

The Environmental Policy of the
City of Cape Town

October 2001

The Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy contains the following sections:

1. Introduction:

This section briefly described the physical and regulatory context of the environmental management in the City of Cape Town (CCT). These and other aspects of our context place a clear responsibility on local government for effective management of the CCT's greatest assets, its environment.

2. Our Year 2020 Vision for the Environment of the CCT:

This vision statement will guide the formulation and implementation of IMEP, in order to work towards an ideal vision of what our environment should be like in the year 2020.

3. General Policy Principles:

This includes definitions (section 3.1), general policy principles (section 3.2), commitments for the implementation of IMEP (section 3.3) and a number of policy tools (section 3.4).

4. Sectoral Approaches to IMEP

The sectoral approaches address specified environmental issues. These approaches will form the basis for more detailed programmes and sectoral commitments to IMEP during its implementation. It is also valuable in the implementation and audit/review of EMS's in which IMEP is interpreted and applied to Council's facilities.

5. Leadership Pledge to IMEP:

Adoption and implementation of IMEP includes the pledge to be completed by all Councillors and senior management. The pledge provides tangible evidence of a commitment to implementation of IMEP for the benefit of sustainable development for all

Introduction

1.1 Our Context

The City of Cape Town's (CCT) greatest assets are its people and natural environmental beauty and resources. Bounded by oceans and mountains and situated in the smallest of the world's six floristic kingdoms, the CCT boasts a rich diversity of fauna and flora that is unique for such a small area. Culturally diverse with a rich history and built environment, the CCT is the southern most City on the African continent and is the economic hub for the Western Cape Province. It is this unique environment that supports the communities of Cape Town.

With a growing population and an increasing divide between advantaged and disadvantaged groups, the CCT faces the challenge of promoting development whilst managing the redistribution of resources to redress current inequities. To address the growing needs of a largely impoverished population and to ensure the health of communities, the CCT needs to become economically competitive, both locally and globally. While working towards these goals, it is imperative that the CCT recognises and effectively manages its unique economic asset, the environment. The central component to achieving this strategy is adopting and applying the fundamental principles and approaches of sustainable development.

Responding to these challenges, the CCT has embarked upon a process of developing an integrated metropolitan environmental management strategy. This Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy (IMEP) will form the basis for a series of strategies and programmes to ensure that the principles of sustainability are adhered to. This will enable the meeting of current needs as well as the maintenance of our resources for the benefit of future generations.

IMEP is a statement of intent, a commitment to certain principles and ethics and to the development of sectoral strategies which will detail goals, targets, programmes and actions needed to ensure sustainable resource use and management of this unique environment for the benefit of all communities.

The structure of local government in the CCT has recently undergone a transformation from seven local authorities to one metropolitan local authority or Unicity. This policy has been developed during this period of institutional change but is intended to be relevant to whatever institutional arrangements exist during the next 20 years.

1.2 Our Responsibilities

1.2.1 Local Government Responsibilities

The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) guarantees everyone the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well being. Further, the Constitution commits all levels of government to sustainable development so as to ensure that the environment is protected for present and future generations. Local government's constitutional roles and responsibilities reinforce the commitment of local governing bodies to these principles.

Local government will implement this policy as part of an integrated metropolitan environmental management strategy. This strategy will give direction to local government's activities and programmes and thereby promote sustainable development.

Management of the environment of the CCT is also guided by emerging national as well as international law and legislation. Both IMEP and its implementation must conform to these higher order statutes and directives, such as the International Convention on Biodiversity and the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA).

1.2.2 Civil Responsibilities

The unique environment of the CCT, its protection and enhancement, is the responsibility of all that inhabit, or visit the City. This responsibility will be enhanced and promoted by local government while civil society will play an active role in supporting, ensuring and monitoring the implementation of the policy.

2. Our Year 2020 Vision for the Environment in the City of Cape Town

Local government will be guided in its activities by the following vision for the environment in the Year 2020:

In twenty year's time...

