



UNFCCC ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

AI/2023/13

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Section 1

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Administrative Instruction is to establish the UNFCCC secretariat policy on the protection of the environment and the promotion of environmental sustainability in its operations. It provides the framework for mainstreaming environmental sustainability in the secretariat's operations.
2. The policy fulfils a commitment made by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to pursue environmental sustainability and implement environmental management systems within all UN organizations. The UN System Strategy for Sustainability Management 2020–2030¹ follows best practices implemented by individual UN system organizations.²

Section 2

Principles

3. The UNFCCC secretariat bears responsibility for the impacts of its operations. In delivering its mandates and fulfilling its institutional needs it remains committed to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of its operations. As an intergovernmental organization entrusted with supporting the efforts of UNFCCC Parties to address climate change, the secretariat in particular has an obligation to minimize its greenhouse gas emissions and its overall environmental footprint.
4. The UNFCCC secretariat pursues the following principles in implementing its environmental sustainability policy:
 - Stewardship of the environment;
 - Efficient use of resources;
 - Continuous improvement of environmental performance;
 - Stakeholder engagement.

¹ <https://unsceb.org/strategy-sustainability-management-United-nations-system-2020-2030>.

² See, for example, the Environmental Policy for the United Nations Secretariat.



5. In addition to those of Parties, the secretariat also considers the views and interests of host governments and cities, staff and other personnel, donors, observer organizations and constituencies, partners and suppliers and, last but not least, the public at large.
6. Subject to its regulations, rules and policies, the UNFCCC secretariat strives to observe the highest environmental standards.

Section 3

Scope and Environmental Impacts

7. For this policy, operations are defined as the following activities of the secretariat:
 - Operations, procedures, decisions, activities and practices at and away from headquarters;
 - Travel organized and/or funded by the secretariat;
 - Conferences and meetings organized at and away from headquarters.
8. Facility management, information and communication technology (ICT) and procurement procedures, decisions, activities, practices and other cross-cutting activities will be considered under the three aspects mentioned in paragraph 7 above.
9. The environmental impacts covered by this policy shall include but not be limited to:
 - Emissions to air;
 - Releases to water and land;
 - Use and management of raw materials and natural resources;
 - Production and management of waste;
 - Biodiversity and ecosystems.
10. While the UNFCCC secretariat has immediate control only over its own operations, it will aim to apply this policy also to operations carried out by third parties on its behalf.
11. Implementation of this policy will respect relevant UNFCCC rules, policies and procedures and United Nations Staff and Financial Regulations and Rules.

Section 4

Implementation

12. In order to implement this policy, the UNFCCC secretariat establishes an environmental management system (EMS). The EMS will provide a set of processes and practices that will systematically ensure the secretariat continuously and consistently reviews its environmental sustainability goals and environmental performance.
13. The secretariat will seek to secure financial resources, as needed, to implement measures identified by the EMS.



14. The secretariat will report transparently and regularly on its environmental performance to internal and external stakeholders.
15. The secretariat will engage staff and other personnel in the implementation of this policy such as by raising environmental sustainability awareness, knowledge and competence; encouraging environmentally sustainable practices and behaviours; and communicating and recognizing progress and achievements.
16. The secretariat aspires to obtain certification of its environmental management against an internationally recognized standard, such as ISO 14001 or EMAS.

Section 5

Governance and Responsibilities

17. The overall responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy lies with the Executive Secretary, who is supported by the Management Team. The Management Team will review the secretariat's environmental performance annually and provide advice as appropriate.
18. The authority and responsibility for day-to-day management of the EMS lies with the Director, Administrative Services, Human Resources, Information and Communication Technology (AS/HR/ICT), who is supported by an Environmental Management Team composed of competent representatives of units responsible for general services and facility management, ICT, procurement, travel, conference affairs, human resources, communications, Capacity-Building, a representative of the Staff Association and other experts on the subject matter as may be appointed by the Director, AS/HR/ICT. The work of the Environmental Management Team shall be coordinated by the Chief, Procurement, Travel and General Services.
19. All organizational entities of the secretariat, staff and other personnel shall contribute, through their decisions and actions, to the environmental objectives and performance of the organization.

Section 6

Final Provisions

20. This administrative instruction shall enter into force on the first day of the month following signature.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Stiell', written over a horizontal line.

Simon Stiell
Executive Secretary