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INTRODUCTION

SECTION

01

WHAT IS AIA CAN?

The AIA Can (An Eco-Office Movement) Guidebook is intended to be a structured and comprehensive resource that empowers all business units (BUs) to effectively navigate and implement sustainability initiatives.

The guidebook serves as a practical checklist to support BU's efforts to engage their employees in embracing and adopting environmentally conscious mindsets, attitudes, and behaviours for a more sustainable AIA and a healthier planet. Ultimately, we hope to inspire a culture of sustainability within AIA and enable every single employee to drive meaningful and positive change.



ECO-OFFICE FOCUS AREAS

The focus areas covered in this guidebook have been thoughtfully selected to address critical aspects of sustainability within a workplace, factoring in both the physical environment of the workplace and the people working within it.

They have been adapted from multiple Eco-Office certification requirements and are aligned with AIA's ESG Sustainable Operations pillar. The focus areas included in this guidebook are intended to support BUs in working towards a cohesive, sustainable office.

INSPIRED BY REGIONAL AND LOCAL ECO-OFFICE CERTIFICATIONS



CitySwitch Green Office
Australia



Hong Kong Green Organisation
Certification (HKGOC), Environmental
Campaign Committee & Environment
and Ecology Bureau



IGBC Green Existing Buildings O&M
Indian Green Building Council



LEED Interior Design and Construction
US Green Building Council



LOTUS Buildings in Operation (BIO)
Vietnam Building Council



SEC Eco Office Certification
Singapore Environment Council



TREES:EB
Thai Green Building Institute



Well Certification
International WELL Building Institute



WASTE MANAGEMENT

To encourage employees to reduce waste, embrace reusable products, and recycle what is possible, so as to contribute towards a circular economy.



WATER USAGE

To encourage employees to be better stewards of water resources through the responsible use of water.



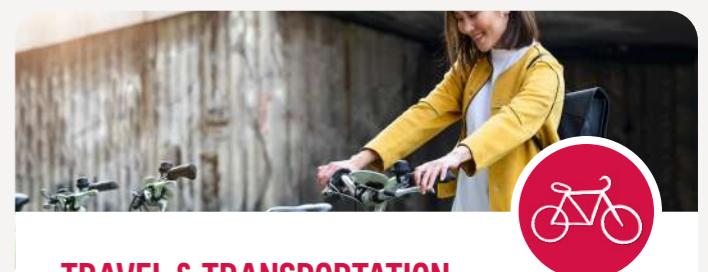
SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

To encourage employees to consider the source, composition, and supply chain of products that they use, and to engage with local suppliers where possible, so as to reduce environmental impact.



ENERGY USAGE

To encourage employees to reduce their energy consumption by building awareness about emissions generated as a result of their daily activities and fostering energy-saving habits.



TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION

To encourage employees to understand the impact of their transportation choices, be more conscious of their environmental footprint, and optimise their travel needs. This includes business travel, work commutes, freight, and more.



ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

To encourage employees to adopt eco-conscious practices and cultivate a positive relationship with nature to optimise their wellbeing at work.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook has been developed to help BUs run sustainability-related employee engagement programmes. It comprises six focus area checklists to help BUs track and implement sustainability-related employee engagement activities.

Additionally, it contains a Knowledge Bank in Section 4, which provides further information about each focus area and how they contribute towards a sustainable office.

Here is a suggested way to optimise the use of this guidebook:

01

**PERFORM A
SELF-ASSESSMENT**



Assess your BU's current performance level based on the six checklists. This will serve as a baseline for you to track your progress.

02

IDENTIFY GAPS



Review the activities that you have yet to accomplish across the six checklists and select which activities your BU would like to undertake.

03

**DEVELOP &
IMPLEMENT A PLAN**



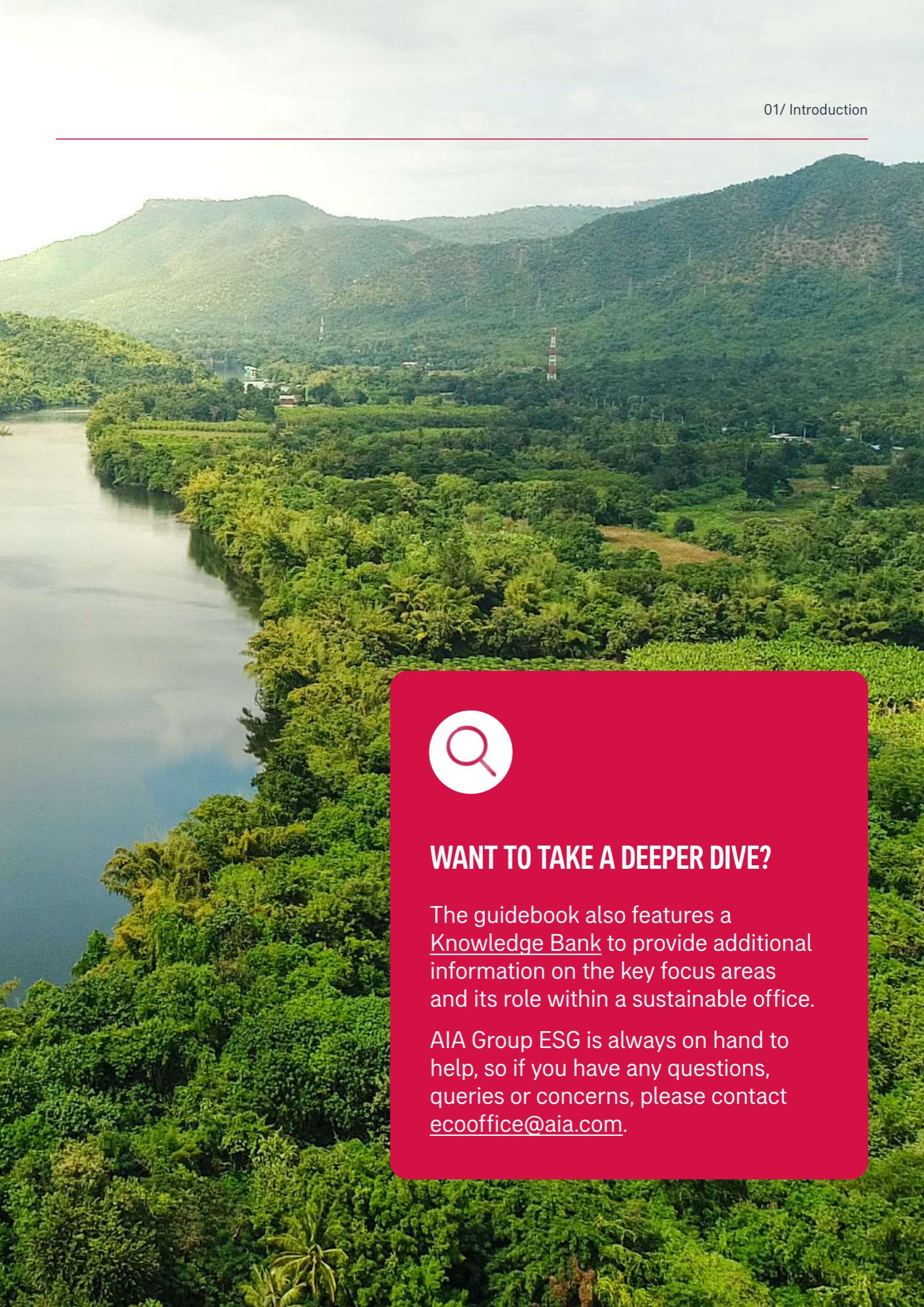
Develop a plan to implement these selected activities, assign the individuals or team who would be involved and put the plan into action!

04

**TRACK & MEASURE
OUTCOMES**



Measure your outcomes, celebrate your achievements and share your learnings with Group ESG.



WANT TO TAKE A DEEPER DIVE?

The guidebook also features a Knowledge Bank to provide additional information on the key focus areas and its role within a sustainable office.

AIA Group ESG is always on hand to help, so if you have any questions, queries or concerns, please contact ecooffice@aia.com.



CHECKLISTS & BEST PRACTICES

SECTION

02

WASTE MANAGEMENT

On average, a single person generates 0.74kg of waste every day.^[1] Effective waste management should therefore be a cornerstone of every responsible and forward-thinking business operation. This is especially true since the mismanagement of waste infiltrates the environment, which can lead to endangerment of wildlife and ecosystems.

This section proposes strategies that BUs can adopt to build a culture of resourcefulness and waste reduction in their offices.

125,000

The amount of electronic waste generated each year is the equivalent of sending 125,000 jumbo jets to landfills.^[2]



25%

...accounts for paper waste,^[3] within landfill waste and 33% of municipal waste in the United States.