- There will be a high expectation from the people, of the authorities in respect of environmental management, monitoring, auditing, as well as accountability. Environmental issues will be dealt with in a structured and efficient way, and impact studies will have ensured a better aesthetic and ecologically balanced City of Cape Town.
- There will be a positive relationship between local government and civil society, collective responsibility for the environment, and an ethic of partnership building.
- The City of Cape Town population will be environmentally educated, aware and conscious. Equitable environmental education will have ensured that people care for and respect their environment.
- The environmental quality will have improved in terms of air, water, land and sea.
- The cultural heritage and the built environment will be enhanced, restored and protected, while diverse religions and cultures will enrich the social fabric of the City of Cape Town.
- Environmental poverty will no longer exist and all communities will live in an environment that is not detrimental to their health or well being.
- Waste management will be efficient, and recycling efforts will be supported and sustained by the population.
- Wastewater treatment facilities will be efficient and comply with legislative requirements.
- Public transport will be safe, clean, efficient and non-polluting. Commuters will be less reliant on private transport and there would be significant reductions in traffic congestion and air pollution. Public transport will provide all inhabitants of the City of Cape Town with a safe, affordable and convenient access to urban opportunities.
- There will be adequate and well distributed open spaces for recreation and sustaining biodiversity.
- The City of Cape Town communities will have adequate shelter and basic services and will have access to education, employment and recreation. The livelihoods of the citizens will be sustainable and in harmony with the natural environment.
- Water and energy resources and utilisation will be optimally and efficiently managed.

3. General Policy Principles

In working towards our 2020 Vision for the CCT environment, we commit the CCT to the following general policy principles and tools for the implementation of strategies and programmes for action.

3.1 Definitions

Sustainable development looks for a balance between economic, social, and natural environmental needs; it also meets the needs of the present generations while not undermining the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The term environment is defined to include our natural, social, economic, urban, rural and cultural context as experienced by the communities of Cape Town.

3.2 General Policy Principles

A commitment to **adopting and implementing the principles and underlying approaches to sustainable development** of the City of Cape Town, and ensuring the integration of environmental issues into local government decision-making at all levels. A commitment to ensuring that current generations use natural resources in such a way as to maximise the benefit to all, while ensuring that those resources are protected for the use of future generations.

A commitment to the **protection of the Constitutional rights to a healthy environment** and the recognition of the responsibilities and obligations of sustainable service delivery and ecologically sustainable development for the benefit of all.

A commitment by the City of Cape Town to **developing and implementing detailed sectoral strategies**, in order to implement and enforce the general policy principles, **for all environmental issues** so as to meet the commitments described in the sectoral approaches.

A commitment to an **holistic** approach to the environment and to protecting the City of Cape Town's **unique biodiversity**. Further, a commitment to a special responsibility on behalf of the global community to **ensure the conservation and protection of the Cape Floristic Kingdom**.

A commitment to, as a minimum, **meeting or where practical exceeding the requirements of relevant international, national and provincial environmental legislation**.

The recognition by the City of Cape Town of the **inherent rights of all living creatures** and a commitment to the humane treatment of all animals, both domestic and wild.

A commitment to the **responsible stewardship of the resources within local governments charge**, through open, consultative, integrated and transparent governance of the City of Cape Town. This will be achieved by ensuring that **best practice environmental solutions and activities are implemented** at all times and that sustained partnerships with communities are achieved.

A commitment to **applying the precautionary principle**, which states that if the environmental consequences of a proposed activity are of significant impact and/or concern, and are uncertain, that activity should not be undertaken.

The commitment by the City of Cape Town to the integration of environmental considerations in all its functions and activities, including strategic planning initiatives such as the **Integrated Development Plan (IDP), and international initiatives such as Local Agenda 21**.

A commitment to the **involvement of, and partnerships with, civil society** in decision-making processes regarding environmental management of the City of Cape Town.

A commitment by the City of Cape Town to recognising and **minimising the impact of its activities on the global environment**, through understanding and monitoring its ecological footprint.

