IOAS Environmental Impact Policy

A Preamble

1 Introduction and purpose of the policy

This policy assists IOAS in identifying and implementing procedures intended to guide the day to day operations of the organisation in order to ensure that negative environmental impacts are minimised, and positive environmental policies and practices are implemented where possible.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all activities and operations of the IOAS that are carried out by all IOAS personnel including the BoD, committees' members and contractors.

3 Definitions

Reference is made to the definitions in the IOAS General Operating Manual.

4 Access and Distribution

This document is distributed to the IOAS Board of Directors (BoD), Impartiality Committee (IC) and Accreditation Committee (AC) annually or available in the IOAS web site 'client area'. Staff are informed of changes as soon as they have been finalised. Interested parties may obtain a copy on request.

5 Authority and revision

This policy is approved by the BoD. It is the responsibility of the IOAS Executive Director (ED) and the BoD to review the appropriateness of the policy from time to time. It may be revised when the need arises. Its effectiveness in meeting the quality policy of the IOAS will be assessed during Internal Review and any measures for improvement notified to the ED and the BoD.

B General

The work of the IOAS affects the environment and our business activities can have varying degrees of impact upon climate change. The IOAS shall calculate annually emissions and other environmental impacts in order to identify reduction options and protocols to minimise negative impacts outlined here and to track progress over time. IOAS strategic plans shall identify measurable targets in the following areas.

1. Travel

Air travel contributes the single largest impact that the IOAS has on the environment. IOAS activities revolve around international assessment visits, meetings by staff and regular BoD and AC meetings. While IOAS staff and contractors will seek to minimise air travel to what is strictly necessary (see next section on Communications), it is recognised that significant air travel will be inevitable. Where appropriate, travel can be reduced by conducting more remote assessments. Remote assessments may be offered in cases where there is low risk and the resources required to complete the activity are available to all parties. There may also be opportunities for travel reduction through working with other accreditation bodies and/or by use of geographically spread assessors and by examining the effectiveness of review audits vs witness audits in identifying nonconformities (NCs) and important issues. An increase in review audits could reduce airline travel for witness audits.

IOAS Environmental Impact policy on Travel:

Consequent emissions of air travel incurred while conducting IOAS business will be compensated by purchasing WWF Gold Standard Carbon Credits, using the following resources.

- **Air miles calculator - https://www.atmosfair.de/en/offset/flight/**
- **WWF gold standard carbon credits - https://www.goldstandard.org/take-action/offset-your-emissions**

Additional resources and information:

- **Overview and Comparison of Existing Carbon crediting schemes - https://tinyurl.com/svqsr28**
- **FAQ regarding Carbon Offsets - https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/faq-carbon-offsets-1.5008339**

2. Communications

While it is often necessary for IOAS staff and contractors to make physical visits in order to comply with assessment requirements, there is room to make better use of alternative technologies in order to minimise impacts associated with travel for IOAS business meetings.

IOAS Environmental Impact policy on communications:

- Staff and contractors will, where possible, seek to maximise the use of teleconferences and video conferences for meetings in place of face to face meetings.

3. Hotels and meals

The IOAS has regular meetings of its BoD and AC for which the choice of hotel accommodation and meals constitute a significant expense. However, IOAS is aware that budget and location restrictions limit choices of using eco-friendly options.

IOAS Environmental Impact policy on hotels and meals:

- For all food and drink, IOAS will strive to make purchases that are environmentally and socially responsible (eg. organic, local, fair-trade).
- Such purchases shall be within a reasonable cost of other food and drink options at the discretion of the individual staff person.
- When making decisions about food purchases when travelling, staff should be mindful of any packaging purchased and disposed of as a consequence.

4. Procurement (Office Supplies)

As a business with a fully paperless digital filing system, IOAS and its staff, BoD and committees' members are not heavy consumers of office supplies, with minimal paper and printer ink toner purchases. IOAS also make infrequent hardware purchases (computers, furniture, etc). However, conscientious decisions will be made about all related office purchases.

IOAS Environmental Impact policy on procurement:

- IOAS will look at the life cycle impacts of all office supplies, favouring those that incorporate recycling / take-back programs.
- IOAS will encourage its staff to purchase paper that is FSC-certified. Failing availability of this option, IOAS will seek to maximize post-consumer waste content, chlorine-free processing and socially equitable working conditions.
- IOAS will encourage its staff to purchase ink cartridges that are recyclable, ideally through a company take-back policy.
- Staff and contractors will make a conscientious decision before printing any documents to consider whether the printing is necessary.
- All printers and photocopiers shall enable double-sided printing and staff and contractors can choose to also print two pages to a side if feasible.

Staff, BoD/committees' members, and contractors are encouraged to assess their own home office environmental impacts by using the "IOAS Environmental Checklist" (TBD), and return this assessment annually to IOAS to measure progress over time.

5. Institutional relationships

IOAS has business relationships with a range of other institutions such as utility companies and banks. To some extent, IOAS has an opportunity to influence these institutions through our choices with whom to do business. Possibly the second largest impact that the IOAS and its staff have on the environment is their energy use and in this context the choice should be made to reduce reliance on power from fossil fuel sources if possible.

IOAS Environmental Impact policy on institutional relations

- IOAS funds shall be held in banks that have strong social and environmental principles and that support the local community, where the fees and service is comparable with other banks.
- IOAS and its staff shall subscribe to ethical utility company plans using renewable energy (telecommunications, power, etc.) where these exist and compare favourably with other utilities.
- IOAS will seek to source mainframe server hosting from providers who offer a service which uses power from renewable energy providers.