



Environmental Management at WFP

WFP is a UN front runner in efforts to improve the environmental sustainability of in-house operations. We recognize our responsibility to protect fragile environments in development as well as emergency settings. Since 2009, we have been measuring and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from our buildings, vehicles and travel worldwide, and in 2015 we declared Climate Neutrality, offsetting our remaining emissions by purchasing high quality carbon credits from the UNFCCC.

WFP has also taken action to measure and manage various kinds of waste and to reduce the use of resources such as paper, printer inks, plastic bottles and other packaging.

Piloting ISO 14001:2015

Now, through participation in a two-year pilot to implement Environmental Management Systems (EMS) across the UN, WFP is moving towards systematic management of the environmental impacts of its life-saving work.

WFP was one of four agencies selected for the pilot coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme with support from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. The UN system has adopted the international standard, ISO 14001 (2015 version), which is used at more than 300,000 organizations worldwide.

WFP's pilot activities are centered in Nairobi at the Kenya Country Office and Regional Bureau. Over time, the EMS will scale up to cover WFP's activities throughout the world, leading to a global EMS for the entire organization.

What is an EMS?

An EMS is a management tool to identify, manage and reduce an organization's impact on the environment. It provides a system for planning, implementing and reviewing an organization's response to those impacts, and achieving continuous improvement in results.

An EMS does not specify minimum environmental standards, but helps an organization to meet environmental protection goals appropriate to each location. WFP's beneficiaries live in some of the most vulnerable and degraded environments on earth. Protecting the environment is therefore crucial to protecting their livelihoods.



WFP's operations in Kenya will be the first to implement EMS, following the ISO 14001 standard

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Why does WFP need an EMS?

The EMS process is designed to help organizations integrate the management of environmental issues into its standard business practices. It's timely right now, given work that is already underway to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into WFP's strategic framework, and other changes as part of the Integrated Roadmap.

Considering environmental actions while planning and carrying out our work delivers better environmental protection, at lower cost, than if environmental issues are considered separately or only at the end of a project or programme.



Shade cloth reduces need for car air conditioning

Managing our use of natural resources can also help WFP save money. A 2012-13 scoping study found that WFP could save up to US\$20 million per year through improved resource efficiency.

Other drivers confirmed by the study included improved risk management in already-vulnerable environments, opportunities to optimize resource use, and enhancing staff safety and wellbeing in remote areas.

WFP's research helped make the business case for EMS across the UN system and in 2013 the UN's High Level Committee on Management called for UN system organizations to progressively implement EMS on a voluntary and flexible basis.

WFP is proud to be one of the first organizations to take up that challenge.

The benefits of adopting an EMS:

- better stewardship of resources by identifying efficiency gains and cost savings;
- enhanced transparency and accountability to stakeholders by integrating environmental performance into the delivery of mandates;
- identification and management of environmental risks which, left unchecked, could adversely impact the local environments of the very people the UN seeks to assist;
- reducing the organization's environmental footprint, and;
- fostering a sustainability culture through promoting behavioural changes such as fuel-efficient driving, recycling, and sustainable procurement.

What will WFP's EMS cover?

WFP's EMS will encompass greenhouse gas emissions, energy, waste, water and staff training. The pilot will identify WFP's impacts in these areas, prioritize mitigation measures, define monitoring needs and ensure these are captured in WFP policies, strategies, operating procedures and guidelines.

