WORLD SCOUTING

Governance Guidelines for Environmental Sustainability for NSO Leadership

World Scout Bureau
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How to read this document

Sections 1–4 set direction and accountability. Sections 5–8 support operational oversight, communication, reporting and implementation. The appendices offer adaptable reference tools. Use the Action Plan template as the working record.

1. Introduction

1.1 Why Environmental Sustainability matters for NSOs

Environmental sustainability is a shared responsibility and an essential part of Scouting. As environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution and resource depletion increasingly affect communities and ecosystems, National Scout Organizations (NSOs) have an important role to play in leading by example and contributing to long-term solutions. With millions of young people engaged in Scouting worldwide, our Movement has a unique opportunity to inspire environmental responsibility, influence behaviours and drive positive change within communities.

For NSOs, environmental sustainability is not only about delivering environmental education or organising community action. It is also about ensuring that the way we govern, lead and operate our organizations reflects the values we promote. Decisions related to strategy, resource allocation, procurement, travel, events, infrastructure and everyday operations all have environmental impacts. Integrating sustainability into these decisions strengthens organizational resilience, promotes responsible use of resources and reinforces the credibility of Scouting as a Movement committed to environmental stewardship.

Leadership and good governance are essential to turning environmental commitments into meaningful and lasting action. While many NSOs already undertake valuable environmental initiatives, these efforts can have greater impact when supported by clear policies, defined responsibilities, appropriate resources and mechanisms for monitoring progress. Embedding sustainability within governance structures helps ensure that environmental responsibility becomes a consistent organizational priority rather than a series of isolated activities.

By strengthening environmental sustainability in their own operations, NSOs can lead by example, empower young people through meaningful learning opportunities and demonstrate that Scouting's commitment to protecting the environment is reflected not only in what we teach, but also in how we act.

1.2 Purpose of these guidelines

These Guidelines help National Scout Organizations (NSOs) embed environmental sustainability in governance, strategy, management and accountability. They support Boards, senior leaders, regions, local groups, event organisers and property managers in setting priorities, assigning responsibility, resourcing delivery and reviewing progress.

The focus is environmental sustainability in everyday decisions: programmes, travel, procurement, events, properties and community action. Operational improvements should also create learning opportunities for young people.

Plain-language principle

The Board needs a clear view of commitments, accountability, resources, risks, progress and decisions needed. Technical detail should support these questions rather than dominate the review.

1.3 Scope

Apply the Guidelines within each level's authority. The National Board provides direction and oversight; management coordinates delivery; regional and local teams adapt actions and provide evidence.

Area of application	What this means in practice
Governance bodies	The National Board and relevant committees approve policy, targets, budgets, reporting and corrective action.
Executive management	The CEO, Secretary-General or equivalent senior manager leads implementation and ensures coordination across departments.
Regional and local structures	Regions and local groups apply the Guidelines in ways that are realistic for their context and provide feedback and basic data.

Area of application	What this means in practice
Campsites and properties	Campsites, offices and other facilities apply practical standards for waste, energy, water, land use, safety and legal compliance.
Events and camps	National and regional events use simple sustainability planning, clear responsibilities and post-event learning.
Partnerships and suppliers	Expectations are reflected in agreements, procurement processes and partnership screening where relevant.

1.4 Relationship with the Action Plan template

These Guidelines define governance expectations. The accompanying NSO Sustainability Action Plan template turns them into objectives, actions, owners, resources, risks and measures for an agreed period, reviewed at least annually. Use both within the NSO's normal planning and approval arrangements.

Tool	Audience and purpose
Governance Guidelines	Board and senior leadership: set commitments, accountability, oversight, reporting and minimum governance practices. Use them when approving direction, resources and annual priorities.
NSO Sustainability Action Plan template	Executive owner, coordinator and delivery teams: record objectives, actions, owners, timelines, resources, risks and measures. Use it during planning, working reviews and leadership updates.
Course on Governance for Environmental Sustainability	To support NSOs in strengthening their governance for environmental sustainability, an standalone e-learning course has been developed that guides board members, national leaders, and other interested individuals within NSOs through key governance responsibilities, sustainability commitments, progress monitoring, and environmental risk management.

1.5 Language used

Word	Meaning in these Guidelines
Shall	A starting governance recommendation.
Should	A strongly recommended practice, adaptable to context.
May	An optional tool or example.

1.6 Guiding assumptions

- Adapt expectations to NSO size, capacity, finances, legal context and local environmental needs.
- Start with a governance commitment, named owner, manageable priorities and basic reporting; expand as capacity grows.
- Integrate sustainability into ordinary planning, budgets, programmes, properties, partnerships and reporting.
- Young people should help choose priorities, shape solutions, review progress and communicate results.
- These Guidelines are not a certification standard. Seek qualified technical support from partners, public authorities, universities or volunteers where needed.

2. From priorities to action

Use the Guidelines as a leadership agenda and the Action Plan toolkit as the working record. Agree outcomes, owners, resources and evidence together before committing to delivery. Keep related records connected through consistent action names; update them before refreshing the leadership summary.

