



Environmental Literacy in New Jersey: A Call to Action



Section 6 The Strategic Initiatives

This section introduces four goal-oriented strategic initiatives that the commission and work group believe environmental education providers should focus some of their efforts on delivering (and many providers are already doing substantial work in these areas). These four initiatives address relevant needs and priorities in environmental education. As programs in these areas are implemented at local and regional levels they would be part of the larger system of support outlined in Section 5, all striving to cultivate an environmentally literate citizenry. They are:

- I. Know and Understand how Ecological Systems Work;
- II. Care for Ecological Systems;
- III. Keep the Environment and People Healthy; and
- IV. Plan for Today and Tomorrow's Quality of Life.

The commission, work group, DEP and other partners would use the environmental education forums, electronic resources, communications tools and other strategies outlined in Section 6, to promote and support the state's educational efforts about these four initiatives. Such support would include:

- Promote new information, expertise and studies useful to educators;
- Feature methods, resources and models for how they are being integrated into NJ classrooms (and in support of NJ environmental literacy plan goals);
- Feature methods, resources and models for how they are being delivered through informal instructional settings in NJ;
- Share announcements regarding grants, awards, enrichment, standards, guidance and new research findings and resources that support their advancement or improvement;
- Encourage partnerships, collaboration and leveraging of funds; and
- Collect, feature and promote information from providers about their work in these areas.

Through the commission and work group's partnership can the Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education, the groups will work together to feature workshops and speakers about these initiatives at New Jersey's annual environmental education conference. A summary of NJ activities concerning these initiatives would be reported to leaders in state government, education, environmental protection, and environmental education, as well as to ANJEE members, as part of *A Call to Action's* reporting process.

Each initiative is accompanied by background information, the overarching goal of the initiative, what the environmental education community can do, actions recommended for specific audiences and metrics for measuring success. Recommended actions and a timeline are presented in chart form and tailored to three broad audiences: adults (in any and all capacities as individuals, community members, business leaders, parents or consumers), educators (formal and informal, school-age and beyond), and youth. Some recommended actions are duplicated across the audiences as well as across initiatives.



Strategic Initiative I Know and Understand How Ecological Systems Work

Earth is host to a complex web of natural, human and built or constructed systems. Each system, whether it is ecological or human-related, can be identified and studied, but few, if any, exist in isolation. Social systems interrelate with financial; cultural interconnect with political; environmental interact with economic. But underlying all are the basic ecological systems and cycles that power the planet. Carbon, nitrogen and water cycles; soil, weather and air systems all enable life. The earth and ecological systems establish a foundation on which all human interactions are built and upon which human life, all forms of life, depend.

In *The Machinery of Nature* (1986), Paul Ehrlich states “all human beings and human activities are embedded in and dependent upon the natural ecosystems of our planet. Ecosystems are the machinery of nature that supports lives. Without the services provided by natural systems, civilization would collapse and human life would not be possible.”

As society shifts further away from its agrarian roots, fewer people are involved directly with understanding the natural systems of the planet. This is especially true of developed and developing countries where this isolation or separation from nature and natural systems brings with it endless challenges related to resource use, pollution, and climate change. People make personal and societal decisions without understanding the ramifications they have on the earth’s ecology. It is clear that “a lack of recognition of the extent to which all things are connected and a poor understanding of basic principles that govern natural systems has been partially responsible for adverse environmental impacts, economic failures and social programs that do not work, and difficulties in achieving sustainable societies.” (*Recommendation for a Sustainable and Secure Future*. Author, date, Pg 5)

Classes and organized courses may provide basic knowledge and accepted theory about ecological systems but first-hand experiences in nature, with nature, can provide the individual with a desire to use this knowledge when making life’s decisions.

Many science, environmental and natural resource professionals, as well as citizens committed to environmental protection and conservation, attribute current professional and personal pursuits to experiences they had earlier in their lives. These are the types of experiences that compel people to understand and value natural systems and become willing to consider the functioning of systems when making decisions at home, at work or in the community.

These types of first-hand lessons, observations and real life experiences with nature and surroundings form the bedrock for environmental literacy for citizens of all ages.



Strategic Initiative I Know and Understand How Ecological Systems Work



GOAL: Individuals will gain knowledge of how ecological systems function and understand how people are an integral part of these systems.

