



**EEB**

European  
Environmental  
Bureau

# Sustainability and Environmental Policy

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## Contents

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Aims of the Policy .....             | 3 |
| Monitoring and Improvement .....     | 3 |
| Transportation and travel .....      | 4 |
| Digital footprint .....              | 5 |
| Energy consumption .....             | 5 |
| Suppliers and office materials ..... | 6 |
| Energy consumption .....             | 5 |
| Waste .....                          | 6 |
| Events and catering .....            | 6 |

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is Europe's largest network of environmental citizens' organisations. We stand for sustainable development, environmental justice & participatory democracy.

We are committed to reducing our environmental impact and continually improving our environmental performance as an integral part of our long-term strategy and operating methods, with regular review points. We will encourage our member organisations, suppliers and other stakeholders to do the same.

## Aims of the Policy

We endeavour to:

1. Continually improve and monitor environmental and sustainability performance, going beyond compliance with all relevant regulatory requirements for associations set up under Belgian law.
2. Continually improve and reduce environmental impacts.
3. Incorporate environmental and social responsibility factors into all our decisions.
4. Increase employee awareness.



**Staff responsibility:** The EEB's Senior Management Team bears the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy. Different EEB staff members are responsible for coordinating and monitoring the elements of the policy as listed below.

The Office and IT Coordinator will oversee and monitor the implementation of all aspects of the policy and report to the staff and SMT (Senior Management Team) at least once a year.

## Monitoring and Improvement

- We will involve all staff in the implementation and monitoring of this policy for increased awareness, greater commitment and improved performance.
- We will review this policy and any related issues at staff meetings and Senior Management Team meetings where necessary.
- We will update this policy at least once every two years in consultation with staff and other stakeholders, and where necessary.
- We will organise a meeting (e.g. as part of the staff meeting) once a year to inform (new) staff about our environmental and sustainability policies.
- The Office and IT Coordinator will once a year inform (in a meeting or communication) the status and progress of the different elements of the policy and associated indicators.



## Transportation and travel

All transport as well as stays in hotels come with an environmental and social impact. Air travel has a remarkably high environmental impact. Reducing the need to travel is crucially important, while making the most sustainable choices where travel is necessary. We recognise that in person meetings, combined with online and hybrid meetings, remain important to achieve our mission – online and hybrid meetings cannot replace the interactions and networking that happen when we meet face to face. Most forms of travel come with an environmental impact, in particular intercontinental travel, and we acknowledge that there is no perfect solution.

We strive to reduce our footprint with the following measures:

- We offer online events where they are valid alternatives to in-person meetings.
- We strive to choose event locations that are well-connected by public transport and international train connections. Where possible, we offer teleconferencing facilities for remote participation and hybrid events.
- Before embarking on a journey, we consider whether the trip is necessary or whether there is an alternative way to achieve the desired outcome with less travelling or without travelling at all.
- We encourage our staff, members, experts and speakers to choose the most environmentally friendly means of transportation. We recommend long-distance train or bus connections wherever it is possible and to avoid flights.
- We have detailed rules for travel reimbursement and preferred modes of transport. These are updated on a regular basis by our Board.
- Staff need a travel authorisation for each trip. Where a trip involves a flight, the staff member authorising the trip needs to make sure that the rules on when we can take flights are respected and that alternatives have been considered. Where there is no alternative to a flight, the process should include a reflection about the necessity of the trip.
- Additional costs, for instance, for long-distance train tickets or additional nights of accommodation are covered (within the limits of available funding, the journey staying within reasonable costs and subject to the person complying with the other conditions described in the EEB's detailed travel reimbursement rules). The EEB regrets the fact that a long-distance train can be several times as expensive as a flight, and we seek to ensure the means to cover those costs.
- For staff, travel time is considered working time (also when travelling on weekends and where it is not possible to work during the trip). We will consider how to compensate for travel time that goes beyond one working day (given that travel time increases when we encourage staff to take long-distance trains and buses).
- For staff, journeys that take less than 10 hours one way by land (or sea if appropriate) should be done by train or bus at least one way, preferably both ways. This includes, for instance, travel to Geneva, Berlin, London and Vienna.