2.1 The planning and delivery cycle

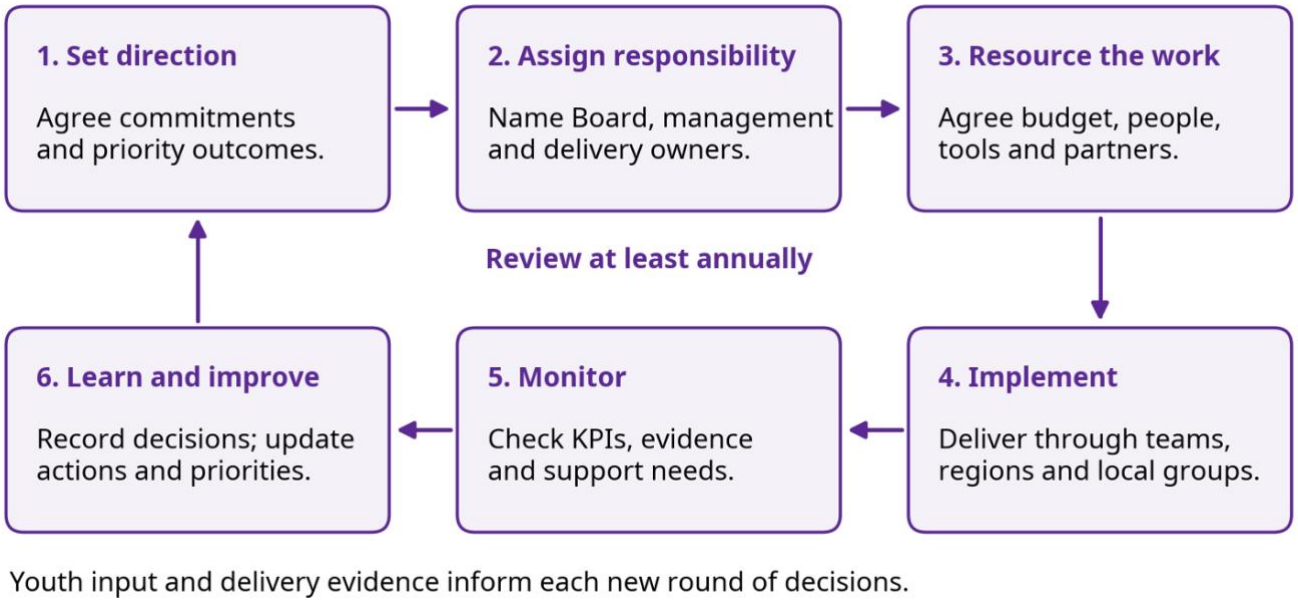


Figure 1. Connect commitments to delivery and learning, with review at least annually.

Step	Leadership question	Action Plan template link
1. Set direction	Which commitments matter most?	Scope, priorities and objectives.
2. Assign responsibility	Who is accountable for oversight and delivery?	Governance roles and action owners.
3. Resource the work	What budget, people and support are needed?	Resource estimates, funding and decisions.
4. Implement	Are agreed actions being delivered?	Activities, dates, evidence and progress.
5. Monitor	What shows progress and unmet needs?	Indicator records and leadership summary.
6. Learn and improve	What should change in the next period?	Review decisions and updated priorities.

2.2 From Board decision to local action

Connect Board decisions to delivery and bring evidence back to review. The examples below show how the Action Plan template supports that flow.

Governance decision	Action Plan template entry	Leadership review
Agree minimum sustainability expectations for major events.	Define the events covered, delivery actions, owners, resources and post-event learning.	Review delivery, recurring barriers and agreed improvements.
Approve travel, food, procurement or waste priorities.	Record policy or guidance actions, timelines, budgets and evidence of completion.	Check progress and whether expectations remain feasible.
Approve annual sustainability reporting.	Set reporting owners, evidence needs and collection deadlines.	Use results to agree resources and next-period priorities.

2.3 Three levels of implementation

Choose an implementation level that matches capacity, then strengthen the system over time. The levels below are starting points, not certification categories.

Level	Suitable for	Minimum expectation
Level 1: Foundation	NSOs beginning the journey or working with limited resources.	Board commitment, one focal point, three to five priority actions, basic annual update.
Level 2: Structured	NSOs with some staff, committees or established programmes.	Board-approved policy, action plan, named owners, simple indicators and a leadership summary, annual public summary.
Level 3: Integrated	NSOs with larger events, properties, staff teams or strong regional structures.	Sustainability embedded in strategy, budgeting, risk, procurement, events, properties and annual reporting.