44.7 MILLION

...tonnes of electronic waste are generated each year, which is equivalent to throwing out 800 laptops every second.^[4]

[1] World Bank →

[2] World Economic Forum →

[3] US Environmental Protection Agency →

[4] International Telecommunication Union →



CHECKLIST

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
01 Provide employees with resources and learning opportunities to enhance awareness of the 5 R's — Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle. <i>Provide details about the frequency and type of resources and learning opportunities offered.</i> <i>Resources and learning opportunities must be provided after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	1			
02 Set grayscale mode and double-sided printing as the default printer settings for all printers in the office*. <i>Provide photos to show that the printer settings have been applied.</i>	1			
03 Encourage digital modes of communication and documentation (such as digital signage, employee intranet, and cloud sharing options) to save paper. <i>Provide examples of how these digital options have been implemented successfully.</i> <i>If possible, provide information on the amount of paper saved as a result.</i>	1			
04 Engage an e-waste disposal company for proper disposal of ink cartridges, laptops, printers, etc. <i>Provide documentation on the amount of e-waste collected (in kg).</i> <i>Provide invoices or contracts with the appointed e-waste collector company.</i>	1			
05 Organise an organisation-wide community clean-up event to foster employees' sense of environmental responsibility. <i>Provide details of the event, including the number of employees involved, the location and date, and the total amount of waste collected (in kg).</i> <i>Provide photos from the event.</i> <i>The event must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	2			
06 Implement an initiative that encourages employees to actively support waste reduction and promote a circular economy, such as an Office Swap Party. <i>Provide details of the initiative, including the number of employees involved, the location and date, and the results of the initiative.</i> <i>Provide photos from the initiative.</i> <i>The initiative must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	2			

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
07 Discourage single-use items and promote the use of reusable or refillable items within the office or for work events. This could include reusable crockery, cutlery and stationery. For example, generic designs could be printed on lanyards so that they can be reused for other events. <i>Provide examples to demonstrate how reusable and/or refillable items have been utilised at the office.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	3			
08 Remove personal bins under desks, replacing them with communal recycling bins at strategic locations to promote waste sorting and recycling. Ensure that all recycling bins have clear instructions on what items should or should not be placed in them. <i>Provide details on the number of recycling bins added and their location within the office.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	3			
09 Organise a waste recycling training or workshop and invite all employees to attend so that they would be educated on proper waste disposal and recycling practices. <i>Provide details of the training/ workshop organised, including the number of employees involved, the location, and the date.</i> <i>Provide photos from the session.</i> <i>The programme must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			
10 Organise a joint waste reduction campaign with an external partner(s) to raise awareness and engage the broader community on waste management. <i>Provide details about the collaboration, including the number of employees involved, the external partner(s) engaged, the location(s), and the duration of the campaign.</i> <i>The campaign must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			

TOTAL POINTS

CASE STUDY

AIA THAILAND: A WASTE MANAGEMENT REVOLUTION

To manage the amount of waste generated within the office, AIA Thailand embarked on a workplace waste management revolution in 2023, hoping to enhance awareness of the 5 R's — Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle amongst employees and drive behavioural change.

01

A waste segregation programme was rolled out where personal desk bins were removed and replaced with segregated recycling bins strategically placed on each floor of the office building. Employees were equipped with the knowledge of how to segregate waste via a training session conducted by the Bang Rak District Office.

**02**

A food compost machine was installed in the staff canteen. Employees were encouraged to put their food leftovers into the machine to be processed overnight. All compost would thereafter be stored in a composting room and used for the office's garden.

**03**

To discourage single-use plastic, all aging water dispensers were replaced with new ones from a respected brand, so that employees' concerns of the cleanliness of the water supply would be allayed, and they would be more inclined to bring their own bottles and refill them instead of purchasing plastic bottled water.

**04**

Also in a bid to reduce single-use plastic, all single-use plastic umbrella covers were replaced with umbrella dryers — just in time for the Thailand rainy season.



LEARNING POINTS

What is notable about these initiatives is that the ESG team at AIA Thailand had intentionally sought for employees' perspectives and suggestions before implementation. For example, employees were consulted on where the recycling bins should be placed on each floor to optimise their use. It was also the feedback from employees that helped

the team see the need for aging water dispensers to be replaced with new ones.

The following outcomes have been observed since the launch of the pilot of the waste segregation programme which was held from June to August 2023:

POTENTIAL RECYCLING BASED ON OUR Q3 2023 PILOT PROGRAMME

General Waste	Plastic	Food to compost	Glass & aluminium	Paper	Biohazard	Total
36%	7%	53%	1%	2%	1%	100%
73 tonnes	13 tonnes	106 tonnes	2 tonnes	4 tonnes	2 tonnes	200 tonnes

As can be seen from the above diagram, the total waste generated per month by AIA Thailand is 200 tonnes, of which 64% can be successfully recycled.

Moving forward, AIA Thailand will continue to consistently engage employees on sustainable waste management habits through town halls, newsletters, emails and workshops on important waste management topics such as upcycling and waste-to-energy. A reward system will also be introduced to incentivise progress, where the floor that manages to reduce the most waste would be acknowledged.

These efforts by AIA Thailand provide a blueprint and inspiration for other BUs to run similar programmes, which can go a long way in fostering better waste management practices group-wide.

If you are keen to learn more about this best practice, you may connect with Chinnakit Silakong at Chinnakit.Silakong@aia.com.



THE WASTE SEGREGATION PROGRAMME MADE ME REALISE THE IMPACT OF OUR BEHAVIOUR ON THE ENVIRONMENT. I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY REDUCING, REUSING AND RECYCLING."

Pattanan Vanichprechakul
Executive Assistant
CIO'S Office

ENERGY USAGE

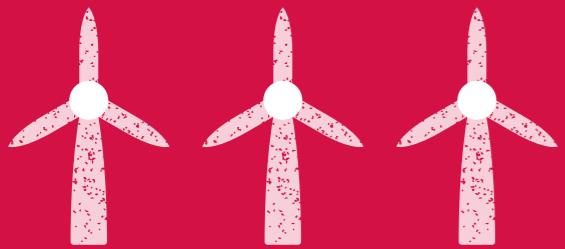
According to the United Nations, energy usage alone accounts for an astonishing 35% of global emissions.^[5] Consequently, adopting efficient energy management practices has become paramount for organisations striving to make a positive impact.

This section explores strategies and techniques for a more energy-efficient workplace.



\$160 BILLION

...could potentially be saved in Southeast Asia in energy cost and address energy security and climate risks by transitioning to renewable energy sources.^[6]



[6] Irena →

90%

...less energy is used by LED bulbs, while providing the same brightness as traditional bulbs and lasting up to 15 times longer.^[7]

6%

...of annual electricity consumption can be saved by simply increasing the air-conditioner temperature by 1°C.^[8]

[7] Energy Star → [8] BEE India →



CHECKLIST

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
01 Provide employees with resources and learning opportunities to enhance their awareness of energy conservation and carbon reduction. <i>Provide details about the frequency and type of resources and learning opportunities offered.</i> <i>Resources and learning opportunities must be provided after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	1			
02 Set air-conditioning to between 24°C to 26°C as the default air-conditioning setting whenever feasible during the summer months. <i>Provide photos to show that the air-conditioning settings have been set.</i>	1			
03 Display posters and signage near stairs and elevators to encourage employees to use the stairs instead of elevators. <i>Provide details on the number and location of posters and signage displayed.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	1			
04 Install energy-efficient equipment and appliances (such as ENERGY STAR certified appliances) when replacing outdated ones. <i>Provide a list of upgraded equipment and appliances and the date of implementation.</i>	2			
05 Display signage and stickers near light switches and computers to remind employees to turn off the lights and their computers when not in use. <i>Provide details on the number and locations of signage placed and stickers given out.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	2			
06 Display real-time energy usage data using smart energy monitoring systems where feasible, to encourage employees to share the responsibility of reducing energy consumption <i>Provide details on the system implemented and the area in which the information is displayed.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	2			

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
07 Ensure that at least 70% of the office* is illuminated with energy-efficient LED lighting. <i>Provide details on the areas within the office that are illuminated by LED light fixtures and the areas that are not.</i> <i>Provide an explanation as to why certain areas have yet to be illuminated with LED lights.</i>	2			
08 Use renewable energy or RECs in place of the conventional electricity supply. <i>Provide details on the renewable energy source selected, the percentage of the renewable versus conventional electricity supply in use, and the relevant appointed energy provider.</i>	3			
09 Implement an organisation-wide activity to promote energy conservation, such as a lunchtime "Earth Hour". <i>Provide details of the activity, including the number of employees involved, the location, and the date.</i> <i>Provide photos from the activity.</i> <i>The activity must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			
10 Devise innovative strategies to encourage, reward, and incentivise employees to share energy-saving ideas and actively participate in energy conservation efforts. <i>Provide details of the effort, the strategies suggested, the number of employees involved, and the duration.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	3			

TOTAL POINTS

*"Office" refers to AIA-owned & occupied spaces, and AIA-leased spaces only.

CASE STUDY

AIA PHILIPPINES: PROJECT ENERCON

Project Enercon refers to an ongoing set of undertakings by AIA Philippines to promote energy conservation and address energy inefficiencies in its building systems.

It was initiated after a decision to upgrade the air conditioning system at a building known as AIA Alabang after complaints from tenants arose. The business case for the upgrade indicated substantial savings from reduced power consumption, as the pre-existing air conditioning system had high electric and water consumption due to its old age and inefficiency. The upgrade was completed in 2021 and resulted in annual savings of PHP 14 million (USD 338,000) in energy costs and significant water consumption reduction as well.

The upgrade catalysed subsequent energy conservation initiatives across AIA Philippines' property portfolio by the real estate team such as:

01

Working with the property and facilities teams to replace all lighting systems in common areas of its buildings with LED fixtures by the end of 2023.



