

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Version: 0002.00
Date: March 2025
Scope: All Employees, Trustees,
Consultants and others
acting on behalf of Practical
Action or its subsidiaries
Review Date: March 2026 (Annual Review)

Approval required from:	Board of Trustees
Policy Owner:	Climate Adaptation & Resilience Expert
Responsible Director:	Director of Impact, Influence and Innovation
Approval date:	March 2025
Queries:	Contact the Policy Owner
Exceptions	Contact the Responsible Director

1. Roles and Responsibilities

- a. Clarifications on the policy content should be sought from the policy owner. Any changes required to the policy will be submitted through this the policy owner to the responsible director, for consideration.
- b. The policy owner is responsible for the annual review of the policy.
- c. Derogations from this policy require the advance written approval of the responsible director.
- d. The responsible director will seek formal approval of significant changes to this policy from the Practical Action Board of Trustees or their delegated representatives.
- e. Directors (including Regional and Country Directors) are accountable that this policy is adhered to in their respective countries, areas and units.

2. Introduction

Practical Action is a global development organisation with a vision of a world that works better for everyone.

We work with communities and expert partners to develop ingenious solutions to bring about real and lasting change. We bring together community members, private companies, local governments, and policy makers to put the plans into action in collaborative approaches that meets everyone's needs. We pilot and refine until we discover solutions that really work. Then we share them with others so they can achieve even more.

Core to all of Practical Action's work is an ambition to safeguard the planet today and for the benefit of future generations. We recognise that our activities have an impact on the environment, and it is our responsibility to minimise the negative impacts as far as possible. We will operate in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation, and we will strive to use environmental best practices in all we do.

We believe that an important element of constructively addressing environmental problems is to consider all the elements that contribute to the production of carbon emissions and environmental pollution.

3. Purpose

This policy outlines the mitigation measures we take to become energy efficient, calculate and track measures to reduce our carbon footprint, consider local environmental impacts where we work, and minimise waste and its disposal in an environmentally friendly manner.

In implementing this policy, Practical Action aims to:

- Provide strong leadership and consistency of approach across the organisation,
- Demonstrate our commitment to pollution prevention,
- Demonstrate our commitment to continual improvement and environmental integrity as core principle of our work.

4. Principles and Key Commitments

We will:

- Communicate this policy across Practical Action's headquarters and country offices and implement it at all levels of the organisation.
- Identify global environmental standards and promote environmental best practice across the organisation.
- Encourage and incentivise staff to follow best environmental practices in all our operations.
- Be aware of and comply with current environmental and net zero regulations in the UK and in countries where we operate which are applicable to the organisation.
- Monitor our carbon footprint across identified categories under scope 1, 2, and 3 GHG emissions in our headquarters and country offices on an annual basis as captured in our [Net Zero Commitment](#).
- Work together with our country offices to identify measures to limit and then lower GHG emissions without compromising the ability of the organisation to achieve impact at scale in countries where we work.
- Set annual GHG emissions targets for the UK office and each country office, taking into consideration the size of the office, expected expenditure, and requirements of the projects implemented to ensure adequate operational capacity.
- Continually monitor GHG emissions and introduce measures to reduce environmental impacts from our operations.
- Incorporate environmental factors into organisational decision-making and consider their impact on local people and communities we work with, including women, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, marginalised and/or disadvantaged people, and other vulnerable groups.
- Communicate this policy to all employees and stakeholders via internal and external communication channels.
- Make this policy and its future iterations available on the Practical Action website.

5. Specific Practical Action Policies

Procurement

Energy: We will aim to select energy suppliers that produce electricity from renewable energy sources where possible. Energy consumption and efficiency will be taken into account during procurement.

Paper: Wherever possible, we will acquire paper certified as ecologically friendly (e.g., PEFC, FSC or EU Ecolabel). We will not knowingly use paper sourced from any endangered, ancient, or virgin forests.

Ethical Trading: Where feasible, we will buy goods and services which are derived from sustainable sources and are manufactured and delivered in an environmentally responsible way. We will favour goods and services with environment-friendly certifications where available in the places we operate.