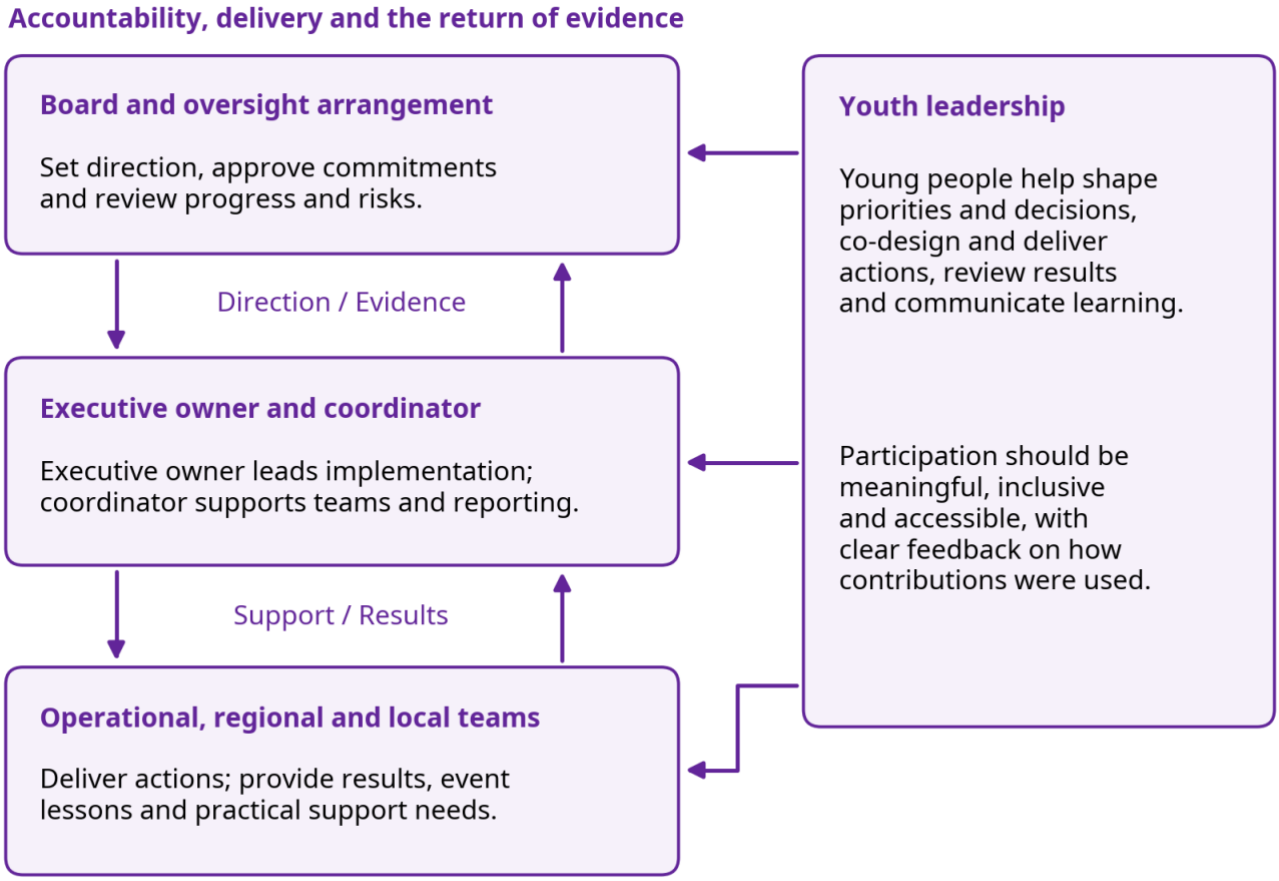
Practical recommendation:

A small number of clear actions, consistently delivered and reviewed, is more useful than a system teams cannot maintain.

3. Governance and accountability structure

Credible sustainability governance links commitments to decisions, resources, responsibilities and regular review. Leadership provides direction; management coordinates delivery; teams contribute evidence and learning.

3.1 Board responsibility



Choose a committee, Board focal point or working group that fits the NSO.

Figure 2: Direction, support, evidence and feedback connect the governance and delivery roles.

The arrows show decisions and evidence, rather than a requirement to create new bodies. Adapt the oversight arrangement to capacity while keeping Board, executive, coordinator and delivery responsibilities clear. Youth participation contributes throughout the cycle.

The National Board is responsible for integrating sustainability into strategy and governance. It sets expectations in line with priorities and capacity and holds the organisation accountable, while management leads delivery.

- The National Board shall approve an Environmental Sustainability Policy, if available, or equivalent governance commitment.
- The National Board shall approve or endorse a small set of long-term priorities and annual implementation priorities.
- The National Board shall clearly assign responsibilities to a committee, Board focal point or management lead.
- The National Board shall review progress at least annually through a short report or dashboard.

- The Board should consider environmental risks and opportunities in major events, properties, partnerships and budgets.
- The National Board should model the behaviours it expects from the organisation, for example by reducing unnecessary travel, using digital meeting options where appropriate and asking sustainability questions during decision-making.

3.2 Executive management and staff roles

The CEO, Secretary-General or equivalent senior executive is responsible for turning Board direction into coordinated implementation. This does not mean that one person does all the work. It means there is a clear management owner who ensures that programmes, events, properties, communications and finance work together.

Role	Core responsibilities
CEO / Secretary-General	Assigns management owner, ensures the Action Plan is implemented, reports progress to the Board and escalates major risks.
Sustainability lead or focal point	Coordinates the Action Plan, gathers data, supports teams, prepares reports and follows up on decisions.
Programme / education team	Integrates sustainability into learning outcomes, badges, activities and leader support.
Events / camps team	Applies event sustainability planning and post-event learning.
Campsite / property managers	Manage practical improvements related to water, waste, energy, land use and legal compliance.
Finance / procurement	Includes sustainability considerations in budgets, purchasing and supplier selection.
Communications	Shares progress honestly and supports culture change without overstating results.
Regional and local structures	Adapt actions to local realities and provide feedback and simple reporting.

