



Department of Environment and Coastal Resources
Corporate Plan (2009-2010)



Ministry of Natural Resources
Department of Environment and Coastal Resources
Turks and Caicos Islands Government

February 2009

Department of Environment & Coastal Resources



Corporate Plan 2009/10

DECR MISSION STATEMENT

“To ensure sustainable utilization of the natural resources of the Turks and Caicos Islands, protect and promote biodiversity and economic prosperity through a sustainable fishing industry an environmentally sustainable development and a protected areas system”

- **Mission Statement - Protected Areas-Environmental Management Division**
 - “To conserve, manage and enhance critical natural and historical resources of the nation, through an environmentally sustainable development and a protected area system that promotes knowledge, participation and stewardship by all for all”
- **Mission Statement - Fisheries Division**
 - “To protect and improve the fisheries through the effective management of fish stocks to promote economic prosperity”

GOALS

1. Protect and improve the environment and conserve and enhance biodiversity within the Turks and Caicos Islands and to integrate these with other government policies and international policies;
2. To promote more sustainable management and use of natural resources (e.g. fisheries, sustainable development, sand mining and protected areas), with all stakeholders

VALUED BEHAVIOUR

The Department of Environment & Coastal Resources’ core values are reflected in our corporate and individual behaviours. They define how we treat our stakeholders, clients, partners, the public and each other.

Commitment and Professionalism

- Working to the highest standard possible
- Work effectively and efficiently for best use of resources and achieving goals.
- Committing to extra hours where necessary.

Respect

- Avoid loose talk, gossip and talking about personalities
- Maintain confidentiality when requested
- Give credit where it is due
- Follow established protocols, do not jump over a line manager without informing them that you would like to take the discussion higher

Tolerance, Patience and Compromise

- Develop a mutual support culture and avoid finger pointing and blaming
- Understand the prevalent blame culture and behave in ways to counter it
- Give people the benefit of the doubt and do not jump to conclusions that they are involved in a conspiracy or have underhand motives.
- Do not negotiate with the intention of securing a perfect position for oneself.

Transparency

- Share information with others and do not hoard information to maintain personal power

Responsibility

- Behave in a way that is responsible and promotes the safety of others and oneself
- Take individual responsibility for equipment in ones uses.
- Take responsibility to communicate ones whereabouts if not in attendance at the office
- Be a part of the solution not part of the problem

Integrity

- Declare any conflicts of interest to appropriate persons
- Be honest in work and personal dealings and keep your word
- “Yes means yes and no means no – Say what you mean and mean what you say”

Effective Communication

- Maintain openness in communication and discussions.
- Giving sufficient time in calling meetings and avoiding calling them at the last moment.

Turks & Caicos Islands

1. Background

- 1.1. The Department of Environment & Coastal Resources consists of the Protected Areas - Environmental Management Division and the Fisheries Division. Together, these two entities are charged with the mandate of preserving and improving the quality of the environment of the Turks and Caicos Islands. It seeks to achieve this directive by assuring that human activity takes place without compromising the integrity and the well-being of human beings and ecosystems.
- 1.2. The DECR sees to it that natural resources are used sensibly with the intent of achieving sustainable development.
- 1.3. The DECR's priorities outlined in the corporate plan were developed in the context of the government's development and fiscal plans. The corporate plan covers two year period from 2009-10, consistent with TCIG financial year cycle.

