sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ economic development needs; and</li> <li>○ biodiversity and environmental protection.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Agriculture)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prioritized National Agricultural and Livestock Development Strategy developed and implemented by 2007 for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ specialized financially viable crops and commodities for domestic use; import substitution; and or export where Cook Islands can create and maintain niche markets;</li> <li>○ agro processing of local and export markets; and</li> <li>○ increasing food and nutrition security through increased production of economically viable food products that are nutritious and safe.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Agriculture)</i></p>
<p><b>ENVIRONMENT</b></p>	
<p>Implement National Environment Strategic Action Framework ensuring use and management of natural resources and environment reflect a balanced economic, social and environmental consideration across all sectors and at all levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Immediate priorities listed in NESAF in relation to each of the broad thematic areas such as biodiversity conservation, waste and climate change relevant to - land, freshwater and marine resources – implemented by 2007.</li> <li>● Short term priorities listed in NESAF in relation to each of the broad thematic areas such as biodiversity conservation, land, waste and climate change relevant to - coastal zone and freshwater resources – implemented by 2010.</li> </ul> <p><i>(National Environment Services)</i></p>
<p>Develop Resource Use and Environment Strategic Action Framework for each of the outer islands reflecting their specific needs and aspirations in the context of their geography and natural resource endowments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Resource Use and Environment Strategic Action Framework for at least three outer islands developed and implemented by 2007.</li> <li>● Resource Use and Environment Strategic Action Framework for all the other outer islands developed and implemented by 2010.</li> </ul> <p><i>(National Environment Services)</i></p>
<p>Strengthen national capacity in the national quarantine control minimizing the risk of introducing foreign plant and animal pest and disease, and the risk of pandemics into the Cook Islands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A prioritized National Quarantine Strategy developed and implemented by 2007 for reducing the risk of introduction of foreign plant and animal pests and diseases and the risk of their spread and establishment in the Cook Islands, through community awareness, improved quarantine services and border control, and other technical and institutional control mechanisms</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Agriculture)</i></p>
<p>Improve institutional coordination, support and implementation mechanism for managing natural resources and environment in an integrated and sustainable manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Cook Island Environment Act and associated regulations implemented and adequately resourced from 2006, providing legislative basis and institutional capacity for increasing the coordination of cross sectoral sustainable development issues</li> </ul> <p><i>(National Environment Services)</i></p>
<p><b>WATER</b></p>	
<p>Develop and implement comprehensive freshwater</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Integrated Water Resources Management Policy developed and implemented by the end of 2008 to increase access to safe drinking</li> </ul>

**GOAL: SUSTAINABLE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

management plan of action to guide supply and demand management of water on each island to ensure universal access to safe drinking water

- water on Rarotonga by 10% by 2010.  
*(Ministry of Works)*
- A Comprehensive Plan of Action for Sustainable Water Management consistent with the agreed Pacific Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Water Management Framework:
    - Developed and implemented for at least the main outer islands by 2008 to increase by 40% access to sustainable, reliable and quality water services to the people by 2010.
- (Ministry of Works)*
- Improve the governance of water management by reviewing relevant legislations as appropriate by 2007, focusing on:
    - developing public private partnership in the supply of water; and
    - the demand side management, including the adoption of the user pays principles and encouraging households to also use rainwater.
- (Ministry of Works)*

**WASTE**

Improve management of solid, liquid and other forms of wastes, minimizing the human health effects and the impacts on the environment

- Prioritised Cook Islands National Waste Strategy consistent with strategies outlined in the Regional Waste Management Strategy and the Integrated Waste Management and subcomponent strategies developed and implemented by 2008, including:
    - a prioritized solid waste management plan to strengthen infrastructure, enhance institutional capacity and encourage Corporate Social Responsibility and individual actions, increasing recycling and reducing residual solid wastes going to landfill by 30%, 2010.
    - a harmonized and integrated liquid waste management policy reducing water borne diseases and environmental costs by 2010.
- (Ministry of Works)*

**GOAL: STRENGTHENED AND AFFORDABLE BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT AND UTILITIES TO SUPPORT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Cook Islands economic and social development depends to a large extent on the quality of the basic infrastructure that exists in the country and associated enabling environments, including roads, airports and harbours, air and shipping services, energy, and the information, communication and technology. Without these, private sector based development is limited, particularly in those key industries, such as tourism that require efficient services. The provision of social services to all people residing in the Cook Islands cannot also be guaranteed in the absence of good infrastructure because of the difficulty in reaching the sparse population distributed across several different islands.

To complicate the matter further, management of infrastructure in the Cook Islands is scattered across many different government agencies and between different layers of government. For example, road transportation on Rarotonga is currently undertaken by different Government agencies, including the Ministry of Works, Police and Environment Services. Whereas in the Outer Islands the Islands Administration and Island Councils manage their road infrastructure and road use. There is thus an urgent need to improve not only the basic infrastructure, particularly, but also the coordination of management efforts, adopting a public-private partnership approach.

The Cook Islands has ratified the Pacific Islands Air Services Agreement (PIASA) and the Pacific Islands Civil Aviation Safety and Security Treaty (PICASST), which should contribute directly to the improved efficiency and frequency of air travel in the Cook Islands. The Cook Islands have also recently become a member of the Pacific Safety Aviation Office (PASO) which will help strengthen aviation safety oversight and ensure that it meets its international civil aviation safety and security obligations at an affordable cost, as mandated by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

**CHALLENGES:**

- Better provision of safe, efficient and affordable air and sea transport to, and safe and efficient road transport on, all islands needed.
- Deteriorating infrastructure, including road, airports and harbours.
- Reliance on imported fossil fuel, increasing price and identifying economically viable renewable energy options, an decreasing consumption of renewable energy
- Limited access to cost effective ICT services and a governance arrangement that respects privacy and intellectual property rights.

