

CINSDP Submission by June Hosking – Mauke

Thank you for the opportunity to 'have a say'. I have read a good portion of the draft EDS document, though not all of it, due to time. I trust there may be something of value to be gleaned from my thoughts below.

1. **Measuring economic growth** each year - we must get to a point where we agree we have enough and then aim to maintain. I believe that developed countries must consider zero growth strategies so that there is fairer sharing and sustainable use of resources. Promote the blessings of living in the Cook Islands, bigger isn't necessarily better.... If we realise what we've got and are satisfied the need for increasing income isn't such a big deal anymore.

The annual income of a household isn't the best measure of how we are doing. Is there a way to put a value on people's accessibility to land as a part of their income? I propose that those with better resilience to 'weather the storms' are those who can live with less, live off the land and have no debt. These abilities have enabled Andrew and I to live on as little as \$3000 for a year. Our annual household income is about \$14,000 averaged over the past 5 years, prior it was about \$6000 avg. I am astounded to see your figures for the outer islands avg household income. That's more than I ever earned as a school principal! Are your figures being skewed by just a few upper outliers?

2. **Unemployment** didn't exist in the Cook Islands years back as everyone had land and therefore couldn't ever be unemployed. I wonder if this is considered now.
3. How about **determining staple foods** so that you also address our NCD problem? There are a number of things on your list that I would not include. Could you survey to get a cross section of household grocery lists and determine the common items by cross matching, but also taking out those that are detrimental to health e.g. cigarettes, fatty foods and sugary drinks.

We live largely off the land in Mauke. The staples we purchase are: cabin bread/crackers, sugar, tea, milk powder, oats, salt, cocoa, mosquito coils, lighters, toilet paper, spices, olive oil, canola oil, soap, detergent, laundry soap, toothpaste, floss, deodorant, shampoo, and candles. Treat/occasional foods – rice, flour, baking powder, yeast, peanut butter, marmite, cider vinegar, noodles, dried beans, split peas, lentils, barley, coffee, small tins corned beef, seeds & nuts, and cat biscuits.

4. **Pa Enuā discount scheme** a great idea. A good way to keep students in touch with home and perhaps out of trouble when hanging around Raro in the holidays???

Mauke flights seem to be more expensive than other southern group islands, why? I have an 83yr old mother living on her own in Rarotonga, COVID has prevented family overseas from visiting so I have made many trips this year to be with Mum. Although

lovely, it's not easy living in two places. Help with airfares would be one relief. The same will apply for families needing to go back and forth for aging parents in the Pa Enuā. I have suggested in the past we could get a discount for bulk purchases e.g. I buy 3 flexible return airfares at discount.

5. **Shipping** – partnering seems a better option as companies already have the experience and history tends to show government owned businesses not as efficient, hence privatising services overseas.

6. **Roading** – Many in Mauke are happy with our coral roads. Sealing will not fit into Mauke's sustainable development plan because:
 - we cannot afford the upkeep,
 - we cannot afford to make roads to the standard required for the heavy vehicles that will use them, or are you planning to keep our big machinery off these particular roads? Even in Rarotonga the roads aren't made for handling heavy machinery.
 - our carbon footprint will increase,
 - we want to preserve our special character (white roads on a moonlit night is one of those Maukean features)
 - our zero road toll means that we don't have to wear helmets. Sealed roads speed up traffic increasing possibility of accidents and then we'll all be forced to wear helmets.

If you look at the older well done roads in Mauke e.g. along Toianga sports ground, you can see that some know how to build a robust road using limestone and I'm guessing that way back a lot of that work would have been by hand perhaps with more care than what has happened in recent times. According to an elderly person the old way used a mix of burnt lime and layers of limestone aggregate of different sizes... I'm assuming that'll begin with layering large aggregate down to finer aggregate on top.

Another option that has turned out to work quite well is the little road running to Aunty Rongo's where someone put a layer of large makatea aggregate at the time the wharf was being done. It was horrible to drive on at first, but now has squashed nicely in together with the dirt below and in rainy times drains nicely and remains good to drive on.

