

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM POLICY STATEMENT FOR WHO  
FACILITIES**

**BACKGROUND**

At the beginning of his first term the Secretary-General, made a commitment to make the operations of the United Nations more sustainable, using energy more efficiently and eliminating wasteful practices. He asked the heads and staff members of all United Nations agencies to join him in this effort and “lead by example”. At the Rio+20 Conference in June, in “The Future We Want, Member States called on UN Agencies to advance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development within the UN system. More specifically they requested that United Nation Agencies improve the management of facilities and operations by taking into account sustainable development practices, building on existing efforts and promoting cost effectiveness.

**GOAL**

The World Health Organization is committed to the challenge of the continuous improvement of its Organizational practices in relation to environmental sustainability. To achieve this goal the Organization will establish a framework, based on the International Standards Organization 14000 family of standards, which is appropriate with the impact of the World Health Organization facilities on the environment. The system is voluntary and allows the Organization to practice good corporate behaviour.

**OBJECTIVES**

The environmental framework comprises:

**Work practices**

The World Health Organization will, to the maximum extent possible, comply with locally applicable environmental laws and regulations; address environmental issues in its facilities procurement practices; request its suppliers and partners to consider the environmental impact of their practices; reuse, reduce consumption, recycle materials to the maximum extent possible within locally applicable constraints; reduce energy and water consumption.

**The Work place**

The World Health Organization will, to the maximum extent possible, comply with locally applicable occupational and environmental standards with regard to indoor air quality, drinking water quality, health and safety, construction, facility management, waste disposal, buildings access and ergonomics.

**Information exchange**

The World Health Organization will, to the maximum extent possible, inform its local neighbours, personnel, contractors and partners of their respective responsibilities to consider the environmental impact of their activities.

**IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING and ACCOUNTABILITY**

The objectives, described above, will be implemented through locally specific Environmental Management Systems established and recorded by each World Health Organization Office and monitored by Regional Offices and Headquarters. Each locally specific Environmental

Management system will, to the maximum extent possible, establish measurable targets and baselines for the reduction of the environmental impact of the World Health Organization's local facilities.

All World Health Organization personnel have a responsibility to understand the impact of their actions on the environment and to be aware of their duty to minimize the impact. To facilitate this duty the World Health Organization will publish the documented performance of the locally specific Environmental Management Systems.

Over time, the World Health Organization will develop its own environmental norms and standards and apply the highest known norm and standards. These will be applied globally, thus making every possible effort to have the same high standards in all WHO Offices.