



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

ICVA Environmental Policy

Part I. Adopted by F&A Board Committee 25th April 2022

Other sections adopted by ED 25th April 2022

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PART I

1. Commitment to being an environmentally responsible organisation

ICVA Secretariat recognises that its day-to-day operations impact the environment in a number of ways. ICVA Secretariat is therefore committed to minimise the potentially harmful effects of its activities wherever and whenever possible.

This policy establishes practices and guidelines for ICVA Secretariat to effectively reduce the carbon footprint and other environmental impacts of its activities while operating under a limited budget. Each staff member is responsible and accountable for their contribution to reducing ICVA Secretariat's carbon footprint.

This policy will also take into consideration the following processes that ICVA Secretariat is a part of:

- Since 2020, ICVA has been a member of and is reporting to [2050TODAY](#). In partnership with the United Nations, 2050Today brings together a community of international Geneva institutions determined to ensure a quick, continuous and measurable greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions reduction of their own institutions.
- In 2021, ICVA Secretariat adopted the '[Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations](#)' which, for a humanitarian NGO network, provides a clear vision and principles to guide humanitarian action in the face of the crises.
- At the General Assembly in May 2021, ICVA members adopted the '[ICVA Strategy 2030](#)', to which ICVA incorporated its [Climate and Environment in Humanitarian Action portfolio](#) under Transformation 2 of the Strategy. ICVA members also adopted the '[Commitment and motion to action on climate and environment](#)'. Through this, ICVA members will consider signing the Charter individually and indicate when they will realistically be able to measure their implementation of the Charter. To keep up with the rate of change needed and continue to advance this agenda, ICVA will review the Motion to Action at latest at the next ICVA General Assembly in 2024.



PART II

The team is asked to continuously contribute to identifying and implementing opportunities to this effect. The policy will be regularly developed to reflect our measures towards a more sustainable Secretariat management, in line with the conclusion by the IPCC in 2018 that the world has to curb its carbon emissions by at least 49% compared to 2017 levels by 2030 and then achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 to meet the 1.5°C target.

This policy has been developed for the ICVA Secretariat (both at Geneva and at the regions), and is not intended as a monitoring tool for ICVA members.

2. Practices and guidelines

Monitoring and reporting

- 2.1 The ICVA Secretariat will report to the ICVA Board and the General Assembly on its practices to reduce the carbon footprint and other environmental impacts of its activities.
- 2.2 Progress is also be shared in the ICVA Annual Report.
- 2.3 Stemming from the reporting requirements of 2050TODAY, a carbon footprint analysis is performed.
- 2.4 An annual action plan is developed .
- 2.5 Progress is monitored against targets.
- 2.6 Compensation is sought for unavoided emissions.

Communication of ICVA's commitment

- 2.7 Internal communication is done in a clear and consistent manner. Sustainability becomes an ingrained part of ICVA Secretariat's culture.
- 2.8 ICVA Secretariat communicates externally to ICVA members, partners as well as suppliers and service providers. This can influence their practices in the broader community, too. It also demonstrates that ICVA Secretariat shares commitments to our environment.

Travel – Flights, vehicle use, and CO₂ compensation

- 2.9 All trips up to six hours are to be done by train or other public transport providing safety and security measures are ensured.
- 2.10 While acknowledging the importance of personal contact and face-to-face dialogue, ICVA Secretariat tries to minimise the number of trips and seeks to find the most environmentally friendly flight routes in planning travel. Video- and teleconferencing is also used to the greatest extent possible to reduce the amount of travel required.
- 2.11 ICVA will ensure a 30% air travel reduction of ICVA Secretariat staff by 2025 (baseline year 2019). This goal is to be collectively achieved, and travel by one staff might need to be offset by a colleague. Collective agreement on essential travels and for whom they are essential is to be sought.
- 2.12 Whenever public transport is not available, the least polluting alternative is sought.
- 2.13 Emissions caused by air travel for the ICVA Secretariat will be compensated by ICVA. ICVA Secretariat compensates air travel through [MyClimate](#).
All meeting and project participants will be encouraged to also compensate for their flights.
- 2.14 As other means of compensation, ICVA pays an "Employee Tax on CO₂" to the Geneva Canton.



Energy

- 2.15 ICVA Secretariat will transit to an energy provider able to offer 100% renewable energy in Geneva by 2030. In addition, to save energy and costs, the ICVA Secretariat staff are asked to follow the directions below:
- Turn off lights, air conditioning devices and heating in rooms not used, especially in meeting rooms
 - Set staff computer's setting on 'energy saver mode' to waste less energy
 - Printers to be switched off every evening
 - Computer plugs are pulled off when not in use
 - Use the dishwasher's eco-cycle

Office – Printing

- 2.16 When printing for internal use ICVA Secretariat prints in black and white (unless colour printing is absolutely necessary for readability).
- 2.17 All Secretariat members should change their printers' setting accordingly. They are asked to think twice before printing for desk use or for internal meetings.
- 2.18 For external use the ICVA Secretariat staff prints as they see fit but aims to print only the final version of the needed document and limits, as much as possible, the length of all printed publications. All public ICVA Secretariat publications (Annual Report, briefings etc.) are printed on 100% recycled paper.
- 2.19 ICVA Secretariat will transit to a low paper use for internal documents in favor of electronic documents.
- 2.20 [Double sided printing by default \(it's the easiest way of saving money, reducing waste, reducing paper consumption, and improving ICVA's carbon footprint\).](#)

Office - Procurement

- 2.21 Office supplies for the daily use of all members of the ICVA Secretariat are ordered through an eco-friendly provider (not harmful to the environment). A list of selection criteria is provided.
- 2.22 For bigger items or specific conference and/or project-related material exceeding 500CHF, a sustainable option should be researched. If the price difference to the cheapest "traditional" option is less than 10%, the sustainable product should be purchased. For office printing, ICVA Secretariat only buys recycled paper.

Finances

- 2.23 ICVA Secretariat will review its banking services in 2022 to seek to transition to climate friendly banking services providing the ability of the bank to transfer funds internationally is not deteriorated.

Food and Drink

- 2.24 At ICVA events like the General Assembly, Annual Conference, Board meetings or workshops, we serve mainly vegetarian food, conscious of origin of products and production conditions.
- 2.25 Where reuseable and recycled utensils can be available, even if at an additional cost, the environmental factor will be considered, as in all other procurement procedures.
- 2.26 Where possible, to move away from single use plastic utensils, water bottles, etc. by providing tap or filtered water will be provided.



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Waste Management

- 2.27 All waste should be separated into bins for paper, plastic and residual waste whenever possible.
- 2.28 Use of plastic is brought to its strict minimum and is considered only for items which are not available in alternative materials.
- 2.29 At internal and external events, we aim to only supply reusable dishes.