3.3 Sustainability Committee or Board focal point

Each NSO should choose a governance arrangement that matches its size and capacity. Larger NSOs may establish a Sustainability Committee. Smaller NSOs may appoint a Board focal point supported by a small working group. The structure matters less than clarity of responsibility and regular reporting.

Option	When appropriate	Minimum features
Board focal point	Small NSOs or early-stage implementation.	Named Board member, clear mandate, annual report to Board, link to management owner.
Board committee	NSOs with larger operations, campsites, events or staff teams.	Terms of reference, regular meetings, youth participation, review of risks and KPIs.
Management working group	Where the Board wants coordination across departments.	Chaired by management owner, includes programme/events/properties/finance/communications, reports to Board or committee.

3.4 Youth leadership and intergenerational governance

Young people should not only participate in environmental activities; they should help shape the NSO's environmental direction. Youth leadership strengthens relevance, legitimacy and innovation. It also reflects Scouting's educational purpose and commitment to young people as active citizens.

- Include youth representatives in committees, working groups or consultation.
- Gather views through accessible workshops, surveys, local forums and project showcases before major decisions.
- Explain the decision, the influence young people can have and how their input was used.
- Include young people from different regions, ages, backgrounds and community realities.
- Recognise youth-led action and provide opportunities to present results to leadership.

3.5 Transparency and accountability

Transparency means that members, volunteers, partners and the public can understand what the NSO has committed to and how progress is going. It also means being honest about limits, trade-offs and areas needing improvement.

- Publish the commitment or policy in accessible language.
- Provide a short annual public update covering progress, challenges and next steps.
- Use clear dashboards, status labels and practical examples.
- Provide feedback channels such as email, forms, youth forums or consultation.
- Check public claims against evidence and explain uncertainties; avoid overstating impact.

4. Strategic commitments

Strategic commitments turn intentions into priorities that leadership can govern and teams can deliver.

4.1 Vision

Define a short vision linked to the NSO's mission and educational purpose. Explain the desired change for young people, volunteers and communities.

Example vision statement:

Our NSO will model responsible environmental practice, help young people care for nature and reduce the impacts of programmes, events, properties and partnerships.

4.2 Priority areas

The Board should approve a small number of priority areas. Too many priorities create confusion and weak accountability. The following priority areas are suitable for most NSOs and can be adapted to national context.

Priority area	What it covers	Examples of Board-level decisions
Education and youth action	Programmes, badges, learning resources, community projects and youth leadership.	Approve inclusion of environmental learning in national programme review.
Events and camps	Planning, procurement, transport, waste, water, energy and post-event learning.	Require sustainability plans for national events above an agreed size.
Properties and campsites	Offices, campsites, land management, utilities, maintenance and compliance.	Prioritise basic measurement of water, energy and waste in major properties.
Procurement and partnerships	Supplier choices, sponsorships, grants, donations and partner alignment.	Approve simple screening questions for large suppliers and partners.
Culture and communication	Awareness, training, storytelling, member engagement and public reporting.	Require an annual sustainability update for members and partners.

4.3 Goal and target setting

Approve targets that can be understood and tracked. Each needs a baseline, owner, deadline and measurement method. If the baseline is unknown, agree who will establish it and when; unknown is not zero.

Good target	Weak target
By 2028, all national events with more than 500 participants will have an approved sustainability plan and a post-event review.	Make all our events sustainable.
By 2027, the three largest campsites will collect annual data on water, electricity and waste.	Reduce our campsite footprint.

Good target	Weak target
By 2026, all national leader training courses will include at least one session or activity on environmental sustainability.	Raise awareness among leaders.
Each year, publish a one-page sustainability dashboard with progress, challenges and next priorities.	Improve transparency.

4.4 Decision-making principles

When environmental sustainability creates trade-offs, the Board and management should use clear decision principles rather than ad hoc judgement. These principles help leaders balance ambition, inclusion, safety, cost and feasibility.

- Proportionality: Match requirements to the activity's size, risk and capacity.
- Inclusion: Avoid choices that exclude people with fewer resources.
- Education first: Use operational improvements as learning opportunities.
- Do no harm: Respect safety, safeguarding, legal and environmental requirements; avoid creating new risks.
- Continuous improvement: Improve progressively, even when resources or data are limited.
- Evidence and honesty: Use available evidence and communicate achievements and limitations truthfully.

5. Operational governance guidelines

The following areas identify the questions and evidence leadership should use for oversight. Record agreed delivery actions in the Action Plan template.

5.1 Programmes and education

Environmental sustainability should be part of Scouting's educational experience, not only a separate campaign. Programmes should help young people understand environmental challenges, practise skills, take community action and reflect on what they learn.

- Include environmental learning in age-appropriate programmes, badges, activities and leader resources.
- Promote conservation, biodiversity, waste reduction, climate adaptation, resilience and responsible consumption.
- Connect outdoor learning and community service to the Scout Method.
- Give adult leaders practical resources that can be used without specialist knowledge.
- Support youth-led project design, delivery and reflection.

