



# SBBOT Policy – Environmental Awareness & Sustainability Policy

**Vision Statement:** *SBBOT will have reduced its impacts on the environment by implementing and maintaining good environmental practices. We will reach the stage where understanding and consideration of Environmental Sustainability will be reflected in all of SBBOT's ongoing and future activities.*

## 1. Aim:

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory CIO (SBBOT) is committed to the practice and promotion of environmental sustainability. As an organisation dedicated to protecting and conserving the natural environment, SBBOT has always sought to reduce the environmental impact of its activities, ensuring that its operations align with sustainability principles.

The Observatory recognises the need to lead by example, minimising its own environmental footprint while advocating for responsible resource use and conservation in others.

Many sustainable features and practices are already in place at the Field Centre and in other areas of Observatory operation. These include, but are not limited to:

- a major contribution made to in-house power generation through use of solar panels
- double glazing and high insulation levels around the building
- installed heat pump system for domestic heating
- systems in place for re-cycling of waste
- use of recyclable plates, mugs and cutlery on particular occasions.

This policy document outlines the Observatory's commitment to implementing further methods of integrating sustainable practices into its operations, decision-making, and outreach efforts, to support environmental protection and biodiversity.

## 2. Objectives:

To meet the above Aims, SBBOT will pursue the following Objectives:

- ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and standards
- measure our impacts on the environment to set benchmarks for improvement
- ensure we continually review how we can make improvements to our environmental performance across all of our activities

- work towards the adoption of a recognised environmental management system that will assist the adopters into a structured way of identifying and adopting improvements
- the promotion of efficient resource use, waste reduction, and recycling within our organisation and community.
- the engagement of members, stakeholders, employees, volunteers, partners, and the public in environmental sustainability initiatives.
- the upholding and advocacy for local, national, and global sustainability goals.

### **3. Scope:**

This policy applies to all activities of SBBOT, including internal operations, public engagements, and external partnerships. It covers areas such as energy consumption, waste management, transportation, procurement, and advocacy and applies to all staff, members, volunteers and, where applicable, visitors and external stakeholders such as contractors.

Overall, the work of the Observatory in this area will seek to make progress in five areas:

### **4. Key Areas of Focus:**

#### **4.1 Energy Use:**

- we will aim to reduce energy consumption by using energy-efficient equipment including LED lightbulbs and/or 'slimline' fluorescent tubes; optimising office space for natural light; turning off all room lights and equipment when not in use and not using portable room heating devices except in an emergency.
- we will investigate the possibility of extending our installation of renewable energy generation, such as solar or wind power.
- we will ensure that all double-glazing window-pane units are regularly checked and replaced if they have 'blown'.

#### **4.2 Waste Reduction & Management:**

We will measure the amount of waste we produce and explore and implement further opportunities for improving waste-management applying the principles of eliminate, reduce, reuse, recycle, disposing:

- Elimination of waste – by trying to avoid wasteful practices in the first place
- Reduction of waste – by minimising the amount of waste that we *do* produce
- Re-using – by using items as many times as possible
- Re-cycling – by re-cycling as much as possible, including items which have already been re-used
- Disposing – of anything else in a responsible way

Examples:

- we will practice and encourage recycling and composting across all areas.
- we will investigate the use of food waste composting through using a food-waste digester, hot composter or wormery
- single-use plastics and non-recyclable materials will be minimised, and reusable products will be prioritised.
- paper use will be minimised by adopting digital communication and documentation. Whenever possible, 100% recycled paper will be used for photocopying purposes and if documents *must* be printed, they should be done on double-sided and, if practicable, on draft printer setting. Exceptions may be made when a higher quality finish is needed for some external communications.
- provision will be made for the safe re-cycling of used toner cartridges, batteries, and electrical equipment, using WEEE-certified contractors as applicable (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment)
- Refillable ink printers or re-manufactured toner cartridges will be used if possible
- where practicable, efforts will be made to both source and re-cycle items such as equipment or furniture through such organisations as the local Free-cycle groups (subject to quality and health and safety considerations).
- We will ensure that potentially hazardous waste items are properly re-cycled through local Council e-cycling centres

**4.3 Water Conservation:**

- we will publicise, encourage and implement water-saving measures within the Observatory Field Centre and encourage water conservation in all projects and community engagements. This will include the use of water-butts for rainwater harvesting and encouragement of the use of 'grey-water' for watering flower-beds and containers.
- we will advocate for sustainable water use and the protection of local waterways and ecosystems.

**4.4 Sustainable Transportation:**

- employees and volunteers will be encouraged to use public transport, carpool, walk or cycle to work and events.
- we will explore the feasibility and cost to install electric car charging points.
- remote working options will be supported to reduce the need for travel.
- travel for organisational purposes will be minimised, with virtual meetings used whenever possible.

#### **4.5 Sustainable Procurement:**

- wherever possible, priority will be given to the purchase of environmentally-friendly consumable products, such as cleaning materials
- priority will also be given to sourcing items that are energy-efficient, made from recycled materials and produced by ethically responsible companies, such as Fair Trade, FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) etc.
- other things being equal, local suppliers will be prioritised to reduce the carbon footprint of transportation.
- consideration will also be given to habitat protection in the procurement chain

#### **4.6 Biodiversity & Habitat Protection:**

- we will minimise the use of pesticides and insecticides anywhere on Observatory properties
- we will continue to ensure the safe storage of potentially polluting materials such as oil and petrol.
- wherever possible, we will use environmentally-friendly consumable products, such as cleaning materials
- where hazardous materials are being used we will ensure protection of waterways/surface drains through spillage prevention and isolation measures
- We will ensure that potentially hazardous waste items are properly recycled through local Council e-cycling centres

### **5. Engagement & Awareness Raising:**

#### **5.1. Education:**

- we will provide regular training and education to staff, volunteers, members and other stakeholders on sustainability practices and environmental issues being undertaken at the Observatory.
- we will investigate the feasibility of establishing a 'Green Team' of interested members and/or staff, who would maintain a watching brief on sustainability issues, making recommendations for further action as required. Alternatively, a 'Recycling Champion' might be considered.
- we will provide other opportunities for feedback from members, staff and volunteers on sustainability issues.
- Consideration will be given to working towards appropriate "Green Standards".

**5.2. Awareness Raising:** We will raise public awareness through outreach campaigns, partnerships, and events that promote sound environmental stewardship.

### **6. Monitoring & Reporting:**

- we will regularly review our sustainability practices and measure progress against the above stated objectives.
- annual sustainability reports will be shared with members and other stakeholders through the Trustees' Annual Report
- feedback from staff, volunteers, and partners will be incorporated to continuously improve our environmental performance.
- this policy will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

**7. Continuous Improvement:**

- we are committed to continuously improving our environmental sustainability practices.
- as new technologies and best practices emerge, we will adapt our policies to further reduce our environmental impact.
- as an essential aspect of our advocacy and outreach programmes, in which we promote the conservation of biodiversity, we will engage in projects that emphasise the sustainable use of resources.

**8. Concluding Statement:**

Sustainability is at the core of Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory CIO's mission. Through focused action and responsible operations, we will contribute to a healthier planet and inspire others to join us in creating a sustainable future.

Approved by: .....

Date: .....