

**Title of policy**

National Policy on Population and Sustainable Development (NPPSD)

**Purpose of policy**

The NPPDS promotes the integration of population issues into national development planning and assessment. This will ensure that the effects of population changes on the environment are well understood and any adverse impacts addressed during programme planning and implementation.

**Previous references**

The approved framework for National Environment and Development Management Strategies (NEMS) identified the 'Management of population dynamics and trends' as one of the key environmental concerns facing Samoa. It is also reflected in the Statement of Economic Strategy (SES) where sustainable development is the focus of Samoa's development programmes.

**Requesting agency**

Department of Lands, Surveys and Environment (DLSE).

**Implementing agency**

DLSE

**Other stakeholders relevant to policy implementation**

Health Department

Education Department

Statistics Department

Department of Treasury

Department of Justice

Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture

Department of Women Affairs

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Trade, Commerce and Industry

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Meteorology

Public Service Commission

Family Health Association

National University of Samoa

Samoa Umbrella of Non-Governmental Organisations

Mapusaga o Aiga

**Background to the formulation of the policy**

Generally in Samoa population issues are considered to be health concerns. However there is growing national awareness that population pressures drive development which in turn impacts on the environment. So addressing sustainable development requires an integrated approach to the issues of population, development and environment.

The key policy question is the number of people versus the level of available resources. A growing population, for instance, needs more land for food production and residential development. It also creates the need for more formal employment resulting in greater demand for commercial and industrial development. As well more

people means increased demand for essential (eg. water, sewage, energy, transport, land release) social services (eg. education, health, waste management). In all, the rate of utilisation of available resources is directly related to the number of people and the extent of adverse impacts to the environment (eg. pollution) is directly attributed to the level of human activities.

### **Detailed statement of the policy**

#### Goal

To achieve a sustainable balance in population growth and environmental resource utilisation for the benefit of present and future generations.

#### Objectives

The policy objectives to achieve its goal are as follows:

Objective	Comments
1. To mainstream the importance of population issues in environmental planning and development assessment as well as in social policy formulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Mainstreaming population issues recognises the strong linkages between people, environment and development – the balance of these factors forms the basis of sustainable development;</li> <li>•Population consideration includes, the physical, social, cultural and economic aspects of people and society;</li> <li>•Environmental planning assesses the effects on the environment due to human activities;</li> <li>•Development assessment determines the impacts of development on the environment;</li> <li>•Social policy (eg. water, energy, education, health) to recognise the linkages between population and resources utilisation) landuse;</li> <li>•The costs of the negative effects of population and development on the environment to be taken into account in decision-making.</li> </ul>
2. To strengthen the collection, analysis and utilisation of population data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Reliable population data are essential for the preparations of plans and development assessment;</li> <li>•To provide up-to-date data, the Government needs to conduct the population census every 5 instead of every 10 years;</li> <li>•Require modern tools (eg. computer-based database, Geographic Information Systems) for the management of population data;</li> <li>•Need to work out the carrying capacity of available resources in order to</li> </ul>

	<p>determine a national optimum growth rate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Need to develop relevant methodologies for the application of population data in development studies and environment assessment.</li> </ul>
<p>3. To develop better understanding of technical population parameters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•A number of key population parameters will require technical support to assess their values and modes of application. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Population growth rates</li> <li>-Internal migration rates</li> <li>-International migration rates</li> <li>-Birth rates</li> <li>-Mortality rates</li> <li>-Sustainable growth rate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>4. To improve public awareness of population dynamics and trends, and their impacts on the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Public to understand the concept of sustainable development - the balance between population growth and resources utilisation for the benefits of all citizens;</li> <li>•Stakeholders to be better informed of the impacts of population growth on the environment;</li> <li>•There is a public perception that the population issues are health-related. The policy takes a planning view which also includes public health aspects (eg. family planning, mortality rates, nutrition);</li> <li>•Awareness could be promoted through school curriculum and government extension programmes;</li> <li>•Existing networks in the public and private sectors (eg. media; workplaces, government agencies, non-governmental organisations) could be employed to promote awareness in urban areas;</li> <li>•Traditional methods of communication using existing social institutions (eg. church, women's committees, village council) may be best suited to promote awareness in rural areas.</li> </ul>
<p>5. To support the development and/or expansion of social and public services to promote sustainable population growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Sustainable population growth is strongly influenced by the levels of social services: eg. health, education, broadcasting). It is also the case with the coverage of public services such as water, electricity, sewage; waste disposal, telecommunication)</li> <li>•As well as the direct benefit in public</li> </ul>

