

WFP: Environmental Mandate & Activities

World Food Programme

Environmental mandate

WFP is committed to environmentally-sustainable interventions in relief, recovery and development. In emergency situations where lives are at risk, the food needs of beneficiaries are of primary importance and take precedence over energy and environmental considerations. However, it is sometimes possible for WFP to address environmental concerns in longer-term programmes.

During the last decade WFP has undertaken a number of initiatives to address environmental concerns in both its relief and development interventions. These include incorporating the consideration of environmental issues in its programme design manual, presenting a paper to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA) on sustainable development (CFA: 27/P/INF/2, 1989), and an examination of issues through case studies. WFP also promotes the goals of Agenda 21, in particular Chapter 34, by helping poor communities adopt sustainable coping strategies and by addressing environmental concerns in relief and development.

Based on the premise that it is more effective to build environmental elements into WFP interventions from the beginning, WFP will adopt as much as possible the procedures and measures indicated below to systematically introduce sound environmental practices in its operations.

Environmental activities

Food Basket Energy Needs Assessments: These assessments take into account the energy and environmental implications of each type of food basket.

Environmental Reviews of Activities and Operations: Environmental reviews are undertaken at the earliest stage of Country Programme cycles and recovery interventions to identify mitigation measures for activities that may have adverse environmental impacts.

Recycling and Green Procurement: WFP promotes environmental stewardship at headquarters and in the field by complying with recommendations of the UNDP Inter-Agency Procurement and Services Organization (IAPSO) on environmentally responsible procurement and recycling.

Safe Use of Hazardous Chemicals: To limit potential hazards from improper use of chemicals used to protect stored food commodities or crops and to control disease-carrying vectors in refugee settlements, WFP works with government counterparts to ensure the safe use and disposal of hazardous chemicals and to promote the use of safer alternatives.

Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods Activities: WFP Country Programmes involving the programming of natural resource management (NRM) and livelihood activities emphasize livelihood security in line with its Enabling Development policy to design, implement and monitor activities that strengthen local NRM practices in order to support livelihood strategies.

Establish Partnerships on Environmental Issues: WFP Country Programmes tap into the operational experience on addressing environmental issues acquired by other agencies, including coordination mechanisms such as the United Nations Common Strategic Framework of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) whenever possible.