Mahatma Gandhi University
Priyadarsini Hills P. O.
Kottayam, Kerala - 686560

(Re-accredited by NAAC with A Grade)

Environment Policy

ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Preamble

Mahatma Gandhi University is very concerned about its campus environment and is striving hard to preserve it in any way possible. Some time ago, there was environmental degradation on campus in the form of degraded air, water, and soil quality. The environmental difficulties were caused by ineffective solid and liquid waste management, as well as ineffective water resource management on campus. Previously, during the summer months, the campus had experienced unprecedented levels of water scarcity, resulting in substantial financial losses for the university. Water scarcity being just one visible effect of environmental deterioration; there were many other unnoticed effects with far-reaching repercussions, such as loss of biodiversity, pathogen contamination of ground water, and diminishing water resources, to name a few. Mahatma Gandhi University has taken some remedial / suitable measures to conserve the environment on campus, acknowledging its responsibility and commitment to maintain the environment at all levels. To attain this purpose, the University and its community have established a few policies that must be strictly adhered to. The environmental policy of the university is to achieve a clean and sustainable environment.

The Environmental policy of the campus is a holistic perception of different sub-policies which reflecting the different aspects of nature conservation are listed below :

1. Environment Management Policy

1.1 Conservation of Critical Environmental Resources

Water Policy :

- All the dug wells in the campus are to be de-silted and maintained well so that the water storage capacity of these wells increase and the ground water re-charge will also occur. Where ever possible the wells are to be recharged with roof top rain water from nearby buildings in order to replenish the ground water.
- Protection and conservation of all water shed areas in the campus (Nalpathimala, Jeevaka- check dam and the Swashakosam) to boost the ground water recharging.
- Extreme care has to be taken to reduce the wastage of water in the campus for instance, avoid prolonged over-flowing while pumping water to the overhead tanks; repair and proper maintenance of leaking faucets and plumbing.

- Roof top rainwater harvest structures of suitable capacities are to be established in all science department buildings and the water from these are to be connected to the labs especially to water distillation units to save - enormous quantity coolant- water exiting from these distillation units and wasted daily.
- Roof top rainwater harvest structures of suitable capacities are to be established in hostels so that the water stored during monsoon can be used during summer months.
- Improve the ground water recharge by establishing shallow contour pits so that the run-off water quantity can be reduced. Also to divert the rooftop rain water from adjoining buildings to Raveendra sarovar and other abandoned quarry in the campus. Periodic maintenance of the water channels connecting the quarry with roof top rain water harvest is very essential.

Biodiversity policy

- Natural vegetation of the campus to be conserved; Tree cover of the campus to be improved so the floral and faunal diversity could be conserved.
- Tree cutting to be prohibited, under unavoidable circumstances the tree cutting may be permitted with the approval of CACTS (Campus Advisory Committee on Tree Saving) provided equal number of tree saplings are to be planted and protected by the University.
- To protect the biodiversity rich patches of the campus as 'Jeevaka live laboratory' of School of Environmental Sciences and the school has to periodically monitor the area for its biodiversity and protection. Human interference has to be completely avoided inside this protected area.

Energy Policy

- Periodic energy auditing to be carried out and the recommendations are to be followed strictly.
- Avoid wastage of Energy and conserve the same. A unit of energy conserved is equal to a unit generated.
- Installation of Solar PV cells wherever possible.

2. Waste Management Policy

- This policy is based on the principle : '*Waste is a resource- not to be wasted'* , this goal is to be achieved by 4 'R's to be followed while managing the waste :
- **R**educe (quantity of waste generated to be reduced); **R**euse (Where ever possible reuse the resources); **R**ecycle (Convert waste in to Energy – Biogas

plants ; convert waste in to Manure – composting / vermicomposting) and **R**efuse to purchase the plastic goods.

- Colour coded waste collection bins are to be placed in each department , division of the administrative section and the cafeteria / canteens and in the road sides in order to segregate (Source segregation)the solid waste in to biodegradable and non-degradable.
- Source segregated waste to be processed using appropriate techniques to recover either material, energy or manure. Install biogas plants and composting / vermicomposting yards at appropriate places. The bio-manure obtained from these yards only to be used for horticulture purposes in the campus.
- The residues which remain after the above mentioned processing are to be disposed safely on earth.
- Total **ban on** use of **plastics in the campus** need to be promoted in phased manner. As an initiative the use of Flex banners in the conferences, seminars and meetings in the campus has to be banned. Also by providing purified water kiosks at several places of the campus will reduce the use of plastic bottles and bottled water consumption.
- Only the **bio-medical waste** or the animal waste originating from Animal house need to be disposed using modern incinerators provided the incinerators are equipped with proper pollution/emission control systems.
- All other recyclable waste material including plastic, glass bottles, lab glassware, paper waste etc are to be given to scrap dealers.

E-Waste management : Properly collected and stored and periodically given to scrap dealers.

Laboratory waste / Hazardous waste management : The liquid chemical wastes / reagents are to be collected with minimal segregation in to separate containers. The same are to be given to recyclers or agencies deal with the disposal of such kind of wastes.

3. Environment Audit Policy

An Environment Audit of the campus is conducted on a regular basis by a team of experts led by the School of Environmental Sciences. This team may also provide this service on a payment basis to other institutions/colleges. The revenue generated may be used for the green initiatives of the campus.

4. General Policies to improve the campus environment

- Give support to research and higher education in environment and awareness programmes
- Integrate environmental education to all aspects of University's teaching and research and help students and staffs develop their environmental awareness and understanding
- Avoid use of hazardous substances except places where it is unavoidable
- Reduce the use of non-renewable sources of energy and increase the use of renewable sources of energy
- Support Green building
- All expansions are to be vertical avoiding the cutting of trees and destruction of greenery of the campus.

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