A commitment to **promoting an ethic of collective environmental responsibility** in the City of Cape Town by means of **environmental education and awareness programmes**

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A commitment by the City of Cape Town to recognising the **role of disadvantaged communities** (particularly the youth and woman and persons with disabilities) in the development and enhancement of the City.

A commitment by the City of Cape Town to **open, transparent and effective environmental governance**.

3.3 Implementation of IMEP

IMEP will be implemented at the highest level of local government in the CCT. The General Policy Principles will give guidance and act as a framework for environmental governance. Detailed sectoral strategies will be developed in such a way that plans, actions, targets, indicators and programmes will be implemented to address particular environmental issues.

Implementation of IMEP and the sectoral strategies will occur through, with and by the sectors and line functions of the CCT in an integrated approach.

This will be given effect by:

- The adoption of IMEP as a corporate policy.
- The alignment and integration of IMEP with other corporate policies and strategies.
- The development and implementation of detailed sectoral strategies, as described in the sectoral approaches, within five years of the adoption of this policy.
- The development and implementation of six priority sectoral strategies within two years of the adoption of IMEP.
- A commitment to ensuring continued improvement in environmental performance.
- A commitment to establishing a policy implementation team which includes representatives from senior management of all relevant financial, operational and service delivery units.
- A commitment to taking a strong position on all environmental issues in the CCT.
- A commitment to implementing an institutional framework that best integrates IMEP throughout local government and which effectively facilitates the implementation of IMEP through projects and actions within all activities of local government in the CCT.
- A commitment to implementing strategies, systems and programmes to ensure that the IMEP policy statements committed to in this policy are realised in the CCT.
- A commitment to adopting, using and applying appropriate environmental management tools as part of the overall environmental management strategy of local government.

3.4 Tools for IMEP

A commitment by the CCT to the principles of both integrated planning and decision-making, and continuous improvement in all its activities and operations that affect the environment. These principles will be given effect by:

- Adoption of Local Agenda 21 principles
- Regular environmental monitoring, public state of environment reporting and other reporting and environmental monitoring tools
- The use of effective and recognised Environmental Management Systems (EMS)
- The development and monitoring of sustainability indicators of performance
- The application of Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) and full life-cycle cost analysis in the assessment of alternatives and selection of the optimum long-term sustainable solutions
- Adoption and implementation of the principles of Integrated Environmental Management (IEM) for all projects and activities
- The application of environmental risk assessment.
- Developing environmental guidelines, where appropriate, for activities, which impact on the environment in the CCT.

- Requiring adherence to new and existing environmental guidelines from all organisations and activities, which impact on the environment in the CCT.
- The use of appropriate tools in meeting the Best Practical Environmental Option (BPEO) principle
- Continuing the research and development of tools for the integrated environmental management of the CCT.
- Annual public reporting on sectoral approaches and implementation of IMEP.
- Enforcement of laws, by-laws, international treaties and strategies.
- Development of new laws and by-laws
- Environmental education programmes at all levels of local government.

