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Environmental policy

Overall regulations and guidelines concerning environmental and climate work in connection with procurements

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1 Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to give overall regulations for Sykehusinnkjøp's environmental and climate work of related to procurements. Sykehusinnkjøp, one of Norway's largest public buyers, has a special responsibility for contributing to reducing the environmental strain in connection with procurements to a minimum. The regulations shall reflect the regulatory requirements that lie with the undertaking through statutes, legislation and guidelines, standardized requirements concerning the environment and the climate in connection with procurements. The regulations shall also define areas of improvement, so that over time a higher standard may be achieved for the environmental and climate work.

2 Policy

The policy applies to all divisions of Sykehusinnkjøp HF. An exception is made for the medicines division as regards points 6.1, 6.2 and related documents. All procurements shall be assessed against the environmental policy of the undertaking. Patients' interests and cost-effectiveness shall be assessed separately.

3 Responsibility

The board of Sykehusinnkjøp adopts the environmental policy as part of the governing documents of Sykehusinnkjøp. The environmental policy shall be revised every second year or in the event of special needs. Related documents shall be kept up-dated on a continuous basis as an administrative procedure. All documents are published on the web.

The regional health authorities and the supplier market shall be invited to make suggestions in connection with policy revisions to ensure that it is efficient and relevant. The environmental policy shall be in accordance with the agreements of cooperation with the regional health authorities applicable at all times.

4 Definitions

The term environmental policy, with objectives and requirements, includes consideration for the environment and/or climate.

5 Ambition

Sykehusinnkjøp shall improve the environmental work of the undertaking on a continuous basis to satisfy the requirements specified by the owners in the memorandum of association to «*push for environmentally friendly procurements*». Sykehusinnkjøp shall remain a valuable partner for regional health administrations by promoting and stimulating environmentally friendly and climate-friendly products and services.

6 Sykehusinnkjøp's environmental goals and related requirements for procurements

Where objectives or requirements developed for individual categories exist and approved by the relevant category head and/or by the owners of Sykehusinnkjøp, these shall override the general requirements, see point 6.5. Local and regional climate and environmental goals shall be taken into account in connection with local and regional procurements.



In addition to reflecting the priorities of the owners, the environmental policy shall ensure that requirements are specified in connection with procurements that contribute to reaching, [national environmental goals and the sustainable development goals of the UN](#). See overview under point 8 - Relevant regulations concerning environmental goals.

6.1 Phasing out or reducing substances harmful to health and the environment

In order to contribute to the environmental goals of the regional health authority, the national environmental goals and the statutory duty of substitution, Sykehusinnkjøp shall phase out or reduce substances that are harmful to health and the environment in products and services provided to the regional health authorities. This is an area where health and the environment are closely connected.

Sykehusinnkjøp shall avoid products and services that contain the following materials and substances, unless these have been added for a medical reason:

- **Substances with very serious properties concerning health and/or the environment (i.e., the candidate list),**
- **Phthalates, halogenated plastics (such as PVC), bisphenols, latex and antimicrobial substances.**

This is specified in *Sykehusinnkjøp's «RSL» - Restricted Substances List*. Sykehusinnkjøp's RSL (Annex 2) shall apply to relevant procurements. This is particularly important for patient-near and employee-near categories.

Notice that Sykehusinnkjøp applies the precautionary principle if there is a risk of serious harmful effects. This implies that chemicals *that meet the criteria for inclusion in the candidate list*, but that have not yet been regulated, may be included in Sykehusinnkjøp's RSL.

6.2 Reducing the environmental and climatic impact to a minimum throughout the life cycle

The requirement from the regional health authorities that Sykehusinnkjøp contribute to reaching national environmental goals concerning pollution and climate, is reinforced through the owners' obligation to increase the share of goods with environmental labelling year by year through membership in Network for environmentally labelled procurements.

- **Where relevant, Sykehusinnkjøp shall use type 1 environmental labels for procurements**

What groups of products that are relevant appear from the overview *Relevant environmental labels (Annex 1)*. This is a changing document that follows the development of criteria. As a main rule, type 1 environmental labels shall be a compulsory requirement, provided that market dialogue shows that it can be offered. If environmental labels are used as an evaluation criterion, for instance where the market is immature, the recommended weighting in the overview shall be used.

Type 1 environmental labels, based on ISO14024, have a life-cycle perspective and help the regional health authorities to ensure low climatic emissions and a minimum of pollution and waste of resources. Notice that the requirements are revised on a regular basis. In other words, the environmental labels contain an inherent environmental innovation – to keep their licenses the producers have to meet revised requirements that ensure increased environmental performance. If it



is possible to demand such environmental labels, this covers the requirements related to chemicals in the RSL.

