

**(Draft) POLICY PAPER**  
**For**  
**CABINET DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**1. Title of Policy**

Cultural & Natural Heritage Conservation Policy

**2. Purpose of Submission**

This policy provides the framework for the conservation, preservation, use, allocation and sustainable management of heritage resources. It also seeks to improve approaches to heritage planning by ensuring that the preservation of our natural and cultural heritage are fully recognized and taken into account in the formulation and implementation of development programs.

**Previous CDC or other reference**

The Heritage Conservation Policy is one of the Target Environmental Components identified in the National Environment Management and Development Strategy (NEMS) document approved by Cabinet in 1993. It is in line with the Government's Statement of Economic Strategies (SES) for sustainable development.

Heritage Conservation in Samoa approved by Cabinet in March 2000 also formalized the establishment of the Heritage Advisory Committee to assist with the first tasks of conserving four priority historical buildings in the urban area.

**3. Requesting Agency**

DLSE

**4. Implementing Agency**

DLSE

**5. Other Relevant Stakeholders**

- Public Works Department
- Samoa Visitors Bureau;
- Samoa Visitors Association;
- Tauese Way Organisation;
- Local Villages & communities
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Education Department;
- National University of Samoa;
- University of the South Pacific;
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries & Meteorology Department
- Other relevant Non-government Organisations
- Samoa Land Corporation
- Internal Affairs
- Women's Affairs

## **6. Background to the formulation of the Policy Proposal**

The preservation of all aspects of our heritage ensures continuity of our human existence. Our culture, our history and traditional customs, had evolved significantly from our ancestors association with the environment and our island's resources. Our cultural and natural heritage are closely integrated and therefore considered together under this policy. Our cultural heritage<sup>1</sup> and natural heritage<sup>2</sup> are irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. The conservation of these resources strengthens our knowledge and contributes to understanding our identity as people of Samoa.

As part of the NEMS process, a sub-committee comprising of representatives from different relevant government agencies, non-government organizations, academic institutions and the private sector, has developed objectives and guidelines on the preservation of traditional arts, culture and history<sup>3</sup>. This policy covers that and natural heritage.

The establishment of the Heritage Advisory Committee<sup>4</sup> was formalised by Cabinet in March 2000 to ensure implementation and development of Heritage Conservation in Samoa. This Committee is made up of relevant government and stakeholder representatives working together with DLSE in conserving four priority historical buildings in the urban area. In the long term, this Heritage Conservation will include all heritage resources that will be identified and preserved.

Samoa is currently in the process of ratifying the World Heritage Convention 1972<sup>5</sup>. Supported by Cabinet, confirmation is yet to receive from the World Heritage Centre in Paris.

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<sup>1</sup> *Cultural heritage* refers to monuments, groups of buildings and sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value. <sup>2</sup> *Natural heritage* refers to outstanding physical, biological and geological formations, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants and areas with scientific, conservation or aesthetic value

(*Operational Guidelines for Implementation of Convention UNESCO World Heritage Centre 1999*).

<sup>3</sup> NEMS Chapter 6... Objectives ...

1. To strengthen the sense of Samoan identity through the preservation of traditional arts, culture and history
2. To integrate the preservation of traditional arts, culture and history with environmental planning and assessment
3. To promote knowledge and understanding of traditional arts, culture and history
4. To improve community awareness of traditional arts, culture and history

<sup>4</sup> Functions of the Heritage Advisory Committee:

- Advise on matters regarding the development, implementation, maintenance and sustainability of heritage conservation;
- Encourage and advise on ways and means of obtaining financial support;
- Ensure correct information is made available and accessible;
- Assist and negotiate with affected parties, individuals, organisations, guardians or anyone on matters pertaining to any information, use of access to heritage resources;
- Encourage on going awareness programs on the importance of the resource;
- Assist and advise on materials and matters for research of heritage conservation and other duties relevant to the project.

(*Cabinet Decision FK (00)06 15<sup>th</sup> March 2000*).

