



1. What is the environment?

The **environment** is defined by the Australian Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999³ as including:

- (a) ecosystems and their constituent parts, including people and communities; and
- (b) natural and physical resources; and
- (c) the qualities and characteristics of locations, places and areas; and
- (d) heritage values of places; and
- (e) the social, economic and cultural aspects of a thing mentioned in paragraph (a), (b), (c) or (d).

2. Why is the environment important?

The Bible teaches that God created the world to His own satisfaction and in a way that reflects His goodness and desire to provide for all creatures. As a Christian organisation, we confess that, along with all of humankind, we have been responsible for large scale destruction of the environment in an attempt to control and exploit it, rather than caring for and nurturing it.

3. Leprosy and the environment

Leprosy is a disease of poverty, and poverty is known to have a close link to environmental degradation because communities depend on their immediate environment as the resource-base for both survival and development.

4. What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the need of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."¹

For TLMA, it is important that, in seeking to meet our stakeholders' needs, we do not compromise the ability of future stakeholders to meet their own needs. Our main approach is to identify and implement ways in which:

- a) our projects and practices respond to the environmental needs of the communities in which project beneficiaries live; and
- b) our projects and practices avoid or minimise harm to the environment.

In addition, we recognise our responsibility to be good stewards of the environment in which our organisational structures are based. Issues to be considered include the consumption of energy and other resources within our buildings, the processing of waste, and our travel².

¹ Gro H. Bruntland, (ed), *Our common future: The World Commission on Environment and Development*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

² Tearfund, *Environmental Sustainability Roots 13*, (Tearfund: 2009).

³ *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016C00777/Html/Volume_2

5. Statements of commitment

As a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), TLMA complies with the Code of Conduct (revised December 2016) and therefore, adheres to the following indicators which relate to environmental protection and sustainability:

3.3.1 Demonstrate an organisational commitment to environmental sustainability and improved environmental outcomes in our development and humanitarian initiatives.

3.3.2 Demonstrate an organisational commitment to environmental sustainability and improved environmental outcomes in our internal operations.

TLMA will therefore commit to:

1. Examining our organisation's current operations and potential operations in order to assess both positive and negative impacts to avoid or mitigate negative impacts and promote positive impacts, e.g. using recycled paper wherever possible, minimising our use of non-renewable energy.
2. Working with implementing country partners to assess the environmental impacts during the design phase of new projects, taking into consideration the needs and resource base of the communities.
3. Assessing the impact and potential impact of projects on the environment in an ongoing manner through project reviews, monitoring and evaluation and report accordingly including advising DFAT where appropriate.
4. Promoting the exchange of ideas with partners, about the importance of environmental sustainability, and on positive ways to address environmental concerns.
5. Encouraging programs and projects which seek to protect and nurture the environment.

The above commitments align with the United Nation's, Sustainable Development Goals Initiative 2015-2030 Goal'11: Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable' and '12: Responsible Consumption and Production'

6. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed in 5 years.

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Summary
3.1	24/01/2017	TLMA IPS	Revision history added. Policy revised with updates from ANCP Guidelines 2016, Sustainable Development Goals and updated ACFID code compliance requirements 2016. Changes tracked for IPC review.
3.2	26/05/2017	TLMA IPS	Policy integrated with IPC suggested comments following IPC meeting 03.04.17
3.3	26/08/2017	Nerida Collard	Amended policy review cycle

Document Approval History

Version	Date	Approved by
1.0	22/04/2003	TLMA Board
2.0	01/04/2006	TLMA Board
3.0	20/05/2013	TLMA Board
3.3	26/06/2017	TLMA Board