Key Baseline Indicators	Value
Proportion Of Population Connected To Internet, Including Business	11%
Number Of Private Households With Telephone Connections	84%
Proportion Of Government Ministries And Agencies With Websites	35%
Digital Access Index (DAI)	NA
Energy Consumption (KWH/Year/Capita)	1350
Windpower (Mangaia Island Only)	20 KW
Solar Power	40KW
Biomass (Titakaveka Island)	5 tonnes per year
Civil Aviation Safety 'Lack Of Implementation Measure As Reported By ICAO'	1.75%
Safety As Measured By The Level Of Compliance With IMO Standards	80%
<i>Source: ICT Division, 2006</i>	



**GOAL: STRENGTHENED BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES TO SUPPORT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

**INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY**

Encourage private sector led ICT development to provide universal access to cost effective ICT

- The Cook Islands ICT policy reviewed and the National ICT Strategy developed and implemented by the beginning of 2007, including the strategies for improving the enabling environment required to promote private sector based ICT services on each island, increasing ICT connectivity by 50% by 2010.
- Appropriate legislative framework developed and implemented for the use and privacy of electronic media that balances the rights and interests of the community and individuals and the security and confidentiality of information, including national security and criminal issues.
- All levels of training programs developed and implemented for progressive and on-going increase in ICT skills and information literacy by 50% by 2010.

*(ICT Division)*

Strengthen e-Government Initiatives for increased public sector efficiency and reduction of barriers to public access to government information for increasing productivity, transparency and accountability in all spheres of economic and social endeavour

- E-Government Initiatives improved resulting in electronic access by the public to government information by 50 percent by end of 2008
- Implementation of web portal, ensuring at least fifty percent of government agencies have their websites operational by the end of 2006
- Pilot e-Island scheme implemented by end of 2008

*(ICT Division)*

**ENERGY**

Rationalize the management of the energy sector by developing and implementing Cook Islands Energy Strategic Plan for all islands

- A prioritised Cook Islands Energy Strategic Plan developed and implemented by early 2007, consistent with strategies outlined in the Pacific Islands Framework for Regional Action on Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea level Rise, 2006-2015, and, the Pacific Regional Energy Policy:
  - establishing a more coordinated and cost effective organisational management structure by 2007;
  - decreasing per capita energy consumption by 20% by 2010 by increasing efficiency in energy use through the adoption of new technologies and energy conservation practices; and
  - reducing the reliance on high GHG based fossil fuel by identifying and adopting technically feasible and financial viable alternative energy sources and increasing the use of renewable energy by 30% by 2010.

*(Energy Division)*

**ROAD, SEA AND AIR TRANSPORT**

Provide a national road transport system for each

- Integrated Land Transport Strategy for each island developed by 2007 and priority actions commenced by the early 2008:

**GOAL: STRENGTHENED BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES TO SUPPORT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

island that is safe and efficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ improving infrastructure, community awareness and appropriate institutional management and standards for each island; and</li> <li>○ increasing road use efficiency and safety.</li> <li>● Public-Private Partnership (PPP) policy developed and implemented by 2008 for developing and maintaining priority road infrastructure on all islands. <i>(Ministry of Transport)</i></li> </ul>
Provide safe, efficient and affordable air and sea transport to all islands in partnership with the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stakeholder based air and sea transport Strategic Plan developed and implemented by March 2007, outlining key policies and strategies including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improving the conduct and performance of civil aviation and shipping and the rationalization of the management of the transport sector; and</li> <li>○ Increasing efficiency and safety of air and sea transport;</li> <li>○ PPP for improving air and sea transport to the outer islands.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <i>(Ministry of Transport)</i>

**AIRPORTS AND HARBOURS**

Provide and maintain safe and secure airport and port facilities and services on all islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A prioritized plan for improving airport facilities and services developed and implemented by the end of 2007 including the accuracy and reliability of new navigational aids and air traffic systems by 90% by 2008.</li> <li>● Standard of international and domestic airports improved to meet the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards and management responsibilities transferred to the Cook Islands Aviation Authority by 2010. <i>(Cook Islands Airport Authority)</i></li> <li>● A prioritized plan for upgrading and maintaining port facilities to meet the needs of domestic and international shipping trade.</li> <li>● A plan to meet the international shipping and port security codes. <i>(Ministry of Transport)</i></li> </ul>
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**GOAL: A SOCIETY BUILT ON LAW AND ORDER AND GOOD GOVERNANCE AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE OUTER ISLANDS, PRIVATE SECTOR AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

A country's ability to realize their national vision is largely dependent on the strength of Parliamentary processes and the national law and order situation, including transparency and accountability of public decision-making processes and enforcement of countries laws. Parliamentary processes need to be strengthened to improve legislative action, Parliamentary oversight and representation. Government, through the advice of the Crown Law Office, needs to ensure that its policies and decisions comply with the Constitution and the law, and where necessary, introduce legislation to implement such policies. The Cook Islands Police Force is the pillar of law enforcement and its national policing programmes need to be further strengthened in partnership with local communities and continue the implementation of the community policing concept.

An examination of data on income, expenditure, education, health and infrastructure demonstrates that the level of socioeconomic development in the outer islands is well below that in Rarotonga, and that the northern group in particular is worse off. A fundamental development challenge is to achieve economic growth and social development that is more evenly spread across all islands and that involves less reliance on public service jobs and welfare benefits as sources of cash income. Government, through Office of the Minister for Outer Islands Administration and other Government entities, is committed to ongoing infrastructure development such as harbours, water, power supply, road construction and maintenance as well as airport maintenance in the Outer Islands.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Poor compliance with good governance principles and commitments, including the Forum 8 Principles of Accountability
- Poor delivery of certain public services.
- Agencies and institutions involved in outer island administration lack coordination.
- Weak provision of public services to, and in, the outer islands.
- Accountability and transparency in public financial management need to be strengthened.
- The Judicial system and the Cook Islands Police Force need to be strengthened to address increasing, petty crime, white collar crimes, drug related crimes and e-crimes.

