

## MARINELife Environmental Policy Statement

### Introduction

MARINELife is the science charity that conducts an Ocean Health Check by gathering information of key marine species so that they may be better protected, by providing relevant, robust and up-to-date information to those working on the sustainable future of our oceans.

We study marine mammal (cetacean) populations, birds and the marine environment and champion them to policy decision-makers, to protect and manage marine ecosystems for wildlife. Research underpins all our work and helps us and other organisations find practical solutions that we can implement and promote.

Our robust and rigorous research is primarily volunteer-led on research routes around the British Isles and North Atlantic. These survey routes are generally reliant on partnerships with commercial shipping organisations, including large and small ships and boats in the passenger, cargo and leisure sectors.

We share our knowledge and enthusiasm through training and public engagement to help people of all ages enjoy the natural world. This includes an extensive education programme to enable the general public to learn and understand more about our marine life.

We recognise that in delivering these positive conservation benefits our work may also have some adverse impacts on the environment. With this in mind, we are committed to continual improvement of our own environmental performance, not only meeting our statutory environmental obligations but also aiming to reduce the environmental impacts of our research by working closely with our partners.

Our main environmental impacts arise from our survey routes and include: greenhouse gas emissions from energy use and travel; oil pollution, water (sewage, 'grey' and ballast) pollution, marine noise pollution, waste generation; water use; and the use of non-renewable resources. To minimise our impacts on the environment, we have set ourselves the following objectives:

- Advocate sustainability and, through our example and achievements, inspire and encourage others.
- Develop and implement environmental action plans to minimise our impacts, and set appropriate targets to achieve continuous improvement.
- Continually review our environmental performance.
- Raise awareness of environmental issues amongst partners and staff and encourage them to observe best practice.
- Incorporate environmental responsibilities into job descriptions, staff training and appraisals.
- Select and work with corporate partners and suppliers towards achieving compliance with this policy.
- Promote the value of sustainability to our members and supporters.

### Additional Statement on Cetaceans in Captivity

MARINELife is engaged in the study of cetaceans in the wild and does not campaign directly on issues relating to cetaceans in captivity. However, MARINELife believes that cetaceans belong in the wild and does not condone the keeping of any cetacean in captivity. We keep this in mind when selecting partners or accepting sponsorship. Despite this, nor do we advocate the release of animals where it would be against the interests of the individual animals to do so (i.e. sanctuary purposes only). We will not partner with any organisation engaged in the capture of wild animals or captive breeding for any purpose.

Responsibility for its implementation lies with the management structure and every member of staff. The policy and supporting management systems will be subject to regular review.

## **Organisations Commitments to Reducing Our Impact**

### **Plastic**

- We will replace plastic products at the end of their life that are used in our day to day administrative operations with alternate environmentally friendly materials.
- If plastic has to be used, we will source where possible, non-virgin plastic in favour of recycled products.
- We will encourage all staff and volunteers to not use single use plastic e.g. water bottles, carrier bags etc. instead to use reusable alternatives.
- We will continue to monitor and report on plastic litter as part of our survey protocols when at sea.

### **Paper**

- We will minimise the use of paper in the office.
- We will reduce packaging as much as possible.
- We will seek to buy recycled and recyclable paper products.
- We will reuse and recycle all paper where possible.

### **Energy and Water**

- We will seek to reduce the amount of energy used as much as possible.
- Lights and electrical equipment will be switched off when not in use.
- Heating will be adjusted with energy consumption in mind.
- The energy consumption and efficiency of new products will be taken into account when purchasing.

### **Office Supplies**

- We will evaluate if the need can be met in another way.
- We will evaluate if renting/sharing is an option before purchasing equipment.
- We will evaluate the environmental impact of any new products we intend to purchase.
- We will favour more environmentally friendly and efficient products wherever possible.
- We will reuse and recycle everything we are able to.

### **Transportation**

- We will reduce the need to travel, restricting to necessary trips only.
- We will promote the use of travel alternatives such as e-mail or video/phone conferencing.
- We will make additional efforts to accommodate the needs of those using public transport or bicycles.

### **Maintenance and Cleaning**

- Cleaning materials used will be as environmentally friendly as possible.
- Materials used in office refurbishment will be as environmentally friendly as possible.
- We will only use licensed and appropriate organisations to dispose of waste.

### **Culture**

- We will involve staff and volunteers in the implementation of this policy, for greater commitment and improved performance.
- We will update this policy at least once annually in consultation with trustees, staff and key volunteers where necessary.
- We will provide staff/volunteers with relevant environmental training.
- We will work with suppliers, contractors and sub-contractors to improve their environmental performance.
- We will use local labour and materials where available to reduce CO2 and help the community.

## **MARINELife Ethical and Environmental Procurement Policy**

### **ETHICAL TRADING**

MARINELife asks that suppliers adhere to the labour standards outlined in our ethical trading document for all products supplied. These standards are based on the Ethical Trade Initiative base code.

#### **Employment is freely chosen:**

There is no forced, bonded or involuntary prison labour.

Workers are not required to lodge "deposits" or their identity papers with their employer and are free to leave their employer after reasonable notice.

#### **Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected:**

Workers, without distinction, have the right to join or form trade unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively.

The employer adopts an open attitude towards the activities of trade unions and their organisational activities.

Workers representatives are not discriminated against and have access to carry out their representative functions in the workplace.