Environmental education providers can:

- Increase opportunities for individuals to explore, learn about, and understand the natural world, natural processes, and ecological systems by offering structured and unstructured outdoor, hands-on experiences and supplemental materials; and
- Promote the benefits of outdoor experiences and outdoor learning.

Recommended actions for working with the following target audiences:

(Years One to Three)

Adults	Educators (Formal and Non-formal)	Youth
<p>Environmental education providers can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and/or expand programs, classes and workshops in which participants experience nature. • Develop and/or expand programs, classes, workshops and seminars that nurture an understanding of natural processes and ecological systems as well as how natural areas can be created in backyards and community areas. • Develop and/or expand courses on ecological systems for local, county and state officials and other decision makers in professional capacities. • Develop and/or expand opportunities for parents or caregivers to learn about the importance of exposing their children to nature and to engage their families in frequent outdoor experiences. • Develop and/or create materials and establish long-term relationships with media and other outlets to promote the value of outdoor experiences and understanding basic ecological systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support pre-service and in-service professional development opportunities that use experiential learning to teach about ecological systems, in academic courses as well as career and education programs, afterschool and pre-school programs. • Work with the NJ Department of Education to ensure that study of ecological systems, earth and environmental sciences are included in formal curricula across grade levels and are reflected in the state content standards. • Integrate natural and social sciences into educational offerings and encourage collaborative teaching among these disciplines. • Ensure that environmental science and ecology materials and programs used by educators reflect current scientific theory. • Conduct professional development for supervisors and administrators on value of ecological systems and extending classrooms outdoors, through gardens, trails, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and/or expand opportunities for youth to participate in outdoor ecological experiences in the communities in which they live. • Use nature study, outdoor learning and outdoor recreation experiences as a springboard for teaching ecology. • Model respect for the natural world. • Provide assistance and support for programs for youth to include nature study and ecology, such as camps, scouting, afterschool programs, clubs, youth groups, etc.

(Years Three to Five)

Adult	Educators (Formal and Non-formal)	Youth
<p>Environmental education providers can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess, improve and create exhibits and informational pieces that interpret natural processes and ecological systems. • Provide and/or increase opportunities to learn about environmental, natural history and green collar careers. • Provide or support ecotourism, theme trails (i.e., coastal heritage trail), outdoor activities for families and individuals (i.e., earth caching, geocaching, orienteering) and nature pursuits (i.e., birdwatching, kayaking, nature photography, journaling, painting). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve cooperation between universities and curricula designers to incorporate ecological concepts at all levels. • Develop, promote, and revise college and professional training courses for all post-secondary students that demonstrate how ecological systems function and how people are an integral part of these systems. • Provide more opportunities for educators to learn about careers associated with the environment so that they can integrate this into their secondary education and college level curricula. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities and/or experiences to learn about natural resource, green collar and environmental careers, especially with secondary students. • Provide opportunities for youth to be mentored and/or to volunteer with natural resource and environmental professionals.

The commission, work group and partners can collect, track, feature, promote and report on the following types of information:

- **NJ Educational resources available about ecological systems**
 - Array of ecology and nature study courses offered in schools, colleges and universities, learning centers, organizations and communities;
 - Array of ecological and nature study outreach materials, including print, Internet-based and media-generated; and
 - Providers, experts and research findings that offer services, assistance and support of ecological systems, nature study, gardens and outdoor classrooms.
- **Public interest and response to learning about ecology and nature study**
 - Public participation in nature-based outdoor programs, ecology courses and programs;
 - Attendance at nature centers and other learning centers that have ecology and nature-based exhibits, programs, outdoor learning trails and stations;
 - Attendance at professional development and enrichment sessions for educators and youth leaders on ecological systems and nature study;
 - Tracking of natural resource, environmental and green collar career programs, promotion of them, and public interest in them;
 - Tracking of NJ green school initiatives and their inclusion of outdoor classrooms, gardens, and other educational features, and their links to curriculum and instruction; and
 - Tracking evidence of student learning in formal education regarding ecological and earth systems and environmental science.



Strategic Initiative II Care for Ecological Systems



According to National Science Foundation’s Advisory Committee for Environmental Research and Education (2003), “The footprint of human activity continues to expand to the point that it is having significant impact on nearly all of Earth’s environmental systems.” This report, titled *Complex Environmental Systems: Synthesis for Earth, Life, and Society in the 21st Century*, also considers “humans [to be the] major force shaping Earth’s surface and are conscious architects of urban, rural, natural, and protected ecosystems – both terrestrial and aquatic.”