02

Reducing the number of elevators in operation and the number of lights turned on during off-peak hours.



03

Considering the possibility of alternative energy sources such as installing solar panels on the rooftop of buildings.



① The previous inefficient HVAC system at AIA Alabang

14 MILLION

...Philippine pesos (USD 338,000) was saved on annual energy costs by upgrading the air conditioning system at AIA Alabang.

LEARNING POINTS

Project Enercon can inspire other BUs to get started on their own journeys to embed sustainability in their real estate operations. Notably, the success of Project Enercon can be attributed to several factors which are helpful to note:



01

AIA Philippines' ability to strategically select appropriate projects for upgrades that would result in both financial savings as well as positive environmental impact.

02

AIA Philippines' commitment to keeping feedback and communication channels with key stakeholders such as employees and tenants open, so as to keep them informed of upgrades, and to receive their input, affirmation and support for the initiatives. By actively engaging with key stakeholders through platforms such as campaigns, emails and newsletters, AIA Philippines is also able to lower the likelihood of complaints.

03

AIA Philippines' decision to gather key personnel for monthly operations meetings, thus allowing it to track its progress on Project Enercon, hold teams accountable to outcomes and sustain Project Enercon as a proactive and continuous effort.



WATER USAGE



Apart from keeping us hydrated, water serves many important functions in our daily lives, such as our cleaning, laundry, and sanitation needs. However, only 2.5% of Earth's water is freshwater, and less than 1% is accessible for human use^[9]. As global temperatures rise, water scarcity poses a growing challenge, urging us to adopt sustainable measures.

3000 GALLONS

...of water can be wasted every year by a leaking faucet if it drips at 1 drop per second. That's the amount of water required to take more than 180 showers.



[10] US Environmental Protection Agency →

1 MILLION

...plastic bottles are purchased every minute, around the world.



[11] UN Environment Programme →

CHECKLIST



Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
01 Provide employees with resources and learning opportunities to enhance awareness of water conservation at work and at home. <i>Provide details about the frequency, type of resources and learning opportunities offered.</i> <i>Resources and learning opportunities must be provided after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	1			
02 Install water-efficient equipment and appliances (such as WELS certified appliances) when replacing outdated ones. <i>Provide a list of upgraded equipment and appliances and the date of implementation.</i>	1			
03 Display posters and signage near water sources (such as faucets) to encourage employees to use water responsibly and report any leaks. <i>Provide details on the number and location of posters and signage displayed.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	1			
04 Reuse grey water for non-potable uses, such as landscaping, gardening, and more. <i>Provide details on the source of grey water and its new uses.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	2			
TOTAL POINTS				



CASE STUDY

AIA KOREA: WATER CONSERVATION EFFORTS

AIA Korea embarked on a multifaceted water conservation programme to address the critical issue of responsible water usage in the workplace.

This included raising awareness amongst employees on the importance of water conservation, installing water-efficient equipment, and introducing innovative water reuse practices, as detailed opposite:



① Improved water-efficient equipment and shared sink facilities in the AIA Korea office.

01

Automatic faucets have been installed in all bathrooms across their facilities to ensure that there is no possibility of leaving the water running while washing hands, significantly increasing water savings.

02

Dual-flush buttons are present at all bathroom toilets, enabling users to select between a big flush and small flush (which utilises less water) depending on their needs.

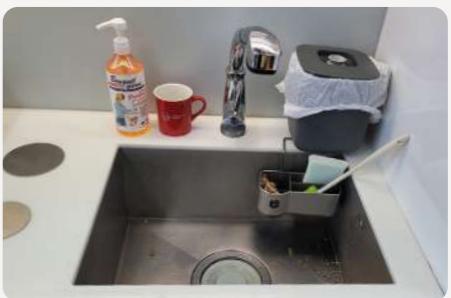
04

Plans have been made to launch a campaign in the fourth quarter of 2023 to provide tips on water conservation and encourage better water conservation practices amongst employees and building residents.



03

Greywater from AIA Korea's AIA Tower is collected and treated through a rainwater recycling system, which involves collecting rainwater from roofs or surfaces, storing it in tanks, and later reusing it for landscaping and gardening.



LEARNING POINTS



AIA Korea has not only been successful at embracing technology and working with its facility management company to implement necessary changes, but it has also made strides on engaging its employees and building tenants on the importance of water conservation and optimising their water use habits.

It has, however, faced challenges in gathering quantitative data on the water savings from the changes it has implemented, thus highlighting the importance of establishing baselines and monitoring systems in order to assess impacts and track progress.

If you are keen to learn more about this best practice, you may connect with DongHa Kang at DongHa.Kang@aia.com.

TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION



The travel and transportation sectors can play a pivotal role in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as they account for 20% of all global emissions.^[12] When we are more conscious of our routes, frequencies, and modes of transport, this can have a direct impact on the climate.

This section explores the methods through which BUs can integrate travel and transportation strategies to cultivate more sustainable travel practices. The primary focus will be on freight and employee travel.

29%

...of total US GHG emissions was caused by fleet emissions in 2021. This is the equivalent of every person in the US driving for 10 hours straight every day for a year.^[13]



4X

The carbon footprint of first-class seats is about 4 times larger than that of economy class.^[14]

80%

...of your emissions could be cut by taking a train instead of a car.^[15]

[12] US Environmental Protection Agency →

[14] World Economic Forum → [15] Our World in Data →

[12] Statista →



CHECKLIST

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
01 Display posters and signage to promote alternative transportation and encourage employees to walk or cycle for short distances. <i>Provide details on the number and location of posters and signage displayed. Provide photos for reference.</i>	2			
02 Set guidelines on prioritising the usage of hybrid or electric vehicles for work-related travel and/or company owned vehicles. <i>Provide details on the guidelines set, records of vehicle rentals, and how often alternative vehicles were selected in place of traditional combustion engine cars.</i>	2			
03 Provide shuttle services for employees to the nearest public transportation facility if the office* is not within walking distance to any public transportation facilities. <i>Provide details on the services offered, including the vendor, the number of employees served, the frequency of the service, and the implementation period.</i>	2			
04 Implement an organisation-wide initiative that promotes sustainable commuting in the office*, such as "Car-Free Day," or set up carpooling and ride-sharing programmes. <i>Provide details of the initiative organised, including number of employees involved, the location and date. Provide photos from the session. The initiative must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			
05 Provide employees with incentives or subsidies for using alternative transportation, including public transport, bicycle shares, and car share memberships for their commute to work. <i>Provide details of the incentives, including the number of employees who have exercised the option. The initiative must take place after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
06 Introduce new facilities such as bicycle racks, changing rooms, and showers to encourage employees to walk, run, or cycle to work. <i>Provide details on the facility implemented, its usage and observed impact (such as number of employees who have embraced low-carbon transport alternatives to work). Provide photos of the new facilities.</i>	3			

TOTAL POINTS

*"Office" refers to AIA-owned & occupied spaces, and AIA-leased spaces only.

CASE STUDY

AIA CHINA: NAVIGATING THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION

AIA China recognised that adopting the usage of electric vehicles (EVs) will make a meaningful impact on their carbon footprint reduction efforts.

With this in mind, they employed the following two approaches:



01

Encouraging employees to opt for lower-carbon transportation alternatives, such as using public transportation for their daily commute.

02

Prioritising MICE organisers and vendors who can provide EV transportation options.

In 2023, two key events adopted EV usage:



④ EV busses used for MICE events.



Name of MICE event that adopted EV usage	Name of vendor	Type of EV utilised
Guangdong Agent Summit in Zhuhai	Guangzhou Guangzhilv travel company	Shuttle bus for 110 pax
China 2023 Five Star Summit in Xiamen	Shanghai Grand China travel company	Shuttle bus for 800 pax

LEARNING POINTS

AIA China acknowledges that infrastructure and market limitations still exists in many cities that prevent them from being able to consistently adopt low-carbon vehicles for MICE travel and transportation needs. Nonetheless, they have committed to do so where they are able and will continually research on means to enhance the feasibility of doing so, in order to progress in their efforts.

440 KG CO₂E

In 2023 alone, AIA China was able to achieve an emission reduction of 440KG CO₂e, as a direct result of employees choosing new energy buses for MICE events.





SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

Our procurement decisions have far-reaching implications. While we are often inclined to choose the most convenient options, these options sometimes carry underlying costs.

Where more than 90% of an organisation's GHG emissions can be attributed to supply chains,^[16] this section proposes best practices in sustainable procurement.

66%

... of merchandise that is given out at events is thrown away and 18% is given to others. Only 16% of merchandise given out at events is retained by the initial recipient.



[17] EarthHero →

15-30%

Brand value may rise 15-30% through sustainable procurement along side revenue by a further 5-20%.



