

INCORPORATING ESD OBJECTIVES

A LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

Hurstville City Council is located fifteen kilometres from Sydney CBD. Council's policies affect the natural environment (bushland/parks), the St Georges River, urban development, car usage, waste and community amenity.

With some exceptions ie bushland management and water quality, Council's policies currently do not focus on ESD.

To guide Commonwealth policy, some of the reasons for this are outlined below.

Factors Hindering Incorporation of ESD Principles

- Lack of understanding of what ESD means.
- Concern about economic impacts. "Development" is seen to represent progress. "Lack of development" · stagnation.
- Reluctance to change present practices eg subsidised Council cars.
- Conflicting information and actions from State Government policies eg building motorways while extolling the virtue of public transport.
- Town planning systems which are not outcome based and not holistic.
- Focus on the natural environment and not the urban environment. It is therefore seen as a "parks and gardens" exercise.
- Absence of common performance indicators set within an overall strategic plan which enable timely and relevant feed back for comparison and evaluation.
- Fragmented transportation systems.
- Division of the city into small unco-ordinated units eg car parking policies are not across LGA boundaries.
- Perceived conflicts of ESD objectives with affordability of housing. This can limit use of alternative material and energy sources.
- Council is unaware of:
 - monitoring or guidance by the Commonwealth,

- any strategic planning related to identifying environmental problems and performance indicators.

Factors which may be Explored by the Commonwealth to Promote Incorporation of ESD Principles

- "Simple" explanation of ESD.
- Identification of where and how ESD objectives can be met. Clearly identify ESD as
 - an urban as well as rural issue.
 - Co-ordination of government departments, information and actions.
 - Australia wide holistic approach long term aims and goals for the country which identifies:
 - We are here 1998
 - Where do we want to be in 2005/2010 etc?
 - What are the implications of not meeting these goals?
 - What are the responsibilities to future generations?

26 November 1998