

Division of Coastal Resources Management

GREEN GUIDE

Best Management Practices
for a Sustainable CNMI

Leading a more sustainable lifestyle may seem overwhelming, but there are basic steps that anyone can take to help achieve a lasting, healthy future for our planet.

In this guide, you can learn how to start small and work towards big sustainable changes for yourself and your community.



A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY

Pale green tips are easy choices and actions that, while small, add up to a huge difference in the management of our coastal resources.



DO MORE FOR OUR ISLANDS

Light green tips may take more time, planning, or resources, but the positive impacts for the CNMI are significant.



MAXIMUM GREENING

Dark green tips have the highest requirements, but offer the biggest rewards. These choices are the best for our islands.

At home

Choices made around the home have a huge impact on our environment. You can quickly lower that impact by adopting some of the changes below.

WASTE



Do not use disposable products at home (i.e. paper plates, plastic utensils, bottled water, etc.).



Purchase products with less packaging. Try buying in bulk to lessen plastic waste.



Build a compost bin. Compost provides essential nutrients for plant growth and is a great alternative to store bought fertilizer.

RAIN WATER RUN-OFF



Place rain barrels under downspouts or your home's eaves to catch rainfall. You can use the collected water for gardening, cleaning, etc.



Plant native plants around your yard. They're great for soaking up run-off and require minimum maintenance. *Contact CNMI Forestry and take advantage of their plant giveaway program.*



Build a rain garden in low-lying areas. Rain gardens reduce flooding and create habitats for local wildlife.



Install a permeable driveway at your home. It reduces surface run-off and can trap suspended soils, thereby filtering pollutants.

**Visit DCRM's website to learn how to install rain gardens and permeable driveways.*

GREEN COOLING



Limit your usage of air conditioning. Set timers for air conditioning to run for a certain time, open windows to maximize air flow, or use fans.



Replace single-paned windows with double-paned models to help keep heat out of your home.



Build a green roof. Green roofs absorb and trap heat and lessen energy needed for cooling. This can lead to significant cost savings.

WATER CONSERVATION



Do not let water run while not in use during showers, brushing your teeth, or washing dishes.



Water your lawn and gardens less frequently. Use collected water from rain barrels instead of faucet water.



Install low-flow faucets, shower heads and toilets in your home. They can reduce water use by up to 50%.

PURCHASING



Refuse plastic bags. When shopping, bring your own reusable bag or ask for boxes instead.



Buy eco-friendly products that contain non-toxic chemicals and are produced using sustainable methods.



Evaluate your needs and cut down on unnecessary purchases. Donate or sell unneeded items and buy used items from neighbors.

At the beach

What you do at the beach can significantly impact our marine ecosystems which provide food sources, protect us from natural disasters, and boost our economy. You can help conserve our coastal resources by following some of these suggestions.

ON THE SHORE



Pack up your trash and pick-up litter whenever you see it. Land based trash can become marine debris when improperly disposed.



Don't drive on the beach. You can disturb sea turtle nesting areas or harm native plant species.



Volunteer and help plant native tree species along our shorelines. They provide shade and help protect our shores from eroding.

CORAL REEFS



Don't touch, break, or remove coral. Coral reefs are fragile living structures that provide wildlife habitat and help reduce wave energy.



Observe responsible fishing practices. Overfishing can deplete reef species and damage coral habitat.



Purchase eco-friendly, or reef-safe, sunscreen. Some sunscreen contain chemicals, like oxybenzone, that can contribute to coral bleaching, damage coral larvae, or disrupt fish development.

BOATING



Remain at least 100 yards (300 ft.) away from all marine wildlife. If wildlife approaches you, reduce speed and put engine in neutral.



Anchor only on sandy surfaces. Anchoring on seagrass or coral reefs are particularly destructive to marine ecosystems.



Perform routine engine maintenance to optimize fuel efficiency and to protect water quality. Do not conduct in-water maintenance.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (MPAs)

MPAs provide recreation and economic opportunities for our community. It helps sustain critical habitats and marine resources for future generations and act as an “insurance policy” by helping protect marine resources from human impacts.



Enjoy marine life from afar. Don't fish or remove sand, shells or coral from no-take zones and don't take certain species from species-specific conservation zones.



Don't feed the fish. Fish feeding can increase nutrient levels which then increases the growth of harmful algae that damage corals.



Speak up. If you see something wrong being done in an MPA, contact the Division of Fish & Wildlife to report violations.

**Visit DCRM's website to learn more about the CNMI's MPAs.*

Your “carbon footprint” is a measure of the impact your activities have on the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) produced through the burning of fossil fuels. Individual activities are estimated to contribute around 45% of your “footprint”.

— *CO₂ and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Our World in Data*

In the CNMI, we work to protect



OVER 1,000 SPECIES OF FISH

Yellow-crowned butterflyfish is endemic to the CNMI



256 SPECIES OF CORAL

32% of all known coral species are found in the CNMI



150 SPECIES OF BIRDS

12 species are endemic to the CNMI



1,029 SPECIES OF PLANTS

244 species are endemic to the CNMI



OVER 50,000 PEOPLE

Let's all do our part and make changes today!

For more information on best management practices (BMPs) or how to implement BMPs, contact DCRM.

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