<sup>5</sup> "When countries sign or ratify the Convention, they agree to ensure the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage situated on their territory. States Parties agree to do all it can to this end, to the utmost of its own resources and, where appropriate, with any international assistance and co-operation, in particular, financial, scientific and technical, which it may be able to obtain"

(*Article 4 of the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972 UNESCO*)

## **Analysis of current situation to justify requirement for policy initiative.**

The need for this policy is covered under four broad issues:

- (i) The conservation of our cultural and natural heritage requires a more holistic approach so that our heritage resources can be utilized and managed in a sustainable manner. This calls for a more collaborative and integrated role by all relevant stakeholders to ensure that everyone works together towards preserving our heritage in a sustainable way.
- (ii) Proper planning procedures and mechanisms need to be in place to guide the utilization and management of our heritage resources. This is very much needed to ensure that these resources are not exploited and not abused for commercial gain.
- (iii) Awareness and education are important to ensure that the public is fully informed, understand and aware of the underlying significance and values of sustainable management of heritage resources. These resources need to be recognized and preserved for their sustainability and continuity of our culture.
- (iv) Computerized systems and sophisticated methods for storage of information are required for efficient and accurate analysis of data to assist with heritage planning and decision-making processes.

## **7. Detailed Statement of the Proposed Policy Proposal**

### **7.1 Objectives**

- 7.1.1 To develop an integrated planning system with a comprehensive approach to conservation, development procedures and implementation strategies that will ensure the sustainability of our heritage
- 7.1.2 To strengthen partnership of the private sector, the local community, the guardians and owners of heritage resources and government departments in the conservation, use and sustainable development of our cultural and natural heritage
- 7.1.3 To increase public awareness of heritage significance, the issues and also the benefits of sustainable heritage conservation practices
- 7.1.4 To promote knowledge and understanding of Samoa's Heritage for scientific research, education and continuity of culture
- 7.1.5 To improve technological systems and human resource in managing, storing and utilizing information and heritage resources in a sustainable manner. This would promote and encourage fair and safe public access to these resources while ensuring sustainable use and management.

### **7.2 Strategies for Achieving the Policy Objectives**

- i. Establish a proper system of identification, classification and management of heritage resources and ensure the inclusion of other

- resources considered to have historical significance or contribute to the discovery and enhancement of heritage resources<sup>6</sup>.
- ii. Develop legal framework for the protection of all heritage resources, Management Plans, guidelines and standards for the sustainable management and utilisation of cultural and natural heritage resources
  - iii. Ensure the representation and participation of local communities, government and private organizations in the development and implementation of heritage planning, conservation and development programs.
  - iv. Improve means of coordinating heritage planning & conservation into environmental assessments and development projects.
  - v. Heritage planning, development and conservation to be enhanced and integrated into existing education curriculum and programs
  - vi. Strengthen roles and increase internal capacity of DLSE in heritage conservation and development. Develop a Heritage section within DLSE to develop and maintain management tools eg. Information Database System and monitor compliance with set guidelines and standards. This Section would work together with Visitors Bureau, MYSC and relevant stakeholders to promote public awareness and heritage information programs.
  - vii. Develop stronger heritage planning and sustainable development activities or programs to ensure proper maintenance, ownership and practical utilization of resources after restoration and rehabilitation works.
  - viii. Strengthen the roles of the Heritage Advisory Committee to include supervising the management of funds obtained for heritage project and maybe head towards a more established forum like a Historic Places Trust or Heritage Trust Board in the long term.
  - ix. Ensure efficient and effective implementation of heritage conservation provisions<sup>7</sup> and processes.

### **7.3 Expected Benefits from the Policy Initiative**

- i. Samoan culture, historic & artistic conditions, physical and natural environment will be taken into account in overall heritage conservation issues
- ii. Increased awareness of heritage resources, issues and concepts of sustainable development in relation to other areas.
- iii. Established information and database systems providing reliable and accurate information that will guide planning and decision making
- x. A proper system in place for managing heritage resources in terms of identification, storage, ownership and use.
- xi. Proper commercial use of heritage resources and ensuring that they are in the best interest of the people and compatible with the country's interests.
- xii. Fair & safe access to heritage resources and benefit sharing
- xiii. Greater understanding and appreciation of our Samoan identity

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<sup>6</sup> Any other things of historical significance not covered in the given definitions of natural & cultural heritage. Example, old pulu trees along beach road & any site, land or part of any property on which a heritage building or any heritage structure is built on.