Board oversight question	Evidence to request
Are environmental learning outcomes included in the national programme or leader training?	Programme review notes, training materials, badge requirements or activity guides.
Are young people leading or co-designing environmental action?	Examples of youth-led projects, youth feedback and recognition stories.
Are resources accessible to local leaders?	Simple activity sheets, translated/adapted materials, online resources, leader support sessions.

5.2 Events and camps

Events and camps make sustainability commitments visible. Agree relevant expectations early and include them in the Action Plan template, with owners, resources, evidence and post-event learning.

- Appoint an event sustainability lead or focal point.
- Prepare a proportionate sustainability plan before approval or final budgeting.
- Consider waste, water, energy, food, travel, procurement, inclusion and communication.
- Give participants clear, positive guidance on how to contribute.
- Record results, lessons and improvements after the event; assign follow-up actions.

Minimum event sustainability questions	Practical examples
Waste	Can waste be prevented? Are reusable options possible? Are segregation points clear?
Food and catering	Can menus reduce waste, use local options where practical and provide inclusive choices?
Water and energy	Can consumption be monitored? Are there simple conservation measures?
Transport	Can group transport, public transport, shared travel or digital participation reduce unnecessary travel?
Procurement	Are suppliers asked simple questions about packaging, materials and waste?

Minimum event sustainability questions	Practical examples
Learning	How will participants understand and contribute to the sustainability approach?

5.3 Offices, properties and campsites

Offices, campsites and properties often create ongoing environmental impacts. They also provide powerful learning spaces for Scouts. The Board should ensure that major properties are managed responsibly and that improvements are prioritised according to risk, cost and impact.

- Identify main properties and assign a manager or volunteer team to each.
- Collect feasible annual data on electricity, water, waste, maintenance and compliance.
- Start with repairs, leak prevention, clear signage, waste facilities and routine maintenance.
- Respect biodiversity, local communities, safety and environmental regulations in land use.
- Use properties to demonstrate environmental learning where practical.

Board oversight question	Evidence to request
Do we know which properties create the highest environmental risk or cost?	Simple property register with risk notes and utility data where available.
Are campsites legally compliant and safely managed?	Compliance checklist, incident records, maintenance plan and risk register.
Are improvements prioritised realistically?	Annual property improvement plan linked to budget and safety needs.

5.4 Partnerships

Partnerships can provide expertise, funding, credibility and learning opportunities. They can also create reputational or ethical risks if the partner's activities conflict with Scouting values or environmental commitments. The NSO should therefore use simple screening, proportional to the size and risk of the partnership.

Screening question	Why it matters
Does the partner's purpose and public conduct align with Scouting values?	Protects the NSO's reputation and values.
Could the partnership create environmental, safeguarding, political or ethical concerns?	Identifies risks before commitments are made.
What practical benefit will the partnership bring to young people, volunteers or communities?	Ensures partnerships support mission and impact.
Are expectations, roles, resources and communication responsibilities clear?	Prevents confusion and overpromising.
How will the partnership be reviewed?	Supports accountability and learning.

5.5 Funding, procurement and investments

Financial decisions shape environmental practice. NSOs do not need complex procurement systems to begin. They need simple, consistent questions that help staff and volunteers choose options that are responsible, affordable and aligned with values.

- Include sustainability costs in normal budgeting.
- Screen significant purchases for durability, repairability, packaging, local availability, waste and supplier conduct.
- Keep environmental grants, donations and sponsorship transparent.
- Consider long-term value, including maintenance and reuse, alongside purchase price.
- Review investments and reserves periodically against NSO values and risk appetite.

5.6 Continuous operational improvement

Use a simple annual cycle: plan, deliver, review and improve. Feed lessons into the next Action Plan template update, including changes to targets, resources and guidance.