One big issue I see is that making a proper road is about much more than the materials used. I'm not an engineer and far from qualified, but common sense tells me that exposed road edges break away (with rain, heavy vehicles, very hot days etc), subsequently eating further and further into the road - commonly observed in Rarotonga where ever there are no actual road edgings/curbs. A road needs to have a camber and gutters designed for water run-off. These are considerations overlooked presently.

However, **the road up to hospital in Rarotonga should be made a number one priority!** People don't seem to know the rule about downhill drivers giving way. I've had some

hairy moments going up there and would hate to be driving in an emergency when nerves are frayed.

7. **It's not easy running a business without internet.** We live without regular 240v power and internet access. Mobile phone signal generally only allows for texting so accessing internet via phone data doesn't work either. I'm not sure why we weren't included in the original solar power upgrade plans even though we have been living in Mauke since Sept 2008. We had internet for a couple of years, thanks to Telecom, but it broke down as they left and no one wants to help us work that one out. Since we lost batteries so had to revert to a 12v system for basics, the possibility of setting up an internet connection from home is pretty remote.
8. **Kaveinga Ora is a good idea.** I feel blessed with the services we do receive and am amazed that we in the pa enua don't get charged for medical services and medications. As a general rule, there isn't enough work for the medical staff we have now on Mauke. A fulltime Dr and Dentist would be a waste of resources. Perhaps a dentist can be kept busy with related tasks e.g. regular checks of all the population from babies up, incentive schemes and education programmes. A Dr flying between the islands seems a great option for little populations.
9. **Referrals from Pa Enua** - There have been times when I think people should have been referred and weren't, as well as times when listening to the doctor wasn't a good idea e.g. I ended up in Middlemore with a 95% block on the heart. The cardiologist couldn't believe that I hadn't had a heart attack, especially as I had been building and cycling in Mauke the week before I flew to Raro in a hurry after some odd feelings when cutting coconuts for the chickens. The first Dr I saw from the plane gave me aspirin and said to come back in a week. He wasn't concerned about my ECG reading or my described symptoms of what turned out to be ischemic attacks/angina. A 'feeling in my spirit' and confirmation from a second visit to a visiting NZ Dr and chat with a nurse caused us to book a flight to NZ. A year later I was reimbursed for my flights both ways Raro/NZ. It made me wonder how many have died because they listened to the Dr and went home.

Last year a young lad in Mauke lost 4 fingers in a coconut auger. This happened on a Saturday and even though our nurse practitioner begged, Raro wouldn't send over a plane for him. All they could give him was Ibuprofen, he had to cry himself to sleep and wait until Monday afternoon to go on the normal flight. I couldn't help thinking had that been the MP's grandson, a similar age, an emergency flight would have occurred.
10. **NCDs** – It seems that not enough attention is given to the role that stress and infections can play. My lifestyle, diet, blood pressure etc. were pretty good and the specialists in NZ who interviewed me often remarked that I was an unlikely candidate, yet I now have

a stent. One specialist explained how damaging stress can be and suggested this may have been a factor for me. Later I learned about the damage done by bacteria travelling through the blood stream to the heart; bacteria from gum disease, but also other infections. I had boils one after another, nothing seemed to work and it really got me down at times. They came out of the blue and then stopped two years later, with no apparent reason. Now I wonder if those ongoing infections played a part in damaging heart vessels.

The NZ Heart Foundation reports on a strong link between diet and mental health also. So getting the diet right may help more than just the known NCDs.

Caregivers need to understand the impact, upon a child's later years, of overfeeding, giving sugary drinks and lollipops. It makes me so sad to see little children toddling around with a lollipop in their mouth. Besides it being a hazard, our kids are being turned into sugar addicts. NCDs are one of our major issues, early childhood and high school parenting classes may be two places to get messages across. The kindy my boys attended in ChCh was in a low socio-economic area, about 50% unemployed parents. We (I was on the Board) put on monthly get togethers in the evening. Families shared a simple meal. When the kids were finished they went off to play whilst a speaker presented to us. A health advisor told us if we want to give our kids the wrong stuff, give them lollies because at least they can get false teeth when older, but stay away from foods high in refined salts e.g. noodles with flavouring sachets, chips, rashuns etc because its killing their kidneys and they can't be replaced so easily. Near 30 yrs ago he predicted an increase in kidney failure at a time when that disease was a problem of the aging. Now people still at high school have kidney disease. Because I also learned about connections with sugars, obesity and diabetes, my children didn't see sweets until they attended 5yr old birthday parties. Those sessions were valuable!