2. The DECR is confronted with many diverse and complex environmental issues :

2.1. The mitigation of the impacts of Climatic Changes

Heightened awareness of climate change issues continues, with international discussion focused on finding ways to reduce the amount of carbon emissions and adapt to the changing climate. While an environmental issue, climate change also has an economic and fiscal impact. Citizens and Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands have the opportunity to demonstrate leadership throughout the Caribbean Region through research and environmental preservation efforts and plans for using renewable energy technology. There is growing awareness that climate change brings other changes for which adaptation is necessary. Anticipating what these changes will be and providing for early adaptation should be considered in the development and implementation of the TCI National Climate Change Policy in order to reduce risk and costs are important for the quality of life in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Including Climate Changes issues in the National Physical Development Plan and in other Planning laws and regulations as in the building code and development manual is also a priority for the TCI National Climate Change Policy. With the increasing demand for cleaner energy, a comprehensive policy need to be developed which promotes the usage of these technologies within the development and commercial sector. Whether it is cleaner hydrocarbons, bio-fuels, wind, or solar, the DECR will continue to work with its partners and stakeholders to find ways of reducing environmental impacts and cumulative effects.

2.2. Environmentally sustainable development and the mitigation of impacts of Development on Biodiversity loss

With the increasing population and pace of development, cumulative effects management is essential to balance the needs of tourism, residential, industrial, and commercial land uses while achieving environmental outcomes. This complex challenge requires understanding new issues

like ecological sensitivity, invasive species and biodiversity and developing management solutions that integrate our knowledge of these issues with our response to growth pressures such as expanding infrastructure needs, social, environmental and human health trends and changing economic opportunities. The DECR must effectively and actively participate at all development stages: development proposals, development agreements, planning applications at all stages and in the construction and operational phases of developments by carrying out an effective environmental screening (including the review of SEIAs and EIAs as required) at the proposal stage and implementing appropriate Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plans covering all the following phases: pre-construction, during construction, post construction and operation.

2.3. Training and Institutional Strengthening

To make the most of opportunities, an individual or an institution must have both the will and the ability to take action. The DECR Senior Management will work with staff members of the DECR to increase their efficiency, strengthen ownership, and plan for the future by providing training and technical assistance in management, financial systems, policy reform, governance, and/or program design, implementation, and assessment. These steps will aid the DECR to be better-equipped to fulfil its mandates.

2.4. Development of the Fisheries Sector

The DECR will seek to provide opportunity for adopting fisheries policies in a more holistic manner, reconciling sustainable resource management, and the contribution of the sector to economic growth.

Dealing with these issues implies adopting a variety of approaches and tools, namely, law and regulation enforcement, pollution prevention, environmental education / awareness, research and environmental monitoring.

3. Priority Objectives:

In addition to ongoing core activities, the DECR has identified the following strategic priorities;

3.1. Climate Change

The Department of Environment & Coastal Resources, together with its partners, will develop and implement the climate change policy /strategy, including conservation, energy efficiency, and adaptation initiatives.

3.2. Environmental Stewardship

The Department of Environment & Coastal Resources, together with its partners, will inform residents and visitors of the Turks and Caicos Islands of our environmental stewardship to ensure a clear, national and international understanding of TCI's leadership, commitment and action on the environment. The implementation of Environment Charter of the TCI would play a significant role in achieving this goal.

3.3. Environmentally Sustainable Development and Cumulative Effects

The Department of Environment & Coastal Resources, together with its partners, will lead TCI's transition to an outcomes focused cumulative effects management system that is integrated with

TCI's Land-use and development policies and addresses the impacts of development on land, air, water and biodiversity, at a national level.

3.4. Water Quality

The Department of Environment & Coastal Resources will monitor TCI's Coastal water resources, identify sources of pollution and work in abating them applying the polluter pays principle to ensure the TCI has the quality of water needed now and into the future to support healthy aquatic ecosystems and economic growth.

3.5. Organization and Staff Capability

The Department of Environment & Coastal Resources will embed organizational learning in our behaviours and practices allowing employees to be engaged, enabled and empowered in the service of the Department's Vision and Mission. A focus on learning will enhance the DECR's capacity to deal with increasingly complex environmental challenges and risks, and a focus on people will help employees be ready, willing and able to make a difference, individually and collectively.

