

Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Energies

# Sustainable Development Policy

Balancing the needs  
of people and the planet



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# Message From the President

I am pleased to present Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Energies' Sustainable Development Policy. This document demonstrates to our stakeholders what sustainability means to us and how sustainability drives our mission, our values and our strategies.

Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Energies views sustainability as a business' ability to meet consumers' needs in a manner that ensures resources are not diminished. This is the reason why Tewaohnhì'saktha initiated Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Energies. We recognized that the energy needs of households, institutions, and businesses will only continue to grow in light of the energy-dependent technologies used by consumers.

It is widely recognized that the main forms of energy production used in the past are not sustainable as they are reliant on fossil fuels. In response to this dilemma, wind energy is a sustainable energy source with minimal environmental impacts. As its name indicates, Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Energies has a mission that goes beyond wind energy and is looking at pursuing other means of sustainable energy such as solar and run-of-the-river turbines, while keeping abreast of any new sustainable energy technologies that may be implemented in the future in Quebec and Canada.

We invite and welcome feedback from our stakeholders on how we can further improve Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Energies' Sustainability Development Policy.

Respectfully,

**John Bud Morris**  
President



**John Bud Morris**  
President



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# Who is KSE ?

Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Energies (KSE) was founded in 2010 as a subsidiary company of the Kahnawà:ke Economic Development Commission (KEDC) with the goal of developing renewable energy projects for environmentally-sound revenue generation.

Defining a sustainable development policy is a responsible business practice that fosters a respectful relationship with the planet and all its inhabitants, present and future. Involving stakeholders in meaningful, respectful, and open dialogue is integral to the evaluation and improvement of our projects.

This document outlines the philosophy, vision, mission, values, principles and commitments by which KSE operates in shaping its present and future endeavors.

*For KSE, sustainability involves practices that reflect long-term thinking and informed decision-making.*

## Our Motto

As our name implies, sustainability is a primary driving force for our company. The decisions we make today regarding our energy choices will shape the wellbeing of the future generations. For KSE, sustainability involves practices that reflect long-term thinking and informed decision-making for balancing the needs of people and the planet. This is our motto and our responsibility.

Although we all have different lifestyles, livelihoods, and values, as humans we all share the same responsibility to establish harmonious relationships with each other and the world around us. This responsibility is woven into every aspect of KSE's policies and practices. Through our sustainable energy projects we strive to fulfill our responsibility to protect all parts of the natural world, strengthen our human relations, and ensure that the cycles of life continue.



## Our Logo

KSE's logo is reflective of the creation story of the Haudenosaunee people that recounts the formation of North America on the back of the great sea turtle. Turtle Island is our homeland and we hold the important responsibility of making good decisions that keep our homeland healthy for the future generations. The wind, sun, and water portrayed on the turtle's back can provide us with endless supplies of clean and renewable energy. This is the focus of KSE's business and of our commitment towards balancing the needs of people and the planet.



# Our Philosophy

Every inhabitant on the planet shares a collective responsibility to respect our Mother the Earth and ensure that our lifestyles, livelihoods, and development do not hinder her capacity to sustain us and the future generations. As Mohawk people, this responsibility is passed down to us in the words of the Ohén:ton Karihwatékhwen, which in our language means “the words that come before all else”. These words are also called the Thanksgiving Address which brings us to a common appreciation and respect for all parts of the natural world.

The modern term that is used to reflect this same philosophy is “sustainability” – making decisions that meet the needs of today’s society, while ensuring that the future generations have the same or better ability to meet their needs. KSE recognizes that sustainable development is an ever-evolving process that strives to continually improve the balance between ecological, economic and societal needs.

However, achieving a perfect balance is not possible because current energy technologies are imperfect. The reality is that every source of energy available today produces some impact to people and the planet. For example:

- Conventional sources of energy such as coal and natural gas release greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere, and contribute to pollution, smog, related health impacts, and global climate change.
- An unfortunate consequence of nuclear energy is that the future generations inherit the long-term risk of managing large quantities of dangerous nuclear waste.
- Hydroelectricity, with its many environmental benefits and economies of scale, has consequences such as flooding of vast areas of land, destroying habitat, and displacing people.