Labour: We will use local labour and materials where available to reduce carbon emissions.

Local Communities and Climate Action

- We will recognise and empower local communities' leadership in driving climate action in our work through informed consent, transparency, and unbiased dialogue with communities and other local stakeholders.
- We will share the impact of our work, both positive and negative, with local communities and endeavour to increase their understanding of climate and environmental risks.
- We will design our projects to promote environmental and social equality, with communities' health and wellbeing in mind.
- Our work with local communities will be guided by the principles and measures outlined in our [Gender Policy](#) and [Safeguarding Policy](#).

Operations

- For projects with activities that may pose some risk to the environment, measures will be integrated into project design so that these risks can be periodically monitored during implementation and assessed after finalisation.
- We will design our projects to minimise GHG emissions whilst ensuring effective delivery.
- Each country office will include emissions reduction targets in their Annual Business Plans and develop an annual report on the GHG emissions resulting from their operations.
- Operations teams will carry out assessments to measure actual vs target emissions and take actions to improve GHG reduction measures if required.

Transport

- Minimising carbon emissions, whilst delivering our work effectively, is a positive challenge for all Practical Action staff. We will consider this in all areas, with a particular focus on international and domestic travel, which accounts for large proportion of our carbon emissions.
- We will promote the use of ecologically friendly modes of transport and make reasonable efforts to provide facilities (e.g., Bike to Work scheme) that enable this.
- We will encourage employees to use the form of transport that uses the lowest carbon, unless there are safety and security concerns, or this adds unreasonably to the cost or length of the journey.
- We will encourage lift-share, carpooling, and the use of public transport, except where this poses safety or security risks.
- As some of Practical Action operations are based in conflict zones, safety and security considerations should always take precedence where these conflict with this policy.

Plastics and Other Waste

- We will minimise our use of single-use plastics (e.g. disposable water bottles, plastic cups, plates, and cutlery) both in our offices and in external events.
- We will seek to segregate and recycle waste in our offices.

Practical Action Environmental Policy

- Where applicable, appropriate recycle bins and battery recycling point will be made available in our sites.
- We will use only reputable, and preferably licensed, organisations to dispose of waste.

Efficiency

- We will encourage cost-effective investment in solutions that reduce carbon emissions in our offices and operations.
- We will minimise paper use in our offices by reducing the amount of printing and photocopying, using double sided printing, and using electronic forms and documents wherever practical.
- We will ensure that all equipment is in good working order and properly serviced so it can perform efficiently.
- We will use cleaning materials that are as environmentally friendly as possible.
- We will provide or enhance alternative means of communication such as video conferencing to encourage our staff to meet virtually to improve collaboration and only use air travel to supplement this when the work demands it.

External Events

Please see Annex 1: [Practical Action Sustainability and Inclusion Guidelines for External Events](#)

6. Environmental Compliance

Practical Action's Environmental Policy and Net Zero Commitment are in compliance with appropriate UK regulations, including *Section 172 Governance disclosure on carbon reporting*, the [UN Global Compact](#), [Climate and Environmental Charter for Humanitarian Organisations](#), and specific environmental commitments outlined in agreements with our donors.

7. Linked Practical Action Policies, Guidelines and Commitments

[Policies and commitments - Practical Action](#)

- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Gender Policy](#)
- [Practical Action Sustainability and Inclusion Guidelines for External Events](#)
- [Net Zero Commitment](#)
- [UN Global Compact](#)
- [Climate and Environmental Charter for Humanitarian Organisations](#)
- Procurement Policy
- Travel and Use of Vehicles Policy

Appendix

Appendix 1: Practical Action Sustainability and Inclusion Guidelines for External Events

Sustainability and Inclusion Guidelines for External Events

Version:	0001.00
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1. Practical Action's Mission

Practical Action is a global development organisation with a vision of a world that works better for everyone.

Core to all Practical Action's work is an ambition to safeguard the planet today and for the benefit of future generations. We recognise that our activities have an impact on the environment, and it is our responsibility to minimise the negative impacts as far as possible. We will operate in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation, and we will strive to use environmental best practices in all we do.