3.6. Approve and implement Environmental legislation

Review the current state of affairs and identify ways to improve the effectiveness of existing instruments to achieve policy objectives at low cost. In so doing, highlight previous regulation that has caused or exacerbated the problem. Wherever possible, seek to amend existing instruments to expand their coverage, remove flaws, improve compliance or strengthen enforcement. If a new approach is needed, the existing regulation may need to be repealed or consolidated.

1. Programmes

- 1.1. The DECR will continue to deliver its work programme work. Medium-term targets, key performance indicators for 2009-10 and planned resources for each programme are provided in this Corporate Plan
- 1.2. The main outputs over the business plan period are summarised below.
 - i. *Scientific inputs to support informed decision making to reduce significantly the rate of loss of Biodiversity in the Turks and Caicos Islands.*
 - Conduct a comprehensive habitat mapping project for the Turks and Caicos Islands. The project will facilitate the production of a series of ecosystem maps for the marine and terrestrial environments of the TCI that will afford us the opportunity to flag ecologically sensitive areas amongst other things. Such undertaking will create a tool to better understand our environment and all of our uses of that environment, so we can then make educated (more informed) decisions on future planning.
 - Collect and collate information into a comprehensive database that integrates environmental monitoring data, research results, Environmental Impact Assessment

(EIA) data, surveillance and published materials to assist DECR and other Government Department / Agencies, national, regional and international environmental groups

- Implement Integrated Coastal Zone Management to encompass management of our coastal and marine environment which will include: beach management and monitoring activities, monitoring water quality and the development of a management framework for the identification abatement of sources of pollution, the implementation of the TCI coral reef restoration and management strategy, the implementation of the policy for the management of coastal infrastructure and furniture, the implementation of the Blue Flag Beach Certification Program – involving the installation of proper signage on the beach, and proper waste disposal systems; the provision of life-guards systems; and implement the Adopt a Beach Program to encourage corporate sponsorship and support for sustainable beach usage and activities.
- Continue research and monitoring of key species and habitats: including fish stocks; coral reefs; iguanas; marine turtles, shoreline monitoring, and the natural vegetation.
- Work with partners to develop an integrated monitoring strategy for environmental conditions and implementation of commitments under the Environmental Charter across the TCI.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to catalogue presence, distribution and eradicate invasive species within the Turks and Caicos Islands, which builds on the works already in progress by the Turks and Caicos National Trust for the management of the Caicos Pine from the invasive beetle and the work of the DECR in addressing the invasion by the Lionfish.

ii. *Climate Change*

- Develop and Implement an appropriate climate change policy which demands that structures (such as) and systems be strengthened to better withstand change (adaptation) and measures be taken to reduce the human impact the climate system (mitigation)
- Develop and Implement a Climate Change Adaptation strategy that builds on the adaptation vulnerability assessment recommendations and integrates with the Office of Disaster Mitigation's comprehensive disaster risk management framework.
- Develop an effective energy policy to conserve energy and to diversify energy sources and decrease reliance on imported fuel.

- Develop a policy and strategy which seeks to reduce external stresses on coastal and marine ecosystems, including coral reefs, sea grass beds and wetlands. Wherever possible, take active measures to restore and or enhance impacted ecosystems.

iii. *Environmental Stewardship*

Environmental stewardship is the shared responsibility of citizens, communities, government and industry. Sharing timely and credible information about the environment helps all Turks and Caicos Islanders make informed decisions. The DECR programs that support this include adopt a beach programme, educational awareness and intergovernmental relationships and partnerships.