*“KSE recognizes that sustainable development is an ever-evolving process.”*



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- As a newer player in the energy industry, shale gas technologies are developing and evolving. Current exploitation methods are known to have negative consequences on local groundwater resources.
- Even renewable sources of energy such as solar photovoltaics (PV) and wind energy have impacts on people and the environment, such as the release of greenhouse gasses during the extraction of raw materials, manufacturing, and transportation of the components.

However, KSE believes that waiting for the perfect energy technology to emerge is not an option. Trade-offs, compromises and sacrifices must occur in the drive towards a more sustainable energy future.

Through its renewable energy projects, KSE is striving to make a net positive contribution to a more sustainable world. During operation, renewable energy sources such as PV and wind are clean sources of carbon-free and renewable energy. In comparing the full lifecycle costs of all energy technologies available today, impacts from renewable energy sources are the least significant. When the impacts are properly mitigated, renewable energy technologies are the most sustainable energy choices for ensuring the long-term wellbeing of the planet and all its inhabitants. Choosing a diversity of low impact energy sources is the key to a sustainable energy future.



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## Our Vision

KSE was founded with the vision of contributing to a more sustainable and responsible energy future by developing renewable energy projects that benefit Kahnawà:ke, the host communities, and the surrounding regions.

KSE affirms that the decisions we make today will impact the future generations. KSE envisions energy projects that balance the needs and wants of the current generations, while fulfilling our responsibility to provide the future generations with a clean and healthy environment.

## Our Mission

The mission of Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Energies is to help meet energy demands by developing renewable energy projects that are respectful of the natural world, reduce our collective energy footprint, and generate revenue, employment opportunities, and other benefits for Kahnawà:ke, the host communities, and the surrounding regions.





# Our Values

The Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen or Thanksgiving Address reminds us of the important role of every part of the natural world in the efficient functioning of the planet. It is this knowledge, passed down through our traditional teachings, that forms the foundation of KSE's values.

- **The People:** Humans have the important responsibility to ensure that the cycles of life continue through peaceful and respectful relationships. KSE commits fully to this role by developing renewable energy projects that support this responsibility. KSE strives to operate with integrity towards people and the earth, and earn the respect of its stakeholders.
- **The Earth:** Our Mother the Earth is a living, breathing system that sustains all life. All parts of the Earth's systems are interrelated. Impacts to one part of the system will affect many other parts of the natural world. It is with deep respect for our Mother the Earth that KSE operates. KSE's projects are developed locally with the goal of improving the global environment.
- **The Waters:** The waters are a vital life force essential to all living creatures. KSE strives to develop renewable energy projects that protect the waters. Best practices will be used when working in or around water to avoid and minimize any negative impacts.
- **The Plant Life:** The plant life provides valuable functions as habitat, medicines, food, shelter and clean air. KSE commits to protect the plant life present on and around project sites. Projects will be carefully planned so as to avoid or minimize disturbance of plant life. Any disturbed vegetation will be replaced and the habitats restored.
- **The Animal Life:** The animal life encompasses a wide variety of wildlife sharing our communities and natural spaces. Birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and fish all fulfill important roles within



their local ecosystem and food chain. KSE will plan its projects to ensure a respectful relationship with the animal life inhabiting or migrating through its project sites. Any potential impacts on the animal life will be avoided, minimized and mitigated.

- **The Four Winds:** The winds that come from the four directions bring the change of seasons and renew the air. KSE values this natural force that can provide us with an inexhaustible capacity to fulfill our energy needs in a manner that is respectful of the natural world, now and into the future.
- **The Thunderers:** The thunderers bring the rains that clean the earth, replenish the waters, and help to purify the air that we breathe. KSE respects the thunderers for the role that they play in reminding us of our responsibility to maintain a clean and healthy environment.
- **The Sun:** The sun is the ultimate life force that sustains life on our planet. It also creates the winds that move around the globe. KSE values the sun for the energy that it sustains and the potential to harness some of that energy to fulfill our needs in a clean and renewable manner.
- **The Moon and Stars:** The moon plays an important role in the movement of the ocean tides, the birth of babies, the growth of our foods, and the habits of many creatures in the natural world. The stars light the night sky and guide us. KSE respects the moon and the stars for the important roles that they fulfill in the natural world.
- **The Teachers:** From time to time enlightened teachers have helped to remind us of our responsibility to live in harmony with the natural world. KSE acknowledges this responsibility and strives to develop energy projects that are harmoniously integrated into the natural environment, for the benefit of the present and future generations.
- **The Creator:** The Creator is the force that brought everything together. KSE is grateful for the opportunity to protect and enhance the natural systems that sustain us.