[18] World Economic Forum →

[16] US Environmental Protection Agency →

CHECKLIST

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
01 Provide employees with resources and learning opportunities to enhance their awareness of sustainable purchasing choices. <i>Provide details about the frequency, type of resources and learning opportunities offered.</i> <i>Resources and learning opportunities must be provided after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	1			
02 Provide locally sourced and/or ethically sourced products in office pantries (such as food and beverages) that have the FAIRTRADE Mark. <i>Provide a list of locally sourced and/or ethically sourced items for employees.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	1			
03 Purchase non-hazardous office supplies with green labels and eco-certifications (such as Singapore Green Label, GREENGUARD, VOC Free etc.). <i>Provide a list of green label certified office supplies purchased.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	1			
04 For company events, engage sustainable caterers that offer sustainably-sourced ingredients (such as caterers with Farm-to-Table or equivalent certification), as well as non-plastic, reusable, or fully compostable tableware and utensils. <i>Provide a list of caterers and suppliers engaged, including a description of how they uphold sustainable practices in their business.</i>	2			
05 Engage vendor(s) that adopt sustainable practices in their products and services offerings, or prioritise giving back to their communities such as social enterprises and B Corp certified organisations. <i>Provide details on the vendor(s) engaged, including information on the social or environmental cause they support.</i> <i>Only vendor(s) engaged from 2022 will be considered.</i>	2			

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
06 Ensure packaging for purchased goods is recyclable and necessary. Avoid disposable plastics, coatings, or laminations on paper products where possible. <i>Provide details to show how this commitment has been incorporated as part of the day-to-day business process.</i>	2			
07 Ensure all paper products used in the office* are deforestation-free by purchasing only 100% recycled or FSC-certified paper. <i>Provide a record of paper products procured for the office for a period of at least 10 months, including the dates of procurement and type of product (such as 100% recycled or FSC-certified).</i>	2			
08 Incorporate sustainability as a criterion in tendering processes, assessing suppliers on their environmental and social credentials. <i>Provide details on the weightage given to sustainability as a factor(s) for evaluation in tendering processes and how this has resulted in changes in supplier selection outcomes.</i>	3			
09 Organise a workshop for the procurement function on sustainable procurement practices and ethical sourcing. <i>Provide details of the workshop organised, including the number of employees and external suppliers, the location, and the date.</i> <i>Provide photos from the session.</i> <i>The programme must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			
10 Organise one capacity building workshop to engage external suppliers on sustainable procurement practices to help them align with internal procurement guidelines. <i>Provide details of the workshop organised, including the number of employees involved, the location and the date.</i> <i>Provide photos from the session.</i> <i>The programme must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			

TOTAL POINTS

CASE STUDY



AIA MALAYSIA: RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT IN ACTION

AIA Malaysia set out on a transformative journey towards sustainable procurement, with its pioneering initiatives to introduce a guide to Sustainable Events and other efforts to inspire their suppliers to embrace ESG policies.

01 – ESG EVENTS GUIDEBOOK

Published in 2022, the AIA Malaysia ESG Events Guidebook, serves as a comprehensive resource for AIA Malaysia's business users and suppliers.

It outlines best practices to reduce the carbon footprint of events, including strategies on minimising plastic usage, reducing giveaways, and prioritising locally sourced and vegetarian options.

[View the guidebook here](#)

AIA Malaysia ESG Events Guidebook

① Excerpt from AIA Malaysia's ESG Events Guidebook.

02 – SUPPLIER ESG QUESTIONNAIRE

AIA Malaysia consistently engages its current and new suppliers to encourage them to establish their own ESG guidelines and policies, and adopt sustainable practices, such as using FSC-certified papers and eco-friendly solutions. They not only request for suppliers to submit their ESG policies but have also gone a step further to integrate ESG principles into every Request for Proposal (RFP) through customised supplier ESG questionnaires. The questionnaire is a set of 18 Yes/No questions, with a point awarded for every "Yes". Implementing this has enhanced AIA Malaysia's efforts to consciously integrate sustainability considerations in procurement processes.

View the questionnaire [here](#).

AIA Malaysia Supplier ESG Questionnaire

HEALTHIER LONGER,
BETTER LIVES

AIA believes that the ESG plays an integral part to effectively managing risk, enhance governance, boost social responsibility and preserving sustainability for our stakeholders.

We seek to have better understanding and aligning on the ESG status of our partners/suppliers. Please complete this survey and submit together with any supplemental information as part of your proposal submission.

(This survey is only means for internal use)

Supplier company name	
PI/C name & contact	

Question/Criteria	Please tick Yes / No	Please provide explanation/supporting if it is YES
1. General		
a) Does your company possess an Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) or similar framework/guideline/policy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
b) Does your company establish dedicated team, or display resources, including internal employee and/or external engagement, to assess sustainability/social concern commitments of your organization, including but not limited to partners/suppliers/contractors and/or investments?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Environment		
a) Does your company monitor, track or report greenhouse gas emissions/carbon footprint?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
b) If yes, is there any initiative to reduce the greenhouse gas emission/carbon footprint? (Please describe the initiative if it is in place)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

↑ Excerpt from AIA Malaysia's Supplier ESG Questionnaire.

LEARNING POINTS

After launching the ESG Events Guidebook, AIA Malaysia shared the guidebook to programme leads and planning committees to guide their event processes. This resulted in more than 50% of events organised by AIA Malaysia adhering to the prescribed practices. Some examples include using LED signs instead of printed banners, QR codes for digital check-ins, local handmade soap as gifts, and refillable water buckets instead of plastic bottles.

With regards to the ESG questionnaire that was introduced as part of AIA Malaysia's RFPs, AIA Malaysia found that this has helped their suppliers better understand sustainability ambitions, and that the questionnaire was a "guide" that suppliers

could also use to embark on and map their own ESG journey. AIA Malaysia's active engagement with suppliers has also borne fruit and inspired suppliers such as 'Kraft Software Solutions' and 'Sedunia Travel Services' to introduce ESG guidelines in their own organisations.

Through these initiatives, other BUs can be inspired to continue engaging with their employees and business partners to build a greater sense of environmental consciousness.

If you are keen to learn more about this best practice, you may connect with Meng Choo at MengChoo.Tiew@aia.com.



④ Head of Sustainability Malaysia announced the winners of the ESG hackathon during Agile week, which generated ideas on improving environmental and mental wellness via insurance solutions.

ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

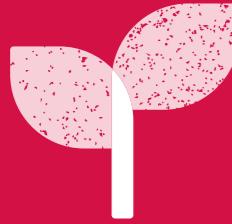
Environmental wellness is a cornerstone of a sustainable and efficient workplace. A healthy team enhances productivity and promotes a positive corporate culture.

This section proposes strategies for BUs to create a workplace that supports eco-conscious practices and connection with nature to enhance the wellbeing of employees at work.



15%

...increase in employee wellbeing and 6% increase in productivity as a result of integrating natural elements such as having plants in the workplace.^[19]



[19] PR Newswire →

2350 LITRES

On average, it takes 2350l of water to produce 150g of beef — that's the equivalent of filling 30 bathtubs.^[20]



[20] Meat Free Mondays →



CHECKLIST

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
01 Provide employees with resources and learning opportunities to promote environmental wellness at work. <i>Provide details about the frequency, type of resources and learning opportunities offered.</i> <i>Resources and learning opportunities must be provided after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	1			
02 Place wall plants and potted plants across the office* space, preferably those with air-purifying qualities. <i>Provide details on where the plants have been placed around the office.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	1			
03 Display posters and signage to encourage employees to adopt a plant-rich and balanced diet. <i>Provide details on the number and location of posters and signage displayed.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i>	1			
04 Establish feedback mechanisms that allow employees to provide input on workplace improvements to enhance their health and wellbeing. <i>Provide details on the methods used to collect feedback and the number of employees who have shared feedback.</i> <i>Provide examples of communication materials used to inform employees about the initiative.</i>	1			
05 Organise an environmental wellness talk or workshop for employees, introducing topics such as the benefits of nature for human health and stress management. <i>Provide details on the programme including number of employees involved, the location and date, the speaker and theme of the event.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i> <i>The programme must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	2			

Activity	Points	Yes	No	N/A
06 Implement an organisation-wide initiative that promotes eco-conscious and healthy habits such as 'Meat-Free Mondays'. <i>Provide details of the initiative organised, including the number of employees involved, the location, and the date.</i> <i>Provide photos from the session.</i> <i>The initiative must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	2			
07 Recruit or appoint employees from different departments as Eco-Ambassadors or to be part of the green committee. <i>Provide details of the green committee, including the names of the members and their respective departments.</i>	3			
08 Acknowledge the green efforts of employees in the office by setting awards to recognise, incentivise and reinforce eco-friendly behaviours at the workplace. <i>Provide details of the award, including the criteria, frequency, and incentive offered.</i>	3			
09 Implement an initiative to foster collaboration and positive relationships among employees, such as community cafes, mentorship programmes and social events. <i>Provide details on the initiative, including the number of employees involved, the location, and the date.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i> <i>The programme must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			
10 Organise a nature-based wellness initiative with an external partner(s), such as a biodiversity trail or nature walk, to raise awareness and engage the broader community on environmental wellness. <i>Provide details on the initiative including the number of employees involved, the external partner(s) involved, the location and the date.</i> <i>Provide photos for reference.</i> <i>The programme must be held after 1 Jan 2024 to be considered valid.</i>	3			

TOTAL POINTS

*"Office" refers to AIA-owned & occupied spaces, and AIA-leased spaces only.



