



**Knowledge for World
Conservation (KWC)**
Climate, Forests, and People

KNOWLEDGE FOR WORLD CONSERVATION (KWC)

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION POLICY



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1. Introduction

Knowledge for World Conservation (KWC) is committed to the protection, restoration and sustainable management of forests, wetlands and other natural ecosystems. As an organisation working with communities, government agencies, private sector actors and civil society stakeholders, KWC recognises its responsibility to minimise environmental harm and to promote practices that enhance ecosystem integrity and resilience. This Environmental Protection Policy provides the framework for integrating environmental sustainability into all KWC programmes, operations and partnerships.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

1. All KWC staff, Management, Board Members
2. Volunteers, interns, consultants and contractors
3. Partners, service providers and collaborators working on behalf of KWC
4. All KWC projects, including forest and wetlands restoration and conservation, plantations, research, training, advocacy and community engagements

The policy applies to office-based work, field activities, project sites, travel and procurement processes.

3. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ❖ Ensure that KWC's activities do not cause environmental degradation or harm to ecosystems.
- ❖ Promote responsible, sustainable and climate-smart practices in forest and wetlands management.
- ❖ Guide environmental decision-making across KWC's programmes and operations.

- ❖ Ensure compliance with national environmental laws and international environmental standards.
- ❖ Support ecosystem restoration, biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

4. Policy Statement

KWC is committed to environmental protection and sustainability in all its activities. We strive to:

- ✚ Prevent pollution and environmental degradation
- ✚ Conserve biodiversity and protect critical habitats.
- ✚ Promote sustainable use of natural resources.
- ✚ Restore degraded forest and wetland ecosystems.
- ✚ Address climate change through mitigation and adaptation actions.
- ✚ Work collaboratively with communities and stakeholders to achieve lasting environmental outcomes.

Environmental protection is a shared responsibility, and all persons working with or on behalf of KWC are expected to uphold this commitment.

5. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy is informed by and aligned with:

1. Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992
2. Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1994 (Act 490)
3. Forest and Wildlife Policy of Ghana
4. National Climate Change Policy of Ghana
5. National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
6. Wetlands Management Regulations of Ghana
7. Relevant international environmental conventions and agreements (including CBD, UNFCCC, Ramsar Convention)

6. Guiding Principles

KWC's environmental protection efforts are guided by the following principles:

- ✚ Precautionary principle – preventing environmental harm where risks are identified.
- ✚ Sustainability – meeting present needs without compromising future generations.
- ✚ Ecosystem-based approach – recognising interconnections between forests, wetlands, biodiversity and livelihoods.
- ✚ Community participation – engaging local communities as custodians of natural resources.
- ✚ Restoration and resilience – repairing degraded ecosystems and strengthening their ability to adapt to climate change.
- ✚ Compliance and accountability – adhering to laws, standards and best practices.

7. Environmental Protection Commitments

KWC commits to:

- ✚ Integrating environmental considerations into project planning, implementation and evaluation.
- ✚ Avoiding activities that cause deforestation, wetland destruction or biodiversity loss.
- ✚ Reducing pollution, waste and greenhouse gas emissions associated with operations.
- ✚ Promoting sustainable land use and natural resource management practices.
- ✚ Supporting conservation of endangered species and sensitive habitats.
- ✚ Enhancing ecosystem services that support community livelihoods.

8. Forest and Wetlands Conservation

KWC shall:

- ❖ Promote sustainable forest management and protection of natural forests.
- ❖ Support conservation and wise use of wetlands in line with Ramsar principles.
- ❖ Prevent encroachment, illegal logging and unsustainable harvesting through advocacy and community engagement.
- ❖ Strengthen community-led forest and wetland governance structures.
- ❖ Collaborate with regulatory authorities to support enforcement efforts.

