

## **RSPB Ethical and Environmental Procurement Policy**

### **Ethical Trading**

In line with our commitment to our ethical principles and to the UN Global Compact, we are committed to taking sustainable and responsible business actions. Suppliers must agree to the labour standards outlined in our ethical trading document for all products and services 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, the [Real Living Wage](#) 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.

### **Environmental Legislation**

We expect our suppliers to comply with all environmental legislation in the provision of a product or service to RSPB.

### **Packaging and Waste Regulations**

A supplier has a duty of care for any waste arising from work they have undertaken at a RSPB site. They must ensure waste is removed by an authorised carrier and is taken to a licenced, permitted or exempt waste management operator. Copies of waste documentation should be kept and made available on request to RSPB staff.

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. We therefore have a positive commercial incentive to use less packaging, more recycled/ recyclable materials and innovative formats and materials. In addition, the RSPB's policy is to follow the waste hierarchy by reducing waste in the first place, re-use and recycling and to move to a circular economy model. The RSPB has a plastics policy and is looking to eliminate plastics without causing other environmental problems.

We therefore require packaging to be:

- Fit for purpose and to meet all legislative requirements.
- Over-packaging is not permissible. Packaging must be minimised for all applications.
- The most environmentally beneficial packaging format and materials should be used.
- Recyclable and bio- plastics should be used, as an alternative to conventional plastics, wherever appropriate. Degradable plastics are not acceptable.
- Recycled materials should be used wherever possible.
- FSC and/or re-used or recycled board should be used for carton board and paper packaging (see Materials section).
- Home compostables

## **Energy Use**

Wherever economical, RSPB will aim to source products with a view to minimise transport & product miles involved, in order to minimise emissions in conjunction and on balance with other sustainable considerations e.g. Fair to Nature, and to balance out the possible economical penalty against the environmental benefits of more local sourcing. The RSPB will be introducing a mechanism to encourage suppliers to report their Carbon Footprint and the ways they are reducing their environmental impact.

## **Materials**

Timber and wood:

The use of reclaimed or recycled timber and wood products will be preferred to new material, when technically appropriate.

All new timber and wood products to be sold by the RSPB will be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international network to promote responsible management of the world's forests and is easily the most recognised ethical & environmental standard for paper/ wood products. It is already widely used for furniture, etc., and it is now being used by board mills as a standard for packaging such as cartons and paper bags.

FSC is the ONLY timber and wood product certification system the RSPB supports. FSC and UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) certified woods are sources of FSC Products, including RSPB woodland reserves.

- a. New timber and wood products supplied from rare and declining tree species or from threatened habitats will not be used. Illegally logged products will not be used.
- b. New timber and wood products must be capable of being re-used and or recycled.
- c. Locally grown and converted / manufactured FSC certified timber and wood products will be preferred to those from more distant sources.

Paper:

Following the same principles as for wooden products, recycled paper is preferred wherever appropriate over virgin pulp. Where virgin pulp is being used, paper must be FSC certified and the RSPB will expect its suppliers of paper products to provide FSC chain of custody certificates. In exceptional circumstances, suppliers may be accepted where they can demonstrate how they are moving towards FSC or recycled pulp in the provision of their paper products within a set timescale. 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.

Tropical commodities and other foodstuffs:

The RSPB has a policy covering products, (including coffee, tea, palm oil, sea-food, sugar, chocolate, meat and dairy), where there is a high risk of a connection to unsustainable loss of habitats and species. Please ask for further details if you are looking to supply products with such ingredients.

## 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. All products sold by the RSPB will 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.

## Peat Free:

The large-scale removal of peat from bogs in Britain and Ireland is destroying one of our most precious wildlife habitats. It takes centuries for a peat bog to form, with its special wildlife - modern machinery destroys it in days. All plants and gardening kits that include a growing medium will be peat free.

## **Link to Latest Environmental Policy**

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/about-us/how-the-rspb-is-run/approach-to-environmental-impacts/>