

# SCER

The Office of Sustainability, Climate, Equity and Resilience

Marine and Coastal Zone Advisory Council (MACZAC) - West Hawaii Civic Center  
July 25, 2025

## Mission:

OSCER connects with County depts. and community, coordinates efforts across County systems, and builds capacity to advance Hawai'i Island self-reliance by:

- Deepening community connections
- Strengthening cross-departmental relationships for project implementation
- Gathering & sharing relevant knowledge & data
- Acquiring funding & resources to implement projects
- Embedding principles of SCER & traditional knowledge into County operations

## Vision:

A deep commitment to Hawai'i Island is integrated into County operations and community relationships, sustaining collective efforts to support the health of our land, people, and future.



# Responsibility of OSCER

## CONNECTING

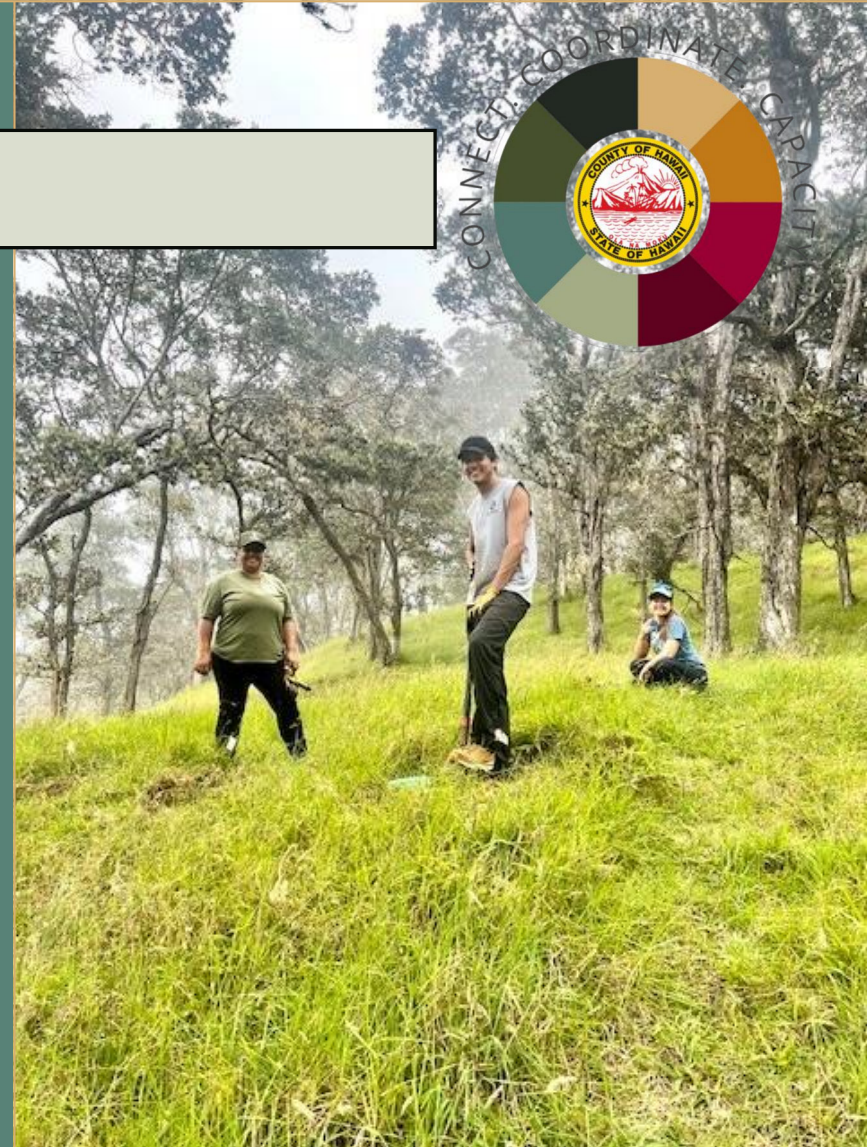
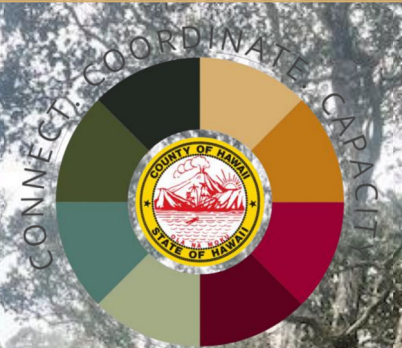
- With people in the community and internal to the County to share knowledge and resources about SCER on-island and implement action in a way that reflects the values of the people here.