Key Baseline Indicators	Value
Compliance With Forum 8 Principles Of Accountability	NA
'Incidents To Processing' (Police)	NA
'Prosecution To Conviction' (Police)	NA
Percentage Reduction In Crimes Against Persons and property, By Sex Of Victim	NA
Percentage Reduction In Crimes Against Persons, including domestic violence	NA
Number Of Financial Audits Completed	44
Increase In Control of Corruption	NA
Increase In Government Effectiveness	NA
Increase in Voice and Accountability	NA
<i>Source: Cook Islands Government 2006, Transparency International, World Bank, 2004-2005</i>	

**GOAL: A SOCIETY BUILT ON LAW AND ORDER AND GOOD GOVERNANCE AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING OUTER ISLANDS, PRIVATE SECTOR AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

**PARLIAMENTARY AND WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT**

Improve the Parliamentary and whole of government compliance with the principles of good governance, including accountability, transparency, contestability and predictability in government decisions

- Parliamentary governance improved through the adoption and effective implementation of the Forum Principles of Good Leadership and Accountability by the end of 2007.  
*(Department of Parliamentary Services)*
- Delivery of services by public servants and their accountability improved by developing, adopting and enforcing a Public Service Code of Conduct under the Public Service Act 1995/96;  
*(Public Services Commission)*
- Whole of government management improved by end of 2008 by:
  - reviewing the public service to assess the impact of the ERP and to determine how the public service could be strengthened.  
*(Public Service Commission)*
  - reviewing and strengthening the Public Service Act 1995/96, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) Act, and the Public Expenditure Review Committee and Audit (PERCA) Act to ensure consistency and clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities.  
*(Ministry of Finance and Economic Management)*
- Government's financial management improved by:
  - decisively acting on the recommendations of the Parliamentary Finance Audit Select Committee established to monitor and review the financial reports, and special audit reports, of the government departments, by 2007.  
*(Crown Law Office)*

**OUTER ISLAND DEVELOPMENT**

Strengthen the Administration of the Outer Islands to meet the needs and aspiration of the people

- The administration of the Outer Islands reviewed in the context of the devolution of administrative functions of the Government to the Island Administrators and the elected Island Councils:
  - strengthening good governance across all sectors and between the central government agencies, Outer Islands Administration and the Island Councils by 2008;
  - developing a policy framework for the Outer Island Administration that minimizes conflict between different institutions and streamlines decision-making processes; and
  - establishing appropriate institutional mechanisms to support effective delivery of services to, and in, the outer islands by 2010.  
*(Office of the Minister for Island Administration)*

**PUBLIC FINANCE GOVERNANCE**

Improve accountability and transparency of public financial management

- By 2008, a response to all audit reports made publicly available within 30 days of their release outlining key recommendations from the report and specific actions to be taken by Government  
*(Audit Office)*

**GOAL: A SOCIETY BUILT ON LAW AND ORDER AND GOOD GOVERNANCE AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING OUTER ISLANDS, PRIVATE SECTOR AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

**LAW AND ORDER**

Strengthen national justice system to meet the changing needs of law and justice in an environment of increasing globalization and international crime

- National Strategy for increasing the effectiveness of the Judicial system and the Cook Islands Police Force to address increasing, petty crime, white collar crimes, drug related crimes and e-crimes within the Cook Islands, developed and implemented by the end of 2007.  
*(Ministry of Justice)*
- National Police Operations Review completed by late 2006 and the implementation of the findings commenced by early 2007.  
*(Police Department)*

**GOAL: STRENGTHENED NATIONAL COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

An effective information system will underpin robust, evidence-based, decision making. It will also facilitate the provision of information for performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Difficulties in universally accessing characterised data from core government departments are made worse by a lack of computer databases, a lack of basic computerised networks and limited management skills in developing these systems. Moreover, poor characterising, aggregation of biogeophysical and socioeconomic data disaggregated by gender is a major concern for Government. There is limited networking between the Statistics Office, Immigration, and including other important economic and infrastructure sectors.

There is concern about our limited capacity in the use of expert systems and technical tools such as Geographical Information System (GIS) for planning purposes. Government needs to strengthen local capacity in expert systems and technical tools to support decision-making and planning activities.

Following the economic restructuring, particularly the public sector downsizing, and the frequent changes in government in the current election period, effective coordination of national economic planning has been weak. Individual ministries were left to pursue planning on an ad hoc basis with very little effective coordination and long-term stewardship by the political leaders. The current process for national planning revolves around the annual budget process and is not specifically set in a medium term framework.

In addition, key government priorities are set out in the annual Budget Policy Statement. The Budget Policy Statement is produced by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management, in the absence of robust sectoral and cross sectoral priorities. A shortcoming of the process is the concentration on annual work programmes without serious regard to a national medium term strategy including a public sector investment programme that should guide the annual budget process.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Lack of quantitative, sectoral, and gender based baseline data
- Weak institutional arrangements for cross-sectoral coordination
- Methodologies and processes for sectoral data collation lack National Statistics Office clearance
- Public service lacks cross sectoral and interdisciplinary skills required to address the cross cutting natural resource and environment use and management issues
- No Central Planning Office to coordinate national development planning activities

Key Baseline Indicators	Value
Number Of Sectors With Appropriate Indicators Identified and disaggregated by Gender	NA
Number Of Sectors With Quantitative Baseline Information Available	NA
Number of Ministries That Have Bureau Of Statistics Approved Data Collation Methods	NA
Number Of Sectors Whose Databases Are Closely Aligned With The National Information System Maintained At The Bureau Of Statistics	NA
Number of sectors with gender disaggregated data	NA
Proportion Of Sectoral Databases Linked To The National Geographical Information System	NA
<i>Source: Cook Islands Government, 2006</i>	

**GOAL: STRENGTHENED NATIONAL COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, MONITORING AND REPORTING**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

**INFORMATION DATABASE**

Strengthen sector and national information systems to support evidence based development planning, monitoring and reporting under the national development plan and against regional and international commitments, including MDGs, CEDAW, CRCs and MEAs

- SWOT analysis of national and sectoral information systems completed by the end of 2006
- A Prioritized Strategy for strengthening GIS based National Information System developed and implemented by the end of 2007 to support evidence based national development planning, monitoring and reporting against national, regional and international commitments
  - Individual and institutional capacity in collecting, storing, accessing and analyzing statistical information increased by 50% by 2010.