9. Restoration, reforestation and plantation Activities

In restoration and plantation initiatives, KWC shall:

- ❖ Use ecologically appropriate, native or climate-resilient species where possible.
- ❖ Avoid monoculture plantations that threaten biodiversity and ecosystem health.
- ❖ Ensure site suitability assessments are conducted before planting.
- ❖ Promote assisted natural regeneration and landscape restoration approaches.
- ❖ Prevent soil erosion, water contamination and habitat fragmentation.
- ❖ Monitor survival rates and ecological outcomes of restoration activities.

10. Biodiversity Conservation

KWC recognises biodiversity as essential to ecosystem stability and human well-being.

Therefore, KWC shall:

1. Protect habitats critical to flora and fauna.
2. Avoid activities that threaten endangered or protected species.
3. Promote biodiversity-friendly livelihood alternatives.

4. Support research and monitoring of biodiversity outcomes.
5. Raise awareness on biodiversity conservation among stakeholders.

11. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

KWC commits to addressing climate change by:

- ✚ Promoting nature-based solutions such as forest and wetland restoration.
- ✚ Supporting climate-resilient livelihoods and land-use practices.
- ✚ Reducing emissions from organisational operations where feasible.
- ✚ Integrating climate risk assessments into project design.
- ✚ Supporting community adaptation and resilience-building initiatives.

12. Environmental Impact and Risk Management

KWC shall:

- Conduct environmental and social risk assessments for projects where required.
- Identify, assess and mitigate potential environmental impacts.
- Apply corrective measures where unintended impacts occur.
- Monitor environmental performance throughout project cycles.

13. Pollution Prevention and Waste Management

KWC shall:

1. Minimise waste generation and promote reuse and recycling.
2. Ensure safe disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous waste.
3. Prevent pollution of soil, water and air during operations.
4. Promote environmentally responsible procurement and logistics.

14. Sustainable Resource Use and Procurement

KWC shall:

1. Promote efficient use of water, energy and materials.
2. Prioritise environmentally friendly goods and services.
3. Encourage sustainable sourcing of forest and agricultural products.
4. Avoid procurement practices that contribute to environmental harm.

15. Community Engagement and Indigenous Knowledge

KWC recognises the role of local communities and indigenous knowledge in environmental stewardship.

Accordingly, KWC shall:

1. Engage communities meaningfully in environmental decision-making.
2. Respect customary rights and traditional ecological knowledge.
3. Promote inclusive participation of women, youth and vulnerable groups.
4. Support environmental education and awareness initiatives.

16. Partnerships and Stakeholder Collaboration

KWC shall work with:

- ✚ Government agencies and regulatory bodies
- ✚ Traditional authorities and community institutions
- ✚ Other civil society organisations and academia
- ✚ Private sector actors committed to sustainability

All partners shall be expected to uphold environmental protection standards consistent with this policy.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

1. Board of Directors – Provide oversight and approve environmental policies.
2. Executive Director – Ensure organisational compliance and leadership.
3. Management and Staff – Integrate environmental protection into daily operations and projects.
4. Partners and Contractors – Comply with environmental requirements under KWC engagements.

18. Monitoring, Reporting and Learning

KWC shall:

- ✚ Monitor environmental performance and project impacts.
- ✚ Document lessons learned and best practices.
- ✚ Report environmental outcomes to stakeholders and donors.
- ✚ Use monitoring results to improve future interventions.

19. Compliance and Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in corrective action, suspension of activities or termination of contracts. Serious breaches may be reported to regulatory authorities where required.

20. Approval and Review of Policy

This Safeguarding Policy is approved by the Board of Directors of Knowledge for World Conservation (KWC) and shall be reviewed at least every three (3) years or as required by changes in law, environmental standards or organisational priorities as required by law or donor requirements. Any changes to the policy shall be communicated immediately to all Responsible Persons.

21. Adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Directors of the Knowledge for World Conservation (KWC) on;

Date: 19/09/2018

Signature: *Alhassan Attah*

Name: Alhassan Attah

Position: Chairman of KWC Board

Date of last review: 12/12/2023