

# UNFPA

## Environmental Efficiency Strategy 2021-2025

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## Environmental Management System

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## Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Context of the Organization	3
2.1	Organizational profile	3
2.2	Internal and external issues	3
2.3	Needs and expectations of interested parties	4
2.4	Scope of the Environmental Efficiency Strategy (EES)	5
2.5	Environmental Management System	5
3.	Leadership	5
3.1	Roles and responsibilities	5
3.2	UNFPA Environmental Vision	7
4.	Planning	7
4.1	Environmental aspects	7
4.2	Compliance obligations and evaluation	7
4.3	Planning action	7
4.4	Objectives and targets	8
5.	Support	9
5.1	Resources	9
5.2	Competence and awareness	9
5.3	Communication	10
5.4	Documented information	10
6.	Operation	11
6.1	Operational planning and control	11
6.2	Emergency preparedness and response	11
7.	Performance evaluation	11
7.1	Monitoring and measurement	11
7.2	Internal control	11
7.3	Management review	12
8.	Improvement	12
8.1	Nonconformity and corrective action	12

*Note: some of the links in the present document are not available externally*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The UNFPA Environmental Efficiency Strategy (EES) is based on CEB Decision CEB2019/1/Add.1 - [Strategy for Sustainability Management in the UN system 2020-2030](#), and therefore targets to achieve all goals determined by that decision by the year 2030. Overall, the goal of the UN wide strategy is to curb the increase of global temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius. To achieve this goal, the UN system will need to **reduce its emissions by 45% compared to 2010 levels**. The present document provides a framework, inspired by the ISO 14001:2015 standard, that will help the UNFPA achieve the 45% reduction target, as well as the environmental targets mentioned in the UNFPA Strategic Plan, while mainstreaming environmental considerations into operations, programs, and policies.

The UNFPA EES will also contribute to individual and community resilience-building, systems strengthening, preparedness, early action and humanitarian response, and data for targeted action.

## 2. CONTEXT OF THE ORGANIZATION

### 2.1 Organizational profile

UNFPA is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency. Our mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

The UNFPA works in more than 150 countries and territories that are home to the vast majority of the world's people. It employs approximately 5000 people worldwide including UN staff, consultants, interns.

UNFPA amplifies its impact by empowering governments to deliver on their promises to women and young people. It accomplishes this by providing data and analysis to show where countries are falling short, by mobilizing resources and expertise, by advocating directly with government officials or in public forums and through training and monitoring. We participate in regional and international meetings and forums that enhance knowledge about and commitment to our issues.

UNFPA further expands the scope of its work by partnering with civil society, academic institutions, and the private sector. In 2013, it formed a Civil Society Advisory Panel to encourage dialogue with organizations, networks and partners on programming and policies. UNFPA also works regularly with parliamentarians to review progress in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action.

UNFPA also participates in and administers several [pooled funding mechanisms](#) - including Joint Programs and Multi-Donor Trust Funds - at country, regional and global level.

### 2.2 Internal and external issues

The list of issues below can influence the environmental efficiency of UNFPA's **operations**. Therefore, these will be addressed in the present strategy.

- Policies, contracts, and partner agreements (e.g., travel and procurement)

- Technology performance (e.g., energy efficient equipment)
- Frequency of air travel (e.g., highest emissions sector)
- Administrative systems and document management and/or retention (e.g., paperless meetings)
- Organizational culture that integrates the environmental factor into daily decision-making as well as into the overall directional framework of the organization.

Regarding its **Programs**, one crucial issue is the large number of stakeholders involved. Therefore, it is critical for all organizations, in particular the United Nations organizations, to have Social and Environmental standards for their programs and operations to ensure that there is no inadvertent harm and that the program approach supports protection and promotion. To facilitate this, in accordance with the CEB decision (CEB2019/1/Add.1), the UNFPA has developed the Social and Environmental Standards (SES). These have been guided / supported by the UN Environmental Management Group July 2019 "[Model Approach to Environmental and Social Programming for UN Programming](#)" (also referred to as the "Model Approach". The UNFPA SES provide guidelines for UNFPA offices for the management of social and environmental risks and impacts in its strategies, policies, programs, and work plans, and they are intended to ensure that there is no inadvertent harm on people and the environment caused by its programming, and to strengthen the quality of interventions by maximizing benefits to stakeholders involved and promote efficient programming.