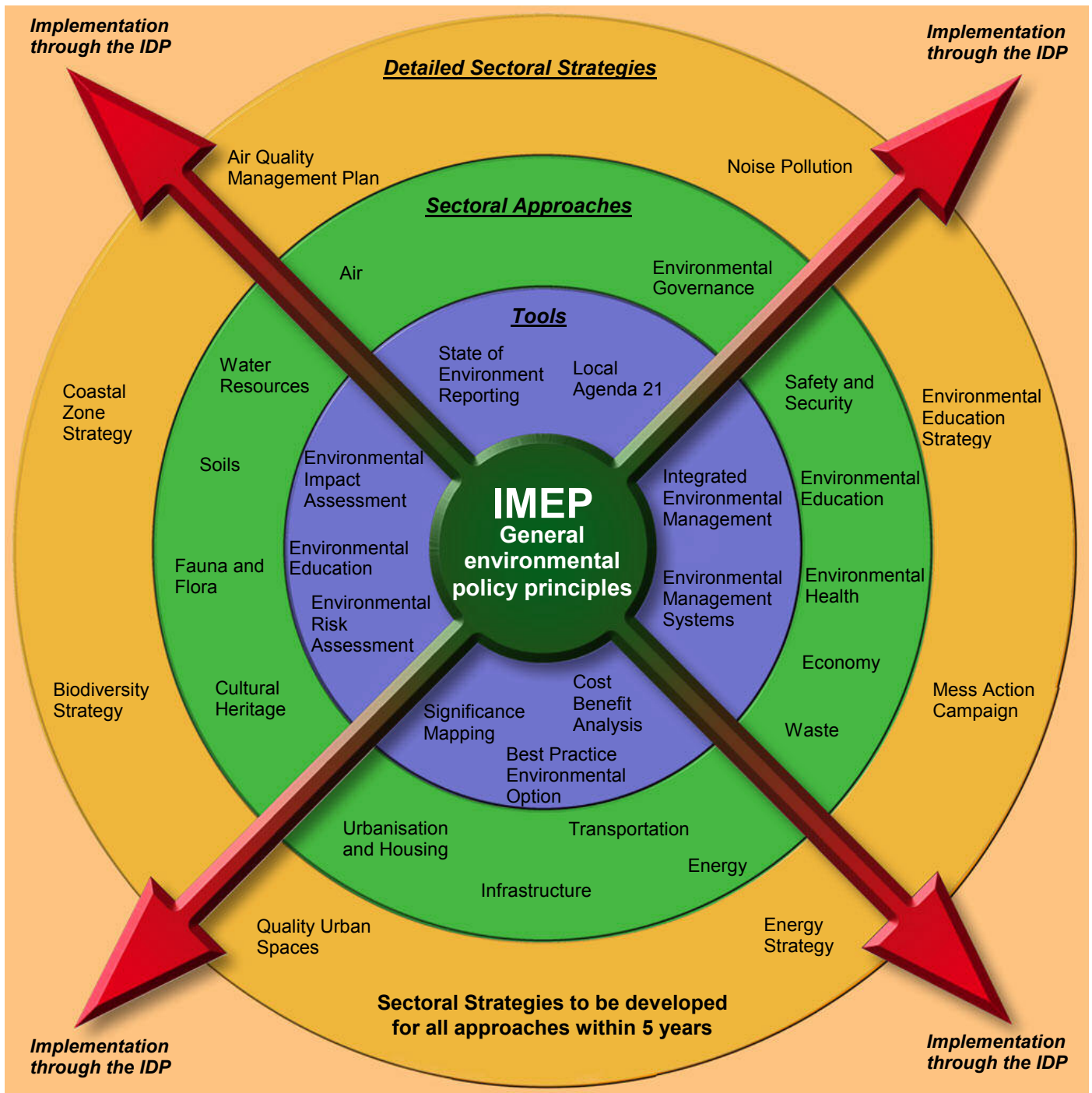
4. Sectoral Approaches to IMEP

The following section details sectoral approaches for IMEP. Sectors, departments, delivery units and line functions, of the CCT shall develop detailed implementation strategies to address these sectoral approaches. The sectoral approaches, which take the form of commitments, are based on the issues identified in the State of Environment report (SoE), together with the issues and policy options identified by the process of public and stakeholder consultation in the IMEP development process.

Sectoral strategies will be developed that will implement plans, actions, targets and indicators and programmes to meet the commitments set out in the sectoral approaches. These sectoral strategies will be developed within five years of the adoption of IMEP as an official policy.

The following diagram depicts the overall implementation of an integrated environmental management strategy for the CCT.

The Environmental Policy of the City of Cape Town



The diagram depicts the overall implementation of an integrated environmental management strategy for the City of Cape Town. The vision and policy principles provide the goals and objectives of the environmental policy that will be achieved by developing detailed sectoral strategies. These strategies will address the sectoral approaches.