*(Bureau of Statistics)*

**INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION**

Improve coordination and harmonization of cross sectoral issues, strategies and policies across government agencies as well with the outer island administration

- Establish a National Planning Division within the Office of the Prime Minister to:
  - coordinate the national development planning activities;
  - prepare, monitor and review the NSDP;
  - ensure that the planning is consistent with the macro-economic, social and environmental policies that are determined in conjunction with NDSP Advisory Committee;
  - prepare in conjunction with the sectoral ministries, the sectoral plans and strategies for incorporation into a national development plan; and
  - in partnership with the Ministry of Finance assist sectors to prepare their annual budgets and to ensure national budget allocation reflects priorities listed in the NSDP and the sector strategies.

*(Office of the Prime Minister)*

- Existing agencies strengthened, and where necessary new interagency committees established, to encourage cross-sectoral coordination by 2007.

*(Office of the Prime Minister)*

**GOAL: A SOCIETY THAT TREASURES CULTURAL HERITAGE, VALUES AND IDENTITY WHILE RESPECTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

The Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development continues to focus on the preservation and promotion of our culture, traditional values, knowledge and practices for future generations. The essence of their existence is to enhance and sustain national pride in the Cook Islands cultural heritage. The Government endorses the need to enhance the Cook Islands Maori language by establishing a National Language Commission, providing resources for the recording of oral traditions and knowledge for future references. The Government also recognizes the economic potential of its performing arts, art and crafts. This economic potential will continue to support other key sectors also such as Tourism.

More government commitment is needed for the improvement of the infrastructure and management of National Research, National Archives, National library and National Museum to preserve historical and cultural materials and information to promote pride in historical and cultural heritage of the Cook Islands. Without standardised infrastructure for these resources, preservation is impossible. The increase in globalisation creates barriers and hindrance to our abilities to maintain our traditional and cultural heritage. More focus on the development of a national legislation to protect Intellectual Property Rights is needed in order to have such a provision in place.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Increase globalisation hinders the Cook Islands ability to maintain their traditional and cultural heritage. There are barriers when it comes to the maintenance of historical sites, due to the ownership of these lands.
- Managing an effective archive information system or rather the implementation of an archive policy across the board i.e. government information/reports etc.
- Getting culture on par with economic development as a key development area
- Managing research by Foreign nationals in the absence of a robust research policy

<b>Key Baseline Indicators</b>	<b>Value</b>
Cultural Events Organised And Implemented Annually	5
Historical Sites Preserved And Managed	2
Archaeological, Cultural And Historic Sites Catalogued	12
Gross Revenue Generated From The Sale Of Cook Islands Music, Video And Performances	NA
Number Of National IPR, Patents And Trademarks Protecting Traditional Knowledge And Practice, Including CI Music, Video And Cultural Performances	NA
<i>Source: Ministry of Cultural Development, 2006</i>	



**GOAL: A SOCIETY THAT TREASURES CULTURAL HERITAGE, VALUES AND IDENTITY WHILE RESPECTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010</b>
<p>Strengthen National Archives, National Library and National Museum to preserve historical and cultural materials and information to promote pride in historical and cultural heritage of the Cook Islands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Heritage Convention ratified by 2007 to increase funding opportunities for culture based projects.</li> <li>• National Plan on Cultural Heritage, Values and Identify developed by 2008 to increase by 2010:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ preservation of historical documents, publications and artifacts by 30%</li> <li>○ preservation, protection and restoration of historical sites by 20%</li> <li>○ promotion and easy access to natural heritage and historical material and information by 50%</li> <li>○ audiovisual recording of national artists and documentaries by 20%</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Cultural Development)</i></p>
<p>Strengthen programs on Cook Islands Maori language, performing arts, visual arts and recording of oral traditions of the Cook Islands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A prioritized Strategic Plan for promoting visual arts, performing arts and oral traditions developed by early 2008 to increase by 2010 the number of their performances by 25%</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Cultural Development)</i></p>
<p>Develop a national legislation to protect intellectual property rights over natural and cultural heritage and traditional knowledge and practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National policy and appropriate legislation developed by early 2007 to protect intellectual property rights over natural and cultural heritage and traditional knowledge and practices and to monitor benefits generated to the Cook Islands</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Cultural Development)</i></p>

**GOAL: AN EFFECTIVE FOREIGN AFFAIRS POLICY THAT MEETS THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE COOK ISLANDS**

Over the past 10 years the Cook Islands has continued to grow and mature in terms of statehood and independence. In 2001 the governments of the Cook Islands and New Zealand clarified their responsibilities to each other through the adoption of a Joint Centenary Declaration on the Principles of their Relationship, which recognized in terms of ability the Cook Islands capacity to act unilaterally on the world stage. In turn this declaration provided for the development and implementation of a more ambitious Cook Islands foreign policy.

In the last decade diplomatic relations have also been negotiated with more than 30 countries around the world and the Cook Islands has established and continues to manage full diplomatic missions in New Zealand with a High Commission and Consulate office and the European Union through a Mission and Embassy. A network of honorary representatives has also been established in countries of economic and geographical importance to the Cook Islands.

In terms of the Cook Islands relationship with the development community, the Ministry of Foreign affairs regularly interacts with donors for New Zealand and Australia, China and Asia, Europe and the European Union as well as ADB, the World Bank and the United Nations and its bodies. As the Cook Islands continues to develop its international personality, greater efforts have been made to maintain these important relationships.

To ensure that the Cook Islands continues to gain optimal benefits from its interaction with the international community it is important that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the capacity to service bilateral and multi-lateral relationships. In cooperation with other Cook Islands Ministries tasked with the economic, cultural and social development of the Cook Islands, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for providing guidance and leadership in terms of the Cook Islands international responsibility.

**Challenges:**

- Continued positive interaction with the international community and developing and maintaining its own International identity
- The establishment of strategic and economic relationships with bilateral and international partners in the interest of the Cook Islands
- Proactive interaction, and more effective engagement with CROP agencies
- Proactive interaction with international organizations and bilateral governments and the promotion of international policies conducive to the continued development of the Cook Islands
- The strengthening and maintenance of existing and future international relationships.