## COORDINATING

- Efforts in the County to implement sustainability priorities, especially when efforts involve collaboration between different departments and external entities.

## BUILDING CAPACITY

- Within the County to be more SCER-conscious in the County's work so that County operations can protect our land and people





# Functions of OSCER



Program  
Development



Grant Writing/  
Management



Project  
Management



Data Collection



Communications  
& Outreach



Public Education  
& Awareness



Coordination &  
Synchronization



Collaboration &  
Connections

# History of OSCER



2008-2012

## County Green Team

- Focus: County Assets
- Participants: Departments
- Energy efficiency, water consumption, etc.

2008-2019

## Political Commitments

- State Clean Energy Initiative/Goals
- County commitments (upholding Paris Climate Agreement; Clean transportation; Aloha+ Challenge)
- Council declaration of Climate Emergency (2019)

2023

## Integrated Climate Action Plan (2023)

Purpose: The plan serves as a strategic roadmap for implementing climate action in municipal operations. The plan identifies actions the County of Hawai'i government can take.

Total Number of Actions: 290

OSCER

Established by Council in 2023

First staff hired mid/late 2024

# ICAP: Our Strategic Roadmap

**Background:** Adopted in 2023

**Purpose:** The plan serves as a strategic roadmap for implementing climate action in municipal operations. The plan identifies actions the County of Hawai'i government can take.

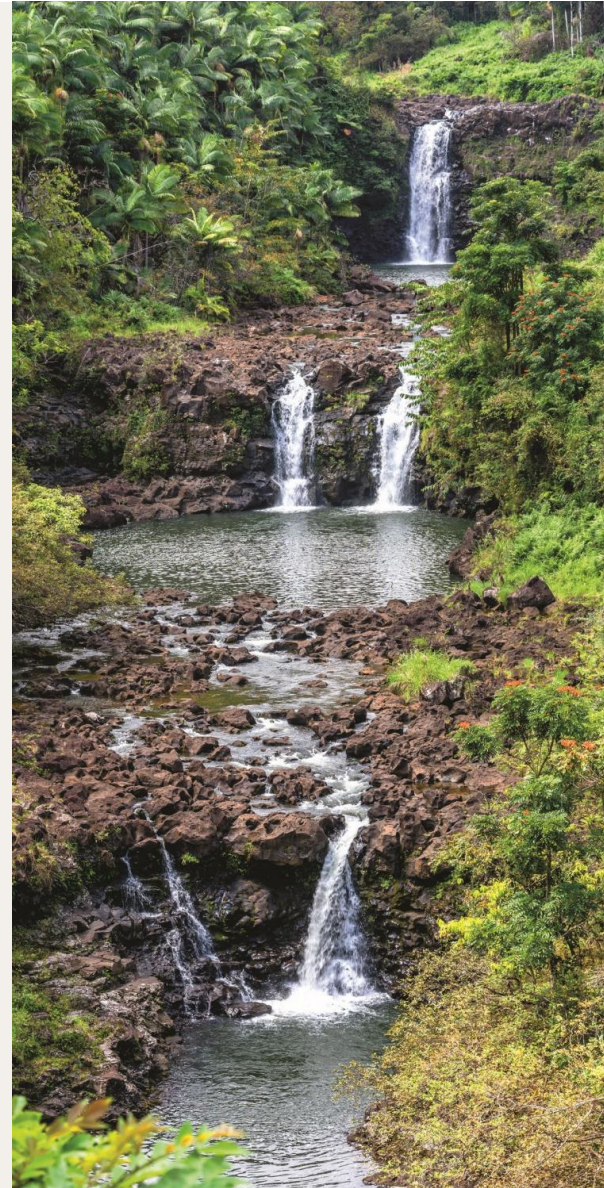
**Framework:** Integrated climate mitigation (greenhouse gas reduction) and climate adaptation (resilience to the impacts of climate change) actions

**Total Number of Actions:** 290

**Types of Actions:**

- Infrastructure
- Policy
- Research / Data
- Engagement /Outreach
- Resource Leveraging

*\*Note: Some actions have more than one component*



June 2023

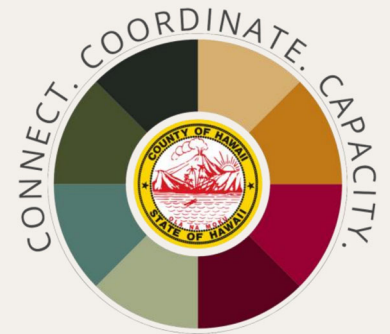
## Integrated Climate Action Plan for the Island of Hawai'i

*Climate Mitigation and Adaptation for Community Resilience in a Changing Climate*





# Initial Priority Areas



## Environmental & Cultural Resources

Support preservation of Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources.