This point must be seen in conjunction with point 6.3.

6.3 Specifying clear and predictable environmental requirements

For suppliers to know what rules of the game apply to public procurements, Sykehusinnkjøp shall use recognized environmental labels and public sets of criteria to the extent possible. Predictable requirements are an incentive for suppliers to make necessary investments that such requirements may trigger.

Sykehusinnkjøp shall collaborate actively with comparable buyers in order to standardize environmental requirements for medical categories. These are categories where the development of requirements by public bodies takes place only to a small extent. Sykehusinnkjøp shall be an active partner for the development of common requirements in the Nordic countries.

6.4 Circular economy

Sykehusinnkjøp shall follow relevant regulations in the Norwegian strategy for a green circular economy, which is an extension of EU's «[European Green Deal](#)», where a circular economy constitutes one of the main strategies.

- **In all procurements, Sykehusinnkjøp shall assess whether requirements or criteria can be set that give suppliers and producers an incentive to make the product or service more circular.**

Circular economy is more than a modernization of the concept recycling – we must utilize our resources in the best possible way and for as long as possible. As little as possible must be thrown away as waste but be kept in a circular flow where continuous recycling results in a reduced need for new raw materials. In connection with relevant procurements, such a discussion should form part of the market dialogue. The market must be informed that estimated volumes may be downscaled if the regional health authorities are able purchase used articles from others. Such a reservation must be included in the tender document and contract.

Produce less waste	Reconsider whether purchase is necessary Reduce the purchased quantity or extend lifetime Cooperate with other purchasers to cover need
Reuse things	Demand reuse, repair, upgrading or disassembly
Recycle materials	Demand recycled or recyclable material
Utilize energy	Consider whether you can further industrial symbiosis where waste may be turned into raw materials

Lost resources

Figure 1: Checklist for managers - procurement; observe the principles of the waste hierarchy. Source: [Figure based on DFØ's \(Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management\) waste hierarchy](#)



6.5 Category-specific regulations

Sykehusinnkjøp establishes category management and in the work related to the different categories, the development of environmental requirements will be adapted to each individual category. The goal of Sykehusinnkjøp is full category management in 2024.

Buildings and property

In connection with procurements to buildings and property, environmental requirements and criteria shall be based on [Green Hospital Project Report II – Environmental and climate measures within building and property management in the specialist health care](#). Procurements of «building articles» and «building and property management, consumption materials, other» shall request EPD (Environmental Product Declaration) as documentation.

On 9 September 2020, Helse Sør-Øst RHF (regional health authority) represented by its managing director gave its approval to [«10 recommended actions for owners of buildings»](#) that shall form the basis for building and property procurements by Helse Sør-Øst.

7 General guidelines

7.1 Statutory requirements

An express objective in connection with the adoption of the current procurement act was simplification. Nevertheless, provisions concerning the environment and climate were included to emphasize the importance of procurements as a means to limit the environmental strain in public services and to stimulate the market:

The Public Procurement Act Section 5. The environment, human rights and other social considerations

«[...] shall organize its procurement practice in such a way that it contributes to reducing harmful impact on the environment and promotes climate-friendly solutions where relevant»

The Public Procurement Act Section 7-9. Minimization of the environmental strain

«[...] shall emphasize a minimization of the environmental strain and promote climate-friendly solutions in connection with procurements and may specify environmental requirements and criteria at all steps in the procurement process where this is relevant and linked to the supply. In cases where the environment is used as a criterion of contract award, it should, as a main rule, be weighted 30 per cent as a minimum.»

This means that Sykehusinnkjøp shall specify environmental requirements for all procurements *where this is relevant*. Furthermore, this means that where relevant environmental considerations exist, and these are *not* included in other steps of the procurement, there is a clear expectation on the part of the authorities that this is weighted 30 per cent as a minimum. If environmental considerations are included as a mandatory requirement and/or contractual obligation, it may be appropriate to reduce the weighting percentage allocated to the environment.

To ensure that the product or service has the desired quality, Sykehusinnkjøp shall use obligatory requirements or contractual obligations where possible. The award criteria should be considered as a «plan B». This may also be used as a signal to the market about future minimum requirements as the market gradually matures.



Lead times and minimum order levels affect the possibility of suppliers to choose environmentally friendly logistics solutions. This should be discussed specifically for the procurement.

7.2 Market research

Compulsory requirements should not be specified without knowledge of the market situation. In other words, time should be allocated to market research. In addition to feedback on proposed environmental requirements and criteria, this is an opportunity to receive useful suggestions concerning other requirements and criteria.