We believe that an important element of constructively addressing environmental problems is to consider all the elements that contribute to the production of carbon emissions and environmental pollution. To this end, **we introduced an organisational [environment policy](#) and a [net zero commitment](#)**, which we update at regular intervals.

2. Scope and Objective

These guidelines outline Practical Action's approach to sustainability and inclusion at external events. We regularly participate in events, expos, conferences, and festivals where we showcase our work.

Therefore, our approach to sustainability and inclusion should be tailored in the light of our existing policies and according to the specific requirements of each event.

3. Human Rights, Gender Equality, Inclusion, and Safeguarding

We should only collaborate with events with demonstrable focus on ensuring and promoting environmental protection, human rights, gender equality, and other aspects of inclusion (e.g., persons with disabilities, children and youth, age, neurodiversity).

As outlined in our [Gender Policy](#), Practical Action is committed to ensuring equitable opportunities for all women and men. We aim to advance **gender equality** and **women's empowerment** through all of our work including programmes, knowledge sharing, advocacy, and external communications, and through our own organisational development.

Practical Action is also committed to creating a strong and effective enabling environment and a safeguarding culture to promote the rights and protection of beneficiaries, community members, staff, volunteers, or anyone else impacted by our work. **As outlined in our [Safeguarding Policy](#), we take seriously our responsibility to safeguard those who come in contact with our work.** Therefore, our activities at external events should be designed with gender empowerment and safeguarding considerations in mind.

4. Energy

We should collaborate with events and venues that foreground sustainable practices and policies, such as energy-efficient lighting, use of natural daylight where possible, and energy from renewable sources. At the event site, our staff and volunteers should ensure that lighting and other energy-consuming devices are turned off and/or unplugged when required to save energy.

5. Transport

We should collaborate with events and venues that are local to Practical Action staff and volunteers to the extent possible, and encourage sustainable travel such as public transport, car sharing, cycling, and walking. We should collaborate with event organisers to assess required equipment to reduce the environmental impact of transporting and delivery of equipment and materials.

6. Water Usage

We should collaborate with events and venues with sustainable policies on water use for drinking and general consumption. We should encourage our staff and volunteers to practise water saving measures and use tap water or filtered water provided by the facility where possible.

7. Food Supplies

We should collaborate with events and venues with sustainable policies on healthy and ethically sourced foods with inclusive dietary options.

8. Waste and Recycling

We should refrain from using single-use plastics in our stalls and exhibitions. We should ensure that all waste from our stalls is properly disposed as per the recycling guidelines of the venue, and we should aim to reuse event materials to the extent possible.

9. Sourcing of Promotional Materials

We should source all our print materials from local partners and ensure that any promotional materials distributed to event guests are made of sustainable and reusable materials (e.g., hemp tote bags, notebooks from recycled paper). We should follow the established good practice of reusing promotional materials and recycling old materials (e.g., materials with old branding) appropriately.

10. Carbon Footprint

Practical Action aims to keep its carbon footprint as small as possible. This means exploring ways to reduce our footprint, while still being able to carry out work effectively. Practical Action has undergone a carbon footprint baselining process and developed an organisational carbon footprint reduction plan. Every year, we will continue to measure our carbon footprint and report progress against our baseline. The key findings being measured are flights (international and regional), use of vehicles, gas and electricity usage, paper and other consumables. **Further details can be found in our [net zero commitment](#) document.**

11. Compliance

Practical Action's environmental policy and net zero commitment are in compliance with appropriate UK regulations, including Section 172 Governance disclosure on carbon reporting, the [UN Global Compact](#), [Climate and Environmental Charter for Humanitarian Organisations](#), and specific environmental commitments outlined in agreements with our donors.

12. Linked Practical Action Policies and Commitments [Policies and commitments - Practical Action](#)

- Environmental Policy
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Gender Policy](#)
- [Net Zero Commitment](#)
- [UN Global Compact](#)
- [Climate and Environmental Charter for Humanitarian Organisations](#)