## Climate Resilience

Prepare our people and infrastructure for changing weather.

## Local Systems

Support local businesses, food & people to strengthen community resilience.

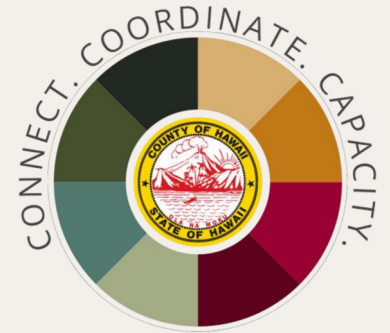
## Clean Energy & Transportation

Transition to renewable energy and transportation to reduce pollution.

## Waste Reduction

Reduce waste and repurpose materials, working with Dept. of Environmental Management

## Initial Priority Areas



### **Facilities Conditions Assessment & Energy Management Plan**

Acquired Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant funds to be used to assess the critical condition and prioritize renewable energy and energy efficient projects for County owned and managed facilities.

### **Participatory Storytelling Training**

Attained funds to build community voice and root our work in place-based knowledge through a participatory storytelling project.

### **County Reduced Waste Pilot Program**

Procured eco-friendly and reusable materials for small County events and education campaign.

### **Heat Campaign**

Collaborated with DOH & other counties for a summer informational campaign with multimedia materials on heat safety and illness and ongoing heat monitoring.

### **Grant Support**

OSCER led or supported numerous grant applications, securing many of those to fund projects that enhance County and community sustainability in our key priority areas, including environmental & cultural resources, clean energy & transportation and local food systems.



# Initial Collaborations & Projects



## Facilities Conditions Assessment & Energy Management Plan

- Scope: Conduct a Facilities Conditions Assessment of County facilities managed by DPW and Parks & Rec, including critical structural features, and create an Energy Management Plan
- Outcomes: Database of facility conditions; recommendations for facility improvements; recommended prioritization of improvements based on cost and critical services; recommendations for energy improvements
- Funding: Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant + OSCER funds
- Collaborators: Public Works, Parks & Rec, Finance, Research & Development, Hawaii Energy

## Grant Support:

- Rural Medical Communications – Collaborated w/ Civil Defense & DOH to get \$1M for emergency med communication
- Building Performance Standards – Collaborated with HSEO to get support for County-level action and staff to implement energy efficiency efforts with HSEO's \$18M of funding
- Coastal Zone Management – Collaborated with PONC for restoration project at Puapua'a Iki

## Coming Soon:

- Launch of OSCER Zero Waste Program for County events
- Roots of Resilience Native and Canoe Plant Project

# Puapua'a Iki Habitat Restoration Project



## NOAA – Transformation Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grant

- **Puapua'a Iki**
  - 11.5 Acres along Ali'i Drive
  - Drought-stricken
  - Cultural Significance – 9 ancient ruins and historic sites, including burial sites and Kauakaiakaola Heiau
- **Focus**
  - Shoreline Stability – implement erosion control and green infrastructure retention measures
  - Site Restoration – vegetation and historic



# Implementation Priority Areas

Action Areas that Align with Community Focus & ICAP



Hazard  
Management

Zero Waste

Land  
Management

Resilient  
Infrastructure

Water  
Conservation

Cesspool  
Conversion

Human  
Health

Energy Use

Fleet  
Conversion

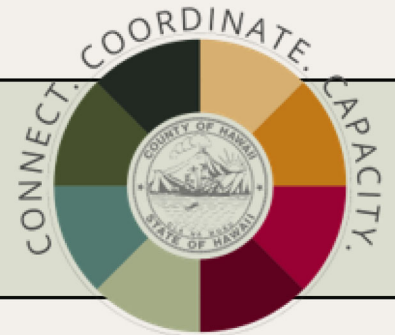
Efficient Use  
of Resources

Community  
Engagement

Policy  
Planning

Grant  
Funding

# ICAP High-Level Implementation Priorities



## IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

### SHORT-TERM 2023 - 2025

- Establish a centralized coordinating authority to oversee action implementation ✓
- Establish regular stakeholder engagement ✓