Key Baseline Indicators	Value
Total Overseas Development Assistance As A Proportion Of <i>GDP</i>	7%
Proportion Of Bilateral Resources Allocated To Different Sectors:	
▪ Health	10%
▪ Outer Islands	31%
▪ Infrastructure	4%
▪ Agriculture And Marine Resources	3%
▪ Other	46%
Proportion Of Bilateral ODA Of OECD/DA Donors That Is Untied	84.8%
ODA Received In Small Island Developing States As Proportion Of Their GDP	6.9%
<i>Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, 2005, Cook Islands MDG Report, 2005</i>	

**GOAL: AN EFFECTIVE FOREIGN AFFAIRS POLICY THAT MEETS THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE COOK ISLANDS**

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010</b>
<b>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>	
Strengthen and manage international relationships in the interests of the people of the Cook Islands	<p>Cook Islands Foreign Policy developed and implemented by 2007 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage and strengthen existing, and develop new, bilateral and multilateral relations in the economic, social and environmental interests of the Cook Islands; and</li> <li>• Ensure Cook Island's active and effective participation in key international fora, noting common but differentiated responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration)</i></p>
<b>AID EFFECTIVENESS</b>	
Increase effectiveness of development partner financial and technical assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The completion of an Aid Management Strategy document by March 2006 that is consistent with the Pacific Principles on Aid Effectiveness, and annual discussions held with development partners and their outcomes incorporated in the existing aid management strategies.</li> <li>• NSDP and associated priorities in the sector strategies used as the context for dialogue and engagement by the Government and the non-government organizations with all development partners by the beginning of 2007, for achieving coordinated and harmonized donor support by 2010, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ at least 50% of development support to Cook Islands reflects immediate and short-term national and sector priorities by the beginning of 2007.</li> <li>○ roundtable discussions held with all donors and CROP agencies for each sector;</li> <li>○ the number of jointly funded programs and joint technical assistance missions by at least 50%</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>(Aid Management Division)</i></p>
Limit vulnerability to development assistance by mobilizing aid for strengthening national capacities at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of aid allocated for targeted national capacity development increased by 20% by 2010.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Aid Management Division)</i></p>
Assertion of leadership role in national processes and framework and insistence that donors work within such frameworks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 30% reduction in transaction costs in developing, monitoring and reporting on development partner funded projects to the Cook Islands by the beginning of 2008.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Aid Management Division)</i></p>
<b>CROP EFFECTIVENESS AND BENEFITS UNDER THE PACIFIC PLAN</b>	
Use NSDP and associated sector strategies as a basis for ensuring optimal benefits from the Pacific Plan and CROP agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CROP-wide coordinated, harmonized and appropriately sequenced program of services for the Cook Islands developed by the CROP agencies under the Pacific Plan in partnership with the relevant government agencies and development partners for at least three key sectors/ themes by the end of 2007</li> <li>• A national monitoring and reporting mechanism established by 2008 for reporting on activities implemented and benefits received from increased regional cooperation and collaboration under the Pacific Plan.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration))</i></p>

## GOAL: A SAFE, SECURE AND RESILIENT COOK ISLANDS

Cook Islands security and resilience depends on not only on the magnitude of disaster but also on the preparedness, mitigation efforts and adaptation strategies that the community has adopted. The Cook Islands is situated within the cyclone belt and, coupled with the effects of climate change, sea level rise and climatic variability, is considered highly prone to natural disasters. Recent years have seen an increase in both intensity and frequency of extreme climate events. Human caused disasters are also always a possibility and it is crucial, therefore, to establish effective national disaster preparedness, awareness and response systems to increase resilience to natural and manmade disasters. Disasters can also be caused man made impacts, and introduction of pests and diseases. An all hazards approach to national disasters have thus been advocated reflecting the commonalities in the approach required to manage each one of them – efforts taken to minimize risk, being better prepared to cope with the residual risk, and being able to recover from a disaster event

National security is also largely dependent on the ability of the country to monitor and enforce national laws. Priorities for national security have shifted focus from traditional policing programmes as well as in terms of management strategies, since the event of September 11, 2001. The Cook Islands border security management has been upgraded and improvement is continuing under the framework of the Combined Law Agencies Group concept, which is aimed at breaking down territorial management behaviour between local, national and regional security management agencies.

The Cook Islands immigration service is in the process of installing a computerised border management system at our international ports with assistance from AusAID and NZAID. Airport security systems have also been upgraded and x-ray machines and iron scans for baggage security installed.

EEZ surveillance and management by the Police Maritime Surveillance Centre is far from adequate. Problems are still being experienced in high operational costs, logistical difficulties and lack of funding.

Drug transshipment is a major concern and capacity in dealing with random checks at Cook Islands international airport and ports of call have already been tested and found to be inadequate. Continued training of officers and introduction of another specialised trained dog maybe required.

### CHALLENGES:

- Lack of a national plan and national institutional capacity for coordinated disaster risk management.
- Weak formal disaster management structures.
- Little financial control on disaster response and rehabilitation.
- Absence of collaboration between law and border enforcement
- Lack of institutional capacity to respond and manage health related disasters such pandemics

Key Baseline Indicators	Value
Compliance Audits Of Maritime And Aviation Security And Surveillance Reveal No Significant Breaches Of National, Regional Or International Security Codes And Regulations	NA
Number of Foreign Plant Or Animal Species Detected at the Border Introduced	NA
Percentage Reduction In the Mean Time Taken To Respond To Natural Disasters	NA
Average Damage Cost for Natural Disasters	NA
Average Damage Cost For All Hazards	NA
<i>Source: Cook Islands Government, 2006</i>	

**GOAL: A SAFE, SECURE AND RESILIENT NATION**

**STRATEGY**

**KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010**

**ALL HAZARD RISK MANAGEMENT**

Establish a coordinated and effective national disaster risk reduction and disaster management system for **all hazards**

