

5. NEW ZEALAND WASTE STRATEGY

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The purpose of this report is to recommend that member councils express support for the New Zealand Waste Strategy

BACKGROUND

The New Zealand Waste Strategy (separately circulated) was released in March 2002 and marks an important recognition by Central Government of the importance of waste issues.

The Strategy sets a long term challenge of ***Towards zero waste and a sustainable New Zealand*** with three core goals:

- Lowering the social costs and risks of waste
- Reducing the damage to the environment from waste generation and disposal
- Increasing economic benefit by more efficient use of materials

The Strategy also contains recommended, but not mandatory, targets for Waste Minimisation, Organic Wastes, Hazardous Wastes, Special Wastes, Organochlorines, Trade Wastes, Construction and Demolition Wastes, and Waste Disposal. These targets are aimed at central government, territorial local authorities, regional councils and business.

Five core policies to form the basis of future action are identified:

- A sound legislative basis for waste minimisation and management
- Efficient pricing
- High environmental standards
- Adequate and accessible information
- Efficient use of materials

To help central and local government put these policies into place four programmes have been suggested:

- Institutions and legislation
- Waste reduction and materials efficiency
- Information and communication
- Standards and guidelines.

The four programmes contain different actions with recommended target dates for completion – a total of 50 separate actions/initiatives.

DISCUSSION

As a first step towards promoting awareness and action by all levels of government the Strategy is welcomed. If the proposed programmes could all be completed as recommended a lot would have been achieved.

Producing the Strategy is however not enough. The lack of resources to achieve these programmes is likely to be the biggest impediment and it is hoped that central government would 'put its money where its mouth is' and empower the Ministry for the Environment and local authorities to achieve the proposed outcomes.

SUMMARY

It is appropriate for all members to individually support the New Zealand Waste Strategy as set out in the recommendation, and for the Subcommittee to seek a meeting with relevant Ministers to further advance outstanding issues.

Staff**Recommendation:**

1. That the Subcommittee recommend to its members that the New Zealand Waste Strategy 2002 be supported through:
 - (a) Adopting the Strategy as a basis for local plans, programmes and actions; and
 - (b) Continuing to work in partnership with Central Government in enabling local and regional councils to realise the Strategy's long-term goals.
2. That the Subcommittee seek a meeting with the Ministers for the Environment and of Commerce to discuss issues arising from the Strategy.

Chairman's**Recommendation:**

That the above recommendation be adopted.