CASE STUDY

AIA SINGAPORE: THE GREEN WORKSPACE REVOLUTION

With an aim to foster a more conducive and eco-conscious workspace and to encourage employees to return to the office, AIA Singapore gathered feedback and opinions from employees on their workspace preferences. AIA Singapore then embarked on an office renovation which incorporated elements as outline below, that are intended to support employees' mental and physical wellbeing:

01

AIA Singapore adopted strategies to maximise natural daylight. This included utilising workstations without partitions to enhance access to natural light. Artificial lighting was also optimised to comply with recommended Lux levels, and the Colour Rendering Index (CRI) was further adopted to improve the quality of artificial lighting; this included installing flicker-free luminaires with LED drivers of frequency 50/60Hz to reduce discomfort.



02

Indoor air quality was also improved with AIA Singapore implementing air purging to introduce fresh air into the office space through mechanical ventilation fans and maintaining the air-conditioning temperature at a constant 24.5°C.



03

AIA Singapore also recognised the importance of biophilic design and as a result introduced planters and green walls at a total of 2% of the entire office area. To include elements of nature, they have also integrated materials made with timber and used green and brown coloured tones for wall finishes, as well as stone and waves designs for floor finishes.

④ The Healthier Choice Symbol



04

To support the physical health of employees, AIA Singapore purchased ergonomic furniture such as height-adjustable chairs, laptop docking stations, and even put-up Point-of-Decision Signages to encourage employees to take the stairs. AIA Singapore also started offering healthier snacking options such as 50% unsweetened drinks and snacks with the Healthier Choice Symbol.

05

AIA Singapore also introduced new facilities to help ensure an inclusive workplace such as wheelchair-friendly facilities and equipping existing nursing rooms with seating, power sockets and a refrigerator to support nursing mothers at work.

LEARNING POINTS



AIA Singapore took a holistic and comprehensive approach to enhancing workplace quality. They considered the different aspects to sustainability including environmental sustainability, health and wellness of employees and so on, resulting in them making improvements to indoor air quality, thermal comfort, lighting, acoustics, and support for employees' wellbeing.

A key takeaway from AIA Singapore's approach would be its continuous efforts to conduct regular Occupancy Evaluation Surveys to ensure that employees are indeed benefitting from the changes, that they have a chance to be heard going forward, and that there is knowledge of what needs to be improved. The survey evaluates parameters such as cleanliness, noise levels, window views, daylight levels, lighting levels, air quality, and thermal comfort.

Post-renovation, AIA Singapore has seen an increase in employees returning to the office. Notably, AIA Singapore also achieved a certification under the Building Construction Authority-Health Promotion Board (BCA-HPB) Green Mark for Healthier Workplaces for their efforts.

If you are keen to learn more about this best practice, you may connect with Apple Tan at apple-bl.tan@aia.com

④ Examples of biophilic design used at AIA Singapore.





RATING SYSTEM

SECTION



03

RATING SYSTEM

A rating system has been put in place to encourage BUs to keep momentum and seek continuous improvement in their sustainability journey. As can be seen below, BUs can earn up to 100 points across all six focus areas.



WASTE MANAGEMENT

Max score **20**



ENERGY USAGE

Max score **20**



WATER USAGE

Max score **5**



TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION

Max score **15**



SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

Max score **20**



ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

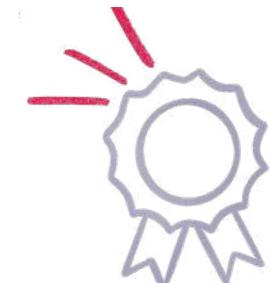
Max score **20**

MAX TOTAL SCORE

100

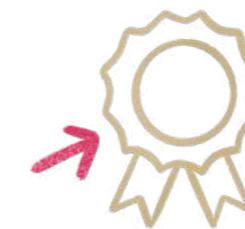
HOW HAVE YOU PLACED?

BUs can earn points by completing the activities listed on the checklists in Chapter 2 and providing the relevant supporting documentation. BUs will be rated either Silver, Gold, or Platinum based on the total number of points achieved each year.



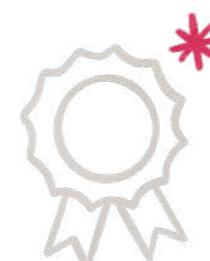
PLATINUM

90–100 POINTS



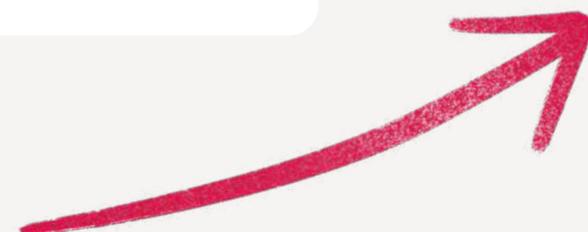
GOLD

70–89 POINTS



SILVER

50–69 POINTS



BUILDING ON GOOD WORK

Through the rating system, BUs are encouraged to move forward on their sustainability journey and take actionable steps towards building a sustainable office. The checklists provide starting points for each focus area on this journey.



KNOWLEDGE BANK

SECTION



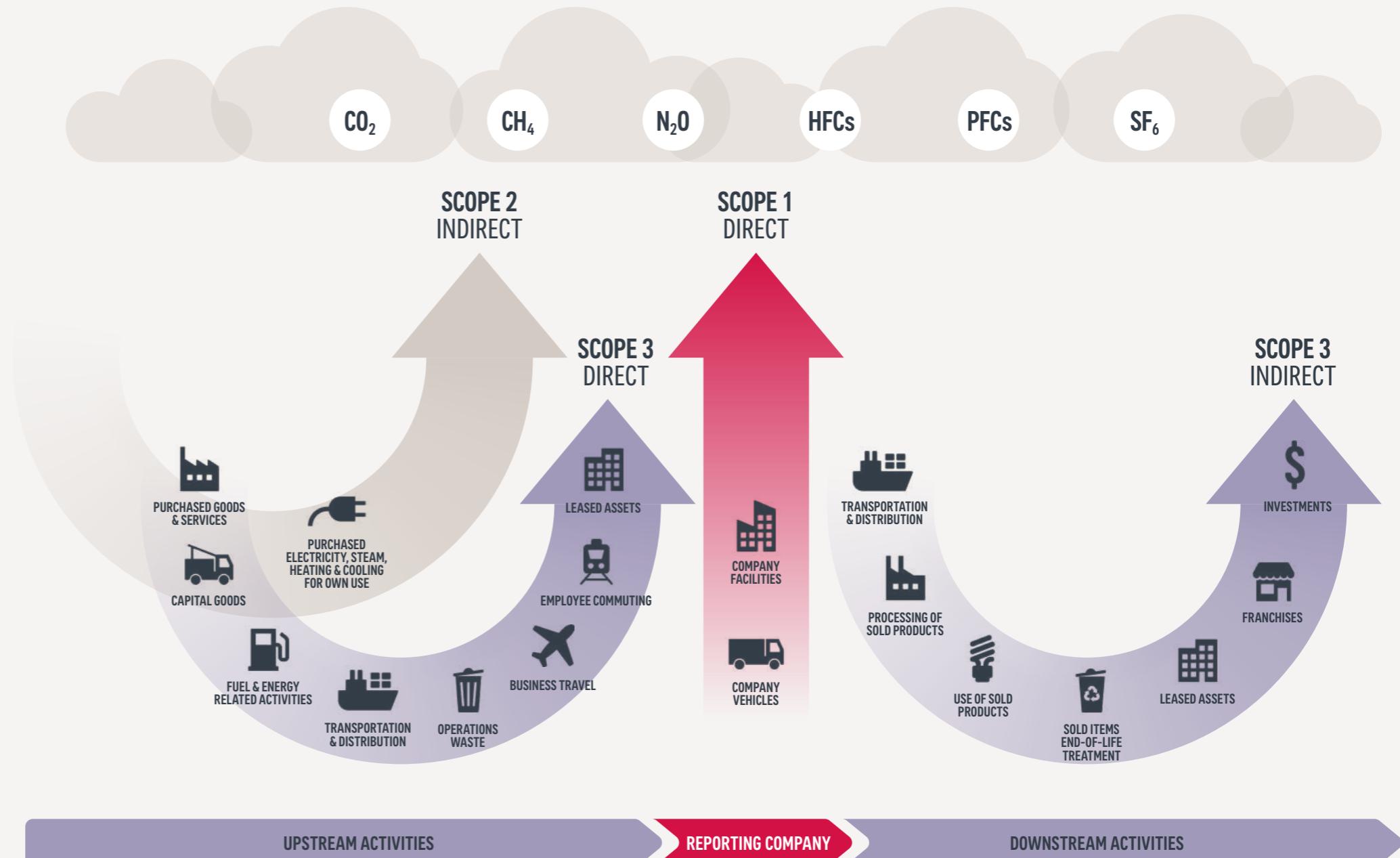
04

KNOWLEDGE BANK

The knowledge bank aims to provide BUs with additional information on each focus area. Each section further explains concepts that have been highlighted in the checklists above and practical strategies that BUs can consider when implementing the activities.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The GHG Protocol provides a standardised framework to account for and report on GHG emissions. It categorises emissions into three scopes based on the source and control of the emissions.^[21]



↑ Figure 1: Overview of GHG Protocol scopes and emissions across the value chain^[22]

Scope 1
Scope 1 emissions represent direct GHG emissions from sources owned or controlled by the reporting entity.
e.g. Emissions from a company's facilities and vehicles.