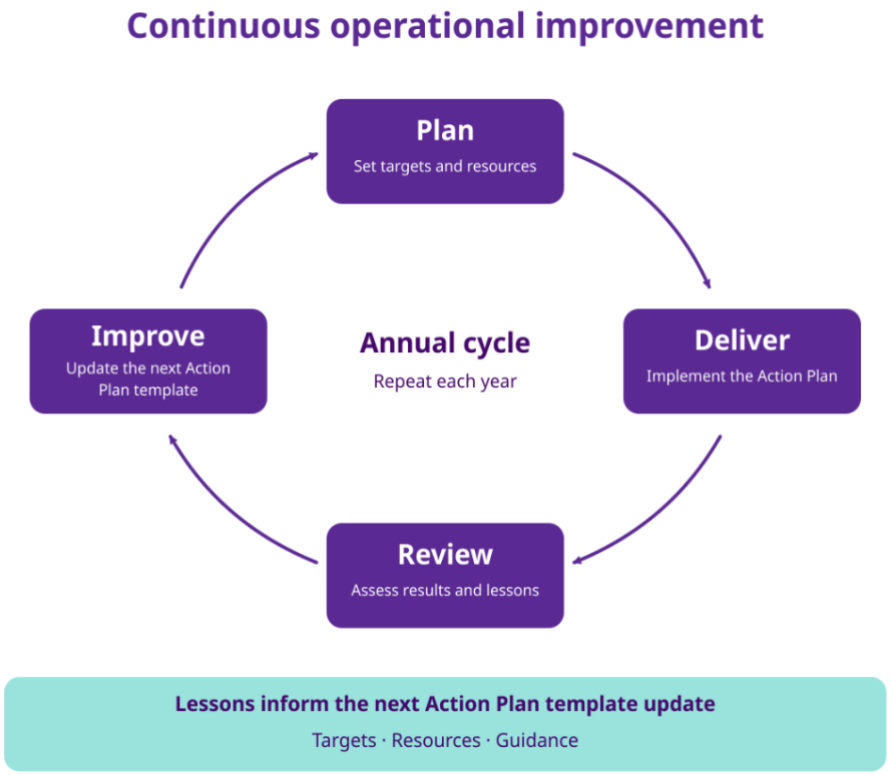


Figure 3: A simple continuous cycle

6. Awareness, education and communication

People need to understand the commitments and how to contribute. Communication should build ownership and support practical action.

6.1 Internal awareness

- Brief Boards, staff, commissioners, trainers and organisers on their responsibilities.
- Include sustainability in leadership training, induction and planning meetings.
- Provide practical tools and examples.
- Share progress and examples through regular internal channels.
- Invite feedback from regions, groups and volunteers.

6.2 Public awareness

- Share progress through websites, social media, reports, events and partner updates.
- Show youth-led projects and community results.
- Explain challenges and the limits of early-stage work.
- Use accessible language and visuals for members, families, partners and communities.

6.3 Youth empowerment

- Support young people with environmental action, project management and communication skills.
- Invite youth recommendations and results into leadership reviews.
- Create accessible opportunities across regions and backgrounds.
- Recognise youth contributions through badges, storytelling and leadership opportunities.

Communication test:

Before publication, ask: Is the claim true and evidenced? Does it recognise contributors, avoid exaggeration and invite participation?

7. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Monitoring supports learning and accountability. Collect information that shows delivery, intended results and decisions needed; keep reporting proportionate.

7.1 Simple KPI approach

Approve a small set of indicators linked to priorities and decisions. Choose measures teams can maintain; the table is a menu, not a requirement to collect every indicator.

Indicator type	Example KPI	What it tells the Board
Governance	Sustainability policy approved and reviewed on schedule.	Whether the governance foundation is in place.
Youth leadership	Percentage of sustainability governance groups with youth representation.	Whether youth participation is built into decision-making.
Education	Number of national programme or training resources including environmental learning.	Whether sustainability is embedded in the educational offer.
Events	Percentage of major events with sustainability plans and post-event reviews.	Whether event governance expectations are being applied.
Properties	Number of major properties collecting annual water, energy and waste data.	Whether the NSO has basic operational evidence.
Procurement	Percentage of major purchases using simple sustainability screening.	Whether financial decisions reflect commitments.
Capacity	Number of leaders, staff or volunteers trained or briefed on the Guidelines.	Whether the NSO is building implementation capability.
Transparency	Annual sustainability update published.	Whether the NSO reports progress to members and stakeholders.

7.2 Indicator register

Use the Action Plan template for indicator records. Agree the definition, baseline, target and deadline, source/method, data owner, review frequency and limitations. Preserve the baseline alongside dated current results and use consistent scope and units.

7.3 Annual reporting

Prepare a concise annual Board update and public summary. Combine numbers with explanations, youth contributions and practical examples.

Report section	Suggested content
Opening summary	One page explaining progress, challenges and next priorities.
Governance update	Policy status, Board review, committee activity and key decisions.
Progress dashboard	KPI table with current status, trend and brief explanation.
Youth leadership	Examples of youth participation and youth-led action.
Operational progress	Programmes, events, properties, partnerships and procurement highlights.
Risks and barriers	Main challenges, resource gaps and corrective actions.

Report section	Suggested content
Next-year priorities	Link to the accompanying Action Plan.

7.4 Review and improvement

The Board or designated committee should review sustainability progress at least once a year. The review should lead to practical decisions: continue, adjust, stop, resource or escalate. Review discussions should be documented so that learning is not lost.

- What should continue or expand?
- What did not work, and why?
- Which indicators need adjustment?
- Which risks need Board attention?
- What support do delivery teams and local volunteers need?
- What belongs in the next Action Plan template update?

8. Implementation considerations

8.1 Budget and resources

Sustainability commitments require realistic resources. The Board should make sure that the Action Plan identifies the budget, people, time and support needed for implementation. Not every action requires new funding; many improvements come from better planning, partnerships and habits. However, unfunded commitments should be avoided.

- Include priorities in annual budgeting.
- Start feasible low-cost actions early.
- Cost investment needs such as property improvements and data systems.
- Seek grants, partnerships and volunteer expertise where appropriate.
- Give local volunteers proportionate expectations, tools and support.

8.2 Barriers and risks

Treat barriers as governance risks. Common issues include capacity, funding, weak data, unclear ownership, resistance to change and competing priorities. Assign likelihood, impact, an owner and a response in the Action Plan template; escalate material decisions or support needs. Appendix D provides examples.

8.3 Incentives and recognition

Recognise progress, learning and collaboration at every level, including work still developing.