11. From time to time people are found **dead in their homes, alone**. Is it possible to have a service providing emergency necklaces or bracelets that people can press to signal they need help? Perhaps a service for those living alone to have someone phone them daily at an agreed time for a 2min chat. If they don't answer they can be checked in on. For Mum, Edna emails daily and if Mum doesn't reply she'll text me and I'll text a friend in Raro to check on her. Perhaps each puna can have a 'chat line' service or link people up with volunteers for those who are lonely or just need to be in touch with someone? In NZ people volunteer to buddy someone for a set weekly phone call.

12. **A dedicated 'boarding house' for Pa Enua** students is a good idea. Finding suitable house 'Mum and Dad' will be critical. I would hope to see students having compulsory 'homework' times during the week and plans to keep the students connected to home e.g. free weekly video calls to home, events where students get to 'show off' their island, participation in a home garden and cooking, and encouragement of the various reo. Another issue I see is that students are overwhelmed at Tereora College. I wonder if

they could transition at Titikaveka where there is more of a small family atmosphere? They could go there for NCEA Level One and then move on with more confidence to Tereora.

13. **We have product to export**, but need help getting them to the market. Had Metua Robati, then at BTIB, not assisted hands on in Mauke Moments' first year we would not have realised this could be a real business. All collapsed after she left, but we were at a place by then to go on our own. I've been told by BTIB since that it isn't their job to do the hands on stuff. Why not? Now with COVID we need help not just to reach the Raro market, but to go beyond. I'm sure exporting is possible. Some suggestions:

- Have a person prepared to do the hands on for first year pa enua small enterprises.
- People order online, but cost of postage doubles the price of our product. Orders could be packaged, addressed and sent bulk by ship to NZ where a person from the consulate perhaps could, once a month, receive and send on the packages by internal mail (if that can work out cheaper of course). The business pays costs of freight, but the handler is FOC to keep costs reasonable. This would be possible if that person is already employed, so adds another task to their JD.
- Have a Cook Islands outlet in Auckland and a person at Raro end who gathers all product into a small container for monthly shipping.
- Have a Small Islands Nations shopping centre in Auckland with shop and storage for each island nation. I bet that would get so much support with many Pasifika being mixed island blood. Perhaps a 'PACER Plus' venture for their members. Specifically small islands to keep out the flood tide of Asian markets.

14. I would love to see more **Cook Islanders working across all fields** to reduce the need to bring in foreign workers.

- It seems there is a shortage of Cook Islanders willing to take up 'service' jobs. Families tell their children not to do nursing saying "why would you want to wipe other people's bums?" Cleaning is considered lowly and yet these jobs are essential. Raise the status via media campaigns and education programmes. Provide training that leads to a recognised and valued qualification.
- Service jobs are undervalued – Pay doesn't reflect their importance, necessity and hardships e.g. dealing with disgusting things sometimes. In NZ school cleaners are paid extra for 'dirt jobs' e.g. cleaning up vomit or worse. Review pay. Not just anyone can do these jobs. I know I struggled to teacher aid a fully dependent disabled student for just one day!
- Jobs are still often assigned to a particular gender. Times are changing, but slowly. At school teachers still slip into assigning e.g. gardening for the boys and sewing for the girls. After all these years and proof that Andrew and I built our house, still some think all I did was hold the clip board and pass the tools☺

- Thinking now seems to be that a piece of paper beats experience. I have been told (not by MoE) that I couldn't be a principal because I don't have a degree. I trained when uni and teacher's college were two different institutions. I throw myself into doing one thing at a time well; when teaching I give all to my students so that they can gain qualifications one day. I have tried to take uni courses at the same time, but soon realised I can't study and meet my teaching standards at the same time. I voiced my disapproval from the beginning of the push to have teachers training for degrees whilst teaching. I foresaw what I have since observed; that for many teachers the stress would cause something to give. Whilst teachers now have degrees parents will tell you their children have suffered. Could teachers take a part paid year in fulltime intensive upskilling instead? I am told now that even relieving teachers have to continue upskilling. Short term courses are great, but long term doesn't work for some and I know retired teachers who have thrown away the idea of relieving because of this requirement. So silly to deny the years of experience!