Natural ecosystems as well as those systems created and manipulated by humans are inextricably interwoven and New Jersey itself is a complex web of natural beauty and diversity, an extensive and diverse population, and dynamic communities and metropolitan areas. Early in the 20th century, Aldo Leopold used the phrases “land ethic” and “stewardship ethic” in his famous work, *A Sand County Almanac*. Throughout this book, Leopold talks about people’s relationship with the land. He wrote “that land is a community is the basic concept of ecology, but that land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics.”

Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines environmental stewardship as, “the responsibility of environmental quality shared by all those whose actions affect the environment, reflected as both a value and a practice by individuals, companies, communities, and government organizations. Positive stewardship behavior demonstrates acceptance of this responsibility through the continuous improvement of environmental performance to achieve measurable results and sustainable outcomes.”

As stated earlier in *A Call to Action*, numerous remedies to the state’s environmental challenges require the public to take action because problems are caused in part by contributions from, or the actions of, many individuals. In order to achieve, restore and maintain healthy ecosystems and habitats and pursue actions regarding smart growth and sustainable practices, informed and involved citizens are needed in all sectors – government, industry, communities and schools, as well as at home. Stewardship initiatives offer people hands-on ways to experience natural systems and learn about them while helping to protect the environment.

Examples of stewardship initiatives already being offered in New Jersey by various organizations, agencies, companies and individuals include, but are not limited to: Volunteer monitoring and data collection programs, citizen science initiatives, adoption of waterway, coastal or land areas for cleanups, habitat and ecosystem restoration programs, energy and water conservation action programs, and numerous scout badge requirements.



Strategic Initiative II Care for Ecological Systems

GOAL: Individuals and organizations will adopt a stewardship ethic toward New Jersey’s natural resources to maintain, restore and preserve the integrity of ecological systems.

Environmental education providers can:

- Create and/or adapt materials and information about how individuals and organizations can care for natural systems in local, regional and global contexts;
- Develop or enhance programs that have active, age-appropriate stewardship components; and
- Encourage and support individual and group stewardship practices on local to global levels.

Recommended actions for working with the following target audiences:

(Years One to Three)

ADULTS	EDUCATORS (Formal and Non-formal)	YOUTH
<p>Environmental education providers can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and/or expand opportunities to understand the value of, and become involved with, stewardship practices at home, in the community and in the workplace. • Support the development of environmental stewardship initiatives by identifying and exploring local and regional natural resources and ecological systems, associated data, and related environmental challenges. • Establish and/or strengthen educational partnerships between non-governmental organizations, businesses, government agencies and landowners in order to increase and improve stewardship programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage inclusion of stewardship-based community service programs in schools, colleges and universities. • Use local natural resources, associated data and environmental challenges when developing education-based environmental stewardship initiatives. • Design and conduct professional development (in-service, pre-service, and non-formal education) on how to incorporate stewardship activities into service learning curricula, academic classes, club activities, afterschool programs, and youth group activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and/or enhance educational programs that highlight stewardship activities and community-oriented programs which are “youth-driven” in scope and action. • Explore how to engage youth in stewardship programs through media, Internet and electronic social networks.

(Years Three to Five)

ADULTS	EDUCATORS (Formal and Non-formal)	YOUTH
<p>Environmental education providers can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and recognize individuals, groups, businesses and government agencies that exemplify excellence in linking education to stewardship.• Develop and establish relationships with media, Intranet and electronic social networks to publicize the need for, status of, and value of ecological stewardship.• Provide and/or increase opportunities to learn about careers in ecological stewardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with the New Jersey Department of Education to integrate and support service learning objectives through community-based environmental stewardship.• Provide and/or increase opportunities to learn about careers associated with environmental stewardship and how to integrate that knowledge into academic and career and technology curricula.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledge youth who initiate and work on stewardship projects that make a significant contribution to the community.• Provide opportunities and/or experiences to learn about, or volunteer in, careers in habitat preservation, restoration and management.

