

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY CORPORATE



ECOCEANOS
FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

The Ecoceanos Foundation is a non-profit organization located in the northern region of Colombia, committed to the protection and conservation of the environment and the rights of indigenous communities. In our work, we recognize the interconnectedness between the health of the planet and the well-being of local communities, especially the Zenú indigenous community.

The world is facing an unprecedented environmental crisis. Deforestation, water and air pollution, overexploitation of natural resources and climate change are seriously affecting biodiversity and the quality of life of the most vulnerable populations. In particular, indigenous communities have witnessed and been victims of these problems, since their survival depends to a large extent on the balance of the ecosystems in which they live. In this context, Ecoceanos has assumed the commitment to develop initiatives that promote environmental restoration and the sustainable management of natural resources in collaboration with these communities.

The main objective of this environmental policy is to establish a framework for action for the organization, ensuring that each of our projects and operations is aligned with principles of sustainability and ecological responsibility. This involves the adoption of appropriate environmental practices, the implementation of nature-based solutions and the promotion of responsible production and consumption models.

Since its foundation, Ecoceanos has worked in the defense of the environmental rights of indigenous communities, understanding that environmental justice is a fundamental pillar to guarantee the well-being and development of these peoples. We recognize the need to promote environmental education and awareness of the importance of biodiversity conservation. In this regard, we are committed to developing education and capacity building programs aimed at communities, schools, and local actors to encourage active participation in environmental protection.

One of the biggest challenges today is adaptation to climate change. The effects of global warming, such as rising sea levels, desertification, and extreme weather events, are disproportionately impacting rural and coastal populations. For this reason, Ecoceanos has integrated mitigation and adaptation strategies into its projects, promoting the use of renewable energies, the reforestation of degraded areas and the restoration of ecosystems key to climate resilience.

Likewise, the organization advocates for the strengthening of environmental public policies that favor the protection of biodiversity and equitable access to natural resources. Through strategic alliances with local governments, universities, international organizations and companies with social responsibility, we seek to influence decision-making to achieve a positive impact in the long term.

Our environmental commitment is not limited to our activities in the field, but also encompasses the internal management of the organization. We apply sustainability criteria in our offices, minimizing the use of paper, promoting recycling and reducing our carbon footprint by optimizing energy consumption and using clean technologies.

Finally, this Ecoceanos environmental policy is not a static document, but a commitment in constant evolution. As new environmental challenges emerge and best practices are developed, we will ensure that we update our strategies and strengthen our actions to continue to contribute to the protection of the planet and the well-being of the communities we work with.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND POVERTY CRISIS

At the Ecoceanos Foundation we know that climate change poses a series of risks to the planet and to people living in conditions of extreme poverty, who are the ones who are most affected by the effects of the climate crisis, such as extreme natural phenomena (hurricanes, droughts, floods). It is also clear that disadvantaged populations are the most affected by the quality of the natural environment in which they live, since they are often directly dependent on the goods (natural resources) and services provided by ecosystems for their livelihoods.

Mitigating climate change could help curb many of the problems. *For example, if the temperature increase were only 1.5°C and not 2°C, as estimated, it would help up to 450 million people vulnerable to climate risks. According to the World Bank, at 2°C, between 100 and 400 million people would be at risk of starvation and between 1 billion and 2 billion would not have enough water for their survival. In addition, by 2080 it is estimated that global crop yields will be reduced by 30%, implying a huge loss of food.*

Despite progress in certain areas, the pressure on the environment continues to increase worldwide, posing a major challenge to the efforts needed for poverty reduction and human development.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN OUR ORGANISATION

The Ecoceanos Foundation promotes its work in sustainable development, thus highlighting that the environmental field is essential to aspire to have a dignified life for the populations with which we work. This area is based on four premises that will characterize all our work:

1. The sustainable development we promote has a **long-term focus** on all our interventions.
2. The **participatory and inclusive work approach** where, on the one hand, the population with which we work actively participates in the entire process that takes place in their community, as well as the diversity of the socio-environmental, socio-political, socio-cultural and socio-economic components is recognized and respected.
3. The **socio-environmental management approach** understands that the relationship between governance and poverty must be supported by a strengthened and inclusive public institutionality, with an increase in the priorities of the public and party agenda, with the existence of spaces for representation, strengthened local capacities and a high recognition of the economic value of environmental services.
4. The **innovation approach** that promotes all types of innovation, both technological and social, to accompany populations in a fairer and more equitable way in a transition towards less intensive models in the use of resources, such as the use of renewable energies, sustainable management in the use of water or the sustainable production of healthy food.