Finally, prior to the onset of the **COVID-19 pandemic**, the humanitarian system was over-stretched with responding to climate and other emergencies, undermining readiness, and response measures. The pandemic is now directly impacting life-saving health, including sexual and reproductive health, and is widening inequalities for women, dependent young and older persons, racial minorities, and other marginalized groups. This pandemic has impacted the delivery of the UNFPA mission but also its operations with the reduction of air travel for missions, the mainstreaming of teleworking and increase of single-use protective equipment (masks and gloves).

### **2.3 Needs and expectations of interested parties**

UNFPA main stakeholders include donors, governments, NGOs, other UN agencies, staff, vendors, and civil society. UNFPA must lead by example and walk the talk, ensuring its activities are not in contrast with its mission and are not contributing to the disruption of Nature's balance.

The behavior of staff in the organization is one of the main factors which determines to what extent changes will have any lasting impact. It is therefore crucial that the overall organizational culture integrates the environmental factor into daily decision-making as well as into the overall directional framework of the organization. Organizational culture refers both to the formal signals and incentives that the organization provides through senior management, and to informal initiatives, often initiated by the staff, to make the organization more environmentally efficient.

## 2.4 Scope of the Environmental Efficiency Strategy (EES)

The scope of this EES applies to all UNFPA offices worldwide (country, regional and sub-regional offices, and headquarters). Yet, the implementation of this Strategy will be undertaken in a phased approach tailored to each country office through individual Action Plans. For further details see the [UNFPA CO Real Estate Management application](#).

The countries with the highest environmental impact based on our Greenhouse Gas Emissions calculations and therefore with the most potential for reduction will be targeted first. We expect that by the end of this EES cycle (2021-2025), at least 60 field offices, representing 75% of total carbon footprint of 2018, will have implemented measures in accordance with the concrete measures detailed in their individual Action Plans.

Regarding the operational boundaries, UNFPA applies the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol approved principle of operational control<sup>1</sup> to define the boundaries of this EES, focusing on six management functions (Procurement, Human Resources, Facilities, Travel, Events, and ICT) and Programs.

## 2.5 Environmental Management System

To achieve the continuous improvement of the environmental performance of the organization as described in the scope above, three key documents are defined:

- Environmental Vision
- Environmental Efficiency Strategy
- Environmental Implementation Guidance

In addition to the above three documents, this strategy also refers to the UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards in Programming as well as the Climate Change Value Proposition to achieve its objectives.

# 3. LEADERSHIP

## 3.1 Roles and responsibilities

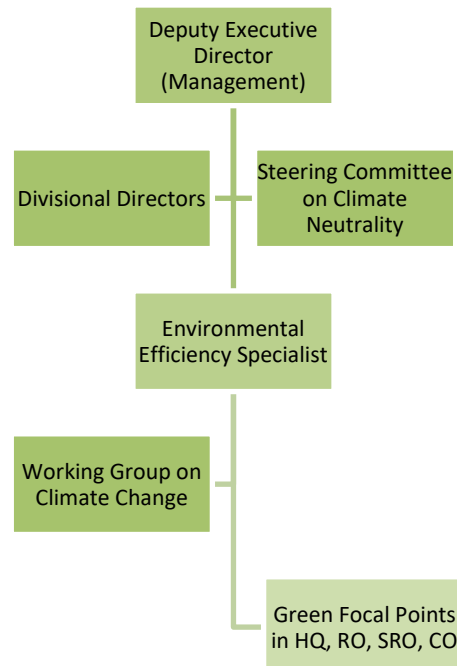
- The **Deputy Executive Director (Management)** is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Environmental Efficiency Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup>An organization has operational control over an operation if it or one of its subsidiaries has the full authority to introduce and implement its operating policies at the operation. This criterion is consistent with the current accounting and reporting practice of many organizations that report on emissions from facilities, which they operate (i.e., for which they hold the operating license). It is expected that, except in very rare circumstances, if the organization or one of its subsidiaries is the operator of a facility, it will have the full authority to introduce and implement its operating policies and thus has operational control.