Sectoral Approaches

4.1 Air

A commitment to reducing the incidence of all forms of air pollution and the potential environmental health risks associated with air pollution. This commitment includes:

- Recognising that the minimisation of air pollution and control of pollution sources is a priority
- Recognising that pollution levels may be detrimental to the health of communities
- Recognising the cumulative impact of new and existing sources of air pollution.

4.2 Water Resources

A commitment to ensuring that the quality of coastal, marine and inland waters of the CCT is suitable for the maintenance of biodiversity, the protection of human health and a commitment to the principle that all CCT inhabitants have the right to clean, potable and adequate water sources. This commitment includes:

- Recognising that water is a scarce and valuable resource, which sustains communities, ecosystems and economic development
- Recognising the importance of groundwater as a water resource.
- Management of water demand to ensure the long term sustainability and affordability of water resources and the environment
- Ensuring water quality, at a minimum, meets national standards as established by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry.
- The effective management of all wastewater systems

4.3 Landforms and Soils

A commitment that recognises the conservation and enhancement of landforms and soils in the CCT is essential for

- The conservation of fauna, flora and the CCT's unique biodiversity
- Human activities such as farming and gardening
- Minimising soil erosion
- Protecting the landscapes of the CCT

4.4 Fauna and Flora

A commitment to the conservation of biodiversity in the CCT through:

- The improvement, enhancement and protection of endemic biodiversity
- Recognising that the conservation and protection of terrestrial biodiversity is a priority
- Recognising and protecting the unique coastal and marine environment and biodiversity of the CCT.
- Recognising that the CCT's most valuable resource is its natural environment which provides a range of essential goods and services
- Recognising the negative impacts of invasive alien species on the environment
- Prioritising fire management within the City's boundaries
- Ensuring sustainable and equitable land use practises within the CCT

4.5 Cultural Heritage

A commitment to ensuring that the diverse cultural heritage of the CCT is preserved, protected and enhanced. This includes:

- Recognising the rich cultural history of the CCT
- Recognising the importance of cultural practises
- Recognising all cultures and religions represented within the CCT
- Including cultural values, sites and landscapes of historic significance, areas of scenic beauty and places of spiritual importance in planning and decision-making

4.6 Urbanisation and Housing

A commitment to recognising that shelter and services are needed for a growing population, whilst at the same time recognising that environmental features and systems need protection. This commitment includes:

- The promotion of clean, healthy, safe and efficient living environments, which take communities, their needs and the surrounding environment into account
- Emphasis being placed on upgrading the living environments of the urban poor
- Recognising the need to manage uncontrolled urban expansion, which threatens the resources of the CCT and leads to unwanted social, environmental and economic costs, by working towards creating a more compact metropolitan area
- Recognising the impact of light pollution
- Recognising that an effective Metropolitan Open Space System (MOSS) is essential to the protection of biodiversity in the CCT and ensuring access to recreational opportunities for all

4.7 Infrastructure

The recognition that the supply and delivery of infrastructure can both improve our living environments and cause environmental impacts. This commitment includes:

- Ensuring that the principles and approaches of sustainable development are applied in the planning and delivery of infrastructure
- A commitment to locally appropriate infrastructure which enhances the living environment
- A commitment to prioritising under-resourced areas for the development of infrastructure.

4.8 Transportation

A commitment to the recognition that transportation is needed for access to facilities and work opportunities, but consumes valuable resources and contributes to environmental degradation. This commitment includes:

- Seeking to maximise the benefits while minimising environmental costs of transportation systems
- A commitment to working towards a public transport system that is safe, accessible and affordable
- A commitment to minimising the need to travel and promoting the use of public transport as the preferred mode of passenger travel
- Promoting appropriate transportation systems which reduce environmental impacts while increasing mobility for all

4.9 Energy

Recognising the importance of energy and its role in development and the negative effects that energy production may have on the environment, a commitment to sources of energy with the least impact on the environment and health of communities. This commitment includes:

