

Motivating Sustainable Project Management Practice – The CCSD Project Manager’s Toolkit Journey

By Prawindra Mukhia (PMP, PgMP)
PMI New Zealand , PMI Global Volunteer of
Sustainability Outreach Project Team

Our journey began in May 2021 when a group of passionate PMINZ (Project Management Institute of New Zealand) members embarked on a trailblazing initiative to develop a sustainable project management Toolkit for the Christchurch City Council. We know that local government’s positive initiatives have considerable impact on the communities. Fortunately, the Christchurch City Council wholeheartedly supported our endeavor and provided a generous sustainability fund of \$NZ 20,000, which allowed our vision to take shape and gain momentum.

Why did we embark on this ambitious quest?

Our premise is simple yet crucial – amidst the ever-growing abundance of information and knowledge about sustainability, we found ourselves facing a significant conundrum. The sheer deluge of resources available to us, while undeniably valuable, has created an intricate web of complexity, leaving us submerged in a vast and daunting sea of information, struggling to navigate it effectively.

As project managers committed to promoting sustainable practices, we recognized that merely having access to information was not enough to drive meaningful change. Instead, we needed a carefully crafted Toolkit that would serve as a compass, guiding us through the labyrinth of sustainability considerations and empowering us to make well-informed decisions. Our vision for the Toolkit extended beyond a mere compilation of best practices; we sought to distill the most relevant and practical insights from an overwhelming sea of data. By doing so, we aimed to create a valuable resource that project managers in Christchurch (and others working in local governments), and beyond, could readily embrace and apply to their initiatives.

We recognized that the complexities of sustainability are multifaceted, spanning environmental, social, and economic dimensions. The Climate Change and

Sustainable Development (CCSD) Project Manager’s Toolkit’s design, therefore, encompassed a holistic approach, ensuring that project managers could address the interplay of various factors while keeping sustainability at the forefront of their decision-making process. By providing clear frameworks, case studies, and actionable strategies, we sought to equip project managers with the tools they needed to integrate sustainability seamlessly into their projects.



PMINZ members – Bapon, Prawindra, Sylvia and Faiz

That was the initial motivation, and it presented our team with a formidable challenge: How can we create a compelling and practical document that will empower project managers to seamlessly integrate sustainability principles into their endeavors?

After careful consideration, we charted a path to develop a tailor-made sustainable project management process exclusively for the Christchurch City Council. The Council has always been a beacon of leadership in various domains, and we saw this initiative as yet another golden opportunity for them to demonstrate their unwavering commitment to sustainability and wield their considerable influence positively.

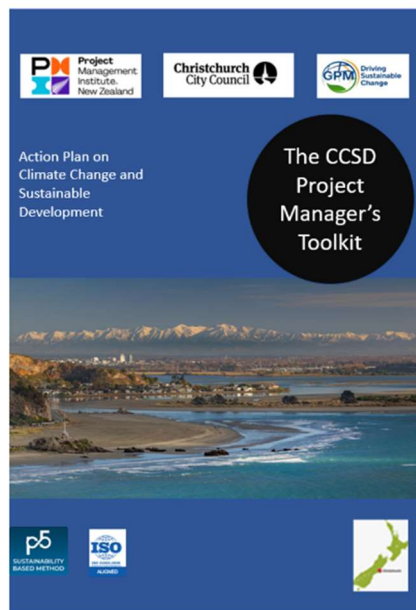
The diverse and dedicated CCSD council crew, comprising eight staff members from various units, brought together a range of expertise, including seasoned project managers, visionary climate change advisors, and insightful PMO personnel. Additionally, the PMINZ team added to this rich tapestry with accomplished consultants and seasoned program managers lending their invaluable expertise.



At the workshop with Council staff

During collaborative workshops, the driving force behind this amalgamation of minds was to gain a comprehensive understanding of what the council could achieve concerning sustainability and its long-term implications.

The result of this collaboration was the creation of the CCSD Project Manager's Toolkit, a 46-page document that encapsulates a wealth of knowledge and practical tools.



The Project Manager's Toolkit draws upon the Council's existing project management practices, PMI's governance guides and the GPM (Green Project Management) P5 Standard for Sustainability in Project Management which we were excited to learn had just established a working relationship at the global level. Among the Toolkit's key components are:

- A robust framework to analyze project and process impacts on environmental /climate change risks, social and project specific economic factors;

- A focus on the benefits of sustainable practices incorporating the whole of life approach;

- A demonstration of the alignment between Council's strategic objectives, UN SDGs (United Nations Sustainable Development Goals), and GPM's P5 model;

- A systematic methodology to establish clear and measurable KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for project success;

- Eleven templates examples for project implementation and tracking, streamlining sustainable project management practices;

- Essential background information on climate change impacts to foster a deeper understanding among project managers;

- A comprehensive suite of over 40 reference documents, offering invaluable climate change tools, guidance, and policies to support informed decision-making.

Importantly, what we have demonstrated through CCSD is that by assessing projects for their impacts and planning meticulously from the outset, we can achieve minimized wastage, clarity of project requirements and maximized benefits. The Toolkit serves as a guiding light, illuminating the path towards sustainable project management practices, not only benefitting the Christchurch City Council, but also setting an example for other organizations to follow suit.

Where is the Journey Now and What Next?

