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### *Guidebook cuts through sustainability confusion*

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—[April 28, 2010]—The recently published Hawai‘i Sustainability Primer cuts through the confusion surrounding the term “sustainability” and offers a practical framework for organizations looking for help with environmental, social, and financial sustainability needs.

This 25-page, full-color guidebook is easy to read and includes success stories and visions that feature Hamakua Springs Country Farm, Kanu o ka ‘Aina New Century Public Charter School, Volcano Island Honey Company, Hawai‘i Preparatory Academy’s Energy Lab, and Hawai‘i County and State.

The downloadable primer was developed by The Natural Step Canada and edited for Hawai‘i Island by The County of Hawai‘i and The Kohala Center. It defines sustainability; discusses the indigenous wisdom of the Hawaiian *ahupua‘a* system; describes the root causes of unsustainability; outlines principles for a sustainable society; and focuses on how to plan, make decisions, and take action for sustainability.

The primer presents The Natural Step (TNS) Framework, the most universally adopted framework for strategically responding to environmental, social, and financial sustainability needs. This framework has already been tried and tested by world-leading corporate, public, and small businesses and is backed by over 20 years of scientific research and hands-on experience in Europe and North America. It provides a simple, scientifically robust definition of sustainability that facilitates innovative decision-making by matching opportunities for reducing costs and improving performance with strategies for long-term sustainability.

"The primer is made available just at the right time," said Matt Hamabata, executive director of The Kohala Center. "As business and government sectors look to reduce costs and build resilience during these difficult economic times, we need a new approach that marries immediate requirements with the strategic need to improve environmental, energy and economic performance of every enterprise. The energy and resource availability crisis has not gone away. Both the market and regulatory bodies are continuing to demand more sustainable products, services and corporate behavior, so this primer gives an example of how to do that successfully as a company or public organization."

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The TNS Framework has been used by many of the world's leading companies including Panasonic, Electrolux, Nike, BHP Billiton, Dow Chemical, and IKEA. In the State of Hawai'i, the TNS framework has been utilized by United States military for organizational planning and re-development of Fort Shafter.

"The primer will give readers the full picture about sustainability, showing where issues and tools such as carbon footprinting, triple bottom line reporting, green-labels and environmental management systems fit into the bigger, strategic picture," Hamabata said.

Introductory workshops and presentations on The Natural Step Framework were held on Hawai'i Island last June. The primer was developed to mark the passage of Hawai'i County Council's eco-municipality Resolution 249 in November 2009. This resolution adopted the science-based definition of sustainability and a strategic sustainability framework to be applied by Mayor Billy Kenoi's Green Team. The Green Team is tasked with improving the environmental, energy and economic performance of local government operations.

Hawai'i County joins a growing number of eco-municipalities across the world; two high-profile examples being Dublin in Ireland and the Resort Municipality of Whistler in Canada.

The primer may be downloaded at <http://www.kohalacenter.org/research.html>. A limited number of free printed copies will be available after May 15 at The Kohala Center in Waimea, Department of Research and Development in Kona at Lanihau Professional Center Suite 2001 and in the Hawai'i County Building Suite 1301 in Hilo. For more information, contact The Kohala Center at 887-6411 or [info@kohalacenter.org](mailto:info@kohalacenter.org).