

Inquiry into a Sustainability Charter - 24 May 2007

Education & Community Engagement



About EcoSTEPS www.ecosteps.com.au

EcoSTEPS is a multi-disciplinary consultancy specialising in Sustainability Training, Education, Practices & Strategies. EcoSTEPS provides support and advice to a broad range of communities and organisations across all sectors of society. The twenty-member team has offices in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.

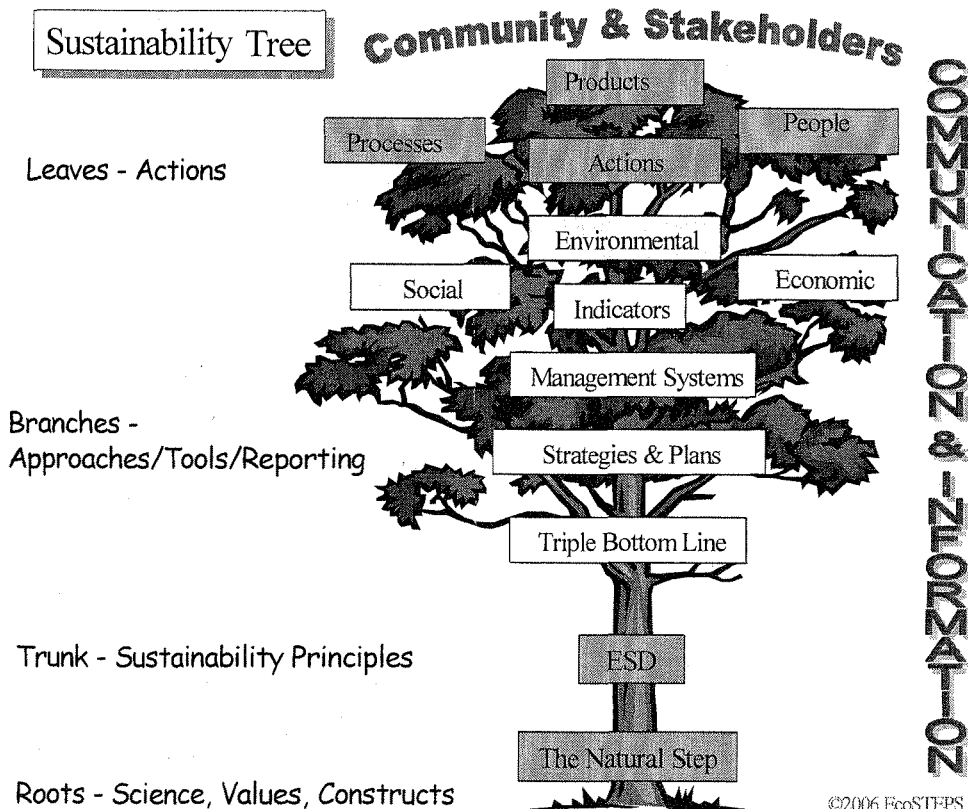
Education & Community Engagement Tools

- Developing a Common Language for Sustainability
- Education for Sustainability
- The Natural Step
- Earth Charter
- Ecological Footprint
- Blue Mountains Sustainable Business Charter

Developing a Common Language for Sustainability

As the Discussion Paper says: *“It is difficult, and perhaps inappropriate to compare different communities’ objectives for sustainability. An issue of extreme importance to one community’s view of sustainability may not necessarily affect another community in the same.”* (Page 15).

This is an area in which EcoSTEPS has had considerable experience with a wide range of organisations, local communities, NGO’s and councils. We offer the EcoSTEPS ‘Sustainability Tree’ model below for consideration as an aid to establishing the necessary ‘common language’ within the Australian community as whole.



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Education for Sustainability www.aries.mq.edu.au/

The international community has come to recognise that achieving sustainability is essentially an ongoing learning process that actively involves multiple stakeholders in change across every aspect of society. Although there are a variety of labels used to describe EfS the process is generally agreed to include the following elements:

- Envisioning
- Systemic Thinking
- Critical (Reflective) Thinking
- Participation in Decision-Making
- Partnerships for Change

The Natural Step www.naturalstep.org

The Natural Step offers a framework that is based on science and serves as a compass for society and individuals working to redesign their activities to become more sustainable. The Natural Step Framework is based on systems thinking, focusing on first-order principles. Four Systems Conditions provide a practical framework which can be used to guide social, environmental, and economic actions.

In the sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing...

1. ...concentrations of substances extracted from the Earth's crust;
2. ...concentrations of substances produced by society;
3. ...degradation by physical means; and, in that society. .
4. ...human needs are met worldwide.

Earth Charter www.earthcharter.org and www.earthcharter.org.au

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society for the 21st century. Created by the largest global consultation process ever associated with an international declaration, it has been endorsed by thousands of organizations representing millions of individuals. Earth Charter seeks to inspire in all peoples a sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the human family and the larger living world.

Ecological Footprint www.footprintnetwork.org

EcoSTEPS is a partner in the Global Footprint Network and strongly supports the use of Ecological Footprint in the Sustainability Charter to aid community understanding and engagement and also provide a comprehensive quantitative indicator of the dimensions of progress.

Blue Mountains Sustainable Business Charter
www.bluemountainsadvantage.com.au

This is a good example! EcoSTEPS have been involved in developing the Blue Mountains Sustainable Business Charter to engage and encourage the local community and businesses become more sustainable.

