

Sustainability Statement for IHE Delft

June 2021

How does IHE Delft envision sustainability?

IHE Delft Institute for Water Education (IHE Delft) envisions a world free of poverty and injustice, in which people manage their water and environmental resources sustainably and equitably.

IHE Delft contributes to a sustainable world through educating and training professionals and through strengthening the capacity of institutional and non-institutional actors to manage water and environmental resources. IHE Delft conceives sustainability in higher education as involving not only the curriculum, but also the daily activities of the organization in the Netherlands and in other countries where IHE Delft staff and students perform education, research or capacity building activities.

IHE Delft's goals imply that sustainability requires modifying thinking and behaviours of individuals and organizations so they make the right choices, to reduce the direct and indirect impacts of daily activities and operations. Sustainability involves the coordination of individual and collective actions to improve the condition of water and the environment and, ultimately, enhance the well-being of society at large. Through its educational activities, IHE will foster a culture in which people realize that every small action has a ripple effect. Therefore, individual and collective choices can improve or degrade the human and social environment.

In line with its Strategy 2018-23 (<https://www.un-ihe.org/vision-mission-strategy>), IHE Delft is committed to practising sustainability through its daily operations. This includes improving IHE Delft's environmental performance (reducing its environmental footprint) in all its activities, in the Netherlands and overseas.

How does IHE practise sustainability?

IHE Delft is committed to improve its environmental performance in the following areas:

1. People

IHE Delft will adhere to ethical principles to create a safe and nurturing work and study environment, that supports the personal and professional development of staff and students and the communities influenced by its operations. This implies (and is not limited to) respecting legal obligations (domestically and abroad), protecting the rights of individual such as freedom of speech, freedom of beliefs, equality among genders, embracing diversity and non-discrimination for ethnical, cultural, religious, sexual orientation reasons.

2. Education

Engaging staff and students is crucial for the successful implementation and evaluation of this policy. IHE will promote dialogue to make this engagement fruitful.

Teaching sustainability is not only about teaching scientific or technological approaches to face environmental problems and their repercussions for society, but about instilling in staff and students the understanding that sustainability is also a way of living, practising professionally and personally what we teach.

3. Research and innovation

IHE Delft's operations involve implementing projects outside the Netherlands. Sustainability relates to having staff, students and partners carry out research following ethical and sustainability principles, e.g. projects not engaging in corruption or violations of human rights, reducing environmental and social impacts, and respecting local cultures and customs. Therefore, IHE Delft commits to respecting ethical principles in research and helping researchers think about, and elaborate on, the ethical aspects of their research projects.

4. Campus footprint and operations

IHE Delft is committed to reducing the environmental footprint of the Campus at Westvest and supporting improvement in other associated facilities, such as student residences. The initial aspects identified include procurement, water and energy savings, waste management, food and catering, and air quality, greenhouse gas reductions and climate change. Specific actions will be created and updated to address each aspect.

As most of the environmental footprint of IHE Delft consists of carbon emission related to travel, IHE Delft will seek to monitor and set targets to reduce emission as much as possible.

IHE Delft will support the sustainability initiatives of its suppliers, including the managers of student residences.

5. Involvement in students' and stakeholders' initiatives

IHE Delft will use different communication media to encourage staff, students and third parties to create and /or participate in local, national and global actions to advance water ethics, protect the environment and create a more just and equitable society. This includes creating an environment where sustainability is discussed and practised openly and with respect for differences in cultural or religious beliefs.

Implementation and continual improvement:

The areas that this statement covers will be reviewed, at least annually, and adjusted to show continual improvement and adaptation to the changing environment. IHE Delft commits to conduct regular assessment of its sustainability performance and to publicly report on the results.