<sup>7</sup> Provision Under National Parks Act 1974; Section 10 (1)(e)

#### **7.4 Relationship to SES and Sectoral Objectives/Strategies**

The Heritage Conservation Policy supports the vision of Government in its SES that emphasizes partnership for a prosperous society. This identifies the conservation and utilisation of natural & cultural heritage resources as tourism product development with added values to correspond with market demand. It also promotes an attractive environment for tourism investment.

### **8. Financial Implications**

#### **8.1 Capital Costs**

Capital costs will be required for preservation and restoration works. These are immense costs that would need financial assistance from potential donors. Eg. UNESCO and UNEP.

#### **8.2 Recurrent Costs**

There will be recurring costs to meet administrative costs and they should be provided for under the local budget. Operational costs should be integrated into overall budgets of relating and relevant agencies. Funding will be needed to fulfill short term and long term strategies calling for the strengthening of roles of relevant agencies to effectively carry out specific duties like training and recruiting new staff; office space and establishment; heritage planning and database storage equipment. These costs are minimal and expected to be no more than 10 (%) of the local budget.

#### **8.3 Revenue Generation**

The HCP promotes the sustainable use, management and conservation of resources that will contribute to the socio-economic development of the country, villages and individuals.

Further revenue will be obtained from the sale of publications, information and tourist site visits.

### **9. Human Resources Implications**

Heritage Conservation is currently coordinated by the Department of Lands, Surveys & Environment, working in collaboration with the Heritage Advisory Committee. The Department manages and ensures the sustainability of the environment including national parks and reserves, biological diversity and including some heritage sites. The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture manages the museum and ensuring the accommodation & collection of artifacts and other material culture. They also administer legendary sites. The Visitors Bureau promotes heritage sites for tourists' purposes, administers scenic view points and lookouts and coordinates promotion programs for traditional activities.

There is a need for all relevant agencies & local communities to work together promoting the sharing of skills and human resources that is needed for the effective and efficient implementation of the Policy.

### **Training Programs Required**

In country training is needed as part of an overall capacity building program targeting all relevant stakeholders to encourage and promote sustainable heritage conservation and development programs. Overseas specialized training to enhance knowledge and skills on various aspects of heritage planning and development is required for the successful implementation of the Heritage Conservation Policy.

### **Technology Transfer Implications**

It is important to encourage technology transfer arrangements to assist with the implementation of the policy and the implementation of sustainable conservation practices for heritage resources.

There will be technical assistance needed from time to time where needed.

## **10. Legislative Implications**

The National Parks & Reserves Act 1974 contained some provisions for Historic Reserves and under the authority of the Minister on matters pertaining to historical interest. Other relevant legislation include: the National Cultural Centre Trust Act 1978; Samoan Antiquities Ordinance 1954; Youth, Sports & Culture Affairs Act 1976; Robert Louis Stevenson Foundation Act 1991; Western Samoa Visitors Bureau Act 1984 and Forests Act 1967. These contain suggested activities and provisions promoting the preservation of cultural and natural heritage resources and their integration into planning and assessment programs.

There is a need to review all these Acts to reflect on the objectives and goals of the Heritage Conservation policy. A coordinated approach towards such review is highly recommended and in ensuring that all stakeholders are involved in such exercise. Perhaps a stand-alone Act needs to be developed to ensure the conservation, identification, allocation and sustainable development of all heritage resources.

## **11. Proposed Implementation Schedule**

The implementation of the Heritage Conservation policy is anticipated to be an ongoing process with periodical reviews from time to time to assess progress of implementation and to take into account any changes that might occur over time. The Heritage Advisory Committee, members of the community at large and all relevant stakeholders are expected to participate in the implementation of the policy.

## **12. Recommendations to be Considered by CDC**

- i. that the Heritage Conservation policy be approved by Cabinet to guide the conservation, sustainable use and management of our heritage resources
- ii. that financial provisions are provided for under the local budget to assist with the implementation of the policy as required
- iii. that the Heritage policy is reviewed annually to take into account significant issues that might have adverse impacts on heritage resources and requiring immediate remedial action
- iv. that implementation evaluation be carried out every three years

**13. Signature of responsible Officer of the Initiating Agency**

Tu'u'u Dr Ieti Taule'alo  
DIRECTOR

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**15. Date of Submission**

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