


Environmental Steering Committee






THE ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING COMMITTEE -AN OVERVIEW-

WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING COMMITTEE?

The Environmental Steering Committee (ESC) is an informal inter-stakeholder committee charged with the responsibility to oversee the “Litter Free PNG” campaign. It provides a forum that supports the efforts of the Office of Environment and Conservation and line agencies such as the National Capital District Commission on certain education and awareness programmes on waste management in the country.

The effort to address litter problems in PNG was a joint initiative of the Prime Minister, Sir Mekere Morauta and the then Minister for Environment and Conservation, Hon. Muki Taranupui back in 1998. Following this the ESC was set up through a collaborative effort between OEC and other government bodies together with the Manufacturers Council of Papua New Guinea. Its main purpose was to carry out a series of campaigns to help address the issue of littering. This programme became a reality following funding provided by the European Union through the South Pacific Environmental Programme which was entrusted to the OEC as the implementing agency.

The other organizations and business houses that have contributed in cash and kind towards this cause include EMTV; NAU/YUMI FM; Department of Health; Department of Education; Nestle (PNG) Ltd; Steamships Trading Ltd; Coca-Cola Amatil (PNG) Ltd; K.K. Kingston Ltd; W.H. Industries; PNG Super Clean Ltd; Conservation International; National Capital District Commission; and Paradise Biscuits.



WHAT IS THE 'LITTER FREE PNG' CAMPAIGN?

The "Litter Free PNG" campaign is an effort by the various stakeholders including industry, line government bodies and public interest groups to educate the public on the effects of wastes such as household wastes and litter on their environment. This campaign was launched in 1998 and covers the entire country.

WHICH ORGANIZATIONS ARE INCLUDED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING COMMITTEE?

There are a number of organizations both from the government and private sectors as well as non government organizations which have membership to this committee. This is to ensure that waste issues are addressed through balanced representation from all levels of community.

These organizations include the Manufacturers Council of PNG (MCPNG) and private sector identities (W.H Industries, Paradise Biscuits, K.K Kingston and PNG Super Clean); Office of Environment and Conservation; Department of Health; Department of Education; National Capital District Commission (NCDC); Conservation International and Eda Ranu. The MCPNG and the OEC are co-chairs to this committee.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES THE ESC HAS ENGAGED IN?

- School Poster Colouring-in Competition
- School Essay Competition
- Cleanest Village Competition
- Litter Free Campaign

WHAT ARE THE FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING COMMITTEE?

- Support the OEC and other line agencies in their efforts to address waste issues;
- providing the avenue for discussions on waste management issues;
- Work towards the establishment of a recycling project.

WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR A LITTER FREE PNG CAMPAIGN?

We all know that our livelihood and survival depends very much on our environment and the resources that it provides. An environment that is well looked after and maintained will support all life systems over a long period of time. We are also aware that Papua New Guinea has a very important but fragile environment which has a wide range of values to our people. However, it has become increasingly apparent that many people are losing the real meaning of conserving our environment. Many are becoming careless especially in disposing of their wastes from households and public places. People of all ages carelessly throw away rubbish in public places like roads and markets, and even the sea. Household garbage is allowed to spill onto streets and walkways.

THE RESULT IS A BUILDUP OF LITTER IN THE STREETS AND ROADSIDES, THESE ARE CARRIED BY WIND AND RAIN ENDING UP ON OUR BEACHFRONTS, IN DRAINAGE SYSTEMS, SEAS AND RIVERS CAUSING POLLUTION

Litter is not only unsightly, which lowers the beauty of the environment, reducing its aesthetic value, it also has a negative effect on the plants and the animals and our health when they make their way to the waterways and other parts of the environment. Accumulated litter can clog drains and water ways causing obstructions to water flow causing floating during rainy seasons. When it rains, rubbish in drains and pools become breeding grounds for mosquitoes carrying malaria or dengue fever and other disease causing organisms.

Rubbish in heaps can be breeding grounds for snakes and vermin and can pose health hazards to us and other people and animals when burnt (please refer to Brochure OEC B1/2001 for more information on burning rubbish).

In this awareness campaign, the ESC is focussed on educating the public including school children on the effects of litter and suggesting ways of minimizing or avoiding litter.

Unless the public is educated and made aware of litter and its effects on us, the problem will continue to exist or worse still it may build up to a level which would be difficult to address in the future.

The ESC also encourages various industry sectors to maintain or improve their waste management systems and help improve our waste problems.

WHAT CAN I DO TO ASSIST THE ESC AND CONCERNED ORGANIZATIONS IN THIS EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF LITTERING IN PNG?

As a committed citizen of our country, you can assist in addressing this problem by doing any of the following:

- By showing good examples to the people and children around you (especially those living with you) by putting your rubbish in the right place and not throwing them away.

You can do this by placing rubbish in the bins and making sure these are collected by the city authorities (please read the Brochure OEC B1/2001 for more information on this). If you continue to maintain these practices, others around you will soon follow your examples.

- Teach or educate the people (including elderly people and children) about the negative effects that can be caused by litter and waste in general.
 - You can form a voluntary group to carry out awareness programmes in your community or village.
 - Working with your community or village leaders to ensure that domestic waste problems are addressed adequately in your community.
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If you have any queries or need more information, contact either :

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