15. In 2003 I had the privilege, as a new school principal, of attending a large multi-national week long environmental conference in Auckland. I learned there of the United Nations' **FOUR pillars of society to be considered for sustainable development instead of the original 3** (mentioned in your draft). The reasoning for separating Culture from Community makes a lot of sense e.g. sometimes our island culture does not conform to the expected western norms for a community. I believe you should treat it as a separate pillar. Having to consider all 4 when planning makes for better outcomes.

Following is a template used to prompt community discussion in Mauke. Lisa Kapi and her team compiled the results of a productive vocal day of discussion by all and sundry. I don't have that copy. Ideas of the various areas to consider came from a number of people. Of significance is that Christianity was specified by the people as being an important part of Mauke's culture.

ECONOMY (*The management of resources by individuals, communities & countries*)

		Problems and Wishes	Short Term Solution	Long Term Solution	Priority High 1 – 3 Low
Tourism	Ports Air & Sea				
	Accommodation				
	Vehicle rentals				
	Activities e.g. guided tours, events				
Fishes	Inshore				
	Offshore				
Retailers	Importing				
	Meeting local needs				
Agriculture	Exporting				
	Pricing				
	Animals				
Value Added Agric/Artisan Industries	Preserves				
	Beauty & health Products				
	Handcrafts – weaving, carving, sewing, brooms				

CULTURE (*The way we do things around here/ our special character*) *What makes Mauke Mauke?*

		Problems and Wishes	Short Term Solution	Long Term Solution	Priority
Preservation, Revival, Passing on &	Te Reo Akatokamanava				
	Traditions/ protocols				
	Performing Arts				
	Visual Arts e.g. ei, carving, rangaranga				
	Historical knowledge and sites				
	Physical features e.g. makatea, pandanus/ara, white roads				
	Planting methods & Maukean Foods				
	Christianity				

ENVIRONMENT (*On and in the: land, Sea & Air*)

		Problems and Wishes	Short Term Solution	Long Term Solution	Priority
Biodiversity protect	Plants				
	Animals				
	Harvesting from the wild e.g. fishing, reefing, maire				
Waste Management	Human & animal waste - septic systems, composting toilets, grey water				
	Toxic Waste – old batteries, e-waste, chemicals, burning				
	Solid waste – plastic, tin, aluminium, paper etc				
	Green Waste				
Water	Salt				
	Fresh				
Invasive	Plants				
	Animals				
Ecosystems (habitat)	Reef and lagoon life				
	Inland, Makatea, Caves				
	Nesting and breeding areas				

COMMUNITY (*Ensuring all have the 5 essentials - **Food, Water, Shelter** [house & clothes], **Love**/a sense of belonging, **Purpose**)*)

		Problems and Wishes	Short Term Solution	Long Term Solution	Priority High 1 – 3 Low
Health and Well-being	Strengthening families				
	Elderly (60 +)				
	Middle aged (36 to 59)				
	Youth (15 to 35)				

	Children (5 to 14)				
	Early Childhood (0 to 4)				
	Disabled				
Education	Apii Mauke ECE to Yr 11				
	Yr 12 & 13				
	Adult				
Justice	Law & Order				
	Land, successions, adoptions etc				
Population	Growth through long term residents with Maukean connection	We need more people to remain viable.	Websites to encourage people home, a simple place to make enquiries, stories of islanders returning or coming for the first time.		
	Growth through short term/trial residents with Maukean connection				
Infrastructure	Roading				
	Transport, Machinery, maintenance				
	Beautification				
	Water works				
	Power	Batteries will need replacing in about 10yrs time.	Reduce power usage e.g. checking fridges & freezers, replacing lights with LEDs	Budget for replacement with longer lasting technology	
	Communications				
	Construction				
	Freight management				
Waste Management					