



SAT

Southern African AIDS Trust

www.satregional.org

Supporting Community Responses to HIV and AIDS in Southern Africa

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN AIDS TRUST

The results and the reality of global warming and environmental degradation (including desertification, soil erosion, deforestation, etc.) are obvious and beyond dispute or debate. They are not just environmental issues as they affect our public health and security but they are urgent matters of survival for everyone on the planet — the most urgent threat facing humanity today and it will take action from everybody working together to reverse these challenges.

Environmental degradation is not an opinion but a scientific reality, and science tells us that human activity has made enormous impacts to our planet that affects our well-being and even our survival as a species. The world's leading science journals report that glaciers are melting ten times faster than previously thought, that atmospheric greenhouse gases have reached levels not seen for millions of years, and that species are vanishing as a result of climate change. In addition, we are also experiencing extreme weather events, long-term droughts, and rising sea levels.

In Southern Africa, environmental degradation is systemically linked to poverty. Research is clear that extreme poverty increases the pressure on the environment (e.g. using wood for fuel). Further, an environment that is being degraded plays a role in increasing societal stresses and potential conflict in and between communities. More targeted research on HIV and AIDS and the environment is in very early phases and no major body of work yet exists from which to make definitive claims. SAT will keep abreast of this research and feed any emerging issues into its programmes, School Without Walls and concepts of community HIV and AIDS competence.

Fortunately, science also tells us how we can begin to make significant repairs to try and reverse some environmental impacts, but only through immediate action, hence the need for SAT and its partners to implement this policy. The policy covers paper, electricity, water, chemicals, smoking, condoms and chemicals. This Policy shall be used as a guide for SAT staff and partners (SAT will encourage its partners to adopt this policy) to make environmentally friendly and healthy work places and communities.


A more environmental friendly home / work place / community contribute to:

- ❖ Improvement of health;
- ❖ Saving of money and other resources;
- ❖ Increased social and spiritual benefits.

The Environment and our Health

- It is no coincidence that what is good for the planet is also good for our health. We are reliant upon the earth to provide us with our most basic and vital needs. Those are fresh air, clean water, and wholesome food. Undertaking measures to reduce the quantities of paper, electricity, water and chemicals we consume we will help us save money and other resources.

Paper

- Use double side while photocopying.
- • Reuse backside of papers for printing and photocopying for internal purposes within the workplace.
- Reuse envelopes for internal purposes within the organisation
- Think twice before deciding to print out documents. Read from the screen as much as possible. Save single side print out with non-confidential matters on to give away to institutions such as orphanages, schools, community groups, etc. to use for writing and drawing on.
- Recollect used cardboard from the suppliers and reuse for packaging again.
- Install recycle bins near photocopier and fax machine, for example: 'Back-paper collection box', 'Envelopes recycle bin' and 'Cardboard recycle bin'.
- Try to use old newspapers or magazines for parcel wrapping.
- Cut some one-side used papers into smaller pieces for notepad purpose.
- Burning paper should only be used as a last resort.

Electricity



- Switch off lights, fans and electronics after use to reduce unnecessary electricity expenditure.
- Check the light intensity if it is too strong since strong light may increase the electricity consumption and thus wasting electricity. Consider switching off a portion of unused lights during recess or off-hours.
- Only use the air-conditioning system during the hot season. Close all openings (i.e. windows and doors) while the air-conditioning is in use.
- Replace burnt out bulbs with low energy lamps
- Switch off computers, copying machines, printers, fans and electrical appliances when you knock-off for the day.
- Always keep electrical appliance dry and away from water.
- When using the heater in rooms / offices, use the thermostat to control the heat level, and switch it off when you leave the room / office after work.

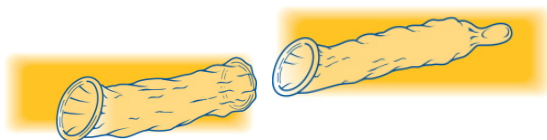
Water

- Close all water taps properly after use and if still dripping report to the office Reception or community leader
- Never leave the water running.
- Avoid watering out-door flowers and other plants during the day as this can reduce the chance of water loss by evaporation.
- Always ensure that the lever comes up after flushing or else the water will continue to run into the toilet.

Chemicals

- Do not use excessive dosages of perfumes, detergents or insect sprays etc. Try to find environmentally friendly alternatives to chemicals; so when shopping ask for these alternatives.
- As much as possible, use refill bottles
- When using chemicals, follow instructions on protective precautions in order to avoid health hazards.

Condoms



- *Do not flush condoms.* Condoms can clog the plumbing in the house / office (or the plumbing wherever you happen to be). If the condom manages to make it through the septic system, it will only end up with the solid waste. This means that somebody has to pull it out of the sewage treatment, which is not pleasant for anybody. The condom might even make it past the treatment plant, and this is not good because it means that it could end up in the water supply, and the last thing we need is more pollution in our rivers, lakes, and oceans.
- *Do not throw away condoms* in areas not designated for litter. Regardless of what material of condom is used (latex, polyurethane, or others), there will be a wrapper to dispose of. These foil wrappers will not biodegrade, nor can they be recycled, and they simply have to be put in the garbage.
- Lastly, remember, *never reuse a condom.* Although reduce, reuse, and recycle is the motto for environmentalism, you need to put health first on this one. Do not minimize condom use; do not reuse condoms, and do not recycle them. Indeed using condoms is environmentally friendly because it is preventing the spread of communicable diseases.



Smoking

- As a courtesy to all non-smokers do not smoke inside buildings.

Recycling of Glass

- If there is a choice between glass, tin and plastic, choose glass for re-usage and recycling.



General Tips:

- Waking up with a traditional wind-up alarm clock rather than the beep of an electronic one - this can save someone almost 48 grams of CO₂ each day;
- Choosing to dry clothes on a washing line versus a tumble dryer - a daily carbon diet of 2.3 Kg of CO₂;
- Replacing a 45-minute workout on a treadmill with a jog in a nearby park. This saves nearly 1 Kg of the main greenhouse gas;
- Opting for non-electric toothbrush will avoid nearly 48g of CO₂ emissions;
- Heating bread rolls in a toaster versus an oven for 15 minutes saves nearly 170g of CO₂;

- Switching from regular 60-Watt light bulbs to energy-saving ones will produce four times less greenhouse gas emissions;
- Walking, cycling, or taking the bus or train (where available) rather than the car for a daily office commute of as little as 8 km will save a big 1.7 Kg of CO₂;
- Shutting down your computer and flat screen both during lunch break and after working hours will cut CO₂ emissions generated by these appliances by one-third;
- Investing in a water-saving shower head will not only save 10 litres of water per minute, but will also slash CO₂ emissions resulting from a three-minute hot shower by half;
- Reducing the weight of goods and items carried onboard by airline passengers to below 20Kg could cut global GHG emissions by two million tonnes of CO₂ a year.