



Supporting Members Starting Out On Sustainability

Article Three – Make Your Business Buying More Sustainable

More and more businesses are looking into the business sustainability of their suppliers before purchasing goods or services. If you want to introduce Sustainable Procurement practices into your business here are some useful tips to get you started.

What Is Sustainable Procurement? – procurement simply means shopping for your business. Price is not the only consideration when purchasing in a sustainable world, procurement now should have a sustainability lens over it. Indeed, many sustainability issues can't be solved internally but need to be solved with a supply chain perspective.

Why Act Now?

- Legislation has been introduced requiring large businesses to report on their contribution to climate change – it's on its way for smaller businesses too!
- Increase the resilience in your supply chain – consider buying local to reduce supply chain issues and reduce transport and packaging costs.
- Market Positioning – being open and transparent about your sustainable procurement policy could increase your market share.
- Stakeholder Management – the same transparency could improve stakeholder relationships and buy-in to your sustainability journey, both internally and externally.

Procurement Policy and Process

You don't need to develop a complicated Procurement Policy, particularly as a small to medium-sized business. However, before you purchase an item you could consider:

- Do you really need it – can you repair it, do you have a spare, can you rent it?
- What are your values – decide what values are important to you in your procurement decisions? Do they align with your business values?
- Who do you want to buy from – target organisations that align with your identified values (eg. Fair trade, organic, sustainable packaging etc)
- How do you check that sustainability claims made by organisations are as good as they say – research them.
 - Authentic sustainable business practices (carbon footprint, climate impacts etc) are often displayed on business websites.
 - Ask them questions if you can't find the information you're looking for.
 - Do they have any external verifications?
- Once you have developed and implemented your Procurement Policy, as you would with any other policy, review it regularly to find ways to improve it.

Follow the links below for useful tips and resources to assist you on your sustainability journey:

- Find out where you're at: [DOCKET \(self-assessment tool\)](#)
- [Circular Economy Directory](#)
- [Amotai - is Aotearoa's Supplier Diversity Intermediary.](#)
- Got a tricky challenge to solve? [Challenge Hub](#)

Adapted from Sustainable Business Network – Making Your Business Buying More Sustainable.