- Develop and enact appropriate all hazards legislation for disaster risk reduction and disaster management by 2007, ensuring effective coordinated whole of government approach and stakeholder driven public private partnership is adopted in the DRR & DM efforts associated with each hazard.
  - A prioritised National Risk Plan of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management developed and implemented by 2007, putting in effect the 2005 Cook Island National Disaster Risk Management Policy, which reflects key principles and strategies agreed to in various regional and international strategies and commitments to:
    - ensure a coordinated disaster risk reduction and disaster management
    - clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each government, non-government agencies and local communities in various aspects of each of the key hazards, harmonize and coordinate national responses to disasters, avoiding confusion, minimizing duplication and or improving efficiency of service delivery
    - for natural hazards such as cyclones and droughts associated with climate change and climate variability, develop and implement a country focused action plan, by 2007, reflecting key principles and strategies agreed to in various regional strategies and policy documents including the Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management, 2006-2015, and the Pacific Islands Framework for Regional Action on Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea level Rise, 2006-2015, and the Pacific Islands Regional Energy Policy to, by 2010:
      - mainstream disaster risk management in the national planning and budgetary process.
      - reduce the costs of average natural disaster events by 20%.
    - build local institutional capacity to adopt and implement an integrated disaster risk reduction and risk management at all levels
- (National Disaster Management Council)*
- A prioritized National Pandemics Prevention and Response Strategy, including clearly identified roles and responsibilities, developed and implemented for the management of pandemics, such as the avian flu and SARS, by the end of 2006, including:
    - border and quarantine controls for minimizing the risk of introduction and outbreak

**GOAL: A SAFE, SECURE AND RESILIENT NATION**

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>KEY OUTCOME TARGETS 2006-2010</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ medical response to contain and minimise the human health effects.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Office of the Prime Minister)</i></p>
<b>IMMIGRATION AND BORDER CONTROL</b>	
<p>Strengthen national immigration and social policy to increase economic development and maintain social harmony</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cook Islands National Policy and Legislation on immigration developed and implemented by 2007 to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ promote economic development while maintaining social harmony and without compromising indigenous ownership rights and culture; and</li> <li>○ establish a computerized system for monitoring of arrivals and departures by 2007.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>(Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration)</i></p>
<b>TRANSNATIONAL SECURITY</b>	
<p>Strengthen national mechanisms to enhance national security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional coordination, including information sharing, and implementation regimes for counter terrorism, anti-money laundering and transnational organised crime, strengthened by the end of 2007.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Police Department)</i></p>

## NSDP IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

The National Sustainable Development Plan for 2006-2010 sets out the path and direction for achieving the national vision for the Cook Islands, which as noted earlier is:

*'To enjoy the highest quality of life consistent with the aspirations of our people, and in harmony with our culture and environment.'*

The overall objective of the Plan is:

*To build a sustainable future that meets our economic and social needs in partnership between government, the private sector and local, regional and international stakeholders, without compromising prudent economic management, environmental integrity, social stability and the needs of future generations.*

Principles, goals and strategies are defined in this NSDP and provide the basis for a systematic and coordinated development of the Cook Islands.

The onus is now on each Coordinating Agency, and other relevant stakeholders, to ensure the implementation of the NSDP. Regional experience has shown that countries continue to perform poorly in this phase of the national planning cycle and it is vital, therefore, that the various factors leading to poor implementation are taken into account when considering the design of this framework.

The **Implementation Framework** is divided into four parts:

1. The NSDP Matrix
2. The Sector Strategies
3. The Ministry/Department Business Plan and Transition to Corporate Plans
4. The National Budget

### The NSDP Matrix

This matrix has been designed to ensure that the NSDP is time bound and performance-based. From an implementation perspective, this means that each Coordinating Agency (ies) has a set timeframe in which to achieve the relevant 'Key Outcome Targets' and will be held accountable for their performance. Development partners will also use the NSDP and associated sector priorities as the basis for providing an indication of broad support.

The matrix is divided into three parts: Strategy, Key Outcome Targets and Coordinating Agency.

**Strategy:** each strategy has been developed with the achievement of the relevant Goal in mind and reflects the broad aspirations and 'priorities' identified during the National Development Forum. Each strategy provides broad direction, but may also comprise a number of discrete but related activities, for achieving the Goal.

**Key Outcome Targets:** these provide for signposts, or periodic check-points, along that path so that progress may be assessed in more detail, and to check that the Cook Islands is still moving in the right direction. In technical terms, these Key Outcome

Targets serve as **performance indicators**. For those goals where sector strategies are unavailable or inadequate, the targets and indicators are identified at the very aggregate level. Where sector strategies do exist and have the level of specificity required or, more specific and quantifiable targets and indicators are provided. Where information on the direct measure is not available, proxy indicators are used. In the extreme situations where there is no base line information available, only indicative parameters are noted, which will need to be refined as more information becomes available.

**Coordinating Agency:** This is the agency that will **lead** the achievement of the Key Outcome Targets by initiating activities (inter departmental task forces, programmes and projects), facilitating broader discussion and debate, organising technical, and or administrative inputs from other relevant agencies, and so on. However, the delivery of specific outcomes will depend on the coordinated and harmonised efforts of all relevant ministries and stakeholders. Thus, there may be a number of agencies involved in the achievement of a specific Key Outcome Target **BUT** only one agency, the Coordinating Agency, will be held accountable for it.

The Coordinating Agency and other relevant government stakeholders, in partnership with the Aid Capital Coordination Committee (ACCC) will also engage with development partners and the CROP agencies in negotiating financial and technical assistance for achieving the time bound targets.

### **The Sector Strategies**

As highlighted earlier, the NSDP does not present detailed sector based policies or projects. These will be identified in the individual **sector strategies**. For those sectors where a strategy has not been developed, the NSDP provides sufficient direction to ensure alignment and consistency with guiding principles and regional and international commitments made by the Cook Islands Government without being overly prescriptive.

What this means is that the sector strategies serve as detailed road maps for each of the stakeholders, either individually and or collectively, making the journey towards the Goal. These details could include specific activities that need to be undertaken and specific indicators that may be used to monitor and measure performance at the sector level. It is important that stakeholders decide how the sector strategies are to be implemented within the broad direction set by the NSDP. This makes sense as the stakeholders have the specific knowledge and expertise to determine the specific tasks to achieve the desired outcomes. Simply put, the NSDP provides the direction while the Sector Strategies show us *'how to get there'*.

Development partners and CROP agencies will also use Sector strategies, where they exist, to scope and identify the most appropriate program of support, and the respective roles of each agency in implementing specific strategies.