- Continue to raise public consciousness about the environment through a comprehensive Public Awareness Plan directed by a public awareness officer; and involving school visits; print media, radio and TV advertisements and programs; and the making and publication of audio-visual materials highlighting various aspects of our marine and environmental heritage.
- Identify, understand and improve awareness of existing and emerging issues that could lead to significant environmental incidents in the Turks and Caicos Islands.
- Enhance public awareness and understanding of environmental issues through public outreach and programs, and enable resident of TCI to take action by;
 - Devoting a public awareness and education campaign targeting climate change, invasive species, ecosystems of the TCI, water conservation, recycling, waste management, energy conservation and biodiversity conservation across the TCI.
 - Expanding youth and community engagement in education and awareness projects.
 - Support our partners (Education Department & Turks and Caicos National Trust) in the development and implementation of environmental curriculums in the schools.
 - Engage with civic groups such as Chamber of Commerce, Turks and Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association (TCHTA), Dive & Water Sports Association, Rotary International, Kiwanis Club, Rotaract etc. in the management of our environment.
- Develop a public awareness and education campaign targeting climate change, water conservation, and waste management issues.

- Expanding youth and community engagement in education and awareness projects by establishing a youth-oriented conservation cadet programme to work with communities and stakeholders on conservation issues.
- iv. *Regulatory and non-regulatory tools and incentives to achieve environmental outcomes in the Turks and Caicos Islands.*
- The DECR will actively work with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Attorney General Chambers to encourage the recently drafted environmental legislations to the Cabinet for Endorsement and onward submission to the House of Assembly for approval and acceding of key multilateral environmental treaties such as MARPOL, CITES, and the Convention on Biological Diversity.
 - Develop a wide-ranging Environmental Protection Legislation and upgrade national EIA Legislation for immediate implementation.
 - Develop and implement a range of regulatory and non-regulatory tools and assess their impact on attaining environmental outcomes. For example, seek Cabinet approval on policy incentivize the importation of green technology and recycling programmes.
 - Develop incentives that encourage appropriate early action rather than supporting remediation.
- v. *Resource Mobilisation*
- Improve in the collection of revenues, eg sand and beach royalties, scientific research permit fees, concessions within national park, national parks and fisheries license fees.
 - Actively seek opportunities to seek funding for research projects from the private sector, funding agencies regional and international bodies.
- vi. *Environmentally Sustainable Development*
- Effective and active participation of the DECR at all stages of development proposals: development proposals to TCInvest , development agreements, planning applications at all stages by carrying out an effective environmental screening (including the review of SEIAs and EIAs as required) at the proposal stage.
 - Effective and active participation of the DECR and in the construction and operational phases of developments in order to implement appropriate Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plans covering all the following phases: pre-construction, during construction, post construction and operation.
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vii. *Institutional Strengthening*

- Develop and implement the organizational structure and learning strategies to enable the Department's systems and employees to anticipate and respond to environmental challenges and adapt to change with resiliency.
- Enhance the staff Capability framework to support employees to align individual and collective performance to achieve the Corporate Plan goals by;
 - a. Provide Training in the following areas
 - i. Middle Management / Supervisory Training for senior staff of the DECR, and provide them with the confident in decision making and implementation of the DECR's Management Strategies.
 - ii. Tertiary level training (Degree level) for Environment Officers and other staff members within the DECR. (There are many opportunities for advance training currently being offered by many institutions and regional bodies, but it is often a requirement that the applicant has a minimum requirement of a BSc)
 - iii. Improve exposure to new ideas and approaches in resource management / Governance by strategically selecting appropriate workshops / forums for the staffs of the DECR to attend.
 - iv. Work with our partners in UK (eg JNCC), in the region (eg CRFM) in sourcing potential avenues for training of DECR staff through exchange programmes with other Overseas Territories or CARICOM Member States.
 - b. Take active steps to encourage and support the recruitment of persons to take up key positions within the Department by or before the end of the financial year 2009/10. Positions which are priority to the Department includes;
 - i. One Chief Conservation Officer
 - ii. One Environmental Education Officer
 - iii. Two Conservation Officers for the South Caicos DECR Station
 - iv. One Environmental Officer
 - v. One Scientific Officer
 - c. Continue to develop/ promote internships and visiting researcher programme in applied research that has a direct influence on policy and systems development.