Where the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is restricted under law, the employer facilitates, and does not hinder, the development of parallel means for independent and free association and bargaining.

#### **Working conditions are safe and hygienic:**

A safe and hygienic working environment shall be provided, bearing in mind the prevailing knowledge of the industry and of any specific hazards.

Adequate steps shall be taken to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, associated with, or occurring in the course of work, by minimising, so far as is reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment.

Workers shall receive regular and recorded health and safety training, and such training shall be repeated for new or reassigned workers.

Access to clean toilet facilities and to potable water, and, if appropriate, sanitary facilities for food storage shall be provided.

Accommodation, where provided, shall be clean, safe, and meet the basic needs of the workers.

The company observing the code shall assign responsibility for health and safety to a senior management representative.

**Child Labour shall not be used:**

There shall be no new recruitment of child labour.

Companies shall develop or participate in and contribute to policies and programmes, which provide for the transition of any child found to be performing child labour to enable her or him to attend and remain in quality education until no longer a child; "child" and "child labour" being defined in the appendices.

Children and young persons under 18 shall not be employed at night or in hazardous conditions.

These policies and procedures shall conform to the provisions of the relevant ILO standards.

**Living wages are paid:**

Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week meet, at a minimum, national legal standards or industry benchmark standards, whichever is higher. In any event wages should always be enough to meet basic needs and to provide some discretionary income.

All workers shall be provided with written and understandable information about their employment conditions in respect to wages before they enter employment and about the particulars of their wages for the pay period concerned each time that they are paid

Deductions from wages as a disciplinary measure shall not be permitted nor shall any deductions from wages not provided for by national law be permitted without the expressed permission of the worker concerned. All disciplinary measures should be recorded.

**Working hours are not excessive:**

Working hours comply with national laws and benchmark industry standards, whichever affords greater protection.

In any event, workers shall not on a regular basis be required to work in excess of 48 hours per week and shall be provided with at least one day off for every 7 day period on average. Overtime shall be voluntary, shall not exceed 12 hours per week, shall not be demanded on a regular basis and shall always be compensated at a premium rate.

**No discrimination is practised:**

There is no discrimination in hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination or retirement based on race, caste, national origin, religion, age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation.

**Regular employment is provided:**

To every extent possible work performed must be on the basis of recognised employment relationship established through national law and practice.

Obligations to employees under labour or social security laws and regulations arising from the regular employment relationship shall not be avoided through the use of labour-only contracting, sub-contracting, or home-working arrangements, or through apprenticeship schemes where there is no real intent to impart skills or provide regular employment, nor shall any such obligations be avoided through the excessive use of fixed-term contracts of employment.

**No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed:**

Physical abuse or discipline, the threat of physical abuse, sexual or other harassment and verbal abuse or other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

The provisions of this code constitute minimum and not maximum standards, and this code should not be used to prevent companies from exceeding these standards. Companies applying this code are expected to comply with national and other applicable law and, where the provisions of law and this Base Code address the same subject, to apply that provision which affords the greater protection.

**Packaging:**

- Packaging must be fit for purpose & meet all legislation requirements.
- Over-packaging is not permissible. Packaging must be minimised for all applications.
- The most environmentally beneficial packaging format and materials should be used.
- Degradable, recyclable, biodegradable plastics should be used, as an alternative to conventional plastics, wherever appropriate.
- Recycled materials should be used wherever possible.
- FSC board should be used for Carton board and paper packaging (see Materials section).

**Packaging & Waste Regulations:**

Since the Packaging Regulations of 1998, we are required to minimise packaging, facilitate recycling and take account of safety, hygiene and customer requirements. We are also responsible for the cost of recycling our packaging, and we have to pay a levy based on how much packaging we use. In addition to any environmental considerations, we therefore have a positive commercial incentive to use less packaging, more recycled/ recyclable materials and innovative formats and materials.

**Energy Use:**

Wherever economical, MARINELife will aim to source products with a view to minimise transport & product miles involved, in order to minimise emissions, and to balance out the possible economical penalty against the environmental benefits of more local sourcing.

MARINELife will be introducing a mechanism to have suppliers report their Carbon Footprint and the mechanisms they are adapting to reduce their environmental impact.

**Materials:****Paper:**

Recycled paper is preferred wherever appropriate over virgin pulp.

Where virgin pulp is being used, priority will be given to FSC certified paper, and MARINELife will expect its suppliers of paper products to provide FSC certificates. Failing that, suppliers will be expected to demonstrate how they are moving towards FSC or recycled pulp in the provision of their paper products. With more and more publishing companies moving towards FSC as standard, and with the quality of recycled boards improving (whether 100% or mixed), costs and quality should no longer be an issue.

**PVC:**

There are many environmental concerns regarding the use of PVC (polyvinyl chloride). The manufacture and disposal of PVC can involve emission of environmentally damaging chemicals.

We aim for products sold or provided by MARINELife to be free of PVC to limit the impact of toxic pollutants generated throughout the life-cycle of this material and its impact on the environment.

Sourcing alternative materials should be possible in virtually all instances, so suppliers will have little difficulty in complying on this policy. PET, Polypropylene and Polystyrene can be used in place of PVC for injection moulded and thermoformed containers, trays, lids and inserts. There may also be alternative degradable/ biodegradable materials, so all options should be fully investigated. Other retailers also prohibit the use of PVC packaging, so suppliers and packaging companies will be familiar with this issue.