



HELCOM Green Workplace guidelines

This document aims at improving the eco-efficiency of the HELCOM Secretariat as well as HELCOM meetings. For that purpose, feasible measures for the HELCOM Secretariat are identified and listed below for its immediate implementation. Measures aiming at making HELCOM meetings more sustainable are also pointed out for HELCOM as an organisation

Green office - Measures for HELCOM Secretariat staff

Saving energy

- Activate energy-saving settings on computers and other office devices;
- Switch off lights and equipment after the working day (last person to leave the corridor checks that lights are switched off also from all other offices and rooms);
- Unplug phone and computer chargers when not in use.

Printing and copying

- Use computers for data management (e.g. Meeting Portal and Document System), do not take unnecessary printouts and print two-sided and black and white whenever possible;
- Apply the booklet printing option for longer documents and shrink size if practicable;
- Reuse printing paper whenever possible (for drafts etc.);
- Explore material options to avoid buying plastic folders.

Recycling

- Sort paper (1. recyclable paper/newspaper/brochures and 2. recyclable office paper), biowaste, cardboard (also in the kitchen), bottles, other glass, metal and hazardous waste;
- Before buying anything for the office, ask if somebody already has the item or equipment you are planning to purchase;
- Use the same mug/glass all day.

Travelling

- Whenever possible try to organise video or audio conference calls instead of meetings with travel involved;
- When you have to travel, take into consideration the eco-friendliness of your way of travelling and, if possible, take a direct flight to the venue since it saves fuel;
- When you bring souvenir sweets to the office, avoid the ones that are individually wrapped in plastic.

Procurement and equipment

- We aim as far as possible to procure the most eco-friendly products and services available;
- We favour renting and leasing contracts;
- We use FSC certified or recycled paper whenever possible;
- All our equipment is actively maintained to prolong its working life;
- We favour electronic publications (especially BSEPs) and reduce printed volumes;
- We favour digital solutions for all HELCOM promotion and communication actions instead of physical objects such as printed brochures;
- The Secretariat's common office equipment settings are adjusted to energy and material saving mode.
- We use recharging batteries for keyboards and mouse.

Kitchen and catering

- We do not use cardboard or other disposable tableware except on special circumstances (more than 15 meeting participants). We do not use plastic tableware;
- Instead of bottled water we use tap water;
- We aim to use fair trade coffee and tea, and organic milk;
- We avoid offering food and drink with individual/multiple plastic wrapping (e.g. cookies, tea);
- In catering we favour local and domestic raw materials, vegetables, organic products and fish caught from sustainably managed stocks (e.g. species identified sustainably used in [WWF guide](#) or fish with [Marine Stewardship Council](#) label) versus meat.

Cleaning up

- We use phosphate free dishwashing liquid;
- We ask the cleaning company to use ecolabelled products and chemicals;
- We consider the possibility of using towels/cloths instead of napkins/paper;
- We use local dish cloths for kitchen which can be washed in the dishwasher, instead of disposable dish cloths;
- We do not have trash cans in our personal rooms. Instead, we directly sort our waste and dispose it appropriately in the different material containers available in the kitchen.

Gifts and greetings

- We prefer (local) immaterial commodities, gift tokens and services instead of goods as a business gifts;
- We prefer gifts that are hand-made, or from recycled materials, supporting local craftsmen and entrepreneurs;
- We prefer gifts that do not contain plastic and hazardous substances, and that can be recycled;
- We send electronic Christmas cards, invitations and letters whenever possible.

General

- We use the "Secretariat Day" as an opportunity to improve our environmental responsibility;
- We provide our staff the possibility to travel and work in an eco-friendly manner
 - By providing an office bike for local travel;
 - By providing a Secretariat HSL travel card for local business-related travel by tram, bus, metro and train,
 - By having a positive attitude to teleworking.

Combined and longer-term targets

- We follow and try to reduce our paper and electricity consumption and waste management costs (e.g. HSY's Petra waste system, which is a free service for comparing waste volumes generated by businesses and organisations in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The system helps in developing solid waste management for buildings and reducing the amount of waste created);
- We will explore the possibility of changing the light bulbs currently in use in the office to more environmentally friendly bulbs;
- In the long term we explore the possibility of having electronic financial administration and e.g. travel order/expense claim management.

[HELCOM as an organisation is committed to green meetings](#)

HELCOM meetings:

- To avoid waste, there is no need to provide pens nor pads for all participants as most participants use their own pens, papers and laptops;
- If tags for the representatives attending are needed, they will be made of paper/cardboard;
- Water and refreshments are provided in jugs/glasses, avoiding the use of single use products as much as possible;
- Shall be organized in the greenest way possible, avoiding single-use products, products containing plastic and hazardous substance;
- Participants are to be informed what they can do to be eco-efficient when coming to and attending HELCOM meetings.