



Environmental Policy

Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University



2022

Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA)

Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University, Bhopal
Kolar Road, Bhopal-462016, M.P., India



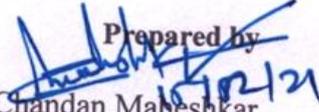
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This document contains the environmental policy and the necessary details for its execution exclusively prepared for the Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University, Bhopal. Hence, prior approval is requested to bring it into effect. Before the finalization of the environmental policy, two experts were reviewed the policy draft. Necessary changes were made before preparing the final draft of the university's environmental policy.

It is proposed to publish this MPBOU environment policy to make it public.

Let's save the environment for future generations.

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1. Preamble

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īśā vāsyamidam sarvaṁ yatkiñca jagatyām jagat |
tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdhaḥ kasyasviddhanam ||

All this-whatsoever moves in this universe (and those that move not) are belonging to the Lord. That renounced, enjoy. Do not covet anybody's wealth.

The complex interaction between socio-economic intentions and the environment has a multifarious influence on human existence. Environmental degradation, climate change, and resultant impacts appeared as critical issues towards sustainable development goals. Environmental sustainability is the need of hour to protect natural resources and develop alternatives that reduce destruction to the environment. It requires society to redesign day to day activities to meet human needs. India needs to work on ecological restoration because various environmental issues directly impact its people and the enormous biodiversity. India's population adds immense pressure to maintain environmental balance and manage its natural resources. Urban India is facing a variety of environmental challenges including polluted air, water and land. As India efforts to grow its economy, garbage is continues to increase that induced loss of biodiversity, and rapid depletion of all kinds of resources.

Higher education institutions can act as a laboratory to experiment, incubate and demonstrate ideas and technologies with environmentally feasible approaches. They have to work as a change agent for bringing sensitivity to promote environmentally responsible behavior in society. Also, this is in sync with the objectives of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 that asks for better understanding of environment beyond syllabus and to build essential skills and capacities among students and faculty. Here, it is necessary to mention that –

- Many Indian cities are environmentally unsustainable, for example, air quality in Delhi and other metropolitan cities. It is due to inappropriate waste management, industrial pollution, and lack of sanitation. Nearly 70% of sewage generated in India is released to water bodies without treatment. It contains environmentally hazardous effluents.
- Environmental degradation is a significant cause of concern for Indian agriculture, with the rising use of insecticides, pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers contaminating soil and groundwater. It is a prime factor that worst affected the food quality directly connected with soil fertility, air and water quality, wildlife, and fisheries.

- India is one of the world's most bio-diverse countries, with 7% of animal and plant species and 21% of its geographic area under forest cover. For higher economic growth and meeting people's ambitions, India is sacrificing a part of its biodiversity.
- Policy failures that provide incentives for indiscriminate and excessive use of natural resources and institutional failures regarding insufficient enforced rights of access to and use of natural resources have exhausted the environment further.

All such challenges or complications are, partially or fully, caused because of social, economic, and political interests of humans. Individuals' insensitivity and escapism for socio-environmental responsibilities can be evidently seen in their habits and habitation styles, which is a primary reason for multifaceted environmental deprivation. In this regard, HEIs have a fundamental role in disseminating sustainable development, especially when incorporating environmental values and practices in both the administration of their physical structures and academic programs. The NAAC accreditation criteria also consider sustainability and environmental performance of the institutions. The parameters covered under criteria VII are considered to award points to the institutions, which is broadly linked with energy conservation, waste management, water conservation practices, environmental audits, and green campus initiatives.

In the light of the National Environment Policy 2006, the University has realized that it should also be responsible for preparing its students with sensitivity for health, environment, and sustainable living. Therefore, the University Environmental Policy has been framed, which acknowledges the commitment of Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University, Bhopal, to a clean and safe environment. The University is expecting cooperation and support from all its stakeholders to improve and maintain the quality of the environment.



2. Definitions

2.1 Environment: The natural surrounding or conditions (the air, water, and land), as a whole or in a particular geographical region, are particularly affected by the human act. It includes the interaction of all living beings, climate, and natural resources that affect human survival and economic endeavors.

2.2 Sustainability: The competence to co-exist by maintaining an environmental balance. It closely connects environment, economy and society. Its primary purpose is attaining the needs of present without compromising the capability of future generations to meet their needs (Bruntland Report, 1987).