7.3 Assessment of due care

The procurement portfolio must be assessed for potential negative impact or damage, included in the supply chain, in accordance with the requirement of due care assessment stated in Report no. 8 to the Storting, The state's direct ownership in companies – Sustainable value creation (the ownership report of government-owned companies), and the Public Procurement Act Section 5. The assessment of due care is carried out annually by the department of social responsibility.

7.4 Innovation

As a major customer, Sykehusinnkjøp may potentially stimulate innovative solutions. Innovation may apply to new solutions or solutions used in new ways, for instance within a new sector. The head of the procurement shall make an assessment of which procurement procedure is best suited to obtain innovative solutions. Often, there will be a need for good planning, extensive dialogue with the market, and the use of performance and function requirements instead of specifying a given solution. Procedures opening for extensive dialogue with suppliers, such as competition-related dialogue, or innovation partnerships, may be best suited.

7.5 Environmental work among suppliers

Demands for certified environmental management may be considered in connection with procurements where it is relative to the service provided. This will mainly apply to service providers. This requirement should be set when it is important that the supplier has an operative environmental management system from the start of the contract period.

- The service provider shall have an environmental management system certified pursuant to ISO 14001, EMAS (the EU arrangement for environmental management and environmental audits) or Eco-Lighthouse.

For suppliers of goods, it is less appropriate to demand certified environmental management as long as that the demand is made to a national sales office and not to the actual factory/parent company. If the procurement manager considers this appropriate, it should be checked with the department of social responsibility before the demand is specified in the procurement.

7.6 Follow-up during the contract period

Environmental requirements and criteria that require follow-up during the contract period shall be followed up by the contract management unit, preferably in cooperation with the department of social responsibility.



8 Relevant regulations concerning environmental goals

8.1 National environmental goals and obligations

The national environmental goals have been set by the Ministry of Climate and Environment and describe what Norway wants to achieve in each area and what the desired condition for the environment in Norway is.

- Environmental goal 4.1 Pollution shall not harm health and the environment
- Environmental goal 4.2 Emissions of substances harmful to health and the environment shall be stopped (the restricted substances list)
- Environmental goal 4.3 The growth in the quantity of waste shall be considerably lower than the economic growth and the resources contained in the waste shall be utilized in the best possible way through material recycling and energy utilization.

Climate goals under the Paris Agreement. During the climate summit COP21 in Paris in 2015, all countries in the world agreed to keep the global temperature increase well below 2 degrees compared to the pre-industrial level, and endeavour to keep the temperature increase below 1.5 degrees. Norway's goals have been included in the Climate Plan 2021-2030:

- Norway shall reduce emissions by at least 50 per cent and close to 55 per cent compared with the 1990 level within 2030 (see p. 37)
- A requirement for zero emissions from passenger cars and light delivery vans in 2022 and for city buses from 2025 in public procurements.

Duty of substitution

The duty of substitution in the Product Control Act Section 3-a (the duty to use less harmful alternatives if this does not cause unreasonable cost or inconvenience) and the Working Environment Act Section 4-5 (chemicals and biological substances that may involve health hazards shall not be used if they can be replaced by other substances or by another process that is less hazardous for the employees). The Working Environment Act in particular provides for strong protection of employees.

8.2 Relevant targets in the sustainable development goals

The UN's sustainable development goals consist of 17 goals and 169 targets and are the result of intergovernmental negotiations. They are aimed at domestic conditions in all countries. Below, the relevant targets related to climate and the environment are commented on.



Good health and quality of life

3.9. [...] substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.

- *This target is covered by Sykehusinnkjøp's work to phase out or reduce substances that are hazardous to health and the environment. Cf. Norway's environmental goals 4.1 and 4.2.*



Responsible production and consumption



12.4. [...] achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle [...] and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

- *As above, this is covered by the work to phase out hazardous chemicals.*

12.5 [...] substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.

- *This is covered by the requirement to reduce the impact on climate and the environment to a minimum throughout the life cycle through the use of type 1 environmental labels, that have a life-cycle perspective, where this is available.*
- *Furthermore, this is strengthened through the work to apply a circular economy to procurements where possible.*

12.6. Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.

- *Area of improvement.*



Stop the climate changes

13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

- *Sykehusinnkjøp shall support the Norwegian requirements and goals following from this UN target. Same as under 12.5.*



Cooperation to reach the goals

17.17. Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resources strategies of partnerships.

- *Sykehusinnkjøp contributes to this by being predictable concerning environmental requirements and by cooperating with public purchasers through the use of available sets of criteria and environmental labels. In connection with the development of new criteria and requirements, this is done, to the extent possible, in cooperation with comparable procurers and with suggestions from relevant interested parties.*

9 Annexes

Article I: List of relevant environmental labels

Article II: Sykehusinnkjøp's Restricted Substances List (RSL)