



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY (2026)

CARITAS SOMALIA

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INTRODUCTION

Caritas Somalia recognizes that environmental degradation and climate change represent structural challenges that directly affect humanitarian crises, sustainable development, and social stability. In the Somali context, recurring droughts, floods, desertification, land degradation, and water scarcity exacerbate poverty, food insecurity, forced displacement, and tensions over natural resources.

Inspired by the Social Doctrine of the Church and guided by the encyclicals *Laudato Si'* (2015)¹, *Fratelli Tutti*² (2020), and the apostolic exhortation *Laudate Deum* (2023)³, Caritas Somalia affirms that care for creation is inseparable from the promotion of human dignity, social justice, and peace. The climate and ecological crisis is a human and social crisis that requires integrated, responsible, and lasting responses.

Caritas Somalia works for climate justice, recognizing that climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable communities. Millions of people lose their livelihoods, struggle to access food and water, and are forced to migrate. The organization intervenes locally, building capacities and resilience through participatory projects on water management, disaster risk reduction, sustainable agriculture, and natural resource management. At the same time, it advocates globally for fair climate policies by actively participating in consultations, working groups, and forums organized by Caritas MONA and Caritas Internationalis at regional and international levels, to protect rights, strengthen resilience, and address the real needs of communities.

This Policy aligns with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)⁴, as well as the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)⁵ and Caritas Internationalis Management Standards (CIMS)⁶. It provides a guiding framework to systematically integrate environmental and climate considerations into Caritas Somalia governance, programs, and operations, promoting a vision of climate action that is just, inclusive, and based on integral ecology.

ARTICLE 1 - PURPOSE

Climate change, as a consequence of human impact on the environment, has and will continue to have a significant influence on people's lives, in Somalia and beyond. Caritas Somalia recognizes the social and economic importance of environmental stewardship and the need to consider this dimension as an integral part of the organization's strategic decision-making and day-to-day operations.

This Policy aims to:

- Formalize Caritas Somalia's commitment to environmental awareness and ecological responsibility;
- Promote a culture of environmental responsibility within the organization;

¹ THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS, ENCYCLICAL LETTER "LAUDATO SI'" ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME, published in May 2015, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

² THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS, ENCYCLICAL LETTER "FRATELLI TUTTI" ON FRATERNITY AND SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP, published in October 2020, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html

³ THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS, APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION "LAUDATE DEUM" TO ALL PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS, published in October 2023,

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html

⁴ <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

⁵ <https://www.corehumanitarianstandard.org/>

⁶ <https://www.caritas.org/what-we-do/we-increase-the-effectiveness-of-caritas-confederation/caritas-internationalis-management-standards-cims/>

- Provide general guidance to staff so that all programs and activities are planned and implemented in an environmentally sustainable way;
- Reduce the environmental impact of operations and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities;
- Promote climate justice through local interventions and advocacy at national, regional, and international levels;
- Ensure consistency with the Social Doctrine of the Church, SDGs, CHS, CIMS, and donor requirements.

Caritas Somalia adopts an integral ecology approach, recognizing the interconnection between environmental, social, economic, and cultural dimensions. Climate justice is seen as human justice: those most affected by the climate crisis must be involved in building solutions, with their needs, dignity, and knowledge guiding every intervention.

ARTICLE 2 - SCOPE

This policy applies to all activities, programs, and operations of Caritas Somalia, whether humanitarian, development, advocacy, or peacebuilding, both nationally and internationally.

The Policy applies to:

- All Caritas Somalia personnel, including employees, consultants, volunteers, interns, and Board members;
- Partner organisations and partner staff involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring, or evaluation of Caritas Somalia-supported activities;
- All geographic areas in which Caritas Somalia operates, primarily within Somalia, as well as any activities carried out outside Somalia under the authority of Caritas Somalia.

This Policy applies throughout the entire project and organisational cycle, including needs assessments, programme design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, learning, advocacy, communication, and internal management processes.

All persons and entities to whom this Policy applies are required to read, understand, and comply with its provisions.

ARTICLE 3- DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- I. **Environment:** the sum of natural ecosystems, including air, water, soil, biodiversity, and natural resources.
- II. **Integral ecology:** an approach that recognizes the interconnection between environmental, social, economic, and cultural dimensions.
- III. **Climate change:** long-term changes in climate patterns, largely caused by human activities.
- IV. **Climate resilience:** the capacity of individuals, communities, and systems to prevent, adapt to, and respond to climate shocks.
- V. **Environmental mainstreaming:** the systematic integration of environmental and climate considerations into all stages of the project cycle.