2.3 Sustainability Practices: The mindful utilization of resources considering long-term priorities and effects of how these resources are used. Simply, it means to support environmental, human, and economic liveliness.

2.4 Sustainable Development: The practice of maintaining sustainability norms and commitments while socio-economic needs.

2.5 Life Cycle Thinking (LCT): A holistic view of product development, consumption, reuse/recycling, and disposal to maintain harmony with the environment. It considers all the phases of a product's life. LCT aims to improve the product's socio-economic performance that has less or no harm to the environment through its life cycle.

2.6 Environmental Management: The practice of managing the interaction and impacts of human activities on the environment.

2.7 Pollution: The presence and/or introduction of contaminants (harmful or poisonous substances) into the environment adversely affect environmental health and thus cause adverse effects on human lives.

2.8 Solar Energy: The cleanest and most abundant renewable energy source that is produced through radiant light and heat from sun.

2.9 Rainwater Harvesting (RWH): A system of accumulation and storage of rainwater (either stored or recharged into ground water) that runs off (from roof tops, roads, parks, open grounds).

2.10 Vermi-composed: It is the resultant of decomposition of decomposable wastes (e.g., garden and food wastes) using worms (e.g., red wigglers).

2.11 E-waste: It refers out of the order electronic objects that are unwanted and usually completed their life.



3. University Environmental Policy

Environmental policy is mainly concerned with how to maintain the relationship between humans and the natural environment in a mutually cooperative manner. It is usually considered the problems such as controlling pollution and waste flows. The university feels that it is responsible for and should be committed to protect and nurture the environment. Therefore, the university's environmental policy represents essential elements to perform all its operations in an environmentally sustainable manner. It encourages the most appropriate sustainable development principles and practices at all levels of the university's hierarchy.

3.1 The Policy Statement

To act positively on environmental protection with a scientific understanding of business, society, and the environment and demonstrates a commitment to sustainable development. Simply it refers, attaining the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future generations.

3.2 Objectives

- 3.2.1 To safeguard the environment by effectively implementing policies set out in this policy document and monitor them;
- 3.2.2 To ensure sustainable use of resources and prevent profligate or destructive practices;
- 3.2.3 To practice environmental standards and assist the university to maintain the set standards;
- 3.2.4 To encourage 'life-cycle thinking' in the procurement of goods and services towards sustainable resource management practices;
- 3.2.5 To communicate university's environmental objectives, create awareness internally and externally, and promote good practices of environmental management;
- 3.2.6 To assure the implementation of responsible environmental management economically and effectively;
- 3.2.7 To supervise environmental management practices and the concerned activities to ensure their feasibility, suitability, and competence regularly;
- 3.2.8 To promote education for sustainable development through academic programs, facilitation of research in sustainability.

3.3 Core Principles

Through the compliance of this Environment Policy, MPBOU, Bhopal shall be committed to,

- 3.3.1 Provide a healthy environment for students, staff and visitors;
- 3.3.2 Always consider environmental guidelines;
- 3.3.3 Adopt *Best Practices* in its operations;
- 3.3.4 Encourage staff and students to be a part of green initiatives;
- 3.3.5 Promote environmental values for business and society;
- 3.3.6 Achieve optimal resource utilization in university operations;
- 3.3.7 Conduct consistent auditing and monitoring;

3.3.8 Support the initiatives/programs that help to reduce the environmental adverse;

3.3.9 Promote environmental education and awareness;

3.3.10 Encourage adoption of sustainability practices.

3.4 Applicability

This policy applies only to all land, buildings, activities and people (employees, students, and other members) within the control of the University.



4. Responsibilities

4.1 Primarily, the Executive Council of the university and the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor as the Chief Executive are responsible for implementing this environmental policy.

4.2 The Registrar and/or Deputy Registrar(s) hold the responsibility of the university's administration. Thus, this policy document should be considered to control the diverse impact of the university's primary activities on the environment, particularly the management, development, and extension of its land and building.

4.3 The University's Environmental Committee (UEC) and Heads/Directors of Institutions and centres are responsible for ensuring compliance with this environmental policy under their authority.

4.4 Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA), MPBOU, Bhopal will actively monitor the performance of UEC, Divisions, and Centres in the implementation of this environmental policy and the compliance of the activities in their control.

4.5 Individuals have a responsibility to co-operate with the university and obey the particulars (rules/requirements) made under the authority of the university's environmental policy.

