



OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL

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HAWAII ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL RELEASES 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

HONOLULU -- The Hawaii Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC) is announcing the release of the 2014 Environmental Council Annual Report. The report identifies environmental priorities for the state and makes important recommendations for sustainability. The full report is available at:

http://oegc.doh.hawaii.gov/Shared%20Documents/Environmental_Council/Annual_Reports/Annual-Report-2014.pdf

State law requires the Environmental Council to submit to the governor and legislature a report on the state of the environment each year. This year's annual report identifies three priority issues for the state: climate change, invasive species, and the 2016 International Union for Conservation of Nature's World Conservation Congress, which will be convening in Hawaii. The report articulates a sustainability vision for the state, establishes goals of 30 percent local food production and 70 percent locally-generated renewable energy by 2030, and recommends the creation of a department of sustainability.

The bulk of the report focuses on the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI) for Hawaii. Rather than simply rely on the gross domestic product as a measure of the state's success, the GPI acknowledges costs that economic growth imposes on society, whether a loss of forests or a loss in leisure time, and adjusts the measure of progress accordingly. This is the third year the annual report includes the GPI. This year, authors Dr. Regina Ostergaard-Klem and Dr. Kirsten L.L. Oleson, used specific data and issues related to invasive species to provide policy makers and the public with information needed to make better decisions about how the state allocates its resources to fight and prevent the damage caused by invasive species.

“There’s no roadmap for determining the appropriate dollar value to spend on protecting or restoring our personal and natural environment,” said Mark Ambler, Chair of the Environmental Council. "Regulatory action (powered by government spending) is driven by public perception and legal mandates. Often, the result is a reactionary system that doesn’t gain traction until an environmental issue has erupted into a crisis. It is time we use new tools, like the GPI. The GPI provides a roadmap for intelligently targeted policy development and decision-making and should be systematically sited in legislation.”

OEQC and the Environmental Council were established under the Environmental Quality Control Act (1970), codified as Chapter 341, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). The purpose of this chapter is to help maintain the optimum quality of the State’s environment.

Twice a month, OEQC publishes [The Environmental Notice](#) which announces the availability of Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements under public review. For more information on OEQC, go to: <http://health.hawaii.gov/oeqc/>

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