Scope 2
Scope 2 emissions represent indirect GHG emissions that result from the generation of purchased electricity, heat, or steam consumed by the reporting entity.
e.g. Emissions from purchased electricity.

Scope 3
Scope 3 emissions represent all other indirect GHG emissions that occur in the value chain of the reporting entity.
e.g. Emissions from employee's commutes and business travels.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

TYPICAL WASTE PROFILE OF AN OFFICE

Creating a waste profile of the office can help BUs develop targeted waste management strategies. Each office would have a different profile depending on building size, location, occupancy, time of year, equipment, and operational practices.

TYPES OF WASTE

Waste Type	Description	Examples
General	Waste that cannot be recycled or composted, and will end up in landfills or incinerators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waxed boxes and folders Laboratory plastics Chemical bottles^[25]
Organic	Waste that is made of biodegradable material (i.e., can be broken down by bacteria or living organisms). Such materials usually sourced or manufactured from animals or plants. As organic waste breaks down, it will create methane and carbon dioxide. The most effective way to dispose of it is to reuse it as compost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leftover food Coffee grounds Fallen leaves^[26]
Inorganic	<p>Waste that is made of materials that are non-biodegradable (i.e., cannot be easily broken down by bacteria or living organisms). Inorganic waste may take hundreds of years to decompose entirely.</p> <p>The most effective way to manage it includes reducing consumption, reusing, and recycling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms of paper Forms of plastic, glass and metal^[27]
Recyclable	Waste that can be processed and remanufactured into new products. While recyclable waste can be made of both organic and inorganic materials, not all organic and inorganic waste can be recycled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms of paper Forms of plastic Leaves or branches^[28]
Electronic	<p>Waste from discarded electrical and electronic devices. Electronic waste is hazardous due to the toxic chemicals that may leach out of the metals when buried. Therefore, it should ideally be recycled in some capacity since it contains recyclable materials including plastics, glass, and metals. If this isn't feasible, electronics should be sent to certified professionals with the right tools for safe disposal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household appliances IT equipment Consumer electronics equipment Battery-Operated Toys

[23] National Environment Agency → [24] US Environmental Protection Agency → [25] ESSR → [26] British Columbia → [27] Peace Corps → [28] Eurostat →

WASTE HIERARCHY

The European Union introduced the waste management hierarchy, a 5-tiered framework designed to guide individuals and organisations to make waste management decisions based on cost-effectiveness and environmental impact.^[29] The ultimate goal is to minimise disposable waste by maximising usage of resources.^[30]

1. Prevention

Preventing waste generation is the most environmentally friendly approach as it helps conserve resources and reduces the need for disposal. Prevention can be achieved through conscientious purchase decisions, and adopting practices that minimise packaging.

2. Reuse

If waste cannot be prevented, the second most preferred waste management method would be to reuse any produced waste by donating products that are no longer needed or using them for an alternative purpose. It could also mean repairing or refurbishing products to extend their lifespan.

3. Recycle

Recycling is the third preferred method and is often used to deal with paper, plastic, glass, and metal waste. Recycling helps reduce the need for virgin materials, as it is the process of turning waste products into new items for other uses. That said, recycling could result in some costs to the environment through emissions generated from transporting of the materials to the recycling process.

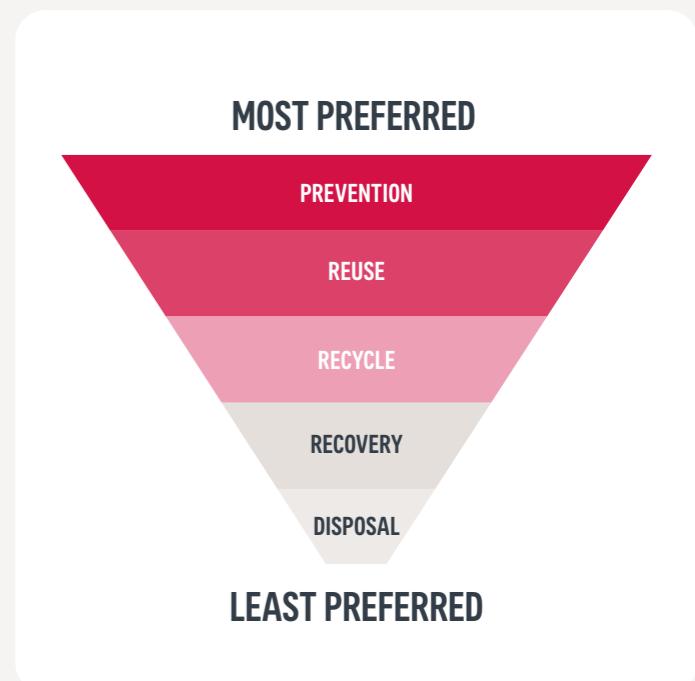
4. Recovery

This refers to utilising energy recovery processes such as waste-to-energy incineration or capturing landfill gas. Through such processes, heat, electricity, or usable fuels are extracted from waste products to be used.

5. Disposal

Disposing waste in landfills should be the last resort, when all other methods proposed above are inapplicable as it is the least eco-friendly option.^[32]

BUs can aim to reduce the waste production by understanding the type of waste generated in the office. Through the use of the waste hierarchy, BUs can make a conscious decision on how to manage their waste before simply disposing of it.



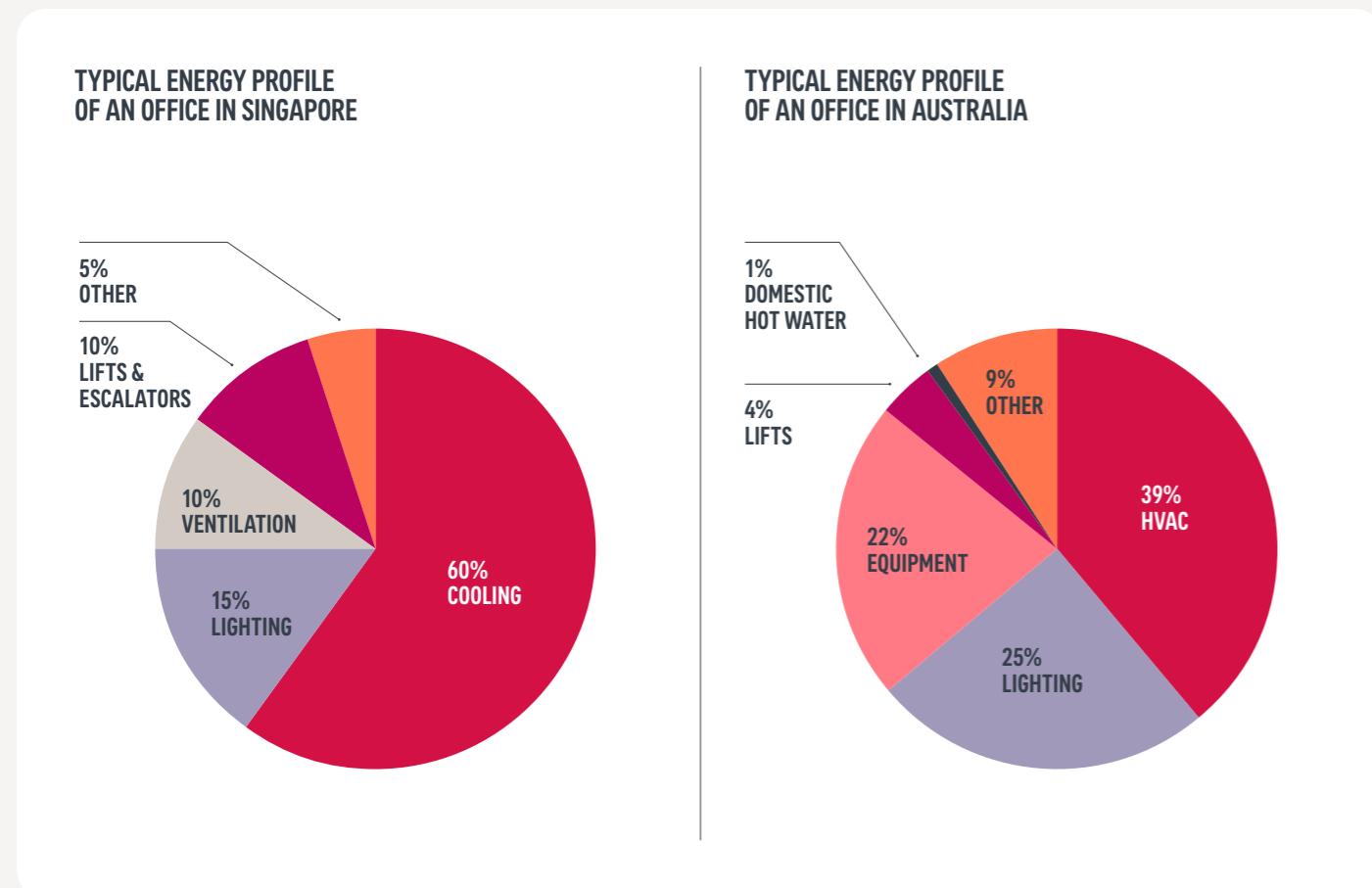
↑ Figure 2: The Waste Management Hierarchy^[31]

ENERGY USAGE

TYPICAL ENERGY PROFILE OF AN OFFICE

Identifying the energy profile of the office can help BUs better understand the different sources that consume energy in the office. This will enable BUs to develop strategies to optimise future energy usage, reduce utilities costs, and minimise our environmental impact. Each office would have a different profile depending on the building size, location, occupancy, time of year, equipment utilised, and operational practices.

