

Arnold I. Palacios
Governor



David M. Apatang
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 2024-006

SUBJECT: Establishing the CNMI Green Growth Initiative

WHEREAS, sustainability is defined as meeting the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, by maintaining the natural and social systems necessary to support life; and

WHEREAS, regenerative development, or green growth, encompasses sustainability principles that go beyond maintaining life support systems to avoid or mitigate harm, by actively restoring, replenishing, and nurturing those systems to increase health, resilience, and abundance for all living things; and

WHEREAS, the global climate crisis has damaged human health, ecosystems, social and economic systems, and infrastructure, impairing the ability of present generations to meet their needs and compromising future generations; and

WHEREAS, like other small island communities, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is acutely vulnerable to the impacts of the climate crisis which compound and magnify local environmental stressors and development challenges; and

WHEREAS, to achieve a sustainable and regenerative future, bold and comprehensive action is essential to protect communities and avoid the most catastrophic impacts of the climate crisis; and

WHEREAS, transitioning to a sustainable and regenerative future presents new opportunities to create good jobs, embrace clean energy, spur economic innovation, protect natural and cultural resources, enhance public health and nutrition security, improve public infrastructure, and promote justice, equity, and resilience in the CNMI; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the United Nations (UN) adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to mobilize global efforts to end poverty, improve health and education, protect ecosystems, tackle the climate crisis, and create an equitable, peaceful, resilient, and prosperous future; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI has embraced these global Sustainable Development Goals and applied them in a local context through the Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan 2021 - 2030, a living document developed by the Office of Planning and Development in collaboration with public and private sector partners that sets forth the vision, values, goals, and objectives to guide sustainable, regenerative development in the CNMI; and

WHEREAS, backed by federal and local resources, ongoing efforts in the CNMI to build a thriving economy, protect marine and terrestrial ecosystems, preserve cultural heritage, reduce climate pollution, transition to clean energy, address historic inequities, improve public health and food systems, develop resilient infrastructure, and implement nature-based solutions, together help to advance the CNMI's Sustainable Development Goals; and

WHEREAS, the principles of sustainability and regeneration are reflected in the rich cultural heritage of the CNMI, and rooted in traditional, indigenous values such as *inafa 'maolek* and *tipiyeew*; and

WHEREAS, the principles of sustainability and regeneration are also embraced in the mission of the Northern Marianas College (NMC) to cultivate stewardship through scholarship, and in its strategic priorities to take care of our community, take care of our resources, and take care of our people; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI endeavors to join and actively participate as an official member of the Local2030 Islands Network, an international, peer-to-peer community of island leaders dedicated to pursuing Sustainable Development Goals through locally-driven, culturally-informed solutions, and the Northern Marianas College has been designated as the CNMI's hub for Local2030 and green growth initiatives; and

WHEREAS, successful implementation and stewardship of the CNMI's Sustainable Development Goals requires effective collaboration among all community members, including elected leaders, government agencies, educational institutions, business leaders, nonprofit organizations, and the general public; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI stands ready to leverage our island wisdom, partnerships, and resources and work within our communities and with other island communities around the world to effectively respond to the global climate crisis, develop and share our locally-driven solutions, and achieve a prosperous future that is centered in our values of sustainability, regenerative growth, and cooperation;

NOW THEREFORE I, ARNOLD I. PALACIOS, Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth, do hereby order the establishment of the CNMI Green Growth Initiative.

The CNMI Green Growth Initiative shall be co-chaired by the Governor of the CNMI and the President of the Northern Marianas College (NMC).

There is further established a Green Growth Initiative Working Group to implement the Initiative.

The Green Growth Initiative Working Group shall report to the Governor and the President of NMC, and shall be co-chaired by the Governor's Special Assistant for Climate Policy and Planning and the Dean of the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services (NMC-CREES).

1. The CNMI Green Growth Working Group shall facilitate a bold, comprehensive, and Commonwealth-wide approach to sustainable and regenerative development through the creation and implementation of a CNMI Green Growth Action Strategy. The Green Growth Action Strategy shall set forth and accelerate locally-driven, culturally informed solutions to meet the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the CNMI:

Goal 1: No Poverty;

Goal 2: Zero Hunger;

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being;

Goal 4: Quality Education;

Goal 5: Gender Equality;

Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation;

Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy;

Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth;

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure;

Goal 10: Reduced Inequality;

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities;

Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production;

Goal 13: Climate Action;

Goal 14: Life Below Water;

Goal 15: Life on Land;

Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions;

Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

2. The CNMI Green Growth Working Group shall further commit to the four principles of the Local2030 Islands Network:

Principle 1: Identify local goals to advance the SDGs and strengthen long-term political leadership on climate resilience and net-zero emissions pathways;

Principle 2: Strengthen public-private partnerships that support diverse stakeholders in integrating sustainability priorities into policy and planning;

Principle 3: Measure SDG progress through tracking and reporting on locally and culturally informed indicators; and

Principle 4: Implement concrete initiatives that build island resilience and a circular economy through locally appropriate solutions, particularly at the water-energy-food nexus.

3. Through the CNMI Green Growth Strategic Framework, the Working Group shall advance policy solutions in the Commonwealth that promote sustainable and regenerative development; build partnerships across sectors to align community goals, leverage resources, and share best practices and information; foster collaboration, public awareness, and public participation in sustainability and regenerative development initiatives throughout the Commonwealth; and update and implement the CNMI Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan.
4. The CNMI Green Growth Working Group shall be jointly administered by the Office of the Governor and Northern Marianas College. The Chairs shall convene regular meetings of the Working Group, determine its agenda, and direct its work. The Working Group may form committees as needed and include other members from the government, business, educational, and nonprofit sectors. The members and committees of the Working Group shall report their recommendations, findings, actions, and updates to the Chairs on a regular basis.

5. All departments and agencies of the Commonwealth Government are requested to fully cooperate and coordinate with the Green Growth Working Group and support its mission and activities to achieve a sustainable and regenerative future for the people of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SIGNED AND PROMULGATED on this 26th day of January, 2024.



ARNOLD I. PALACIOS

Governor