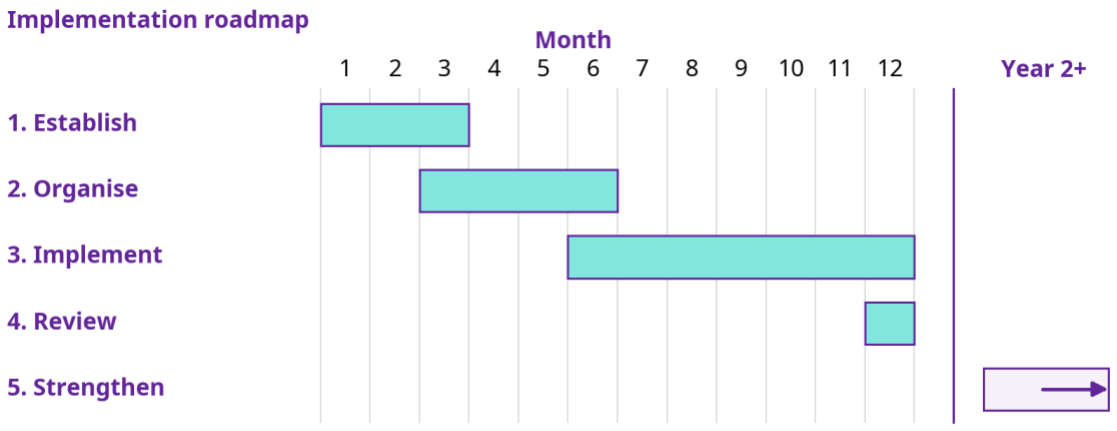
- Recognise practical progress by youth, volunteers, staff, groups and regions.
- Share cases and lessons across the NSO.
- Link practice to leadership development and training.
- Use awards, badges, public acknowledgement or event recognition as appropriate.

8.4 Ethical and legal responsibilities

Environmental sustainability should be implemented in a way that respects people, protects young people and complies with relevant laws. Environmental action must not create new risks or burdens for vulnerable groups.

- Comply with relevant environmental, labour, safety, safeguarding, data protection and association laws.
- Protect personal data in surveys, reporting, images and project records.
- Keep activities safe, inclusive and accessible.
- Review conflicts in partnerships, procurement and funding.
- Respect local rules, land rights, biodiversity and community relationships.

8.5 Phased implementation roadmap



Phase 1: months 1–3; Phase 2: months 3–6; Phase 3: months 6–12.
Phase 4: year end; Phase 5: year 2 onwards. Adapt the timing to capacity.

Figure 3: An illustrative roadmap; adapt the timing to capacity and the agreed plan period.

Phase	Timing	Main outputs
Phase 1: Establish	Months 1-3	Board commitment, focal point or committee, draft policy, priority areas, link to Action Plan.
Phase 2: Organise	Months 3-6	Named owners, simple KPI register, risk register, communication to regions and teams.
Phase 3: Implement	Months 6-12	Priority actions delivered through programmes, events, properties, partnerships and communications.
Phase 4: Review	End of year	Annual report, Board review, lessons learned, updated Action Plan.
Phase 5: Strengthen	Year 2 onwards	Improved data, expanded priorities, stronger local support, more consistent reporting.

9. Conclusion and next steps

These Guidelines connect environmental commitments to ordinary governance and delivery. The Board sets direction and oversight; management coordinates implementation; young people and delivery teams shape action and return evidence. Use the Action Plan template to maintain responsibilities, resources and progress, then turn review findings into practical improvements.

Building the Action Plan

Action Plan Template
The Action Plan Template is in the form of an editable workbook that can be downloaded from >> this link <<.

How to make the most out of the Action Plan Template for Environmental Sustainability of NSOs

To help NSOs make the most out of the Action Plan Template, an additional resource has been developed that explains the planning steps and provides field-by-field instructions on how to work with the Template. You can access the Guide at >> this link <<.

Appendix A: Board approval checklist

Use this checklist when approving governance commitments, the Action Plan template or the annual report.

Question	Yes / No / Notes
Is the purpose of the Guidelines clear and practical for our NSO?	
Have we identified the governance owner: Board focal point, committee or equivalent?	
Is there a management owner responsible for coordination?	
Are roles clear between Board, management, regions, local groups, campsites and events?	
Are the annual priorities realistic and reflected in the accompanying Action Plan?	
Are resources, budget needs and capacity constraints identified?	
Are youth meaningfully involved in decision-making and review?	
Are the KPIs simple, measurable and useful for decision-making?	
Are key risks identified and assigned to owners?	
Is there a clear reporting and review cycle?	
Is public communication accurate and proportionate?	
Are safeguarding, data protection, legal and ethical issues considered?	

Appendix B: Sustainability Committee terms of reference

Adapt the terms below for the chosen committee or working group.

Element	Suggested content
Purpose	To support Board oversight of environmental sustainability commitments, risks, progress and learning.
Authority	Advises the Board; may recommend policies, targets, resources and corrective actions. Final authority remains with the Board unless delegated.
Membership	Board member or chair, management lead, youth representatives, relevant staff or volunteers, and invited expertise where useful.
Meetings	At least twice per year, with additional meetings before major reports or events if needed.
Core responsibilities	Review Action Plan progress, indicator results and leadership summary, risks, youth input, partnership issues and annual report.
Reporting	Provide written or verbal update to the Board after each meeting and a formal annual summary.
Youth participation	Ensure young people have meaningful opportunity to contribute to agenda, discussion and recommendations.
Review	Terms of reference reviewed every three years or when governance arrangements change.