4.2 Continuation of the Policy

The University will conduct periodic reviews and improve this Environmental Policy and will ensure its implementation. This process includes sincere compliance with local and national environmental policy and its legislative guidelines (only related and possible) and incorporating the University's policy into actions at all its hierarchical levels.

4.3 Reporting Violations

Violation(s) of environmental policy, partially or fully, can be reported to the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor and/or the Registrar of the university.



5. University's Green Practices

It is imperative to and responsibility of higher education to create value for humans, society, and the environment. Higher education institutions cannot restrict them to only pre-specified scholastic activities. Being sensitive and responsible to the environment is a trait that should be nurtured at different stages of students' educational journey. Significantly, the university makes its academic and non-academic employees, students, visitors, and other stakeholders aware of their environmental duties and future generations. Therefore, Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University, Bhopal, has identified the green practices as ascertained below–

- 5.1** Utilizing sustainable construction practices while renovation of existing infrastructure and/or any new development project or expansion initiative.
- 5.2** Making the university an attractive institution for education and research.
- 5.3** Giving preference to products/services base on their environmental friendliness or prefer least harmful products/services to the environment, if necessary.
- 5.4** Collaborating with suitable external organizations to explore environmental issues caused or faced by the university and their solutions.
- 5.5** Encouraging the conservation of native ecosystem in campus, and to strive to practice environmental responsibility of preservation of its natural woodlands.
- 5.6** Engaging staff and students in execution and monitoring of environmental policy.
- 5.7** Preventing pollution that may cause from University's operations and maintaining zero waste to its premises.
- 5.8** Collaborating with local community and/or task groups or NGOs to protect local environment.
- 5.9** Promote a purchase policy which supports those products/services which cause the least harm or no harm to the environment.
- 5.10** Promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport to, from and within the University.
- 5.11** Developing the university's ability to practice sustainability principles and promoting understanding of environmental ethics between faculty, students, and the public in general.
- 5.12** Reviewing university's operations to reflect sustainable best practices.
- 5.13** Adopting a pro-active approach that places environmental aspects as one of the prime consideration in university's decision-making process.
- 5.14** Ensuring efficient and optimal utilization of resources such as land, water, and fuel, particularly, the non-renewable.
- 5.15** Adopting principles of green procurement by incorporating appropriate provisions in contracts and procurements.
- 5.16** Addressing Environmental complaints (pollution, degradation and rehabilitation/restoration) with various stakeholders and Government Departments and conservation associations/societies.
- 5.17** For setting an example, MPBOU is encouraging all its stakeholders to adopt environment friendly alternatives in their life practices

6. University's Best Practices

6.1 Solar Energy

The University has installed 100 KW rooftop solar panels under the project RESCO Model. It is a joint venture of the university and Madhya Pradesh Urja Vikas Nigam Limited, Bhopal. Currently, this solar plant exporting nearly 1500 KWH units of electricity generated to the Grid. The university is getting a considerable rebate in its monthly electricity bills and saves nearly INR 12, 00,000/- annually.

6.2 Rainwater Harvesting

MPBOU holds an adequate **Rain Water Harvesting System (RWHS)**. The University is steadily working towards maintaining infrastructure to facilitate rainwater harvesting in a significant magnitude. The green grounds around the University building allow the rainwater to percolate through the soil so that the deep water aquifer/underground water reserve gets replenished. **Storm water drains have also been positioned all along the perimeter of the large terrace to collect rainwater.**

The National Water Mission (NWM) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, has the objective, “conservation of water, minimizing wastage and ensuring its more equitable distribution both across and within States through integrated water resources development and management.” The ministry has adopted various strategies for achieving the goals of NWM in a collaborative approach. In this way, encouraging active participation of stakeholders to lead sustainable development is a significant step. Thus, Ministry of Jal Shakti launched some important campaigns under NWM— Water Talk, Catch the Rain, and Sahi Fasal.

NWM's ‘Catch the Rain’ campaign is to engage all the stakeholders to create **Rain Water Harvesting System (RWHS)** before the onset of Monsoon, to catch the rain. Through extending the campaign, Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” with the theme “**Catch the Rain, where it falls, when it falls**” on **22nd March, 2021**. For the success of the campaign, the University Grant Commission (UGC), Delhi requested all the universities (**D.O.14-15/2017 (CPP-II) dated 24th June 2020**) to have appropriate Rain Water Harvesting Structures so that large volume of rainwater can be collected and undertake the activities mentioned in **Annexure-I (D.O.14-7/2021 (CPP-II) dated 19th March 2021)**, respectively.

