Austrian Action Plan for Sustainable Public Procurement
Our lifestyle affects both the environment and our natural resources. We need to be aware that our activities leave a footprint and that we have to change existing patterns of production and consumption in order to protect our climate. It is up to the consumer to pave the way to a sustainable future. Even with small steps much can be accomplished.

The Austrian Action Plan for Sustainable Public Procurement was elaborated by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management with the aim to contribute to changing our behaviour. Public administration acts as a role model and can set an example focusing on energy efficiency and sustainable use of resources.

Public procurement is not only an instrument to support the protection of our environment and climate, but also an instrument to promote innovation. Austria is on the right track, perfectly linking innovation and environmental protection. The European Commission recently acknowledged our country as a leader in eco-innovation.

I would like to invite you to participate actively in the implementation process of the Austrian Action Plan by using it as a guideline for further procurement activities. Only together we are able to shift our patterns of production and consumption to a more sustainable path.

Andrä Rupprechter
Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
Enactment by the Council of Ministers
In July 2010, the Austrian Council of Ministers enacted the Austrian Action Plan for Sustainable Public Procurement (naBe Action Plan), which addresses all public authorities in Austria.
The naBe Action Plan was initiated by the Federal Government and is coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW). The process of implementation, evaluation and improvement of the naBe Action Plan is supervised by a steering group including representatives from the federal ministries, the provinces, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, the Austrian Association of Municipalities, employer and employee associations, the Federal Procurement Agency (FPA) and the Federal Real Estate Agency (BIG).

Start of the implementation process
The naBe Action Plan process pursues the goal that the public sector buys sustainable products, buildings and services. Given the major purchasing power of the public sector, the naBe Action Plan contributes to the development of a sustainable market. Austria is in good company as all member states of the EU endeavour to promote sustainable public procurement to meet EU environmental targets.

naBe Action Plan provides orientation
The naBe Action Plan was elaborated over a period of two years together with public procurement authorities. Employees of the federal ministries, the provinces, communities and municipalities, as well as employees of public entities, sector contractors, the FPA, employer and employee associations and the Consumer Information Association were involved in the process.
The naBe Action Plan comprises:
• the current situation of sustainable public procurement in Austria
• targets of sustainable public procurement
• measures designed to accomplish these targets

www.nachhaltigebeschaffung.at
What is Sustainable Procurement?

• Sustainable procurement is the procurement of environmentally friendly products and services.

• Sustainable procurement is economical, efficient and appropriate.

• Sustainable procurement is the procurement of products and services that satisfy social standards in their production or delivery.

Sustainable production takes into account additional principles of sustainability such as regionality and innovation and strengthens regional economic cycles. EU laws and regulations have to be complied with.
The Centralised Procurement Authority in the province of Upper Austria has developed its own eco-guideline and requires compliance with the specified criteria in its tenders. For example, energy efficiency criteria were implemented in the technical specifications and also in the award criteria for the procurement of PCs and desktops (www.land-oberoesterreich.gv.at).

“GemNova DienstleistungsGmbH” is a subsidiary of the Tyrolean Association of Municipalities and aims to manage procurement for the Tyrolean communities. Sustainability criteria are considered in all tenders issued by GemNova DienstleistungsGmbH. It also contributes to increasing efficiency in the communities by offering measures such as benchmarking for building cleaning, development of cleaning schedules or training (www.gemnova-dl.at).

“BeschaffungsService Austria” is the central information centre for sustainable procurement in Austria and offers a free counselling service for sustainable public procurement. It helps procurement officers to implement sustainability criteria, promotes networking among stakeholders and supports the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management in its activities concerning sustainable public procurement (www.nachhaltigebeschaffung.at).

Situation of Sustainable Public Procurement in Austria

This illustration shows selected initiatives for sustainable procurement in Austria and selected procurement authorities taking sustainability aspects into account when tendering products and services.
"NÖ Landeskliniken-Holding" is responsible for the management of the 27 provincial hospitals in Lower Austria. Its procurement process involves employees in the definition of objective product specifications, the selection of products and the development of procurement strategies. Emphasis is placed not only on ecological and economic aspects but also on the safety and satisfaction of patients and staff. Despite the increasing globalization of the economy, the hospital management holding focuses on regional and seasonal products, which is illustrated by the fact that 74% of the food is supplied by producers from Lower Austria (www.lknoe.at).