The unveiling of CCSD in June 2023 marked a significant milestone in our sustainability journey and it should serve as compelling motivation for both Project Managers and organizations. The Toolkit request form is now accessible through the PMI - Climate Change and Sustainability Action Group's (CCSAG) link, making it readily available to interested parties.

[PMI - Climate Change and Sustainability Action Group](#)

Looking ahead, the Toolkit is now accessible to Council's Project Managers and its application is being encouraged. Council is still learning how best to apply and operationalize it. We are eager to witness project managers

from other local governments examine, implement, and contribute suggestions for improvement to the Toolkit. We firmly believe that collective collaboration and knowledge-sharing will further enhance its impact and effectiveness.

Our commitment to sustainability extends beyond the initial launch of CCSD. We are dedicated to fostering ongoing local dialogues within PMINZ and forging meaningful collaborations with other like-minded New Zealand organizations that share our passion for climate change and sustainability. Together, we can drive positive change on a broader scale and foster a community of sustainability champions.

In recognition of the importance of sustainable practices, PMINZ has demonstrated its support by introducing the ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) Award, scheduled for the coming year. This prestigious award should serve as motivation for all organizations that aspire to be truly "sustainability-driven." It acknowledges and celebrates the efforts of those who proactively integrate sustainability principles into their operations, creating a positive impact on both their organizations and the wider community.

Summary

My objective in penning this article was to galvanize project managers to wholeheartedly embrace sustainability principles in their work. We recognize the historical challenges posed by the overwhelming abundance of information and time constraints in this endeavor.

I firmly believe that the responsibility lies with organizations to invest in and develop their own CCSD Toolkit, custom-tailored to align with their strategic objectives. By doing so, they empower and inspire project managers to spearhead sustainable project management practices. Our CCSD for local government represents just one initiative that can serve as a foundation for continuous refinement and improvement.

As project managers, we are leaders with a crucial cause and motivation – sustainability. By integrating sustainable practices into our projects, we contribute to positive change, making a lasting impact on our communities and the environment.

Together, let us embrace sustainability as not just a buzzword, but a guiding principle that shapes our decisions and actions. By working hand in hand, we can forge a future where sustainable project management becomes the norm, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come.

We can and do make the difference.

And here is what some of our CCSD Toolkit team members have to say about their motivation for sustainable project management.

Dr. Bapon Fakhruddin, Water Sector Lead, Green Climate Fund

"When we began creating the CCSD toolkit, our hearts were filled with love for our planet and a burning desire to protect it. Looking back, it stirs a sense of pride and joy within me. Yet, I know this is just the start of our journey. We need to make sustainability a part of our lives. Let's rise and navigate towards a sustainable future with this Toolkit as our compass for project management."

Tony Moore, Principal Advisor Climate Resilience. Christchurch City Council.

As a public servant, I am motivated to make a real difference for our wonderful people and special place. It was great to have a cross council team work with PMINZ colleagues to bring this toolkit to life.

Project Managers have a profound impact on outcomes delivered. That's why it's so important to have a mandate and the tools to embrace sustainability and climate resilience.

The CCSD Project Managers Toolkit makes it easy for our staff to understand and apply best practice approaches. It aligns with our processes and uses council templates, making it easy to embed in our projects.

Numerous social, environmental and economic benefits will result from its use – and that's a proud and positive legacy we all want to achieve. We hope that others can benefit from this important work.

Sylvia Maclaren, Programme Manager,
Sorm Environmental (NZ)

Project managers often don't realise their power to influence a project's fundamental outcomes. Moving our projects towards a sustainable future is crucial, and something I'm passionate to drive.

Peter MacGibbon, Senior Project Manager,
Recreation, Sports & Events Unit,
Christchurch City Council

Sustainable projects can reduce negative environmental impacts, mend the planet for our children, and improve the client's bottom line. There are opportunities to win all round.

Dr. Faiz Rasool, CEO and Founder, PM
Training School, Auckland, (NZ)

"As an agile expert, my motivation was to integrate sustainability with agility, innovatively transforming project management practices for a greener future."

Richard Wesley, Project Manager for
Business Systems Improvement,
Christchurch City Council

We all have a role to play in reducing our impact on planet earth. In project management there are many opportunities to make big improvements. Exploring new ideas and ways of doing things, and then sharing these ideas with others is so important. This PMINZ led toolkit does both these things.

Dr. Joel Carboni, Founder of Green Project
Management

"My personal motivation, which started 15 years ago, stems from a deep-seated belief in the power of sustainable practices to transform industries and ultimately, our world. I see sustainability not only as an ethical obligation but also as a strategic advantage that can drive innovation, efficiency, and long-term value creation. For me, sustainable project management is about integrating these principles into every stage of a project, from planning to execution, to ensure we are making the

most responsible and effective use of resources.

This commitment to sustainability is also driven by a vision of the future where businesses no longer have to choose between profitability and responsibility. I believe that through sustainable project management, we can demonstrate that these goals are not mutually exclusive, but rather, deeply interconnected. By aligning our project goals with the broader objective of sustainability, we can create outcomes that benefit not just our bottom line, but also our communities, our environment and future generations. It's this potential for transformation on such a wide scale that truly motivates me to champion sustainable project management.

Jon Bruce, Project Lead, DETA Global (NZ)

I am impressed with the functionality of the Toolkit and how it embraced integration with existing systems, such as the Council's own project management framework. The Toolkit has helped me to understand how any project, particularly those at an early stage of development, can integrate sustainability across the entire lifecycle, and has been effective toward helping me communicate these concepts to others.