

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

1. Preamble

At Balakrishnan V & Co, we are cognizant of our role in fostering environmental sustainability and recognize the significance of small contribution towards sustainability development. As a responsible Chartered Accountant (CA) firm based in India with less than 10 employees, we commit to integrating sustainable practices into our operations, aligning with our broader commitment to social and environmental responsibility.

2. Scope

The Environmental Sustainability Policy of Balakrishnan V & Co extends across all facets of our operations and engagements, focusing on internal activities within our office premises. It governs our approach to energy consumption, resource utilization, and waste management while fostering a culture of sustainability among our employees, encouraging their active participation in environmentally responsible behavior. Our commitment to the local community involves active participation in environmental initiatives, fostering partnerships, and contributing beyond our immediate operations. **Notably, this policy does not encompass noise and water pollution but specifically addresses air and land pollution concerns.** Additionally, it necessitates regular monitoring and transparent reporting of our environmental performance to stakeholders. Periodic reviews ensure alignment with emerging trends, technological advancements, and evolving best practices in environmental stewardship, involving all individuals associated with our firm in our collective journey toward sustainability.

3. Commitment to Environmental Sustainability

3.1 Legal Compliance:

- We are dedicated to ensuring compliance with all applicable environmental laws, regulations, and standards within the The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1987, after the enactment of the Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 the enforcing responsibility was entrusted to the Board. As such, the Board was later renamed as the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board in 1985, and The Environment Protection Act (EPA), 1986. By staying abreast of and adhering to environmental legislation, we aim to contribute to the broader environmental protection efforts in our region.

3.2 Resource Conservation:

- Recognizing the finite nature of natural resources, we pledge to implement measures to minimize our consumption of water, energy, and paper. This commitment extends to optimizing resource usage, exploring energy-efficient solutions, and adopting practices that contribute to the conservation of vital resources like paper reduction (mentioned in 4.2).

3.3 Waste Reduction:

- In our pursuit of sustainability, we commit to reducing waste generation. This involves the adoption of paperless communication practices, as a practice used papers are not disposed instead are given away at every quarter to paper recycling agencies and a register is maintained (as shown in the table below) and it is monitored regularly.

Calendar year		No. of paper (in kg) disposed	Name of the agency
2023	Jan - March	1.5 kg	xxx
2023	April - June	2 kg	yyy

The firm has got tie up with Saahas Zero Waste Solutions, E waste Hub, companies who deal with electronic waste disposal who are certified under Karnataka State Pollution Control Board. The firm has got an arrangement with these companies to pick up the E waste and dispose them in accordance with Karnataka State Pollution Control Board. By embracing waste reduction strategies, we to contribute to a circular economy and reduce our overall environmental footprint.

3.4 Ban on Single-use plastic:

- In a resolute commitment to environmental sustainability, Balakrishnan V & Co enforces a stringent ban on single-use plastic within its premises. This policy aims to eliminate the consumption and distribution of single-use plastic items, including but not limited to bags, bottles, straws, and disposable packaging. We recognize the severe environmental repercussions associated with single-use plastic, contributing significantly to pollution and posing threats to ecosystems. By prohibiting its use, we embrace eco-friendly alternatives and encourage the adoption of reusable, biodegradable, or environmentally safe substitutes. This ban extends to all employees, and visitors mandating the use of sustainable alternatives and promoting a plastic-free environment. This initiative aligns with our broader commitment to reducing our ecological footprint, fostering a healthier planet for current and future generations. The ban on single-use plastic is covered in employee policy/handbook and the visitors are not allowed to carry single-use plastics inside the premises.

4. Office Operations

4.1 Energy Efficiency:

To enhance energy efficiency, we will implement measures within our office, such as the use of energy-efficient appliances and lighting. Regular maintenance of equipment will also be prioritized to ensure optimal performance and minimize energy consumption. Furthermore, in line with our commitment to sustainable energy practices, the firm strictly limits its monthly energy usage to a maximum of 80 units. This cap serves as a proactive measure to control and reduce our overall energy consumption. Through conscientious monitoring and efficient utilization of energy-efficient technologies, we aim to not only adhere to this limit but also explore innovative methods to further curtail our energy usage, promoting a culture of energy conservation across the organization.

	Consumption (Units)	Electricity Price (in Rs.)
August	65 units	1425
September	45 units	1309
October	55 units	1321

4.2 Paper Reduction:

In a concerted effort to reduce paper consumption, we will adopt digital documentation practices and encourage the use of electronic communication channels. Where paper usage is unavoidable, we commit to implementing double-sided printing to minimize environmental impact. Additionally, each office system is restricted to a maximum of 50 pages for printing per month. The firm diligently maintains a register to track (as shown in the table below) and monitor paper printing, ensuring compliance with this restriction and promoting responsible paper usage across all departments. In adherence to this policy, any requirement exceeding the maximum limit necessitates seeking explicit permission. Employees must submit a formal request justifying the need for additional printing, outlining the necessity and environmental considerations. These requests will undergo review by designated personnel to assess the environmental impact and urgency, ensuring responsible and justified paper usage within the organization.

	April	Approval (if required)	May	Approval (if required)
System 1	30	-	56	Approval e-mail dated ../..
System 2	52	Approval e-mail dated ../..	20	-

5. Employee Engagement

Awareness and Training:

To instill a culture of sustainability, we conduct regular training programs and workshops for our employees. These initiatives comprehensively cover various aspects of environmental sustainability, emphasizing the importance of resource conservation, waste reduction, and energy efficiency. As part of our commitment, awareness training programs are conducted for employees once every six months. These sessions serve as an opportunity to update our staff on the latest sustainable practices, reinforce the significance of environmental stewardship, and inspire proactive engagement in our sustainability initiatives. Through consistent education and reinforcement, we aim to empower our workforce with the knowledge and tools necessary to actively contribute to our sustainability goals, fostering a collective dedication to responsible environmental practices within the firm.

6. Community Outreach

Local Community Involvement:

- Beyond our office walls, we will actively seek opportunities to contribute to local environmental initiatives and community projects. By engaging with the local community, we aim to extend the positive impact of our sustainability efforts beyond our immediate operations. As a policy the company has given self-target of implementing a mid-sized greenery project every year. We are in the process of collaborating with local organizations and authorities, leveraging collective expertise and resources to support and participate in environmental conservation efforts within our community.

Apart from the above the firm maintains a green work ambience by maintaining more than 100 lungs friendly and oxygen generating indoor plants within the office premises. It is an endeavour to measure the quantity of oxygen generated by these plants.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

7.1 Regular Assessment:

- We are committed to regularly assessing and monitoring our environmental performance. Through regular assessments, we will identify areas for improvement and implement measures to enhance our sustainability practices continuously.

7.2 Transparent Reporting:

- Transparency is a core value in our sustainability commitment. We will transparently communicate our environmental sustainability efforts and progress to our employees, clients, and the wider community. By doing so, we aim to foster accountability and inspire others to embrace sustainable practices. Yearly sustainability reports shall be published in our firm's website.

8. Review and Updates

8.1 Policy Review:

- This Environmental Sustainability Policy will undergo an annual review to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. The review process will involve assessing the evolving needs of our business, advancements in sustainable practices, and changes in environmental regulations.

8.2 Continuous Improvement:

- Our commitment to sustainability includes a dedication to continuous improvement. As we strive to be at the forefront of environmental responsibility, we will update this policy as necessary to reflect emerging trends, technological advancements, and best practices in environmental stewardship.