Under the operational control approach, an organization accounts for 100% of emissions from operations over which it or one of its subsidiaries has operational control.

- **Divisional/Regional Directors** are responsible to ensure that their respective divisions incorporate the Environmental Vision into their activities, operations, and policy decisions.
- The **Steering Committee for Climate Neutrality** is an oversight body composed of the Directors of Technical Division (TD), Policy and Strategy Division (PSD), Division for Management Services (DMS), Division for Communication & Strategic Partnership (DCS), Division of Human Resources, and of two Regional Directors (on a rotational basis), as well as the Chiefs of Information and Technology Solutions Office (ITSO), and Supply Chain Management Unit (SCMU). For further details see the [terms of reference](#).
- The **Environmental Efficiency Specialist** is responsible for providing yearly GHG emissions data of the entire organization, working closely with the Green Focal Points in developing Environmental Action Plans to reduce GHG emissions. S/He is also responsible for ensuring UNFPA climate neutrality by purchasing offsets for unavoidable emissions and for managing UNFPA’s Climate Neutral Fund. For further details see the [terms of reference](#).
- The **Working Group on Climate Change** is a coordination committee that links the internal environmental efficiency efforts with programmatic efforts around climate change. It provides guidance and support to the Environmental Efficiency Specialist in terms of the maintenance and implementation of the EES.
- **Green Focal Points** are responsible for developing, implementing, and monitoring the Environmental Action Plans of their respective offices. Green Focal Points are also responsible for the annual submission of their greenhouse gas emissions data. Each Head of Office is responsible to ensure that a Green Focal Point is appointed in his/her office and the name communicated to the Environmental Efficiency Specialist.



### 3.2 UNFPA Environmental Vision

The [UNFPA Environmental Vision](#) defines the environmental objectives of the UNFPA and is the driver for implementing its EMS as to maintain and improve its environmental performance. It reflects the commitment of top management and is signed by the Executive Director.

## 4. PLANNING

### 4.1 Environmental aspects

An environmental aspect is an element of an organization’s activities or products or services that interacts with the environment and can cause an impact. Under the scope of this EMS, we aim to reduce the impact of six management functions (Procurement, Human Resources, Facilities, Travel, Events, and ICT) and Programs. Its main aspects and related impacts are:

Environmental aspects	Environmental impacts
Use of natural resources (energy, water, consumables)	Depletion of natural resources
Waste production	Air, soil, water pollution
Use of refrigerants	Climate change
Construction of new premises	Biodiversity degradation
Direct GHG emissions	Climate change

The document “[Environmental aspects evaluation](#)” describes the process of identifying environmental aspects, taking into account a life-cycle perspective, determining its associated environmental impacts and calculating a risk analysis matrix allowing us to prioritize areas of action.

### 4.2 Compliance obligations and evaluation

Being a global organization, UNFPA has certain privileges and immunities that would exempt it from local laws and requirements. The compliance with existing regulations in many areas falls under the responsibility of the different country, regional and sub-regional offices as well as overall organizational operations, processes, and programming. Compliance with each applicable national law and periodical legal inspections are maintained within the contractual obligations determined and reviewed by the UNFPA administration.

### 4.3 Planning action

Based on the evaluation of environmental aspects and opportunities from internal and external issues as well as from the needs and expectations from interested parties, the Environmental Efficiency Specialist

proposes action plans to address these issues, considering technological options and financial and operational requirements. The action plans, when approved, are reflected in the [EES Plan](#).