- VI. **Climate justice:** the principle that those most vulnerable to climate change impacts must have a voice in building solutions, and their rights, needs, and knowledge should guide action.
- VII. **Environmental impact:** any positive or negative effect on natural resources, ecosystems, and communities resulting from the organization's activities.
- VIII. **Sustainability:** ensuring that present actions do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

ARTICLE 4 - POLICY COMMITMENTS

Caritas Somalia commits to:

- Protect the environment as an integral part of its humanitarian and development mission;
- Apply the principle of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (3R) in all operational activities;
- Minimize the environmental impact of operations, logistics, and administrative management;
- Promote sustainable use of natural resources, particularly water, soil, and energy;
- Integrate climate adaptation and mitigation measures into programs and projects;
- Comply with local environmental regulations and international standards;
- Support local communities in building resilience and sustainably managing natural resources;
- Advocate nationally, regionally, and internationally for fair climate policies, participating in consultations and working groups of Caritas MONA and Caritas Internationalis;
- Promote collaboration and coordination with religious groups, government institutions, local partners, and civil society to amplify messages and impacts;
- Continuously improve environmental practices through monitoring, evaluation, and learning

ARTICLE 5 - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Caritas Somalia is guided by the following principles, applied in all decisions and activities:
- **Responsibility:** all levels of the organization are accountable for the environmental impact of their decisions;
- **Precaution:** prevent environmental harm even in the presence of scientific uncertainty;
- **Sustainability:** ensure that present actions do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs;
- **Participation:** involve local communities and stakeholders in the management of natural resources;
- **Equity:** recognize that environmental impacts disproportionately affect the most vulnerable communities;
- **Climate Justice:** the most vulnerable communities must be involved in building solutions, with their needs and knowledge guiding all interventions;
- **Collaboration:** engage in dialogue and coordination with local partners, religious groups, government institutions, and civil society to amplify impact and messaging.

ARTICLE 6 - ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRATION IN CARITAS SOMALIA PROGRAMS

6.1. Collaboration with local partners

- Select partners committed to promoting environmental sustainability and climate resilience;
- Support partners in building their capacity to integrate environmental and climate considerations into their activities;
- Consult local experts and other NGOs to identify best practices;
- Engage organizations that can address needs beyond Caritas Somalia's operational scope.

6.2 Environmental integration in activities

6.2.1 Twin-track approach

- Integrate environmental and climate considerations into core programs;
- Develop targeted activities for communities particularly vulnerable to climate impacts.

6.2.2 Program Design and Development

- Identify communities most vulnerable to climate change, including areas prone to drought, floods, and soil degradation;
- Analyze environmental and climate risks, local vulnerabilities, and barriers to resilience;
- Consult communities to understand local needs, knowledge, and priorities;
- Actively involve communities in program design and in defining mitigation and adaptation measures.

6.2.3 Monitoring and evaluation

- Collect and analyze data on the environmental impact of projects and the effectiveness of adaptation measures;
- Regularly evaluate program results and gather feedback from communities and local partners;
- Adapt activities based on findings and lessons learned to ensure continuous improvement.

6.3 Sector-specific implications

6.3.1 Humanitarian assistance

- Reduce environmental impact in emergencies and strengthen community resilience;
- Integrate climate adaptation measures into emergency responses;
- Ensure sustainable use of natural resources during crises.

6.3.2 Food security and livelihoods

- Promote resilient and sustainable agricultural practices;
- Improve soil and water resource management;
- Support vulnerable communities in adapting their livelihoods and agricultural activities to climate impacts.

6.3.3 Migration and internal displacement

- Analyze the impact of climate change on migration and forced displacement;
- Integrate resilience measures into programs for displaced populations and host communities;
- Promote safe and equitable access to natural resources and services.

6.3.4 WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene)

- Ensure sustainability and resilience of water infrastructure;
- Protect water sources and manage services sustainably;
- Engage communities in planning and managing water and sanitation resources.

ARTICLE 7 - ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS FOR CARITAS SOMALIA

- HR policies and codes of conduct promoting environmental responsibility, sustainability, and non-harm to the environment;
- Create a safe and respectful work environment that fosters a culture of sustainability;
- Continuous staff training on environmental practices, climate change, and climate justice;
- Strict application of codes of conduct, reporting procedures, complaints handling, and whistleblowing related to environmental practices;
- Internal and external communication campaigns to raise awareness of environmental responsibilities and promote sustainable practices;
- All staff and Board members are responsible for integrating environmental and climate considerations into daily decision-making and project management.

ARTICLE 8 - APPROVAL AND REVIEW

8.1 This Environmental Policy has been formally approved by the President of Caritas Somalia and enters into force on the date of approval. All Board members, staff, volunteers, and partners are expected to adhere to its principles and integrate environmental and climate considerations into their daily work.

8.2 The Policy shall be reviewed every four years from the date of adoption, unless a specific need for an earlier review arises. In particular, the Policy shall be reviewed in the following circumstances:

- a) amendments to Somali legislation or regulations relevant to environmental protection, natural resource management, and climate change;
- b) publication of new guidelines, standards, or documents that impact environmental and climate practices;
- c) significant societal, organizational, or operational changes affecting policy implementation; or
- d) following serious events impacting environmental sustainability, community resilience, or climate justice principles.

8.3 Any revision of this Policy shall be formally approved and communicated to all Board members, staff, partners, and relevant stakeholders. The most recent version supersedes all previous versions, and dissemination mechanisms shall ensure that all personnel are aware of their obligations under the Environmental Policy.

Djibouti, on 12/01/2026

Mgr. Jamal Daibes
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President – Caritas Somalia