

Environmental policy of the national level of the Church of Sweden

Adopted by the Church Board 2016-05-10. Revised 2016-09-06

1. Introduction

Purpose and context

The Church of Sweden is part of a worldwide community of churches and acknowledges our common responsibility for sharing the gifts of creation in an equitable and sustainable manner. A fair distribution includes both the needs of today's and future generations. A sustainable society requires that we manage natural resources in a responsible way and protects the ecosystems that bring us invaluable services.

This is the starting point of the sustainability efforts of the national level of the Church of Sweden. Our work is based on two fundamental principles of Christian ethics and faith – the principle of human value and the concept of good stewardship. They emphasise the equal value of all human beings and our responsibility both towards other people, future generations and Creation as a whole.

The establishment of an environmental policy is part of the national level's sustainability efforts. The policy expresses the goal to minimize the burden on the environment and promote environmentally friendly efforts.

Target group

This policy covers the Church Board and bodies/groups/delegations it appoints, as well as employees and contractors at the national level.

Communication

The policy is spread through the Church Office's intranet and during the introductory calls and introductory courses.

Follow-up

The Secretary General is responsible for ensuring that the policy is regularly updated.

Update

The Church Board will review this policy once every term of office. The Secretary-General is responsible for giving the Church Board information needed to be able to update the policy.

2. Principles for the national level's environmental work

- We will actively work to manage our environmental impacts, leading to continual improvement, with the aim of taking responsibility for how we affect the world around us

and further strengthening confidence in the Church of Sweden as a positive force for sustainable development.

- An environmental perspective will permeate everything we do. It should be integrated in both governance and planning of our work.
- Applicable environmental laws, regulations and other environmental requirements to which the organisation subscribes will be followed, including the precautionary principle¹. Legal requirements put only a minimum level.

Translated into practice, this means, for example, that the national level will:

- Have a property management with a good environmental profile.
- Use renewable energy to the extent possible.
- Integrate environmental considerations in travel.
- Manage resources and waste in an environmentally-friendly way.
- Analyse the environmental impact before purchases and let the conclusions affect the choice of product/service as well as our own behaviors.
- Select digital output in front of printed material.
- Give all employees a good knowledge of our environmental efforts and strengthen their capacity to contribute to reduced environmental impact.
- Make use of, and where necessary strengthen, employee commitment and expertise in the environmental field.

In addition to the above points, the national level will be a positive driving force through policy dialogue, purchasing and asset management to promote sustainable development.

3. Environmental targets

With this policy as starting point, the Secretary General is responsible for formulating concrete targets and activities, possible to follow up.

4. Other

Please also refer to environmental requirements and ambitions expressed in other policies related to asset management, travel and purchases. All policies can be found at the intranet: <http://internwww.svenskakyrkan.se/kyrkokansliet/policyer-och-riktlinjer>

¹ The precautionary principle is defined as follows in the Swedish Environment Code (Chapter 2, para 3): "Persons who pursue an activity or take a measure, or intend to do so, shall implement protective measures, comply with restrictions and take any other precautions that are necessary in order to prevent, hinder or combat damage or detriment to human health or the environment as a result of the activity or measure. For the same reason, the best possible technology shall be used in connection with professional activities. Such precautions shall be taken as soon as there is cause to assume that an activity or measure may cause damage or detriment to human health or the environment".