

Policy	Environmental policy
Owner	Head of Advocacy, Education and Communications
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Approved by	CAFOD Leadership Group
Audience	All
New Review Due	March 2023

Policy Statement

As part of our 2020-30 strategic framework *Our Common Home* we have a commitment to “an ecological conversion to transform ourselves”. One of the measures of our ecological conversion is that CAFOD will “exemplify environmental stewardship and be net carbon neutral by 2030”.

CAFOD’s Approach

Protect. We will reduce our environmental impact across all of our work. This means we will reduce our environmental footprint through travel, energy use, procurement and investments; we will not fund programme work that damages the environment and we will monitor and mitigate risks to the environment in our programmes work; and we will mobilise others, from decision-makers to the Catholic Community in England and Wales to reduce their own footprint through policies and practice.

Regenerate. We will support and scale up actions to regenerate the environment. This means we will develop and implement programme to have the maximum positive impact on the environment; work with our partners to evidence and promote best practice; support others and influence decision-makers to implement effective policies and practise.

Measure Progress. To understand our impacts, measure our progress and set future strategies and action plans, we will measure our impacts.

- This will be included in our 2019/20 annual report, starting with measuring our operational carbon footprint and achieving a full picture of the impact of our work within three years.
- We will undertake an independent environmental audit of our own operations every five years to support this.

Background

*“The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound inner conversion...what [we] all need is an ‘ecological conversion’” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’* #217)*

We hear directly from our local partners of the devastating impact that environmental degradation has on the poorest and most disadvantaged and that the impacts of climate change will also be felt disproportionately by developing countries and the poorest who have the least resources to deal with such impacts. We also recognise that the scientific evidence is overwhelming and compelling about the scale of the climate crisis, the extent of biodiversity loss and environmental destruction and the urgency of action required.¹

¹ Climate Change and Land, Special Report (IPCC, 2019) and Global Assessment Report (IPBES, 2019)

As an international development agency we therefore have an urgent calling to respond: to stand with those who are suffering; to influence those who have the power to change the systems and structures; to mobilise others to act; and to look at our own actions. We recognise that northern economies and consumers have contributed the most to the current crisis and therefore have the responsibility to act first and go further.

Legal Compliance

The legal requirements are to report on carbon emissions via:

- a) an annual report on our UK operations required by the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) and
 - b) a report every four years required by the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS).
- CAFOD will comply with all environmental legislation in the countries where we work.

Risk Statement

There is a high risk that CAFOD will lose of credibility of voice and incur reputational damage if we take no direct action in terms of the environmental impact of our own organisational footprint; we would be open to accusations of hypocrisy if we do damage to the earth as part of our programmatic work.

Policy Details

Scope

This policy sets out how our work internationally and in England and Wales will help CAFOD deliver on this commitment. It covers both how we will reduce our environmental impact and increase positive environmental actions that will restore and regenerate nature. To be net carbon neutral we will need to both reduce our carbon footprint and offset for the emissions we produce.

It is an overarching policy to show the direction of travel and underlying commitments. Other policies and practices will need to be developed and reviewed to be fully in line with our environmental policy.²

Action Areas

Whilst CAFOD is already doing some good work to protect and regenerate the environment and to measure our progress, we are committed to doing this in a more systematic and strategic way. The actions we will commit to in this policy cover three broad areas:

1. Minimising the environmental impact of our own operations in England and Wales and in our international offices
2. Exemplifying an integral ecology approach in international programmes
3. Inspiring, facilitating and mobilising the Catholic Community to protect and regenerate the environment

² For example, CAFOD's investment, procurement, and travel policies

1. Minimise the environmental impact of our own operations in England and Wales and in our international offices

We will reduce the environmental impact across our operations from the UK and international offices. Our main negative environmental impacts come through travel, energy use and procurement, so these will be the focus of our actions.

