

Beginner's Guide to Sustainable Procurement

Sustainable procurement is the process of reviewing the items and services that your office purchases and selecting ones with lower environmental impact. Sustainable purchasing principles can be applied to the purchase of all the major items of equipment, energy, water, paper, cleaning, and furniture. Environmental impact can include what went into making the products, such as toxic compounds, to the resources they use in operation, through to their disposal.

Sustainable or green procurement policies and tracking methods and a range of certificate marks are available to guide consumer choice. Sustainable procurement can save money, improve the health and wellbeing of your office, strengthen your brand, and send a strong signal to the market about your corporate values.

Purchasing carbon neutral products and services is an excellent way of managing Scope 3 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol classifies a company's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into three 'scopes':

Scope 1: direct emissions from owned or controlled sources.

Scope 2: indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy.

Scope 3: indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the reporting company, including both upstream and downstream emissions. These GHG emissions are typically related to goods or services that an organisation procures (e.g. purchased paper, car rental, flights etc.).

Quick Guide

To sustainable / green procurement:

- Adopt clear policies and guidelines
- Communicate your corporate procurement position to staff and suppliers
- Identify the most commonly purchased items by volume and value and establish their environmental impacts and possible alternatives
- Develop procurement management systems, tracking and benchmarking
- Identify end-of-life options
- Provide necessary training
- Review processes and identify areas of improvement

Resources

[Quick Guide to Sustainable Procurement](#) – CitySwitch