### MID-TERM 2025 - 2030

- Integrate climate change risk into County planning and decision-making
- Establish a County climate database
- Maintain robust stakeholder engagement

### LONG-TERM 2030 - 2040

- Update the General Plan using lessons learned from climate action implementation
- Support place-based management of Hawai'i Island lands and waters as part of climate action efforts



# Sustainability: More Than Energy & Climate



## Empowerment through Action

Empowering individuals and communities amplifies our collective ability to address climate challenges effectively.

Climate change and sustainability share roots with social justice issues. Addressing inequality, racism, and economic disparity go hand in hand with creating meaningful action.

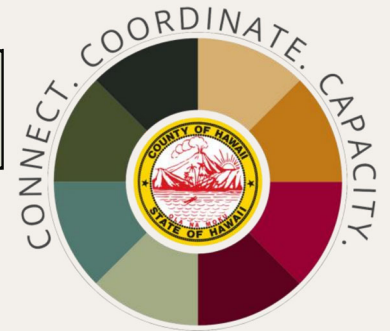
## Root Causes & Solutions



## Cultural Significance

Indigenous cultures like Hawai'i's emphasize deep ties between humans and nature. Ancient practices highlight sustainable stewardship ingrained in cultural heritage and should be foundational to any action

# Sustainability: More Than Energy & Climate



Sustainability isn't just about the environment; it's about people. The human aspect of sustainability should drive action.

## Human Dimension



Engagement with nature fosters a deeper understanding of sustainability. Building relationship with nature is a crucial part of any sustainability movement.

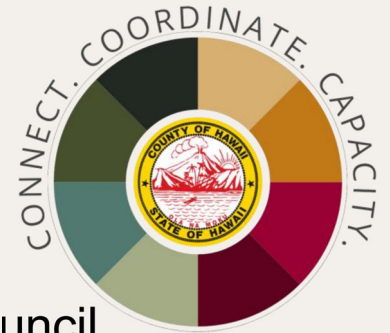
## Connecting People to Nature



## Opportunities in Hawai'i

Local initiatives and organizations in Hawai'i provide opportunities for involvement in climate action. See next slide for more info.

## Community Partners on Hawai'i Island

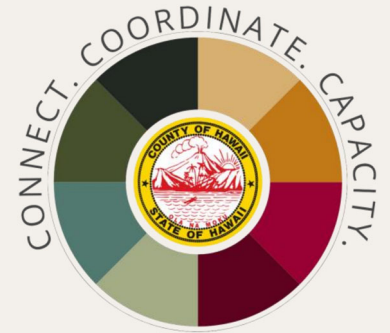


- Three Mountain Alliance
- Waikōloa Dry Forest Initiative
- Hui Ho'oleimaluō
- Hawai'i Environmental Restoration
- Stewardship at the Summit
- Hawaiian Electric
- University of Hawai'i - Hilo
- Hawai'i Community College
- Arizona State University
- Big Island Invasive Species Council
- Hawai'i Energy
- Kohala Center
- HuiMAU
- Vibrant Hawai'i
- Zero Waste Hawai'i
- 'Imiloa
- Coral Reef Alliance



Just to name a few (of many!)

## Making a Difference in Your Own Life



### **Integrate environmental awareness into whatever field you work in**

Example: Public school teachers integrating environmental education into curriculum & starting school farms; Farmers advocating for reuse infrastructure for value-added products

### **Practice sustainability in business**

Example: Implement energy-efficient technologies at your business; Incentivize employees to volunteer with conservation organizations; Prioritize local purchasing

### **Advocacy and policy engagement**

Example: Support climate change legislation; Vote for people that represent your values and concerns; Call your representative about your concerns

### **Volunteering opportunities**

Example: Beach clean-ups and tree-planting events

**In the end, building relationships within our community & place is the most sustainable practice we can do!**



# Mahalo!

[www.hawaiicounty.gov/OSCER](http://www.hawaiicounty.gov/OSCER)  
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