Therefore, the university is an active participant of ‘**Catch the Rain**’ campaign and has a significant contribution in achieving NWM's objective.

6.3 Herbal + Medicinal Garden - ‘Aarogya Vatika’

It has been identified that the University should have a well maintained separate garden of herbal and medicinal trees. The quarter/half-acre garden area would be sufficient to accommodate a variety of herbs, shrubs and trees of high medicinal values. This initiative

would be helpful to create awareness of the medicinal properties of plants and trees. Thus, all the herbs and medicinal plants can be labeled so that they can be easily identified.

The potential objectives of establishing and maintaining an herbal garden are –

1. To connect the stakeholders and visitors with *Mother Nature* and sustainable practices;
2. To add educational value to the university environment;
3. To make stakeholders and visitors aware of herbs and medicinal plants so that they can be able to identify and use them; and
4. To facilitate students, including other institutions (schools and colleges with limited resources), under Institutional Social Responsibility.

6.4 Oxygen Park/Street

An Oxygen park with Peppal, Neem, and Kadam has been established at the University. The Oxygen Park is welcoming students, employees, and visitors to harmonize their body, mind, and soul with the intake of high quality Oxygen; and develop the symbiotic relationships with nature.

6.5 Vermi Compost Units

The infrastructure for preparing vermi-compost is planned and will be successfully installed in the campus. Biodegradable waste originated from gardens and residential buildings will be used to prepare vermi compost.

6.6 E-waste Management

Repairing and recycling of laptops, computer hardware, and projectors are encouraged and carried out normally. University departments are usually using overhauled computer peripherals, laptops and printers as a part of the process. Disposal of unusable hardware is achieved through buy-back policies, and the money is utilized to get new and upgraded equipment. A disposal box for E-waste collection has already been installed in the University.



7. Implementation of the Policy

To implement this environmental policy following provisions have been made –

- 7.1 The university shall establish a committee for environmental affairs titled “Bhoj Environmental Committee” which consists of members of academic and non-administrative staff, students, and/or any government/semi-government or non-profit institutions.

- 7.2** The budgetary provisions will be made by the university to facilitate the implementation of the policy and the related events and activities.
- 7.3** The role of the university's environmental committee shall be:
- 7.3.1** To develop and recommend programs to achieve the objectives of all priority areas mentioned in this policy document;
 - 7.3.2** To form action groups to develop and recommend programs and performance indicators to monitor progress in each objective. In this regard, experts from within and outside the university shall be consulted as and when required. CIQA-MPBOU can be a direct internal agency for consultation in the absence of internal or external experts;
 - 7.3.3** To conduct a periodic review of the university policies, plans, and programs to ensure compatibility with MPBOU's environmental policy;
 - 7.3.4** To supervise the implementation of the environmental policy of MPBOU, Bhopal;
 - 7.3.5** To conduct appropriate environmental audits and pilot projects;
 - 7.3.6** To organize education and training programs to inform the employees and students on this policy and how they can contribute to achieve the environmental objectives approved in it;
 - 7.3.7** To collect information on ongoing sustainability measures and communicate progress;
 - 7.3.8** To identify emerging opportunities for collaboration among academic and administrative units, offering the campus as a learning centre to students, and increased operational sustainability to faculty with administration;
 - 7.3.9** To maintain waste management system such as setting-up multi-waste sorting bins in common areas;
 - 7.3.10** To advise and make recommendations to maximize socially-just sustainable planning in policy making, development, and purchasing;
 - 7.3.11** To monitor best practices and adapt these practices to achieve the environmental objectives;
 - 7.3.12** To issue a report annually that describes the efforts made to attain each of the objectives and issues needed particular attention;
- 7.4** The university shall designate an Officer of Environmental Affairs who shall act as a secretary of the *Bhoj Environmental Committee*. He/she shall be responsible for receiving complaints and suggestions from staff, students, visitors, and residents of the MPBOU campus and shall take necessary action.
- 7.5** An appropriate task group, as decided by the university administration, shall be required to execute the functions/action plans determined by the university's environmental committee.
- 7.6** Meeting shall be held at least once in every four months.