a. Travel

We commit to reducing our travel further. At 60-70%, travel is by far the largest percentage of our operational carbon footprint. As an international development agency, travel is essential to the operation of our organisation. At the same time, we are committed to reducing both the quantity and the impact of our travel. CAFOD's travel policy requires travel by train where possible in Europe, with no flights permitted within the UK or to Paris and Brussels. We will regularly review our travel policy to seek further reduction. We will invest in appropriate technology and look at different ways of working with sister agencies and will set targets to reduce our carbon footprint through travel.

b. Energy use

We commit to reducing our energy use further. All energy in Romero House currently comes from a renewable energy provider and will continue to do so. Romero House is an energy efficient building with an excellent BREEM rating. It produces around 20% of the energy it uses through heat pumps sunk into the earth. We have recently reduced energy by moving all lighting to energy efficient LEDs. We will continue to implement measures to reduce energy in Romero House. We will use renewable energy and more efficient energy sources where possible in our other UK and overseas offices, which are rented.

c. Procurement

We commit to further reducing the environmental impacts of our procurement and will update our procurement policy to reflect this, which will cover UK and overseas operations. CAFOD has existing guidelines for purchasing, paper, print and postage, to reduce our environmental impact of paper use, covering practices such as using 100% recycled paper, economical formats and print suppliers who are ISO 14001 accredited. While recognising that that printed material is important for communicating with parishes, our supporters, donors and other stakeholders, and encouraging them to participate in our work, we look for ways to reduce our printed materials.

2. Exemplify an integral ecology approach in international programmes

CAFOD's international programmes will adopt an integral ecology approach where we respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor in an integrated manner; meet immediate needs, support long-term locally rooted processes and seek to challenge and change structures that keep people poor, perpetuate injustice, cause environmental destruction and exacerbate climate change. It covers our development, emergency and advocacy work.

a. Programme quality

Our programme quality standards commit to ensure that our programmes and projects have a positive impact on the natural environment, with the environment considered alongside people and communities from the start. To achieve these standards, we have developed an environmental stewardship tool which will educate and train staff and partners on environmental issues; support the analysis, reduction and management of negative impacts to the environment of our development and emergency programme work; and continuously improve environmental performance.

b. Advocacy for long-term change

We are committed to addressing the underlying causes of poverty, environmental destruction, climate change and injustice. We will continue to influence governments, international institutions, businesses, media, financial institutions and others with power towards a just transition based on more sustainable models of development that respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. We work with local communities and organisations, The Catholic Church and other faith groups and a wide range of organisations to bring about lasting change and hold those in power to account. We will stand by and witness with those who are affected by destructive models of development and seeking change.

3. Inspire, facilitate and mobilise the Catholic Community

As part of the Catholic community of England & Wales, including volunteers and young leaders, we act for the common good. We use our campaigns, education, fundraising and wider supporter communications to demonstrate the interconnected cry of the poor and the cry of the earth. We encourage supporters to take action through calling for political change, supporting CAFOD's work and changing their lifestyles. We support the work of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales with the Catholic community on these issues.

Policy Dissemination

This policy will be disseminated to all staff and ultimately all partners. We will educate all staff on these policies as part of induction and on an ongoing basis. This policy will be accessible through the CAFOD website (*add link when available*).

Compliance with Policy

The Head of Advocacy, Communications and Education is responsible for monitoring compliance. The Environmental Stewardship Working Group will oversee the implementation of the identified actions for this policy, accountable to the Corporate Leadership Group via the Head of Advocacy, Communications and Education.

If you have any concern regarding the activities of staff or partners under this policy, this can also be reported through the CAFOD Whistleblowing Policy, which is accessible through the [CAFOD EthicsPoint](#) System.

Trustees' responsibilities

Trustees are ultimately responsible for reviewing and approving this policy. They must ensure that CAFOD complies with relevant environmental legal requirements and makes the necessary representations in the Trustees' Annual Report.