

# The Sustainable Public Procurement Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP SPP Programme)

## Principles of Sustainable Public Procurement

March 2015

### Introduction

---

Governments and other organizations should implement sustainable development in their operations. Understanding and minimizing negative social, economic, and environmental impacts in the public procurement process are specific objectives of Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP).

SPP is defined as: *“A process whereby public organizations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life cycle basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organization, but also to society and the economy, whilst significantly reducing negative impacts on the environment.”*<sup>1</sup>

### What are the principles for?

The Principles of SPP assist countries and organizations in gaining a common understanding of sustainable public procurement.

These principles are based on the systematic step-by-step approach to introduce or further develop SPP which was developed by the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement (MTF on SPP)<sup>2</sup>. The principles reflect components needed for successful implementation of SPP.

UNEP’s “Sustainable Public Procurement Implementation Guidelines” (2012)<sup>3</sup> provide advice on steps to transform these principles into SPP practice, based on practical experience in applying the MTF on SPP approach in a number of countries.

### Whom are the principles for?

These principles are for any stakeholder involved in the public procurement process with an interest in sustainable public procurement and good governance. Partners in the 10YFP SPP Programme recommend that countries and organizations apply these principles when developing or updating their

---

<sup>1</sup> Updated by the Multistakeholder Advisory Committee of the 10YFP SPP Programme from: Procuring the Future – the report of the UK Sustainable Procurement Task Force, June 2006. Definition adopted by the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement. The footnote to the definition reads: Sustainable Procurement should consider the environmental, social and economic consequences of: Design; material use; manufacture and production methods; logistics; service delivery; use; operation; maintenance; reuse; recycling options; disposal; and suppliers’ capabilities to address these consequences throughout the supply chain.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unep.fr/scp/marrakech/taskforces/procurement.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unep.fr/scp/marrakech/taskforces/procurement.htm>

own legal frameworks and any relevant international and national commitments made by their country<sup>4</sup>. Partners in the 10YFP SPP Programme also recommend that countries and organizations include these principles in their respective procurement policies and frameworks and apply them in their purchasing practices.

## Sustainable Public Procurement Principles

---

### Principle 1: Good public procurement is sustainable public procurement.

SPP follows the essential elements of good public procurement – transparent, fair, non-discriminatory, competitive, accountable, efficient use of public funds, and verifiable – whilst integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development: social, environmental, and economic. Good public procurement – like SPP – accounts for social, economic, and environmental impacts

Good public procurement requires an understanding of the full impacts of a purchase throughout the whole life cycle of a product or service, irrespective of location, from the sourcing of natural resources through end-of life management (e.g., reuse, recycle, and disposal).

### Principle 2: SPP implementation needs leadership.

Influential senior-level champions are needed to promote SPP. They can ensure sufficient resources are dedicated to implementation and that best practices are shared widely.

### Principle 3: SPP contributes to broad policy goals.

SPP is a key element in attaining a wide range of government or organizational goals through strategic spending. Examples of those goals can include sustainable natural resource management, resource efficiency, sustainable development, and sustainable consumption and production. SPP can also drive markets for sustainable innovative solutions, encouraging early engagement with the market and create green and decent jobs.

### Principle 4: SPP engages all stakeholders.

SPP requires support from all parts of society. Policy-makers, politicians, customers, manufacturers, suppliers, contractors, procurers and civil society organizations together enable the delivery of SPP. The skills needed for SPP are communication and analysis, the ability to influence, negotiation, and professionalism, an understanding of the market and of all the different sustainability impacts of the procurement process. SPP requires the communication of a consistent message designed for needs of various internal and external audiences. SPP has to be supported by clear lines of accountability, with incentives for delivery.

---

<sup>4</sup> A complete list of Partners in the 10YFP SPP Programme can be found here: [10YFP SPP Programme Partners.pdf](#)

## Principle 5: SPP implementation is based on sound organizational management principles.

SPP is based on a risk-based approach, continually reassessing and targeting areas of highest impact or priority. Immediate success can be demonstrated through a “quick wins” approach. However, this should not replace a more comprehensive long-term approach.

To have SPP as part of an organizational management system helps make it part of routine procurement practice.

## Principle 6: SPP monitors its outcomes and results.

Continuous improvement is only possible if the outcomes delivered through SPP are known. Using monitoring and evaluation systems to measure outcomes is essential for tracking progress as well as identifying areas for improvement. Outcomes can include environmental performance such as reduced emissions, reduced material use and reduced waste generation; economic outcomes such as cost savings (including non-tangible benefits and costs), job creation, wealth creation, and transfer of skills/technology; and social outcomes such as minority empowerment, poverty reduction, and good governance.

### Want to learn more about these Principles and the 10YFP SPP Programme?

Visit our webpage now at [www.unep.org/10yfp/procurement!](http://www.unep.org/10yfp/procurement!)

For a List of the 10YFP SPP Programme Partners [click here](#)

*For more information please contact:*

#### 10YFP SPP Programme's Lead

**Farid Yaker**, Programme Officer, UNEP  
farid.yaker@unep.org  
Tel: + 33 1 44 37 76 34

Sustainable Public Procurement  
Sustainable Production and Consumption  
Responsible Consumption Unit

#### 10YFP SPP Programme's Co-leads

**Philipp Tepper**, ICLEI  
philipp.tepper@iclei.org

**Hyunju Lee**, KEITI  
hjlee@keiti.re.kr

United Nations Environment Programme,  
Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics  
15 rue de Milan, Paris 75009 France