### **Ministry/Department Business Plan and Corporate Plans**

Currently, each ministry/department prepares a Business Plan, which is an annual 'statement of intent' and which is used as the basis for a Ministry/Department's national budget submission.



The intention under the NSDP is for Coordinating agencies to develop medium term Corporate Plans and to ensure the alignment of these Plans to the Sector Strategies and the NSDP. In its Corporate Plan, each Coordinating Agency will have a clear statement, which describes the agency's role, functions and objectives. The Corporate Plans will translate the Sector Strategies and the NSDP into ministry/department plans of action. It will also highlight how the Coordinating Agency intends to involve and collaborate with other relevant stakeholders in the implementation process.

These Corporate Plans will allow for annual priority setting. The annual priorities will then form the basis for the Coordinating Agency's annual budget submissions. These submissions, where cross-sectoral coordination/ multi-stakeholder collaboration is involved, will entail the provision of funding support through the Coordinating Agency to each stakeholder in the implementation process.

Coordinating Agency's approved budget will then form the basis of their annual business plan, which sets out their work program for the year.

The Corporate Plan, thus, will give detailed effect to how a Coordinating Agency will contribute to the achievement of the NSDP Goals through the national budget and development partner resources.

### **National Budget**

The National Budget will provide the resources needed to ensure the effective implementation of the NSDP, together with the resources available from development partners and CROP agencies. The amount of national resources available will be determined by the Cook Island's macroeconomic performance and, beyond this, by the fiscal policies that Government has adopted to manage its resources and control its use.

The NSDP-Budget link is the most vital link in the national planning process. Even the best strategies require adequate resourcing in order to be implemented and the failure of certain national plans to deliver has been, more often than not, attributable to the weakness in this link.

The link is strengthened when each annual budget submission clearly shows the following:

- **Priority Setting** ('the Ministry/Department has shown that it has prioritised the implementation of its sector strategies [via ranking and or sequencing] over the period of the NSDP').
- **Link to the relevant sector strategy** ('how funding this activity/programme/project will lead to the implementation of the relevant strategy').
- **Link between the sector strategies to the NSDP Goal** ('how the implementation of the strategy will lead to the achievement of the relevant Goal').

The link is also strengthened when initiatives in sector strategies are realistic and appropriately costed.

## Development Partner Support and Aid Coordination

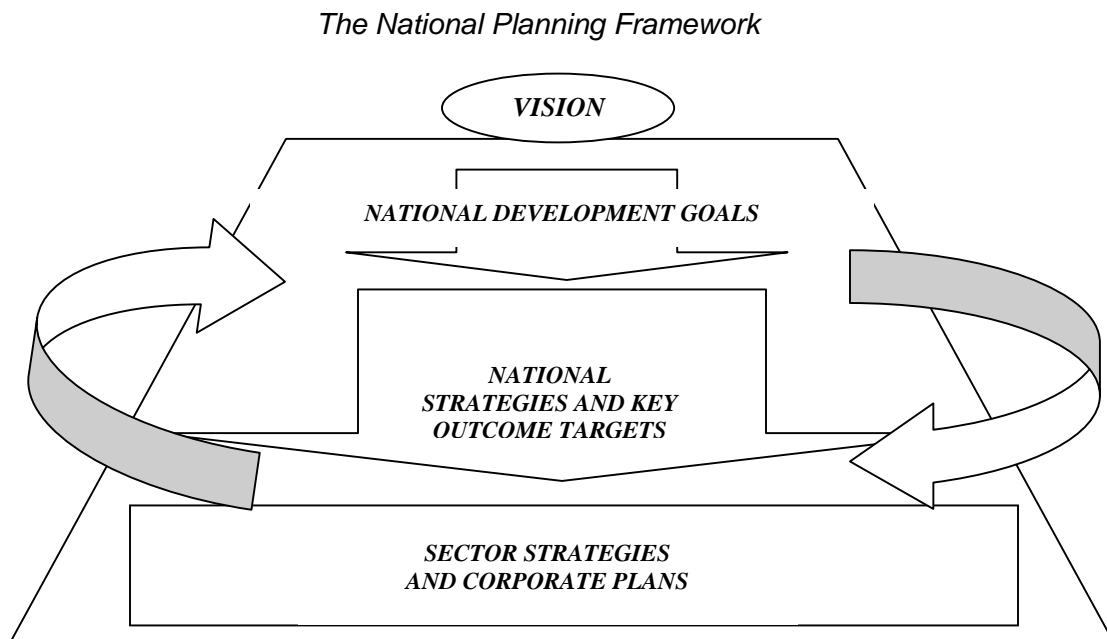
National coordination and harmonisation of development partner support is integral to the achievement of the NSDP Goals. The NSDP and the Sector Strategies provide the foundation for negotiating with development partners and CROP agencies for appropriate support. Ideally, Coordinating Agency for each strategy would negotiate collectively with development partners and CROP agencies for a medium term program of support aimed at achieving the desired sector goals and targets.

Effective implementation of the National Sustainable Development Plan over time thus requires:

- A clear link between the NSDP and the sector strategies and priorities.
- Stronger planning capacity within sectoral ministries to develop a prioritized program of activities which are appropriately sequenced and coordinated to achieve the desired outcome in the most cost effective manner.
- Realistic and appropriate multiyear costing, if necessary, of specific sets of activities for achieving a specific outcome.
- Commitment of national, CROP and development partner resources to coordinate and harmonise their support to complement national resources over the duration of the strategy.

## NSDP MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) FRAMEWORK

Effective implementation of the NSDP also requires the follow-up and monitoring of developments, an understanding of what works and what does not, and the enactment of improvements to processes and activities throughout the whole national planning framework (below).



