

## Appendix 5. Environmental Sustainability Policy

(Next review by June 2027)

Policy number	5	Current policy version	4
Original policy approved	Jan 2010	Previous review date	Sept 2024
Current policy reviewed by CEO	PI	Current version approved by Committee of Management on	Sept 2024
Responsible person	CEO	Scheduled review date by	Sept 2027

### Introduction

Assisi Aid Projects (Assisi) acknowledges the importance of environmental sustainability in its work to contribute to the preservation of the environment for future generations.

In the countries where Assisi works, the natural environment is often the foundation for people's wellbeing and livelihoods. Rapid and unsustainable exploitation of resources can lead to environmental destruction, and the disempowerment and impoverishment of communities. Women are often the worst affected, particularly those who face intersectional forms of marginalisation, such as women with disabilities and those who live in rural areas.

### Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to outline Assisi's commitment to conducting its work in an environmentally sustainable way. All activities supported by Assisi will meet standards set by environment treaties, laws of the country Assisi is working in, donor policies and guidelines.

### Scope

This policy applies to all of Assisi's staff, members, Governing Body members (including Committee of Management and subcommittee members), volunteers, interns, representatives, contractors, and visitors to project sites (hereinafter referred to as "personnel").

In addition, Assisi will support in-country partners to understand the principles of this policy, and to practically implement environmental sustainability procedures in their local context.

### Policy

This policy extends to two areas of Assisi's work – in Australia, and overseas.

#### Environmental sustainability in Assisi's work in Australia

Assisi is committed to considering environmental impacts and usage of resources in day-to-day operations. Where possible Assisi will:

- Assess any proposed activity to identify potential direct and indirect impacts on the environment and implement actions to minimise these impacts.
- Minimise air and road travel.
- Reduce the amount of office materials used. Where possible reuse, or purchase products made from recycled materials.
- Limit unnecessary use of electricity and water.
- Ensure all project agreements and project cycle management tools include environmental protection requirements.

#### Environmental sustainability in overseas programs supported by Assisi

Assisi is committed to promoting and supporting environmental sustainability, climate action and improved environmental outcomes in development initiatives, with the overarching principle of 'do no harm.'

Assisi delivers development programs through local partners and therefore recognises the importance of working with local partners to improve their capacity in implementing programs that are environmentally sustainable. Where relevant this includes incorporating the following into project delivery:

- Project designs and reviews include an assessment of the possible or actual impacts of a project on the local environment, and strategies for minimising negative impact.
- Project designs and reviews consider and include ways that the project could improve and promote sustainable activities, such as sustainable agriculture and forest management practices.
- Regular monitoring of projects considers if the project is effectively addressing environmental concerns.
- Promoting community management of natural resources.
- Supporting traditional knowledge and indigenous leadership, especially led by women.
- Consideration of disaster risk reduction, through measures such as food security initiatives.
- Educating children and communities on the importance of protecting the environment and of environmentally friendly practices.
- Supporting partners and communities to advocate for environmental protection in their community.
- Staff model behaviours that respect and protects the environment.

#### **Responsibilities**

As outlined in the Good Practice Manual, there are roles and responsibilities that apply to all policies. There are no other specific responsibilities that apply to this policy.

## **Related Documents**

DFAT – Environmental Protection Policy for the Aid Program, November 2014

ACFID – Climate Change <https://acfid.asn.au/our-focus/combating-climate-change/>

Assisi – Program Manual