# Our Principles of Sustainability

KSE also respects the 16 principles of sustainability established by the Quebec Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment, Fauna and Parcs.

1. **Health and quality of life** – KSE believes that healthy individuals make up healthy families that together produce vibrant communities. KSE commits to sustainable energy projects that honor this principle.
2. **Social equity and solidarity** – KSE commits to develop its projects in a manner that is respectful of all people, present and future generations.
3. **Environmental protection** – Protection and respect for the environment are core values for KSE. This principle is a driving force in all KSE projects and daily operations.
4. **Economic efficiency** – Through its sustainable energy projects, KSE strives to boost the economy of Kahnawà:ke, the communities hosting our projects, and the surrounding regions. In working towards fulfilling this principle, KSE supports innovation, training, social progress, and respect for the environment.
5. **Participation and commitment** – KSE commits to engaging stakeholders in a two-way dialogue to ensure that voices are heard and concerns are mitigated. It is KSE's goal to involve people in meaningful ways throughout project development and operation, and ensure that project benefits are maximized and shared.
6. **Access to knowledge** – Information about KSE's projects will be made available in many different mediums to ensure transparency and equitable access to knowledge for all stakeholders. KSE strives to be proactive in raising awareness about our projects and renewable energy in general, to enable stakeholders to make well-informed decisions that support sustainability.

*“It is KSE's goal to involve people in meaningful ways throughout project development and operation, and ensure that project benefits are maximized and shared.”*



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7. **Subsidiarity** – KSE believes in the wisdom of “subsidiarity” which affords local citizens and communities the capacity to participate in planning and decision-making. Establishing representative consultation committees ensures that projects are evaluated in collaboration with stakeholders and stakeholder interests are integrated into project design, implementation, and operation.
8. **Inter-governmental partnership and cooperation** – It is in the spirit of respectful collaboration that KSE liaises with its own local government (the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke), the municipal councils of host communities, as well as the various levels of government involved in the planning, evaluation, and implementation of renewable energy projects.
9. **Prevention** – KSE carries out comprehensive project evaluations in order to identify risks and ensure that they are avoided or adequately mitigated to reduce harm to any and all parts of the natural world.
10. **Precaution** – KSE respects all applicable environmental and health standards and undertakes effective measures to protect the health and well-being of people and the environment.
11. **Protection of cultural heritage** – Cultural heritage encompasses landscape, special sites, traditions, and knowledge, and reflects the identity of the people or society. KSE strives to respect the cultural heritage of the communities we work with.
12. **Biodiversity preservation** – The diversity of life on Earth is necessary for the proper functioning of the planet. Every piece has an important role to fulfill within the cycles of life. Preserving biodiversity is integral to the values and actions of KSE.
13. **Respect for ecosystem support capacity** – KSE’s renewable energy projects help to meet growing energy demands in a way that is respectful of the ecosystem’s capacity to support itself. By reducing



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our collective impact on the environment and minimizing our energy footprint, we protect and enhance the ecosystems that support us.

14. **Responsible production and consumption** – The production and consumption of renewable energy is a responsible way to meet our energy needs. KSE will work to avoid and minimize waste, and optimize the use and recycling of resources during all stages of our projects.
15. **Polluter pays** – KSE takes full responsibility to prevent, reduce, control, mitigate, repair and protect the environment on and around its project sites.
16. **Internalization of costs** – KSE commits to internalize the costs associated with project planning, evaluation, operation, maintenance, decommissioning, and site restoration.