	<p>health and education services, good access to such services are also essential to the promotion of responsible attitudes about living;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ensure that these services reach the most vulnerable target groups.</li> </ul>
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### Strategy for achieving objectives

The following strategies have been identified:

Strategy	Activities
<p><u>Short-term</u> Strengthen the capacity of the DLSE to facilitate the policy implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Recruit a Senior Policy Analyst to facilitate the policy implementation and provide office resources;</li> <li>•Set up a network of frontline agencies to collect and collate information and case studies;</li> <li>•Liase with service providers to ensure that population issues are considered in their polices and work plans;</li> <li>•Build up a database of population and related data;</li> <li>•Develop public awareness programmes to inform the public on policy details;</li> <li>•Apply population consideration in existing DLSE programmes (eg. urban services, resource management, environment reports, landuse planning);</li> <li>•Facilitate the annual reviews of the policy and coordinate the work of the Implementation Task Team.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Medium- to long-term</u> Incorporate population considerations into a national planning and assessment system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Establish a framework for national planning (if not yet in place);</li> <li>•NPPSD implementation becomes the responsibility of the Development Planning Section, which will deal with development approval, coastal development, building permits, and environmental reporting;</li> <li>•Set up relevant standards on the impacts of population on the environment;</li> <li>•Establish planning criteria on the effects of population on development;</li> <li>•Formulate planning polices on the integration of population, environment and development;</li> <li>•Develop economic evaluation methods to assess the costs of population pressures</li> </ul>

	<p>on the environment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Enact legislation to control the adverse impacts of population on the environment;</li> <li>•Support service providers in the development of social policies and expansion of services;</li> <li>•Facilitate the independent evaluation of the policy every 3 years.</li> </ul>
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### **Expected benefits from the policy initiative**

Overall the NPPSD will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by highlighting the connections between population and the environment. Specifically, the expected benefits from the policy will include the following:

- Focus on population issues in development planning and assessment;
- Improve the quality of available population data;
- Better understanding of the linkages between population growth and resource utilisation;
- Create public awareness of population issues in relation to the environment and development;
- Expand public and social services to support sustainable development.

### **Relationship to SES and sectoral objectives/strategies**

According to the 2000-2001 SES environmental issues will continue to receive a high priority in the consideration of all development projects. The NPPSD will ensure that population parameters are carefully considered in social policy generally and development assessment in particular due to their strong implications for the use of environmental resources.

### **Financial implications**

Initial capital funding is required to pay for a Senior Policy Analyst and to provide office resources, ongoing operating expenses will be covered under the DLSE annual budget. No extra resources will be required in the long-term if responsibility for planning comes under DLSE.

### **Human resources implications**

In the short-term, a new Senior Policy Analyst is required to facilitate policy implementation within the DLSE. However in the long-term, then work will be incorporated into the responsibilities of the Development Assessment Section of DLSE which will deal with the investigation and determination of development proposals and for monitoring compliance.

### **Legislative implications**

The main legislative changes will be the establishment of empowering provisions for development planning and assessment within the DLSE Act. Associated planning legislations will set up the planning and assessment standards as well as the necessary compliance regime. A review of the Lands, Surveys and Environment Act 1989 is required to reflect the broadening of the planning functions of the DLSE.

**Relations with other agencies**

There will be close consultation between DLSE and the other relevant agencies to the policy implementation in order to avoid duplication and lend support. In particular, good cooperation with the non-governmental organisations and traditional institutions will promote public awareness and enhance success.

**Proposed implementation schedule**

The NPPD will come into effect once approved by Cabinet with implementation to be overseen by an Implementation Task Team comprising the following agencies: DLSE, Statistics Department, Health Department, Department of Trade, Industry and Commerce, Family Health Association, and Mapusaga o Aiga. It will be reviewed annually but a full independent evaluation of the NPPD will be carried out after three years.

**Recommendations**

That Cabinet approves this policy for implementation.

**Responsible officer**

Tu'u'u Dr. Ieti Taule'alo  
Director, DLSE

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**Date of Submission**

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