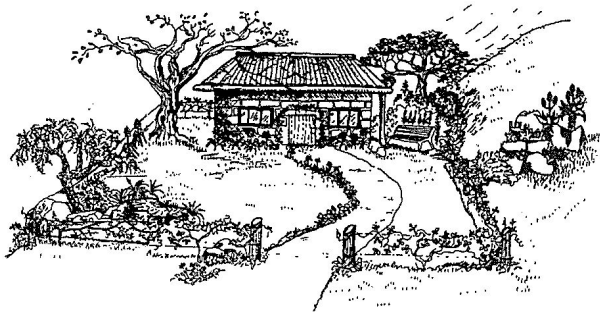


Change Choices Good, Better, Best

Household Environmental Management



Stepping Up to Sustainability

Stepping Up to Sustainability – how can we live more sustainably and make positive lifestyle choices?

In 2011, WESSA launched the 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' concept. With the support of various partners, USAID and other funders, eleven 'Sustainability Commons' have been established across South Africa.

Each of these 'Sustainability Commons' will practice sustainable living by:

- reducing, sorting and managing waste better,
- installing renewable technologies,
- conserving and teaching about water management, as well as,
- providing experiential courses on biodiversity.

The goal is simple - to put into practice the lifestyle choices we all need to make! These innovative concepts are set to expand as we all 'step up to sustainability' and seek to change our environmental footprints into environmental handprints of practice for a more sustainable future!



Our homes

A good place to start!

Close your eyes and paint a picture of your environment in your mind's eye. What do you see? Can you see plants and animals, water and sun? What about houses, cars, factories or roads? Are there people in your picture? Where do you fit in?

Every one of us has a unique perception of our own environment and no two are the same. If we look carefully, however, we would probably find that each person's picture shares a few common features, one of them being the places where we live.

Whether we live in cities, or in small rural towns, we can all incorporate sustainable living practices into our daily routines.

The benefits of 'stepping up' to more sustainable living practices include:

- A sense of pride in acting with environmental responsibility;
- A healthier and cleaner living environment;
- A reduction in household living expenses;
- The whole family working together!

Did you know?

Rosemary, nasturtiums, peppermint, sage and basil are natural pest repellents and keep flying insects and ants away.

Did you know?

Having a long shower of 35 to 40 minutes uses more water than taking a bath.

Did you know?

You can reduce your electricity bill by 10% simply by unplugging appliances or switching devices off at the wall.

Good Change Choices

Our homes



Water. Switch off taps properly after use.



Energy. Turn off lights and electrical equipment when leaving a room



Paper. Reduce use of paper towels and tissues and replace with cloths and handkerchiefs.



Waste minimisation. Donate old books, clothes etc rather than throwing them away.



Reduce impact of our eating habits.

Buy locally grown food as much as possible.



Think and act environmentally. Join an environmental group. They need your support!



Reduce use of energy and fossil fuels.

Don't leave the fridge door open longer than necessary.



Eliminate use of ozone-depleting products.

Purchase aerosol sprays bearing 'ozone friendly' logos.

Where possible, replace with non-aerosol alternatives

Better Change Choices

Our homes



Water. Water your garden early in the day (before 9am) to minimise water loss through evaporation.



Energy. Reduce the temperature setting of your hot water geyser (55-60°C is adequate) and switch it off when going away for long periods.



Eliminate use of products tested on animals. Purchase beauty products and household cleaners marked with 'cruelty-free' or 'not tested on animals' logos.



Develop your grounds naturally. Put up bird baths, nest boxes and feeding trays.



Think and act environmentally. Celebrate special environmental days.



Monitor and protect natural habitats.

List and map all of the invasive alien plants in your garden and find out how to control them.



Water. Reduce the amount of water used with each toilet flush by putting a cooldrink bottle filled with stones into the toilet cistern.

Best Change Choices

Our homes



Develop your grounds naturally. Plant indigenous plants and trees to attract wildlife such as:

- White Stinkwood, Wild Olive, Wild Figs, Forest num-num and Nana Berry for berries and fruit;
- Cape Honeysuckle, Aloes, Tree Fuscia, Natal Bottlebrush, Proteas and Red Hot Pokers for nectar;
- Indigenous grasses for seeds.



Install solar panels or windmills to run some of your home's electrical equipment. Solar panels will lower your electricity costs and are easily installed.



Upgrade toilets to 'double' flush systems. Upgrading toilets to dual flush toilets reduces water usage dramatically.



WESSA Share-Net

People
Places and
Publications
For
Environmental Education

For **environmental resources** to support better lifestyle choices, contact WESSA Share-Net, 033-330 3931 ext 124 or 144; e-mail us at sharenet@wessa.co.za or visit our website www.wessa.org.za

Main funding agent of the WESSA 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' project.

Did you know?

About half of the refuse we throw away each day can be turned into compost, thus reducing waste, recycling valuable resources and enriching the soil.

Did you know?

There are more than 20 300 indigenous species of flowering plants that occur in South Africa.

Did you know?

Most of South Africa's electricity comes from fossil fuels – via coal power stations. The power we get from coal causes air pollution, acid rain and global warming.

Practice the
lifestyle choices
we all have to make!!