Appendix C: Simple KPI register

Select useful indicators from these examples and keep the working records in the Action Plan template. Establish missing baselines and agree targets, owners and review dates before reporting progress.

KPI	Definition	Owner	Frequency	Baseline / target
Policy approved	Environmental sustainability policy or guideline approved by Board.	Board Secretary	Annual	Approved / review date
Action Plan progress	Percentage of planned annual actions completed or on track.	Management lead	Quarterly or annual	Annual target
Youth participation	Youth represented in sustainability committee or consultation process.	Committee chair	Annual	Yes/No or %
Major event plans	Major events with sustainability plan and post-event review.	Events lead	After each event	% of eligible events
Programme integration	National programme or leader training resources with sustainability content.	Programme lead	Annual	Number or %
Property data	Major properties collecting electricity, water and waste data.	Property lead	Annual	Number of properties
Procurement screening	High-value purchases using sustainability screening questions.	Finance/procurement lead	Annual	% or number
Annual update published	Public sustainability update shared with members or stakeholders.	Communications lead	Annual	Yes/No

Appendix D: Risk register template

Risk	Likelihood / impact	Owner	Response / progress
Limited staff or volunteer capacity delays implementation.	Medium / High	Management lead	Reduce annual priorities and provide templates. Progress: Open
Event teams apply sustainability too late in planning.	Medium / Medium	Events lead	Require sustainability plan at event approval stage. Progress: Open
Data is inconsistent across regions or properties.	High / Medium	KPI owner	Start with basic indicators and standard definitions. Progress: Open
Sustainability costs are not budgeted.	Medium / High	Finance lead	Include costs in annual budget and Action Plan. Progress: Open
Public claims overstate progress.	Low / High	Communications lead	Review claims against evidence before publication. Progress: Open

Appendix E: Annual sustainability report template

Use the structure below for a two- to four-page annual update, adapted to audience and capacity.

1. Opening message: Brief note from the Board Chair, Chief Commissioner or Secretary-General.

2. Summary dashboard: Traffic-light view of the main KPIs.

3. Progress highlights: Three to five practical achievements from the year.

4. Youth leadership: How young people contributed to decisions and action.

5. Operational learning: Key lessons from programmes, events, properties, partnerships and communications.

6. Challenges and risks: What proved difficult and what will be addressed next.

7. Next-year priorities: The main priorities to be included in the accompanying Action Plan.

8. Acknowledgements: Recognition of youth, volunteers, staff, partners and local groups.

Appendix F: Maturity self-assessment

Use this maturity self-assessment to identify support needs and priorities. It supports learning and planning, not external ranking. Do not total the stages into a performance score.

Area	1 - Starting	2 - Developing	3 - Integrated
Governance	No clear Board responsibility.	Board focal point or committee exists but reporting is irregular.	Board reviews progress and risks annually or more often.
Action planning	Activities happen separately without a shared plan.	Annual Action Plan exists with some owners and timelines.	Action Plan is linked to budget, KPIs and Board reporting.
Education	Environmental activities are occasional.	Some programme or training resources include sustainability.	Sustainability is embedded in programme review, training and youth projects.
Youth leadership	Youth mainly participate in activities.	Youth are consulted on priorities or projects.	Youth help shape decisions, implementation and reporting.
Events	Sustainability depends on individual organisers.	Major events use some checklists or good practices.	Major events have plans, owners and post-event reviews.
Properties	Limited knowledge of environmental impacts.	Some data or improvement actions for major properties.	Regular data, maintenance priorities and improvement plans are in place.
Partnerships and procurement	Environmental considerations are rarely discussed.	Simple screening is used for some large decisions.	Screening is integrated into partnership and procurement processes.
Reporting	No regular sustainability reporting.	Internal updates are provided to leadership.	Annual dashboard or public summary is shared and used for improvement.

Appendix G: Glossary

Term	Plain-language explanation
Action Plan	The companion document that lists actions, owners, deadlines, resources and progress updates.
Baseline	The starting point for measuring progress.
Committee	A group formally appointed to support oversight or coordination.
Environmental impact	The effect an activity has on the natural environment, such as waste, water use, energy use or land disturbance.
Indicator	A piece of information used to track progress.
Material issue	An issue important enough to influence decisions, resources or reporting.
Mitigation	Action taken to reduce a risk or negative impact.
Sustainability lead	The person or team responsible for coordinating implementation and reporting.
Target	A result the NSO intends to achieve by a specific date.
Verification	A check that information is accurate enough to support decisions or public reporting.
Governance	How the NSO sets direction, makes decisions, assigns responsibility and ensures accountability.
KPI	A selected indicator used to track progress against a priority.
Environmental sustainability	Reducing harm to the natural environment and improving positive contribution through education, operations and community action.
Sustainability governance	Leadership and accountability arrangements that build environmental commitments into decisions and follow them through.

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