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# Our Commitments to Sustainability

The following commitments will enhance the sustainability of our renewable energy projects for the betterment of Kahnawà:ke, the communities hosting our projects, and the planet. KSE commits to:

## **Practicing Good Governance**

- Operating with openness, honesty, integrity and respect
- Practicing ethical and moral behavior
- Making transparency a priority through regular and publicly-accessible monitoring and reporting
- Being accountable to our community, the communities hosting our projects, and all stakeholders
- Welcoming all questions, concerns, feedback and suggestions from stakeholders and providing timely and accurate responses
- Evaluating options with long-term sustainability-oriented goals that strive to balance ecological, economic and societal needs
- Using sound, peer-reviewed, science-based information to guide decision- making

## **Engaging with Stakeholders**

- Empowering people through engagement during all stages of our energy projects
- Working to develop and sustain meaningful and respectful relationships with all project stakeholders
- Ensuring that all stakeholders have easy access to clear, complete and rigorous information about KSE's projects and their potential impacts and benefits



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- Ensuring that all stakeholders have a multitude of appropriate methods and opportunities to express their interests, concerns, and feedback regarding KSE's projects
- Working to incorporate the interests, concerns and feedback of all stakeholders into the evaluation process for KSE's projects
- Implementing mitigation strategies to address concerns, reduce impacts, and improve benefits to stakeholders
- Maintaining meaningful participative project monitoring and follow-up programs and ensure ongoing communication with stakeholders throughout the entire project life

### **Protecting and Preserving our Environment**

- Developing renewable energy projects with the long-term vision of reducing our ecological footprint and making a net-positive contribution to a more sustainable world
- Selecting the best available technologies for the protection of the environment
- Employing best practices at all stages of KSE's projects, drawing from local, regional, provincial, federal and international standards for the development of renewable energy projects and the assessment and mitigation of their associated social and environmental impacts
- Managing our operations responsibly by implementing environmentally- friendly business practices and a responsible waste management policy for our office and project sites
- Protecting and restoring the natural spaces of Kahnawà:ke and the communities that host our projects
- Carrying out rigorous environmental impact assessment studies that evaluate any potential impacts to the environment



- Implementing mitigation strategies to avoid and minimize any environmental impacts from KSE's projects
- Developing and implementing environmentally-sound decommissioning and site restoration plans and practices

### **Protecting and Preserving Health and Safety**

- Selecting the best available technologies for maximum health and safety
- Ensuring the diligent use of best practices for workplace health and safety
- Making the prevention of accidents an important priority through regular and frequent monitoring of project sites during construction, operation, and decommissioning
- Developing and implementing health and safety plans for all projects during construction, operation, and decommissioning
- Developing and implementing emergency plans for all projects during construction, operation, and decommissioning

### **Investing in Sustainable Communities**

- Strengthening the economic vitality of our community through investments in environmentally sound energy technologies and businesses
- Improving the self-sufficiency of our community through revenue generation and projects that build our capacity to sustain ourselves into the future
- Maximizing local and regional economic benefits by implementing a local purchasing policy
- Ensuring that the majority of the employment opportunities



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generated by KSE's renewable energy projects will be made available to qualified people and contractors in Kahnawà:ke and the communities hosting the projects

- Funding training in fields that support renewable energy development in Kahnawà:ke and the communities hosting our projects
- Continually improving the knowledge base of the KSE Team to enable sustainable decision-making
- Building the capacity of the population to support sustainable energy choices by improving the knowledge base about renewable energies
- Using a portion of the profits from renewable energy projects for the sustainable development and environmental protection initiatives



# Implementation

KSE is committed to the successful implementation of its sustainable development policy. In order to achieve this, KSE will appoint a person who is responsible for ensuring the sustainability of KSE's decisions, actions, and business practices throughout all stages of its energy projects. This person will be responsible for designing an implementation plan that reflects KSE's commitments described above and includes clear objectives, indicators and actions. The objectives will be established in accordance with the established SMART method to ensure that they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound. This person will report to the KSE Board of Directors and prepare a sustainability report card on a quarterly basis. The sustainability report card will highlight successes and evaluate shortcomings in order to improve KSE's ability to meet its sustainability commitments to the environment and its stakeholders. KSE will also communicate information about its sustainable development practices and establish mechanisms to enable stakeholders to provide feedback and suggestions for improvements.



# Continuous Improvement

KSE's Sustainable Development Policy was developed as a dynamic living document that should be improved and adapted to the economic, social, cultural and environmental realities of the time. Every five years, the KSE Sustainable Development Policy will undergo a comprehensive review. Community stakeholders will be invited to provide feedback on the direction that KSE should take towards sustainable energy development over the next five years. The first review is scheduled for 2017, however changes or improvements to the policy can be made sooner if deemed necessary by the KSE Team or Board of Directors.



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