- The consideration of energy efficiency in all functions and activities
- A commitment to discourage the use of inefficient energy fuels and those that are characterised by high pollution levels
- Reducing energy wastage
- Investigation, support and promotion of alternative, renewable, cleaner and safer energy sources

4.10 Waste

A commitment to the need for an integrated waste management strategy that addresses both the production and disposal of solid and liquid wastes, as well as the safe collection, transport and disposal, and the reduction of illegal dumping. This commitment includes:

- A commitment to reducing and preventing waste
- Supporting and promoting waste recycling initiatives
- Recognising that combating illegal dumping and littering in the CCT is a priority
- A commitment to safely managing all hazardous wastes

4.11 Economy

A commitment to the recognition that the environment of the CCT is its greatest asset and that sustainable development requires economic growth, the creation of jobs and the reduction of currently high levels of poverty in the CCT. This includes a commitment to:

- Recognising the interdependence of economic development, poverty and environment
- Supporting economic development strategies and initiatives that promote global competitiveness, provide jobs, reduce poverty and improve living and business environments.

4.12 Environmental Health

A commitment to the Constitution of South Africa which guarantees the right of all South Africans to an environment which is not detrimental to their health and well being. This includes recognition that:

- Poor living environments contribute to the increased risk of the infectious diseases HIV/AIDS and TB
- Environmental health risks in the CCT result largely from poverty, the inadequate provision and access to basic services, overcrowding and inadequate shelter and from air and water pollution
- The unsafe supply of food increases the incidence of food borne diseases
- Excessive levels of noise pollution negatively affect the living environment
- Health risks result from poor occupational health and safety conditions

4.13 Environmental Education

A commitment to supporting and promoting appropriate environmental education and awareness throughout the CCT and within local government structures. This commitment includes:

- Education and awareness of health and safety, waste and recycling, environmental rights and the resources of the CCT
- Supporting environmental education which enhances the understanding and appreciation of the environment and the opportunities that it creates while promoting an ethic of collective responsibility of the environment amongst all citizens.

4.14 Safety and Security

In recognising that many communities in the CCT experience an unacceptable incidence of crime, a commitment to supporting crime prevention and the reduction of crime is needed. This includes a commitment to:

- Supporting development, which enables sustainable livelihoods for all and contributes to reducing incidence of crime by addressing vulnerability
- Promoting safe living environments for all CCT communities
- Considering safety and security in all planning aspects

4.15 Environmental Governance

Recognising that effective environmental governance in the CCT is in the process of being established. As such, a commitment to:

- The continued growth in the skills and resources available for environmental governance in the CCT.
- Supporting community driven environmental projects
- Promoting environmental structures in the communities
- Open communication between local government, communities and all stakeholders
- Enforcement of and compliance with environmental legislation, regulations and controls
- Environmental governance on behalf of people and the living environment
- Promoting partnerships to ensure effective environmental governance
- Including communities in the decision-making process
- Promoting safe living environments for all CCT communities

5. Leadership Pledge to IMEP

This pledge is to be signed by Councillors and senior management, committing local government to strive to uphold the principles of sustainable development in the CCT.

LEADERSHIP PLEDGE TO IMEP

I, the leadership of local government in the City of Cape Town, shall ensure that this Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy, or IMEP, is implemented in all activities, plans, programmes and actions undertaken by local government in the performance of its Constitutional and other obligations for service delivery and economic development in the City of Cape Town. I commit myself to the promotion of the principles of sustainable development which aim to meet the needs of today whilst protecting and enhancing resources for use in the future.

I further commit myself to initiating, supporting and driving strategies, projects and programmes in accordance with the principles and approaches in IMEP are implemented and to ensure compliance by all stakeholders and role players. This I do in accordance with the Constitution and National Environmental Policy of South Africa and the rights and responsibilities these place on me as a steward of our resources and promoter of sustainable development.

Signed:.....

Date:.....