The commission, work group and partners can collect, track, feature, promote and report on the following types of information:

- **Types of NJ stewardship programs available to the public**
 - Array and types of stewardship programs that are available;
 - Array of outreach materials, including print, Internet-based and media-generated, that offers guidance and information regarding stewardship activities; and
 - Providers, experts and research findings that offer services, assistance and support for various stewardship programs.
- **Public interest and response to NJ stewardship opportunities**
 - Public participation in various types of stewardship initiatives;
 - Attendance at nature centers and other learning centers that offer stewardship programs, training, courses, service and volunteer opportunities;
 - Attendance at professional development and enrichment sessions for educators and youth leaders on stewardship and service learning initiatives;
 - Tracking of natural resource, environmental and green collar career programs, promotion of them, and public interest in them; and
 - Tracking of NJ school and campus-based stewardship programs; and student interest and participation in them.



Strategic Initiative III

Keep the Environment and People Healthy



The term “environment” is often used to describe nature. However, the Random House Dictionary defines this term as, “the aggregate of surrounding things, conditions, or influences, especially as affecting the existence or development of someone or something.” It stands to reason then, that the environment affects people who in turn, affect the environment. One positive effect the environment has is on youth. Psychologists are finding evidence that children who participate in unstructured playtime in nature are less prone to attention deficit disorder and social isolation. These findings are prompting daily outdoor play, safe community green areas, and nature programs for children and families, especially in underserved communities.

The Collaborative on Health and the Environment (CHE), a national network of individuals, organizations and agencies states, “Scientific evidence increasingly indicates a relationship between a range of environmental factors and [a diversity] of diseases and conditions.” CHE goes on to say, “Since World War II, more than 85,000 synthetic chemicals have been registered for use in the United States and another 2,000 are added each year. These pollutants have become widespread in our air, water, soil, food, homes, schools and workplaces, and thus also in our bodies.”

There is increasing evidence that a person’s health and wellbeing can be affected by one’s environment. Asthma sufferers who spend time outdoors are cautioned about increased mold spores and plant allergens as well as air pollution. However, the quality of indoor environments is just as important. Gases released from construction materials, furniture or cleaning supplies can cause allergic reactions or more serious health conditions. Or, the amount of light in a building can affect a person’s ability to concentrate. The study of indoor environments and building design and their effects on the health of persons using them have led to healthy schools and green buildings programs and research. Environmental health education is a large part of these programs.

In urban centers and aging suburban areas nationwide, studies show the disproportionate effects of exposure to environmental hazards on minority and poor children, and other residents. New Jersey’s Environmental Justice Program helps ensure fair treatment of all people, with respect to how environmental laws and policies are carried out. According to the Environmental Protection Agency’s definition for environmental justice, “no one should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations.” Public education plays a big role in empowering residents to become involved with community planning and development activities.

Each day people make numerous decisions for themselves, their families, businesses and communities. For these to be informed decisions, rational analysis and not just emotional reaction must be practiced. Not all information sources are equally valid and not all risks are equivalent. Understanding that risk is a factor that can be measured and compared, and that possibilities are not the same as probabilities, are characteristics of environmental literacy.



Strategic Initiative III Keep the Environment and People Healthy

GOAL: Individuals will follow lifestyles that improve the quality of the environment and human health.

Environmental education providers can:

- Investigate and become familiar with the environmental health concerns that are localized and/or relevant to the audiences being served;
- Utilize information and educational resources that illustrate how human actions affect environmental systems and how the health of the environment can, in turn, affect human health; and
- Provide opportunities for individuals to understand risk when making personal, business and community decisions that affect human and environmental health.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS for working with the following target audiences:

(Years One to Three)

Adults	Educators (Formal and Non-formal)	Youth
Environmental education providers can:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and support practices that protect environmental and human health. • Identify environmental health concerns that are localized or relevant to constituents being served; offer materials and programs that address the concern(s) and include discussion on causes and prevention measures, risk analysis, and any economic, cultural or social factors involved. • Create opportunities to discuss and assess short-term environmental effects vs. long-term environmental exposure related to environmental health concerns. • Encourage parents /caregivers to include activities such as hiking, walking, nature study and other outdoor pursuits in their own lives and those of their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate appropriate environmental concepts into curricula, programs, materials and services that address human health and well-being. • Include in pre-service and in-service professional development offerings a focus on how human health and environmental health are linked. • Incorporate risk analysis about environmental and human health concerns into health, science, and other related programs or curricula for secondary and college level students. • Encourage and support healthy indoor environments at schools, campuses and other learning institutions. • Encourage physical and outdoor activity in school, pre-school and after school classes and community programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate in an age-appropriate manner, discussion of environmental and human health issues into programs and materials that are directed toward youth. • Provide or coordinate local volunteer and community service opportunities for youth that focus on improving the environment in order to help reduce or prevent impacts on human health. • Encourage or provide opportunities for children to play outdoors as well as in natural areas.