④ Figure 3: Comparison of a typical office building end use energy consumption breakdown in Singapore and Australia.^{[36][37]}



*Refers to the energy consumed by devices plugged into electrical outlets, such as chargers, refrigerators, personal appliances, etc.

[33] US EIA → [34] OSTI → [35] Carbon Trust → [36] Research Gate → [37] Research Gate →

ENERGY SAVING STRATEGIES

1. Automation

Systems for monitoring and controlling building operations, such as lighting, security, ventilation, heating, and cooling, are now being integrated with the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and data analytics to create smart buildings. These systems make use of sensors and timers to adjust the lights and thermostats to optimise the building's energy usage.

2. Insulation

Insulation plays a crucial role in reducing energy consumption and improving energy efficiency in buildings. Proper insulation minimises heat transfer through walls, roofs, and windows, reducing the need for heating and cooling, thus saving energy.^[38] It is recommended that BUs engage professional insulation contractors to install the insulation in their building.

3. Power Modes

Saving energy on plug loads can be achieved by simply turning devices off when not in use. Sleep mode is often referred to as "vampire power" or "standby power" because it can account for a significant portion of energy consumption. Studies have shown that devices in "standby mode" account for 3-12% of electricity bills in homes around the world.^[39]

4. Reducing Usage of Heating & Cooling Systems

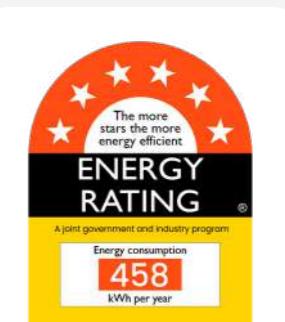
Energy costs relating to heating and cooling systems can often be reduced with simple and quick solutions such as allowing more sunlight into the office, using sun shades or installing solar films on the windows.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY LABEL

The labels provide energy efficiency ratings on appliances, electronics, vehicles, and buildings. The ratings are given based on extensive testing of the same product in various models across different usage scenarios and against a set of predetermined criteria. These ratings help consumers and organisations make informed purchasing decisions which can lead to reduced energy consumption, lower utility bills and environmental impact.

Examples of Energy Efficiency Labels

There is a wide range of energy efficiency labelling schemes developed internationally. They differ based on the local context, coverage and whether the scheme is mandatory or voluntary.



④ Figure 4: Energy Rating Label, Australian Government^[40]



④ Figure 5: Bee Star Label, Ministry of Power, Government of India^[41]



④ Figure 6: Malaysian Energy Efficiency Label^[42]

WATER USAGE

TYPICAL WATER PROFILE OF AN OFFICE BUILDING

Understanding the water profile of the office can help BUs develop water-efficient strategies to minimise environmental impact and reduce costs. Each office would have a different water profile depending on the building size, location, occupancy, time of year, equipment, and operational practices.

Some of the key water usages in offices are from:^[43]

- Heating and Cooling Systems
- Landscaping Needs
- Restrooms

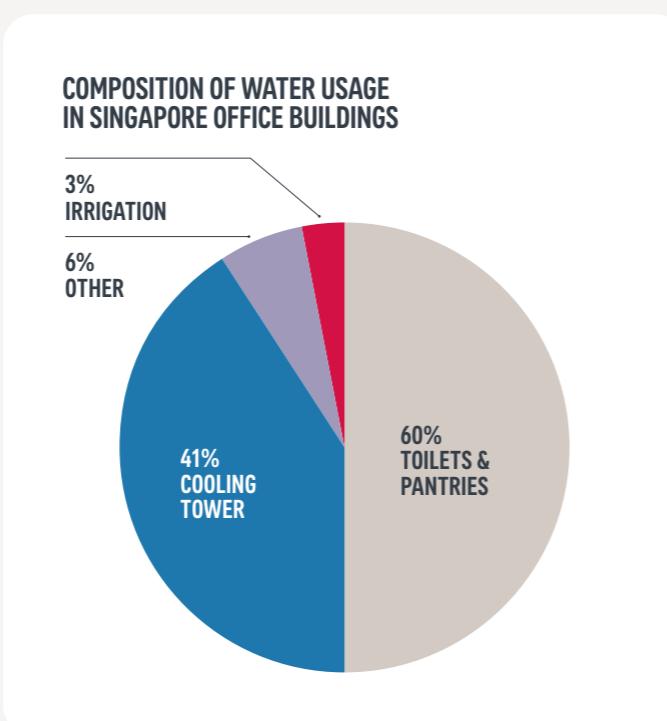


Figure 7: Pie chart showing composition of water usage in office buildings in Singapore as of 2021.^[44]

WATER SAVING STRATEGIES

Water can be conserved using the methods outlined below. BUs should seek professional help and abide by local regulations when implementing these strategies.

1. Use low-flow plumbing fixtures

Installing low-flow faucets in bathrooms, kitchens, and pantries can help reduce water usage. They are designed to have a lower flow rate than conventional fixtures, allowing them to use less water without compromising performance. By doing this on a large scale, up to half the quantity of water that a traditional plumbing system might expel can be saved, significantly reducing water bills.

2. Insulate water pipes

Insulating pipes can be an efficient way to conserve water in commercial buildings. Water temperature can be quickly achieved by insulating water pipes and reducing heat loss. This reduces the need to let water run and conserves energy as it takes less time to reach the desired temperature, resulting in both water and energy conservation.

3. Reuse greywater

Wastewater can be categorised into blackwater and greywater, depending on the level of contamination it carries. Blackwater is usually contaminated by pathogens and grease from toilets and kitchens, whereas greywater comes from bathroom sinks, showers, and washing machines, which has lower levels of contamination. While it is not clean enough to drink, it can be reused for flushing toilets, irrigation systems, cooling tower makeup, and laundry facilities.

4. Ensure timely leak proofing or repair

Water leakage contributes to a significant amount of water wastage daily and, consequently, increases a company's monthly bills.^[45]

WATER EFFICIENCY LABEL

Water efficiency labels provide information about the water efficiency of appliances so that consumers and organisations can make informed decisions. Common examples of products that have water efficiency labels include:

- Dishwashers
- Showerheads
- Taps and faucets
- Toilets and urinals
- Washing machines

Examples of Energy Efficiency Labels^[46]



Figure 8: WELS label in Singapore^[47]



Figure 9: WELS label in Australia^[48]



Figure 10: WELS label in Hong Kong (In Hong Kong, the lesser the drops, the better the rating)^[49]



Figure 11: WELS label in New Zealand^[50]



Figure 12: WELS label in Malaysia^[51]

Most countries use standardised water efficiency ratings, assigning 'stars', 'water droplets' or 'check marks' to appliances based on a set of predetermined criteria that assess water efficiency.

There is a wide range of water efficiency labelling schemes developed internationally. Although some may have similar names, they differ based on the local context, coverage and whether the scheme is mandatory or voluntary.

TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION

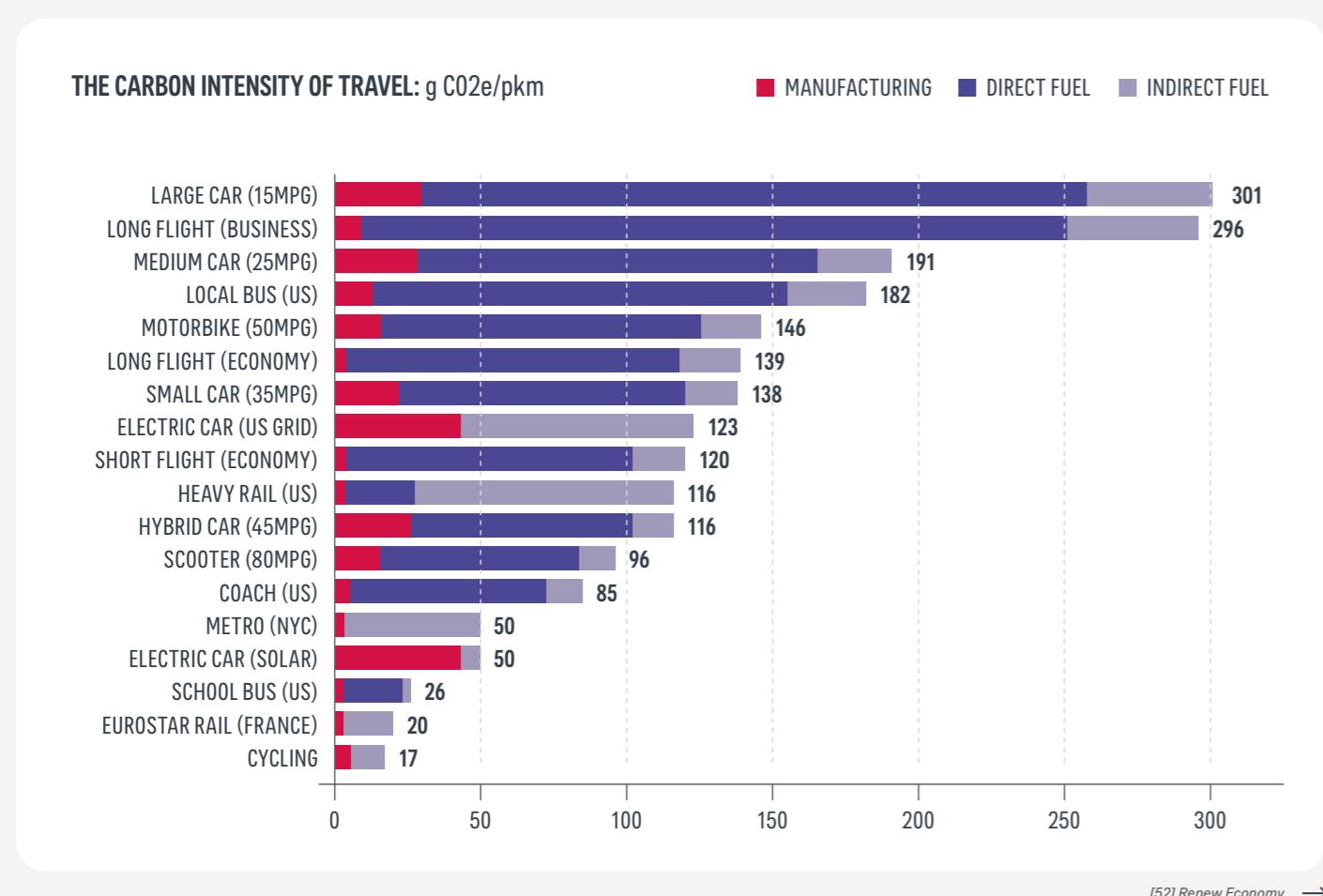
SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION

