

Protection Approaches

Climate Emergency and Environmental Policy

Name of policy	Climate Emergency and Environmental Policy
Brief description	The climate crisis will exacerbate pre-existing situations of identity-based violence and create new risks. This policy seeks to help Protection Approaches mitigate its own contributions towards the causes of climate change and adapt to the impacts already being felt by our own staff and the communities we work with and for.
Approved by	Draft policy – awaiting approval
Who is responsible	Executive
Applies to	All staff
Date of review	Ongoing
Version Control	V1 01/11/21 - Next Review November – 2022

Our commitment to more intentionally confront and adapt to mounting ecological and climate crises is born out of Protection Approaches’ mission to work towards a world free from identity-based violence. We know that the ongoing and future impacts from climate change will exacerbate pre-existing situations of identity-based and mass violence and are likely to create new risks in places assumed to not require atrocity prevention. Although the changing climate impacts different communities unequally, it already does and will continue to impact everyone. Therefore, just like the prevention of all forms of identity-based violence – from hate crime to genocide – inclusive and just climate action is needed everywhere, all of the time.

Consistency between what we advocate and how we do our work is an integral value of our organisation. It is PA’s core belief that we must start with our own table before venturing out. This DRAFT policy seeks to help PA mitigate its own contributions towards the causes of climate change and better adapt to the impacts already being felt by our own staff and the communities we work with and for.

We recognise that individual actions by themselves will not be sufficient to avert climate crises. What is needed is structural change. We will therefore work to contribute to a truly intersectional, joined up approach in the UK that recognises the prevention of climate collapse as vital to the prevention of identity-based violence, here in Great Britain and internationally.

Protection Approaches considers it an organisational priority to more intentionally confront and adapt to mounting ecological and climate crises. We know that integrating this thinking and such considerations into how we make decisions will strengthen our work, contribute to a positive and inclusive working environment, and help to encourage a culture of responsibility.

This policy is intended to be a living document to which staff, trustees and partners are encouraged to input, constructively challenge and proactively engage. As such there will be an all staff meeting at least every six months and a standing agenda item at all board meetings to discuss this policy, and our individual and collective work towards achieving our commitment to carbon neutrality and a healthier environment.

Protection Approaches sets a high standard for maintaining low consumption and emissions, for recycling, and for innovative solutions of day-to-day workplace waste reduction. To do so we commit to:

1. **Avoid and reduce:** Work to ensure our consumption of materials and production of emissions is as low as possible
2. **Reuse and recycle:** Where avoidance is not possible we will ensure that office and other waste is as low as possible
3. **Compensate and Offset:** When waste and emissions cannot be avoided we will compensate for any significant residual, adverse impacts

1. Avoid and reduce:

We commit to working to reduce our per head carbon emissions year-on-year and to publish our progress each year in our annual report. To account for organisational changes, we will use the annual carbon footprint per employee as a benchmark to measure our success in mitigating emissions.

To avoid and reduce emissions when making decisions around programme design, activities, procurement, data and cloud usage and office management staff and board members should actively give consideration to environmental impacts. For example:

- decisions relating to technology, web hosting, internet and office space must always be taken with a view to keep energy use and material consumption as low and efficient as possible
- food, drink or materials for events or activities should always be ethically and locally sourced. We should aim for our catering to be vegetarian, with exceptions only to safeguard accessibility and inclusivity. Cutlery should be bio-degradable or reusable
- car-pooling, cycling, and using public transport is encouraged, and where possible facilitated
- where possible, and particularly within the United Kingdom and western Europe, we should travel only when it benefits the progress of our work compared to virtual meetings and that travel is limited to train, bus or car, rather than plane, as much is financially and logistically feasible. This also applies to travel within regions other than where we are based. Any air travel needs to be signed off by a senior manager following the completion of an air travel justification form showing that other options are not viable
- a growing part of our carbon footprint is data storage. As an organisation we will review our data, cloud and website hosting and endeavour to migrate towards sustainable hosting platforms. We encourage our staff to make decisions to minimise their own data-related emissions for example by unsubscribing from extraneous mailing lists and using alternative search engines like Ecosia.

We recognise that while many changes and adaptations can be made without greater resource, others are expensive; taking the train across Europe is more costly than to fly, for example. We will therefore include in our funding proposals where appropriate request to cover, and advocate more widely as part of general funding reform the inclusion of, the additional costs often associated with zero or low-emitting approaches to our work, including travel and technology. We see this not just as a benefit to our own organisation but as critical for our sector to remain fit-for-purpose during the climate emergency.

Where necessary, procurement should give preference to environmentally sustainable suppliers. Our Procurement Policy, states that we must “ensure we do not contribute to organisations or systems that perpetuate [abuses of human rights], including man made climate change.” This includes that all

suppliers must comply with environmental regulations and preference should be given to suppliers who actively promote environmental sustainability.

2. Reuse and recycle

Staff are encouraged to reuse items as much as possible. This also includes exploring options to mend or fix items rather than disposing them.

All members of the team shall ensure correct disposal of any waste that may result from our work. The office will be equipped with bins to facilitate the separation of waste to benefit recycling. At activities, events and other programmatic work, staff will ensure the correct disposal of waste associated with those activities. If the appropriate facilities are not available at the location of the activity, waste should be brought to the nearest recycling facility. The commitment to recycle applies to daily waste and to more sporadic waste, including e-waste.

3. Compensate and Offset:

We recognise that avoiding sources of carbon emissions cannot always be achieved based on the nature of our work and the fossil fuel dependency of our societies.

We will calculate the organisational carbon footprint annually, and we will pursue offsetting all our annual carbon emissions through vetted, human rights-centred projects. Details of our organisational carbon footprint and our chosen means of offsetting will be published each year in our annual report.

We know that the impacts of climate change and other environmental injustices are already felt in London, where we are based. We will proactively explore and commit to what PA can achieve within its office space to help mitigate and adapt to climate consequences already felt in our communities including but not limited to heat islands, air pollution and flooding.

Employee responsibilities and protections

All employees of Protection Approaches are required to take an active role in helping us meet our commitment to the environment. This policy should inform all of our work at Protection Approaches. We ask all staff to be aware of their use of resources and to save energy, reduce emissions, and to recycle wherever possible. We will not tolerate the disregard, from any of our staff, for environmental concerns. We will always invite suggestions from our staff to improve our efforts to be a low-emissions environmentally aware organisation.

As part of our core commitment to the physical and mental health and well-being of our staff, we will ensure our sick leave policies accommodate the consequences of climate change, for instance when crises occur within the home communities of our staff. We will also monitor the climate impacts within London and suspend work if need be for the safety of our staff, for example in response to extreme heat or severe storms.