#### **4.4 Objectives and targets**

The overall objective of UNFPA’s EES is to avoid pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions stemming from operations and programs to the minimum. Moreover, UNFPA is committed to offsetting all its greenhouse gas emissions to achieve climate neutrality. The purchasing of offsets is to account for UNFPA’s unavoidable greenhouse gas emissions and are to be funded from the Climate Neutral Fund established for this purpose. Finally, following the disruption caused by the pandemic in 2020, the UNFPA will strive to change old paradigms, developing new ones that are more in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNFPA’s EES targets for the six managements functions and Programs are the following:

##### **Governance**

- Integrate environmental risks in the risk management procedures;
- Implement the EES in 60 field offices using the [Environmental Efficiency Ladder](#);

##### **Facilities management**

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions attributed to facilities by 30% by 2025;
- Increase no. office compounds measuring waste production and water consumption by 20% annually;
- Reduce waste generation levels by 30% by 2025;<sup>2</sup>
- Reduce water use by 30% by 2025;
- Attain green building certification (EDGE, LEED or equivalent) if available and feasible.

##### **Travel**

- Reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions attributed to travel by 30% by 2025;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions attributed to vehicles by 30% by 2025;

##### **Procurement**

- Identify the procurement spend and categories having a significant environmental impact and for which UNFPA has leverage by 2021;
- Include environmental criteria in the procurement of all identified high impact / high leverage procurement categories per above by 2025;

##### **ICT**

- Introduce digital archiving and document management to facilitate paperless offices by 2025;
- Reduce the printing of publications to only the UNFPA flagship publication by 2025;

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<sup>2</sup> Waste generation reduction goals might change due to the availability of more reliable data in future GHG Emissions Calculator measurements. It is assumed that the current waste generation data is an underestimate due to unavailable data in most UNFPA offices and only rough estimates in others.



### **Events**

- Implement “[UNFPA Green Events Checklist](#)” in all major events (> 300 participants) by 2025;
- Ensure all UNFPA events provide opportunity for remote participation;

### **HR**

- Provide mandatory “Greening the Blue” training to all staff by 2025;
- Include environmental objectives in senior management appraisals;
- Continuously provide formal-informal communication and awareness-raising campaigns;
- Review further expansion of flexible working arrangements, including teleworking;

### **Programs**

- Increase the number of partnerships with a climate change component;
- See the [Social and Environmental Standards](#).

## **5. SUPPORT**

### **5.1 Resources**

Due to the fact that UNFPA has established both a [Climate Neutral Fund](#) as well as a capital budget, most if not all the targets in this EMS can be achieved without additional funding requirements. However, it is the ambition to attract additional funding opportunities, from both the public and the private sector, through the implementation of the present strategy. Moreover, to transform the organizational culture towards an environmentally conscious workforce and provide sufficient support to field offices in establishing and implementing their action plans, UNFPA shall have a dedicated staff member<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, the network of Green Focal Points is crucial for the successful implementation of the present Strategy.

### **5.2 Competence and awareness**

Educated, motivated and aware staff are invaluable in achieving UNFPA’s environmental goals. As an introduction to UNFPA’s commitment to climate neutrality, all UNFPA staff should complete the “Greening the Blue” mandatory training on green office behavior. UNFPA also provides for an [Environmental Efficiency Community](#) on its intranet, hereby informing interested staff about the latest developments in this area. Furthermore, a Green Corner can be introduced to the UNFPA learning opportunities portal.

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<sup>3</sup> One of the targets spelled out in the CEB approved Strategy for sustainability management in the UN system 2020-2030 is “100% of entities have dedicated capacity for environmental management” (CEB/2019/1-Segment 2). By being instrumental in achieving the targets of this EES as well the additional EES that will follow to achieve the Strategy for sustainability management in the UN system 2020-2030, the cost for this resource is recovered multifold by the environmental and cost efficiencies gained through the implementation of this EMS.

UNFPA should ensure the incorporation of an environmental training plan for its Green Focal Points through the UNFPA Learning Corner to ensure that they are aware of the relevant environmental issues and have adequate (specialized and general) training and experience to deal with their responsibilities.

The training activities should ensure that staff at UNFPA is aware of:

- The importance of conforming with UNFPA's Environmental Vision Statement and the requirements of the EES;
- The environmental aspects of UNFPA's operations, processes and programming activities and the benefits of improved environmental performance;
- Their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that UNFPA's environmental policies and procedures are adopted and maintained; and
- The potential consequences of deviating from the EES.