To achieve sustainable travel and transportation, BUs can review internal policies and utilise available technologies to ensure that carbon emissions are kept to a minimum for employee commute and freight. For example, BUs can encourage employees to commute to work via walking, cycling, taking public transport or carpooling. BUs can also consider utilising low-carbon freight or electric fleet options to reduce emissions and fossil fuel reliance.

Notably, employee travel is one of the most significant contributors to GHG emissions. Business travel often involves air and car transportation, especially in regions lacking viable rail options.

The following figure is a comparative representation of the per passenger emissions from different modes of transportation.

④ Figure 12: Comparison of grams of carbon emissions per passenger kilometre (g CO₂e/pkm) from different modes of transportation.^[51]



FLEET MANAGEMENT

Corporate fleets play a significant role in contributing to GHG emissions. With sustainable fleet management practices, organisations can reduce their carbon footprint substantially, lower operating costs, and improve regulatory compliance.

1. Embrace mixed-energy fleets

Incorporating electric, hybrid, or alternative fuel vehicles can significantly reduce emissions and contribute to a more sustainable fleet.^[53]

2. Harness the power of data

Organisations can gather valuable insights into vehicle performance, fuel consumption, and driver behaviour by leveraging data and fleet management software. This data can help identify areas for improvement, optimise routes, and make informed decisions to reduce emissions.^[54]



STRATEGIC FLIGHT BOOKING

Here are some strategies that can help reduce carbon emissions from air travel:

1. Use fuel-efficient aeroplanes

Search for airlines that have a newer fleet of planes. New aeroplanes are usually more fuel-efficient than older ones.^[55]

2. Fly economy

To keep emissions to a minimum, choose to fly economy. Business and first-class seats take up significantly more space per person. Therefore, they come with a much larger carbon footprint.

3. Go direct

Choose to take direct flights, which are more carbon-efficient than connecting flights. According to a report by NASA in 2010, about 25% of aeroplane emissions result from landing and take-off, including taxiing.^[56]

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

KEY PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT^[57]

Sustainable procurement is the outcome of integrating ESG considerations into procurement and purchasing decisions, and engaging with vendors and suppliers on the same. It requires striking a balance between sustainability, value for money, and meeting stakeholder requirements.^[58]

Here are the principles underlying sustainable procurement:

1. Environmental Responsibility

In making procurement decisions, BUs can consider factors such as the product's waste production, energy efficiency, GHG emissions, and usage of renewable resources throughout its lifecycle. These factors can guide BUs in procuring goods and services that have minimal environmental impact.

2. Social Equity

BUs are encouraged to prioritise engaging with suppliers that adhere to fair labour practices, provide safe working conditions, provide equitable remuneration, and protect human rights. BUs can also discuss with suppliers on topics such as diversity, parity, and social inclusivity.

3. Economic Contribution

BUs can consider engaging with suppliers who positively contribute to the local economy. This could entail collaborating with local enterprises, giving precedence to fair trade commodities, and supporting suppliers committed to ethical business conduct.

④ Figure 13: Pillars of Sustainable Procurement^[59]



[57] LinkedIn → [58] Sievo → [59] Inverto →

FAIR TRADE

Fair trade refers to a set of business practices that support producers in developing countries by doing things like paying fair prices, making sure that workers have good working conditions and fair pay.^[60]



④ Figure 14: The original FAIRTRADE mark^[63]

Based on the World Fair Trade Organisation, fair trade is about:^[61]

- Putting people and the planet before profit
- A trading partnership based on dialogue, transparency, and respect
- Fighting poverty, climate change, gender inequality, and other forms of injustice
- Seeking greater equity in international trade
- Contributing to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions and securing the rights of marginalised producer and workers

The trademarked term "Fairtrade" and the "FAIRTRADE" mark is only used by organisations, brands, and products that are part of the Fairtrade International system. A product has to be independently certified to be in adherence to a set of internationally agreed standards to qualify for the FAIRTRADE mark. The product must also be fully traceable, meaning the history, location, use, and processing of products and material can be identified.^[62]

LOCAL SOURCING

Local sourcing refers to obtaining products or materials from manufacturers within a specific geographical region or country. Local sourcing requires BUs to establish connections with nearby suppliers and manufacturers capable of providing the necessary products.^[64]

Here are some benefits associated with local sourcing:

1. Reduce Transportation Distances

One of the direct benefits of sourcing locally is shorter transportation distances. This will result in reduced GHG emissions, lower transportation costs, and a greener supply chain with a smaller environmental footprint.^[65]

2. Support Local Communities and Livelihoods

Supporting local suppliers strengthens local economies. Organisations can help create job opportunities and foster economic growth.^[66]

3. Reduce Supply Chain Risks

Working with global suppliers may increase supply chain vulnerability, due to unforeseen disruptions such as natural disasters, pandemics, geopolitical conflicts, trade wars, and cyber attacks. With local sourcing, there are shorter lead times, quicker communications and likely better oversight over the supply chain.

4. Brand Reputation

Consumers are increasingly aware of the origins of purchased goods and are beginning to advocate for locally sourced products. By sharing your supply chain, brand reputation can be improved significantly.

ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Environmental wellness refers to the two-way relationship between humans and our surroundings —our impact on the environment and the environment's impact on us. It focuses on instilling responsibility in protecting and improving the environment and emphasises the interconnectedness between nature and humans. Applying this to the workplace, BUs can create a positive work environment by incorporating elements of nature in the office to improve employee's wellbeing and foster a connection with nature.



INTEGRATING NATURE ELEMENTS IN THE WORKPLACE

Biophilic design incorporates nature into the indoor environment. Having plants, access to outdoor spaces, natural light and water features can create a calming space with a visual connection to nature, improving wellbeing, health, and productivity.

Biophilic designs can impact workplaces in the following ways:

1. Healthy ambiance and aesthetics

Having plants around the office helps employees feel like they are close to nature.^[67]

2. Improved productivity

Adding greenery to the workspace helps restore the attention and focus of employees and improves productivity by about 15%.^[68]

3. Better air quality

A study found that indoor plants can lower carbon dioxide levels by approximately 10% in air-conditioned offices and up to 25% in non-air-conditioned offices.^[69]

4. Plants diminish noise

Plants possess the ability to absorb sound. This innate capability helps minimise disruptive conversations and noise. Positioning sizable potted plants at room corners and perimeters could yield a significant reduction in noise levels.^[70]

Examples of biophilic designs in the workplace



1. Growing a green wall

Green walls can be a simple and structurally non-intrusive method to add greenery into the office space. Alternatively, BUs can consider hanging planters vertically on the walls to create the same effect.



3. Create green paths or private spaces with potted plants

Planters could help to carve out walkways in an open office or section off a zone for a more private work or relaxation space.



2. Select natural materials

BUs can opt for natural materials, such as wood, stone or bamboo for the office furnishing to add patterns, shapes and textures.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY LIVING

A healthy lifestyle recognises the need for access to healthier food options and regular physical activities. A nutritious diet can support employees' physical health, enhance their mental vitality and boost overall wellbeing. BUs can support employees by offering healthier food options in pantries and educating employees on proper nutrition.^[71]

Regarding physical activities, BUs can consider setting up fitness challenges, walking meetings, active stretching breaks, or even provide employees with access to wellness facilities or fitness events. These will help encourage employees to better manage their stress levels and stay healthy.



HEALTHIER, LONGER,
BETTER LIVES

GET IN TOUCH

If you have any further questions about
AIA CAN (An Eco-Office Movement),
please don't hesitate to contact:

ecooffice@aia.com