

# MANAGING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

## Christian Aid's environment policy

Christian Aid's approach to managing its environmental impacts reflects its role as an international organisation working in around 50 countries; that is to say, our environmental policy allows us to meet our commitments on carbon reduction without compromising our mission of eradicating poverty.

Our policy identifies actions that can have benefits over the short, medium and long term, allowing for sustained and effective change.

In particular, we monitor our environmental impacts by focusing on the emissions of carbon dioxide from activities relating to travel, paper use and energy use. Although these aspects are only a small part of our overall likely impact on the natural environment, they constitute a measurable variable that can be used to set improvement targets.

Our specific actions are as follows:

### Reducing our carbon footprint

We are committed to reducing our carbon footprint by 80% by 2050 based on our 2005/6 carbon footprint. This target is a reflection of the provisions in the UK Climate Change Act 2008 and the threshold identified by the Stern Review as the minimum required to avoid the most catastrophic climate change.

We have chosen an incremental approach to achieve at least a 5% reduction year-on-year with the hope that we will have achieved our overall 80% reduction much sooner than 2050.

### Minimising the environmental impacts from travel

Staff members are required to minimise travel wherever possible. By planning travel at the beginning of each year, staff

members should be able to consolidate different aspects of Christian Aid's work in order to take fewer trips, take advantage of travel already taking place elsewhere in the organisation and benefit from staff who are already located in the areas in which we work.

Christian Aid provides a range of remote meeting and conferencing technology including video, web and audio conferencing. Staff members are asked to always consider the use of this technology to avoid the need for travel in the first instance.

Where services exist, our policy states that journeys should be made by train (and ferry if appropriate) if the journey from a base office to the final destination and back again can be undertaken without significantly affecting work commitments. This policy is primarily aimed at reducing intra-European travel but also has implications for travel in some countries such as India where rail services are considered to be available and safe.

If staff members are required to travel by air, for longer haul journeys for example, they are asked to choose the most direct flight available, where the cost is not prohibitive. Multiple short haul legs generate more carbon emissions than one long haul leg.

### Minimising the environmental impacts from vehicle use

Around a quarter of Christian Aid's staff members use vehicles as part of their work. Staff are required to walk or cycle or use public transport to make their journey where it is feasible to do so and consider vehicle use only where it is essential.

In the case of assigned or pooled vehicles, we will choose vehicles from an agreed vehicle-purchasing list and choose the smallest vehicle to match the needs of

# POVERTY

**“Christian Aid knows all too well the impact climate change has on poor communities around the world. That's why we have publicly committed to cutting our own carbon footprint by at least 5% a year.”**  
Our Carbon Footprint report

**“...carbon emissions hurt poor people. It therefore follows that Christian Aid’s emissions hurt poor people and that they must be reduced wherever possible.”**  
The climate of poverty: facts, fears and hope (2006)

**“Christian Aid recognises environmental stewardship as a key factor in its accountability to poor people and to future generations of all key stakeholders.”**  
Christian Aid’s Accountability to Natural Environment.

the user. Our vehicle retention period is no longer than five years, ensuring that staff members travel in the most efficient vehicles available. We ask vehicle users to apply driving techniques that encourage fuel efficiency.

### **Minimising the environmental impacts from paper use**

Print is a key medium for communicating our important messages - through paper publications, leaflets and other materials.

We now work closely with our suppliers to agree the most environmentally friendly specifications for our publications. Our policy states that all paper purchased should be 100% recycled, if this option is available. Materials produced should be recyclable as well, so that, once our supporters have used them, waste is not directed to landfill.

We also try to minimise the amount of paper we use when we are designing publications. Our design choices will always take account of paper usage, both in terms of the size of the publication and the amount of paper used in the production process.

More and more communication is through digital channels and we encourage our supporters and wider stakeholders to choose online and electronic versions of our reports and promotion materials. Where our supporters do not have access to IT, mailings are minimised through our ‘constant monitoring of supporters’ interests and needs.

In our offices, we encourage paper-free working and meetings. Where printing is necessary, it should be duplex. New printers allow us to record usage by staff members.

All ink cartridges are recycled and we encourage our staff and wider networks to recycle their printer cartridges too through the Christian Aid Recycling Appeal.

### **Minimising the environmental impacts from energy use**

Half of the electricity we use is from renewable sources and we are aiming for this coverage to grow. Energy efficiency is a requirement in every office, from switching off unused lights and appliances to installing energy efficiency technology, recognising

both the carbon and the cost benefits of doing so.

In countries where renewable energy is not available, we aim to invest in fuel-efficient burners and generators that run on cleaner fuels such as LPG.

### **Minimising and managing waste produced in offices**

Although we do not calculate the carbon emissions of our office waste, all offices have been asked to provide recycling facilities, where the services exist. Staff members are asked to adopt the principle of ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’ for all materials purchased by Christian Aid for work purposes, as well as for materials bought into the office such as the waste created at lunchtimes.

Our head office in London is ‘zero to landfill’. All waste that is not recycled is directed to an energy-from-waste plant. We encourage all our offices to take advantage of similar facilities, where available.

### **Procuring environmentally sustainable goods and services**

Christian Aid has a clear corporate procurement policy and code of conduct for suppliers. Christian Aid aims to purchase goods, services and works that have the least negative impact on the environment. The policy also requests suppliers, in their own operations, to meet legal and regulatory obligations in relation to the environment and to demonstrate good practice in waste management, energy efficiency and in the conservation of natural resources.

### **Our policy on carbon offsetting**

In the absence of a global cap on carbon emissions, Christian Aid does not offset its carbon emissions. This is because we believe the effectiveness of offsetting schemes remains uncertain in a world in which emissions are still rapidly growing.