(Years Three to Five)

Adults	Educators (Formal and Non-formal)	Youth
Environmental education providers can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support web-based informational services that relate to human health and the environment.• Establish long-term relationships with media and other outlets to promote healthy lifestyles.• Provide and/or increase opportunities to learn about human and environmental health careers. .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide and/or increase opportunities for educators to learn about human and environmental health careers and to integrate environmental careers into curricula.• Support the construction and maintenance of schools and other learning centers that incorporate environmentally responsible practices and materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide opportunities and/or experiences that teach about careers in human and the environment health.

The commission, work group and partners can collect, track, feature, promote and report on the following types of information:

- **Types of NJ environmental health education initiatives available**
 - Methods for integrating environmental and related human health issues into course offerings in schools, colleges, learning institutions, workplaces and community groups;
 - Array of outreach materials, including print, Internet-based and media-generated, that offers guidance and information on environmental health challenges;
 - Methods and resources for educating people about risk perception and analysis; and
 - Providers, experts and research findings that offer services, assistance and support for various environmental health concerns.
- **Public interest and response to NJ environmental health education initiatives**
 - Public participation in environmental health programs, training, community meetings, environmental justice forums, etc.;
 - Attendance at schools, learning institutions, businesses and organizations that offer environmental health courses, exhibits, service and volunteer opportunities;
 - Attendance at professional development and enrichment sessions for educators and youth leaders that feature or include environmental health education initiatives;
 - Tracking of NJ healthy school program activities;
 - Tracking of natural resource, environmental and green collar career programs, promotion of them, and public interest in them; and
 - Tracking evidence of student learning in formal education regarding environmental quality and human health, such as in health and science.



Strategic Initiative IV Plan for Today and Tomorrow's Quality of Life

One commonly quoted definition of sustainability was put forth in 1987 by the Brundtland Commission (World Commission on Environment and Development) and states, "sustainable development meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." As activities in communities and cities around the world become more advanced it becomes evident that individuals should have a basic understanding of ecological systems, how the environment affects human health as well as social and economic factors, and how humans affect the environment. In addition, sustainable decision making about the environment pertains to the informed and equitable use of resources today so that they are not depleted, damaged, or destroyed without regard to the needs of future generations. In recognizing the far-reaching consequences that today's decisions can have, it becomes very important that solutions to today's environmental challenges address short and long-term needs and factor in the causes, relationships and patterns related to that challenge.

In 2002 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution that designated a ten-year period (2005-2014) as the "Decade for Education about Sustainable Development." Conference proceedings state, "We firmly believe that a key to sustainable development is the empowerment of all people...and that a key to such empowerment is action-oriented education." (*Decade of Education for Sustainable Development – Taking It Forward Together*, 2005, pgs. 16-17).

In New Jersey, juggling the needs and challenges of a healthy environment with the state's economy and in an equitable manner concerning all residents can be daunting; but it becomes essential in the long-term effort to maintain the state's quality of life, sustain a healthy business environment, and preserve biological diversity. One statewide effort to build sustainable communities is the Sustainable Jersey model, a certification and incentive program for municipalities that "want to go green, save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term." Dozens of New Jersey communities have signed on to this model and school and community based education are part of its design.

The NJ chapter of the U.S. Green Buildings Council has a mission to promote buildings in New Jersey that are "environmentally responsible, cost effective, productive, and healthy places to live, learn, and work." Its Green Schools Committee pursues high performance school construction and the use of green schools curriculum and activities. This chapter, along with other regional and state level groups that administer workforce and career-based training programs, are exploring avenues for delivering green collar job initiatives in New Jersey.

