

Environmental Policy / Mission Statement should be developed and displayed publicly

Benefits

- Publicly acknowledge commitment to improved environmental performance in your establishment.
- Use the environmental mission statement as a marketing tool to highlight environmental commitment
- Direct the environmental action plan, which leads to reductions in resource consumption and waste production and leads to improved environmental performance.

Overview of the intervention

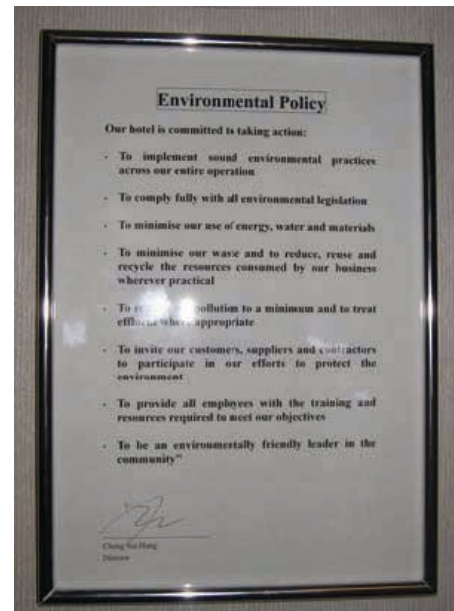
An environmental policy or mission statement is a written statement outlining an establishment's mission in relation to managing the environmental effects and aspects of its operations.

The environmental policy should clearly state the aims and principles of the organisation, its mission with respect to its impact on the environment. The policy should also allow its management to communicate its aims and objectives to employees and other interested parties, including shareholders, customers and suppliers.

There is no standard format for writing an environmental policy, but the style should reflect your organisation's culture. A good starting point is to collect and review examples of policies written by other organisations and select the format and style most appropriate to your own organisation

There are a few basic rules to follow to ensure the policy is clearly written and concise:

- Keep the statement short – if its longer than a sheet of A4, then it's probably too long
- The statement is meant for everyone to see, so make sure it's easy to read and understand;



- The statement must be realistic, achievable and relevant to your organisation's activities and practices
- Demonstrate commitment to making the policy work and get the statement signed, dated and endorsed by the MD, Chief Executive or / and other senior management

There is no standardised content for an Environmental Policy, although policies normally contain the same themes, including those listed below:

- A commitment to continuous improvement;
- Recognition of compliance with relevant environmental legislation as a minimum level of performance
- The education and training of employees in environmental issues and the environmental effects of their activities
- The monitoring of progress and review of environmental performance on a regular basis (usually annually)

Additional issues relevant to your organisation, and which you may wish to address in your environmental policy, could include:

- Transport
- Recycling of packaging materials
- Minimising waste
- Efficiency use of water and energy
- Use of biodegradable chemicals
- Minimising use of solvents and lead-based paints
- Use of timber from sustainable (managed) forests
- Procedures to minimise noise disturbance to neighbours

The checklist below may help you to draft a policy appropriate to your business. Choose examples of the statement that would apply to your business and make the statements as specific as possible for your operations:

- Comply with the requirements of environmental legislation and approved codes of practice;
- Assess the environmental impact of all historic, current and likely future operations;
- Continuously seek to improve environmental performance;
- Reduce pollution, emissions and waste
- Reduce the use of all raw materials, energy and supplies
- Raise awareness, encourage participation and train employees in environmental matters

- Expect similar environmental standards from all suppliers and contractors
- Assist customers to use products and services in an environmentally-sensitive way
- Liaise with the local community
- Participate in discussions with environmental issues.

A generic environmental mission statement is available for download and can be used as is, or modified for use in your establishment.