- For participants to our Working Groups or events, we recommend that journeys should be made by train and bus (or ferry if appropriate) both ways if the travel time is less than 6 hours one way, and at least for one way where it is less than 8 hours. It is recommended that journeys that take less than 10 hours are made by train or bus at least one way, but this remains at the discretion of the participant.
- It is recommended that when a plane trip becomes unavoidable, the social and environmental practices of the available airlines (such as fuel-efficient planes) are taken into consideration and that those with a poor record are avoided.
- Journeys by car (or taxi in case of local travel only) can only be made if there are no realistic public transport alternatives, for reasons of personal security, because of disabilities affecting mobility, or for carrying materials or luggage which it is impracticable to transport by public transport.
- We monitor CO2 emissions linked to travel. When it comes to EEB staff, we work with a travel agency that helps to monitor CO2 emissions. We will analyse and compare emission over the years to better understand the impact our activities. We may consider setting benchmarks to reduce our emissions.
- When choosing hotels for guests and staff, we give preference to hotels with clear sustainability policies.
- To come to the office, we encourage staff to use public transport, to use bikes or walk. The EEB ensures indoor parking space for bikes.



**Staff responsible:** Dept. Secretary General (link to SMT) and Events Coordinator (liaising with the membership team when it comes to exceptions).

## Digital footprint

The EEB recognises the importance of reducing our digital footprint.

This section is under development and will be updated as soon as possible, and latest as part of the next review.



**Staff responsible:** Office and IT Coordinator

## Energy consumption

- We will seek to reduce the amount of energy used as much as possible and encourage our property owner to choose green energy providers.
- Lights and electrical equipment will be switched off when not in use.
- Heating will be adjusted to 19°C during the heating period and switched off whenever possible.

- Air conditioning will be used with energy consumption in mind.
- We encourage staff and visitors to use the stairs instead of the elevator (posters by the elevators).
- We make sure that the computers of EEB staff are configured to save as much energy as possible (screen savers, turning them off when leaving the office, etc.).
- We consider investing in a device to analyse our energy consumption (including how many kWh used for electricity and how many on heating and cooling) to inform how successful the measures are if funding is available.



**Staff responsible:** Office and IT Coordinator

## Suppliers and office materials

- We evaluate if the need can be met in another way before purchasing equipment (for instance, by renting or sharing).
- We ask all suppliers to provide us with their environmental and sustainability policy and make this an integral part of our selection criteria.
- We evaluate the environmental impact of any new products or services we intend to purchase.
- We regularly screen the products we use in the office and favour more environmentally friendly and efficient products as well as companies with high social responsibility standards wherever possible.
- We continually reduce the use of paper in the office by reusing and recycling paper where possible and where not possible prioritise recycled and recyclable paper products.
- We evaluate if digital distribution is enough before printing publications. When printing a publication is deemed necessary, we prepare a distribution plan to avoid oversupply.
- We encourage staff to prioritise products with reliable and credible ecolabels wherever possible.



**Staff responsible:** Office and IT Coordinator (with Secretary)

All staff must make sure they comply with the policy in their own projects and when buying material for their own events. The Office and IT Coordinator and the IT Technical Support Officer monitor printing quantities, set benchmarks and make comparisons on an annual basis.

## Waste

- We reuse everything we are able to.
- We continually reduce waste in the office.
- We sort biowaste, paper, and plastic and metal and composite materials (PMC) in separate bins.
- We chose certified organisations aiming at repair when we dispose of electronic waste.
- The EEB provides appropriate tableware to make it easy for staff to collect take-away food in reusable containers or directly on big plates. Food leftovers from meetings and events are immediately distributed among staff that is present at the office and/or stored in the fridge to be distributed next day
- We explore an agreement with the restaurants around the EEB to incentivise the staff to bring reusable tableware.
- The EEB offers a shelf and a chat for staff to share and donate items



**Staff responsible:** Policy Officer for Waste

## Events and catering

- We ask all venues and hotels to provide us with their environmental policy and make this an integral part of our selection criteria. We will favour more environmentally friendly and sustainable venues and hotels wherever possible.
- We ask all caterers to provide us with their environmental/sustainability policy. We will favour sustainable caterers with high social responsibility standards that use seasonal and locally sourced bio-products whenever possible.
- We only serve vegetarian and vegan food to reduce the environmental impact of EEB events and meetings. We will strive to minimise left-overs and look for solutions where they can be donated to charities or similar.
- We select caterers that either do not use single-use (particularly plastic) packaging or at least have options/choices that allow us to avoid it.
- We give preference to glass bottles of water and ask providers if they can set up a fountain for people to fill their water bottles at events.
- We avoid serving industrially produced ultra-processed and HFSS (high in fat, sugar, salt) food and beverages.
- We avoid serving food produced by transnational food corporations that contribute to the food system's dire environmental footprint and its current social disruptiveness.



**Staff responsible:** Events Coordinator. All staff must make sure they comply with the policy in their own projects and when organising events and meetings.





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A better future where people and nature thrive together