GUIDELINES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

In the field of international organizations, both in terms of international cooperation and for other actors, it is considered that efficient and equitable management of the environment is crucial to achieve a sustainable improvement in the living conditions of populations in vulnerable situations. This has been evidenced through the multiple international conventions (such as COP25), as well as by the fact that ten of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter, SDGs) that have made up the 2030 development agenda are directly linked to environmental aspects. This policy takes as references the Paris Agreement¹, the European Union, the United Nations, in particular the UNEP² (United Nations Environment Programme), and specifically with regard to emergency responses, the Joint Unit for the Environment UNEP/OCHA (JEU) and the Humanitarian mandate of the Spanish Agency for Development Cooperation (AECID).

However, it is pertinent to keep in mind the main challenges we have to face:

1. The imperative need to maintain and manage with a long-term vision the environmental capacity to supply the raw materials on which the population depends.
2. Guarantee fair and safe access to the goods provided by the ecosystem to the whole of society.

The Ecoceanos Foundation works on the environment and specifically on mitigating the effects of climate change through "SDG 13. Climate Action", as an imperative approach (of mandatory compliance), and complementary actions in basic aspects to ensure basic living conditions. We are aware that in the territories where we work, the effects of climate change are becoming evident through the increasingly strong impact of natural phenomena (hurricanes, floods, etc.).

PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on a series of principles, which guide its development and application. To highlight:

Coherence

Decisions on environmental matters must be consistent with the ethical criteria, principles and values of the Ecoceanos Foundation, limited only by current legislation.

Organizational Commitment

Through this policy, the Ecoceanos Foundation expresses its firm commitment to the protection of the environment, both in terms of our intervention and our daily work, based on the following guidelines:

1. To effectively and efficiently comply with the environmental legislation that is applicable, both in each of the countries where we work and at the international level, as well as the rest of the commitments in this area that we have voluntarily subscribed to.
2. To coherently integrate this policy into all decision-making processes and in all actions carried out in the organisation, from design to implementation, complying with the principles of prevention and reduction of environmental impact and promoting the continuous improvement of our management and our behaviour in this regard.



Excellence

The Ecoceanos Foundation will act rigorously and efficiently in the application of resources, seeking the greatest possible efficiency in the performance of its work through optimal management of resources.

Transparency

The Ecoceanos Foundation undertakes to proactively disseminate this policy to all its stakeholders, as well as to enable and keep open the communication channels established for the presentation of communications in the event of possible illegal acts and/or suspicious transactions.

Respect

The Ecoceanos Foundation will always respond from a constructive approach of respect for the environment, guaranteeing that both the population and the communities with which we work will not see their ecosystem harmed.

Sensitization

The Ecoceanos Foundation will be responsible for promoting, disseminating and raising awareness among its main stakeholders of respect for the environment, as well as ways to prevent the deterioration of the planet.

Tolerancia cero

La Fundación Ecoceanos se compromete a impulsar en el seno de la organización una cultura preventiva basada en el principio de “tolerancia cero” hacia la comisión de actos ilícitos entre los que se encuentran los delitos contra los recursos naturales y el medio ambiente, disponiendo a tal fin de los medios necesarios para su cumplimiento como son nuestros canales de denuncias.

AXES OF THE POLICY

Below, we present the two axes that make up this policy, grouped according to the type of environmental impact and the activities that generate it. These axes are accompanied by a series of lines of action formulated as proposals to be followed to achieve them, but whose application will be specified in the regulations that develop this policy and in the organization's strategic guidelines documents.

Encourage the implementation of the programs and projects that we promote to promote respect for and protection of the environment.

Through the strategic work guidelines of the Ecoceanos Foundation, the following will be sought:

1. The inclusion of strategies aimed at an efficient, responsible and sustainable use of natural resources in all programs and projects to be implemented. To this end, the environmental risks linked to our intervention will be identified and evaluated, in order to design and implement prevention and/or mitigation measures.
2. The inclusion of strategies aimed at minimising the production of waste through our actions, as well as achieving the highest possible degree of separation of waste to maximise its subsequent reuse and recycling.
3. Promote good practices in the consumption and use of water in all our activities in international cooperation and/or humanitarian aid programmes and projects, based on the premise that this liquid is one of the main resources consumed in their development.

To reduce the environmental impact derived from the activities inherent to our operations.

This includes everything related to energy expenditure, travel and office activities.

It is intended that the environmental impact generated by our work teams when acting is always in line with the efficient use of natural resources and energy, referring in the latter case to both the rationalisation of travel and a coherent use of energy in our facilities.