### **5.3 Communication**

#### **Internal communication**

To ensure that environmental efficiency becomes a top priority for the organization, senior management will be regularly informed about progress towards climate neutrality and sustainable management practices through semi-annual meetings with the Steering Committee on Climate Neutrality. Minutes of these meetings are registered in the dedicated [folder](#) in the Drive.

The [UNFPA Environmental Efficiency Community](#) serves as an information resource and forum as well as the origin of innovative communication channels for UNFPA staff on all things pertaining to the organization's efforts on environmental efficiency.

#### **External communication**

UNFPA currently cooperates with and contributes to numerous inter-agency bodies, including UNEP SUN and the Issue Management Group on Environmental Sustainability Management, through which it also communicates progress towards environmental sustainability to the UN system. UNFPA efforts on environmental efficiency are conveyed to the general public through UN Environment reports, and the [Greening the Blue](#) and [UNFPA website](#).

Regarding programs, communication is described in the [Social and Environmental Standards](#).

### **5.4 Documented information**

The Environmental Efficiency Specialist will ensure that EES documentation is adequate, updated, and reviewed periodically. In general, these documents are available for interested parties. The documents will be stored in electronic format and accessible to all UNFPA personnel via the [Environmental Efficiency Community](#) or, if adequate for external audiences, to the public at large through [UNFPA website](#).

## 6. OPERATION

### 6.1 Operational planning and control

Operational planning and control are described in the [Environmental Implementation Guidance](#) document.

Regarding Programs, guidance is described in the [Social and Environmental Standards](#).

### 6.2 Emergency preparedness and response

Emergency situations causing high environmental impact should be treated immediately on the ground in accordance with local law to avoid further damage to the environment. The environmental impact of such an emergency should be reported via the [Global Service Desk](#) (GSD) to get further advice on preventative measures.

## 7. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

### 7.1 Monitoring and measurement

To ensure that operational control measures are effectively dealing with environmental impacts and are leading to progress toward environmental objectives and targets, monitoring and measurement will be undertaken on a regular basis to check conformity against UNFPA's environmental targets and objectives.

The most important and quantifiable measure is the annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, pertaining to vehicle use, travel, heating, cooling, electricity, water consumption and waste generation. This data will be used to assess the effectiveness of the action plans developed by each office and help identify the most important environmental aspects that each office must focus on to achieve the objectives and targets mentioned in the EES.

The results of the collected data and improvements in the environmental performance of UNFPA will be communicated internally and externally as described in Chapter 5.3.

### 7.2 Internal control

UNFPA will plan annual controls of the EES to determine whether the EES has been properly implemented and maintained and whether it conforms to the planned arrangements for environmental management. The findings are discussed during Steering Committee meetings and used to identify opportunities to improve our EES.

### **7.3 Management review**

Management review of UNFPA's EES will take place at least once a year and will include the participants of the Steering Committee. This review is designed to monitor and evaluate the progress of this EES's targets and ensure its efficiency and continuous improvement. Minutes of the Management Review will be shared with all participants.

Items reviewed by Steering Committee will include:

- Need for changes in the Environmental Vision;
- Changes in the context of the Organization that may influence the environment and the EES;
- The environmental performance of UNFPA, including new environmental aspects;
- Progress against the objectives and targets and the need for any changes;
- Changes in staff members and management expectations;
- Incidents, non-compliance, and nonconformities;
- Corrective actions and periodic controls;
- Recommendations for improvement

## **8. IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Nonconformity and corrective action**

For the purposes of this EES, non-conformity refers to the following:

- Accidents or emergency situations having an environmental impact;
- Significant deviation from EES objectives and targets;
- Non-compliance with contractual commitments;
- Non-conformities or remarks identified during a periodic control.

UNFPA will monitor progress towards the attainment of targets and objectives through the annual environmental review and GHG Emissions Inventory submission. Recommendations for the improvement of environmental performance to attain the targets and objectives are to be reviewed in the management review.