The Federal Procurement Agency (FPA) offers the most extensive procurement service in Austria. Its clients comprise authorities at federal, provincial and local level as well as outsourced companies, universities and health care institutions. All products and services purchased by the FPA must comply with the core criteria of the naBe Action Plan. Criteria have so far been developed only for a portion of these products and services, which are specifically marked in the FPA online shop. The FPA is also actively involved in the procurement of ecological innovations (www.bbg.gv.at).

"ÖkoKauf Wien" is one of the oldest initiatives to promote green public procurement. Ökokauf Wien elaborates new criteria for the different procurement groups and evaluates and improves existing ecological criteria, which must be implemented in all tenders issued by the City of Vienna (www.oekokauf.wien.at).

The Central Procurement Agency of the Province of Styria has emphasized environmental friendliness and sustainability for years. Regular feedback to the departments had a positive influence on their consumption patterns and led to a significant reduction in resource use. Other initiatives focusing on ecological aspects include e.g. office bikes and CNG vehicles, the monitoring and permanent reduction of fleet average CO₂ emissions or the implementation of energy-saving competitions in the Styrian administration (www.steiermark.at).
The Four Targets of the naBe Action Plan

Establishing sustainable procurement
Sustainable procurement should be firmly embedded in public purchasing in Austria. Tenders should integrate at least the core criteria.

Maintaining a leading role
Austria is one of the leaders in terms of green public procurement in the EU. This position should be maintained and also extended to socially responsible procurement.

Coordinating the activities around sustainable public procurement
All activities in the entire field of sustainable public procurement should be coordinated and the strengths should be pooled.

Dismantling barriers
Barriers to sustainable public procurement should be removed.
The Core Criteria
Products and services procured by public authorities must comply with a basic standard of sustainability. This basic standard is met on compliance with the CORE CRITERIA of sustainability. These core criteria comprise:

- ecological
- economic and
- social core criteria

The core criteria have been developed to different stages:

- Ecological core criteria exist for 16 procurement groups.

- The economic core criteria require the total cost of ownership (life cycle costs) to be established when procuring products involving relevant costs during their use (e.g. fuel costs for vehicles.)

- An expert group is currently developing suggestions for social core criteria. These proposals should be available by 2012 and will then be submitted for political approval.
The five key measures:

**Expert groups for the development of social core criteria and for dismantling budgetary barriers**
Expert groups including representatives from the federal ministries, provinces and communities, employer and employee associations and procurement experts will cooperate in elaborating suggestions for social core criteria for public procurement and the reduction of budgetary barriers.

**Monitoring of the naBe Action Plan**
The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and public procurement authorities will conclude an agreement on cooperation for active participation in the monitoring of the naBe Action Plan.

**Extension of the knowledge base regarding the effects of sustainable procurement**
Studies will be conducted in order to investigate the ecological, economic and social effects of sustainable public procurement.

**Information about the naBe Action Plan for suppliers and public commissioners**
Suppliers and public commissioners will be informed about the activities within the naBe Action Plan process.

**Evaluation of the naBe Action Plan**
The regular evaluation of the naBe Action Plan aims to identify weak points and to put forward suggestions for improvement. The existing core criteria can thus be revised and further core criteria for other product groups can be developed.
Assistance to Procurement Officers
The naBe Action Plan offers the following support to procurement officers:

**Website** [www.nachhaltigebeschaffung.at](http://www.nachhaltigebeschaffung.at)
- Core criteria for 16 product groups so far
- Additional criteria for those who seek top performance
- Tools for sustainable procurement

**Helpdesk**
For questions regarding sustainable procurement please contact the helpdesk:

Tel.: +43-316-813 909-19  
E-Mail: beschaffung@ifz.tugraz.at  
Contact form: [www.nachhaltigebeschaffung.at/node/174](http://www.nachhaltigebeschaffung.at/node/174)

**naBe Action Day**
The annual naBe Action Day provides a platform for the presentation of new developments and gives procurers the opportunity to exchange information and experiences.

**naBe Award**
From 2012, good practice examples for sustainable procurement in Austria can be nominated for the naBe Award. This award will be presented annually at the naBe Action Day.
Network Partners

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Information on agriculture, food, forestry, environment and water:
www.lebensministerium.at

Information on sustainable procurement:
www.nachhaltigebeschaffung.at

The Austrian Ecolabel is a guarantee for environmentally friendly products and services:
www.umweltzeichen.at

The klima:aktiv climate protection initiative launched by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management:
www.klimaaktiv.at

EMAS – the voluntary Eco-Management and Audit Scheme of the European Union:
www.emas.gv.at