



Cognia

Environment,
Social &
Governance
Policy

ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE AT COGNIA

Our culture of social and environmental stewardship informs our broad and deep approach to sustainability; the protection of the environment; and having a positive impact in the communities where we live and work.

To map our impact activities and opportunities related to environmental and social sustainability, we reference the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Paris Agreement. These frameworks provide a common language and guidance on how environmental and social performance is addressed and they allow us to align our priorities with the goals and objectives of our stakeholders across our value chain and in the communities where we work and live.

We focus on the following SDGs, namely:

- #1 – No poverty;
- #4 – Quality education;
- #5 – Gender equality;
- #12 – Responsible consumption and production; and
- #13 – Climate action

Governance

Our values and guiding principles are:

- **Quality** - Quality and excellence are the cornerstones of everything we do.
- **Dignity** - We treat every individual with dignity; valuing diversity, honesty and authenticity.
- **Community** - We value our relationships and create opportunities for all: individually we are strong; together we thrive.
- **Agility** - While clients navigate a rapidly changing world of law, we understand that innovation, flexibility, and creativity are key.

Our values underpin our commitment to sound principles of corporate governance and ethical behaviour driven by Cognia's purpose to redefine the future world of law with our clients and to integrate how legal services are provided so that our team, partners, clients and communities thrive together with people at the heart of what we do.

We set clear expectations of behaviour for our people that foster a culture of integrity and dignity that guide our daily decisions, actions and relationships. In addition to policies on Anti-bribery and Corruption and Know-Your-Customer, Cognia has a Whistle-blower Policy to further promote and support a culture of honest and ethical behaviour. The policy encourages and provides protections for the reporting of reasonably held concerns of suspected or actual misconduct or an improper state of affairs or circumstances at Cognia.

Information is the foundation of our business. Confidential or commercially sensitive information comes in many forms, including via conversations, on paper, and electronically. We take industry standard measures to preserve the confidentiality of Cognia and client data.

Cognia is also committed to protecting and respecting the privacy of any employee or third-party personal information that it processes. Internal data privacy requirements guide the collection, use, transfer (including transfer across international boundaries), release, disclosure and security of such data. These requirements also describe our expectations for third parties who process such data on our behalf.

Cognia is an ISO 9001 (Quality Management Systems) certified organisation.

Environment

Cognia is committed to responsible environmental stewardship and managing our business in a sustainable manner. We are cognisant of the footprint of our day-to-day operations as well as the footprint of our staff. Being a proudly learning organisation, we aim to inform and enable our staff to make environmentally aware decisions and choices.

Our carbon footprint report can be found here: www.cognialaw.com

We focus our actions on four areas that will help create a healthier future, for people and for our planet.

1. Our leadership

Our leaders demonstrate accountability in how we:

- Communicate and promote the ongoing improvements of our environmental performance;
- Embed our environmental management objectives and targets firmly in our strategy, operations and culture; and
- Practice proactive environmental risk management.

2. Our carbon footprint

To reduce our carbon footprint, we implement measures to minimise our greenhouse gas emissions and consumption of energy, water and consumables and reduce our waste generation. We will continue to explore ways to reduce the environmental impacts of our operations such as being:

- 100% paperless;
- Responsible water custodians;
- Recycling;
- Reducing electronic waste;
- Reducing air travel; and
- Adopting flexible working policies that reduce employee commuting time to the office.

3. Our people

We know we will only reach our goals if we create deep commitment among all our people to meet environmental objectives, seek environmentally sustainable solutions and be involved in initiatives they are passionate about.

4. Our partners

We build mutually beneficial relationships with our partners to ensure our environmental expectations align. We collaborate and influence to realise our environmental aspiration across our supply chain.

Social

Cognia's long-established values have always included a commitment to dignity and communities. Our efforts have a positive impact on our employees, contractors, suppliers, and clients, as well as the communities in which we live and work. Empowering people and communities through meaningful partnerships and initiatives to drive sustainable change and create a positive social impact in our core focus areas, recognising the responsibilities that flow from our privilege.

1. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity

Cognia was founded to create a work environment in which all people thrive and is committed to conducting business in a manner that preserves and respects human dignity.

Cognia does not engage in discrimination based on race, colour, gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, religion, union membership, or marital status in hiring and employment practices such as promotions, rewards, and access to training. Our employees are expected to treat one another professionally and with mutual respect.

This means that we strive to build a diverse and high-quality staff profile within the company, and to contribute to diversity in employment in the territories in which we operate.

2. Social Responsibility

We contribute to the social development of our communities by supporting initiatives that improve youth education and living conditions.

Collaboration is central to Cognia's purpose and therefore common to all of our CSR initiatives. Through proactive outreach and partnerships with our clients, partners and community organisations, we strive to uphold our values by running, sharing in, and supporting initiatives in three key focus areas:

- Education, mentorship, and development. We enact our values of dignity and community in our efforts to nurture the young people, entrepreneurs and evolving leaders who will shape our future communities;
- Empowerment. We help our supported organisations, on a pro bono basis, to navigate their legal challenges with a positive social impact; and
- Local community involvement. We believe that responsible environmental stewardship starts at a local level and aim for a percentage of our community initiatives to be dedicated to advancing our carbon neutral agenda and managing our impact on the local areas inhabited by our team.

We actively support the following organisations Ikamva Youth and Black Lawyers Association Student Chapter (BLASC) at the University of Cape Town.

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