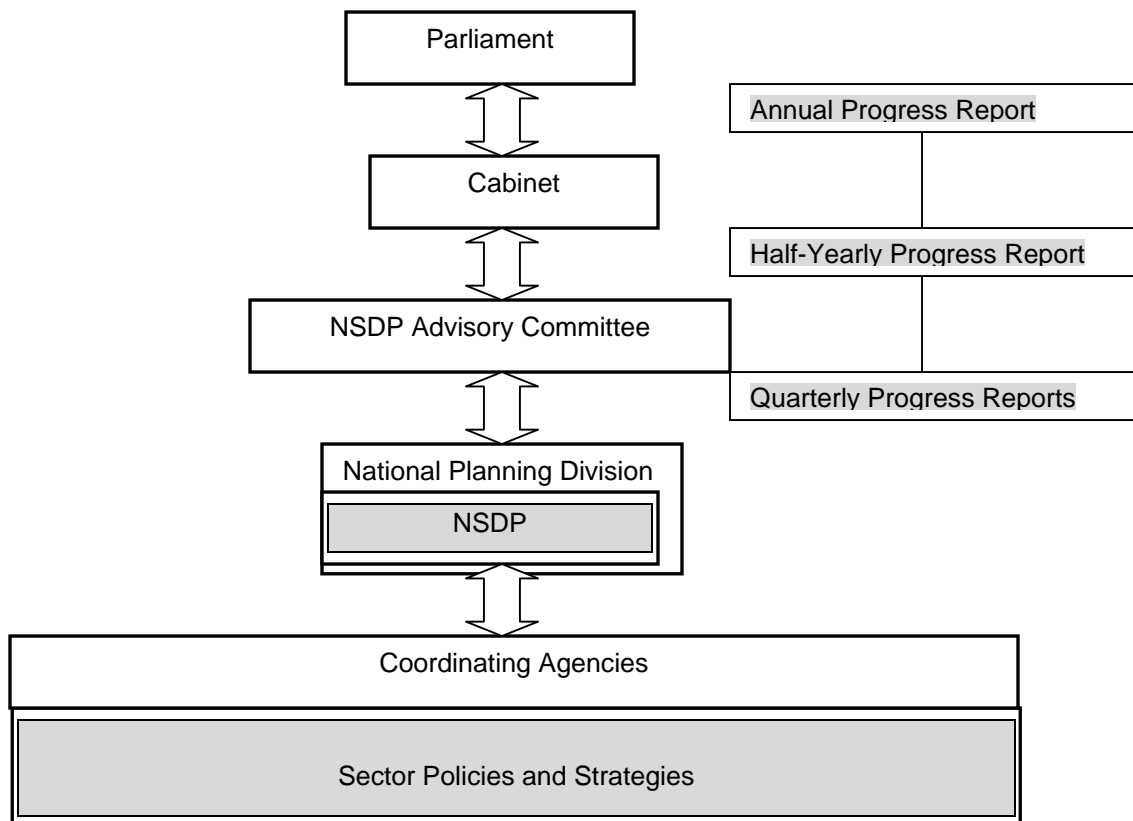
Monitoring and evaluation is about continuous improvement (in processes, in institutional arrangements and in decision making) – rather than just proving the success of a plan. Monitoring and documenting changes and accordingly adjusting policies and priorities is an important aspect of monitoring and evaluation.

The National Sustainable Development Plan 2006-2010 contains measurable targets and indicators which will be used to gauge implementation progress and achievements.

These indicators will not only provide a real guide as to development progress made by the Cook Islands but can also be used to provide information on progress against the various international and regional commitments that the Cook Islands has signed on to (e.g. the Millennium Development Goals and the Pacific Plan). Moreover, these reports will serve to highlight the value of mobilizing resources under various regional and international instruments to achieve national priorities. Development partners can also use these indicators to review their support and highlight to the Cook Islands what additional resources are available.

Given the high profile of the NSDP and the fact that it should reflect a whole of country approach to development, progress reports on its implementation will be provided to Cabinet and Parliament on at least an annual basis, and linked to the budget process, and also made available to the public. More regular performance reporting may be released to Cabinet on a quarterly or half yearly basis. The progress in implementing the NSDP will be also made available as widely as possible to all stakeholders to ensure greater transparency and accountability.

*National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework*



The NSDP Advisory Committee (NAC), comprising representatives from Government (Heads of Ministries: OPM (Chief of Staff, Chairperson), MFEM, PSC, MOE, MOW, NES, CIIC), the private sector (CICC) and community groups (CIANGO), will meet on a quarterly basis to provide high level, multi-stakeholder, analysis of reports outcomes before these are consolidated and presented to Cabinet every 6 months. The reports are then made available to the public and Development Partners after presentation to Parliament.

The National Planning Division, as the Secretariat to the National Advisory Committee, will be responsible for coordinating, compiling and analyzing all inputs into the progress reports and reporting to Parliament, through Cabinet, on the implementation of the NSDP and the outcomes achieved.

Each Coordinating Agency will provide the National Planning Division with an annual progress report based on the implementation of relevant strategies and associated key outcome targets. The information required for the reporting against the sectoral strategies will in most cases be aggregated upwards to underpin the reporting under the NSDP, thus minimizing the information and reporting requirements. It is possible that initially much of the reporting may include only qualitative information, but over time as better information systems are developed, outcomes against key targets, where relevant, may be reported quantitatively.

The National Planning Division will compile and analyse the information provided with a view to providing Cabinet with an overview of:

- (i) the number of strategies which have been implemented including:
  - those strategies requiring *legislative or policy* actions;
  - those strategies requiring funding support from the Government and or development partners, in particular those which have received funding and those which have not;
- (ii) the number of strategies *in the process* of being implemented;
- (iii) the number of strategies *not implemented* and reasons why (identifying roadblocks to implementation where appropriate);
- (iv) the number of strategies successfully implemented and key outcomes achieved; and
- (v) emerging or new strategies (including key outcome targets) under each goal and requiring Cabinet's attention.

### **Reporting Against International and Regional Commitments**

The NSDP and associated sector strategies will also provide a platform by which the Cook Islands reports against its international and regional commitments. This happens on two levels. Firstly, at the NSDP Matrix level, whereby the Key Outcome Targets reflect certain international or regional targets albeit at a broad level. Secondly, at the Sector Strategies level, whereby these targets are reflected in much more detail, that is, the sector level performance indicators developed are much more specific, more localised and may have a much stronger link with specific international and regional targets. Thus, reporting on the implementation of the NSDP also provides the mechanism for reporting against progress made in achieving international and regional commitments.