Finally, an organization tracking the state's sustainability planning efforts is the NJ Sustainable State Institute and it has the following goal for education: "A quality, lifelong education equally accessible to all New Jerseyans, whereby individuals learn to be critical thinkers and engaged citizens with an understanding of and respect for the systems that support civilization (social, economic and environmental)." The state's accomplishments and growth of environmental education and its pursuit to cultivate an environmentally literate citizenry should and is being relied on to help advance sustainability and quality of life goals in New Jersey.



Strategic Initiative IV Plan for Today and Tomorrow's Quality of Life



GOAL: Individuals will possess the knowledge and skills needed to make decisions and plans that will benefit today's quality of life and that of future generations.

Environmental education providers can:

- Explore impacts of human activities on other living and non-living things, as well as within natural and human systems, and the short and long-term consequences of these activities;
- Engage in environmental decision making and problem solving activities and ensure that related ecological, political, social, economic, health as well as environmental considerations and/or systems are incorporated into these processes;
- Encourage individuals and decision-makers to understand that not all components of "quality of life" can be measured, quantified or monetarily assessed;
- Encourage individuals and decision makers to address environmental challenges by collecting and analyzing information and research and by participating in active discussion, consensus building and the generation of short- and long-term plans; and
- Help individuals recognize that action as well as inaction directly relates to quality of life concerns of today's individuals or communities, as well as those in the future.

Recommended actions for working with the following target audiences:

(Years One to Three)

Adults	Educators (Formal and Non-formal)	Youth
Environmental education providers can:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop or enhance programs and classes that incorporate a systems-oriented approach to environmental awareness and responsibility and include sustainable principles and practices. • Develop or enhance materials, exhibits and products that broaden understanding of environmental challenges and solutions so that risk analysis and short and long-term consequences are included. • Encourage active community involvement and informed participation in local decision-making processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and/or enhance pre-service and in-service professional development that demonstrates how a systems approach to understanding the environment is valuable and can be integrated into curriculum. • Incorporate the use of real and local environmental challenges for problem solving and planning needs, through place-based simulations, role-playing and case studies, and include sustainable principles and practices. • Support efforts to involve students in environmental citizenship activities locally and at various levels of government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create experiences and programs for youth that use a systems approach to addressing environmental challenges and include sustainable principles and practices. • Provide opportunities for youth to practice skills related to identifying, researching, assessing, evaluating and providing short- and long-term solutions and plans that address environmental challenges and that consider sustainable principles and practices.

(Years Three to Five)

Adult	Educators (Formal and Non-formal)	Youth
<p>Environmental education providers can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with environmental commissions and other local officials to encourage informed environmental decision-making. • Facilitate collaborations that transfer school-based environmental education to community practice. • Develop and establish relationships with media and other outlets to produce and publicize dialogue about environmental planning and decision making. • Provide opportunities to learn about careers in environmental decision making, including systems analysis, modeling and planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue cross-disciplinary integration of systems-based environmental decision making and planning and inclusion of sustainable principles and practices. • Provide opportunities for educators to learn about how to incorporate sustainable principles and practices into most careers and fields, as well as in environmental decision making, such as through systems analysis, modeling and planning; and, integrate this career information into curricula. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and help coordinate civic involvement of youth in local or regional community decision-making and planning exercises, regarding environmental challenges. • Provide opportunities and/or experiences for youth to learn about careers in systems analysis, modeling and planning, as well as how sustainable principles and practices can be incorporated into most careers and fields of study.

The commission, work group and partners can collect, track, feature, promote and report on the following types of information:

- **Types of NJ planning and sustainability education initiatives available**
 - Methods, programs, materials and resources available for integrating environmental decision-making and planning into course offerings in schools, colleges, learning institutions, workplaces and community groups, for various ages;
 - Methods, programs, materials and resources available for integrating sustainable principles and practices into course offerings in schools, colleges, learning institutions, workplaces and community groups, for various ages;
 - Providers, experts and studies that offer services, assistance and support for adult and youth-focused and community based environmental education and leadership; and
 - Providers, experts and studies that offer services, assistance and support for education about sustainable principles and practices in New Jersey.
- **Public interest in NJ planning and sustainability education initiatives**
 - Public participation in community environmental planning activities and forums;
 - Public participation in community-based sustainability forums and models;
 - Attendance at professional development and enrichment sessions for educators and youth leaders that focus on environmental planning and/or sustainability;
 - Tracking of green collar career program and public interest in them; and
 - Tracking evidence of student learning about environmental planning and sustainability.