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Aitutaki input into the Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+

Financial challenges and the need for economic diversification was a strong discussion point raised at a public consultation on the Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+.

Driving the local economy in Aitutaki to bring Cook Islanders back was a vision raised by several people attending a public meeting for the Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+, as was driving the local economy to allow for a better income for Cook Islanders.

The need to address the high cost of living and Reo Maori vitality has been a common theme raised during the extensive consultations underway since they began in July 2020.

The Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Agenda 2020+ is our national blueprint that will guide us all towards the 100-year vision of wellbeing. This will be achieved by 25-year outcomes, these will be monitored and evaluated by 5-year plans to tell us just how well we are doing to achieving the outcomes, and vision.

The CINSDA2020+ follows on from the CINSDP 2016 – 2020 the third iteration of its kind.

“All that was raised in our meeting are challenges and issues that we all want addressed. We talked about the problems of good work, finances, our people overseas and even our family challenges here. We all want solutions to these problems, and I think we will find them together,” said Mr Teiti Teiti.

“We had really good discussion tonight, now we wait to see these reflected in our national plans.”

Aitutaki brought together over 50 people to discuss ways in which the Cook Islands could achieve a vision of wellbeing. It is the final of the Pa Enea to participate in the consultations. The Central Policy and Planning Office of the Office of the Prime Minister (CPPO OPM) has undertaken extensive information with over 65 consultation meetings taken place on Rarotonga.

Voices of our communities across Pa Enea were also recorded during visits Atiu, Mangaia, Mauke, Mitiaro, Pukapuka and Tongareva as part of national consultations. Over 20 in all were held across the Pa Enea.

All of whom raised the high cost of living and need for better incomes during public consultations.

“There have been common themes raised throughout our consultations – the struggle to pay for bills and the high cost of living was just one. Others from across the Pa Enea included access to basic amenities such as a safe water supply, telecommunications - internet and cost of living,” said Ms Valentino Wichman, Director of CPPO OPM.

“Gathering all the thoughts and experiences of people from across the Cook Islands has been a valuable activity. The input will now be shared with our research and drafting team who are reviewing all feedback to build our CINSDA2020+ upon.”

A healthy, caring people and community, positive relationships, the need for financial well-being, and the need for more to speak Cook Islands Maori, options for our Cook Islands youth, and diversification of our economy were just several of the concerns raised from the floor.

Over 50 people of all ages, gathered to learn more about the CINSDA2020+, sharing their thoughts as to how we can achieve our 100-year goal of well-being under the new national blueprint.

Also, to take place were consultations on the Cook Islands Population Policy now in the consultation phase of development.

The Aitutaki public meeting took place at the Ngapu Ariki Hall in Arutanga on 28 June.

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