



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
MINISTRY OF CLIMATE CHANGE  
& ENVIRONMENT

# UAE GREEN BUSINESS TOOLKIT

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# UAE Green Business Toolkit

## What is this Toolkit for?

The *UAE Green Business Toolkit* is intended to inspire all types and sizes of businesses across the country for taking the first important step to make them more eco-friendly and socially responsible. A green business can contribute to fulfilling the national and global agenda such as the *UAE Vision 2021*, the *UAE Green Agenda 2030*, and the *National Climate Change Plan 2050*, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations.

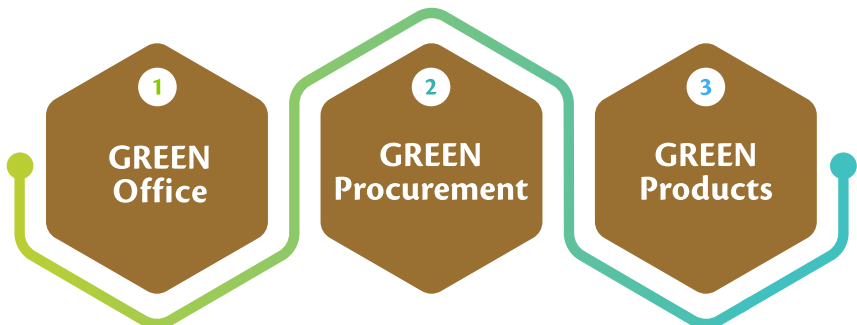
## What is a Green Business?

A green business, or a sustainable business, means an enterprise that aims for minimal negative impact on the global and local environment, communities, society, and economy — a business that strives to meet the “triple bottom line” or to address “people, planet, profit” instead of seeking only short-term economic gains.



## What is in this Toolkit?

This Toolkit provides entry-level guidelines on how to green your business or how to establish your own business as a green entrepreneur, in **three key areas**:

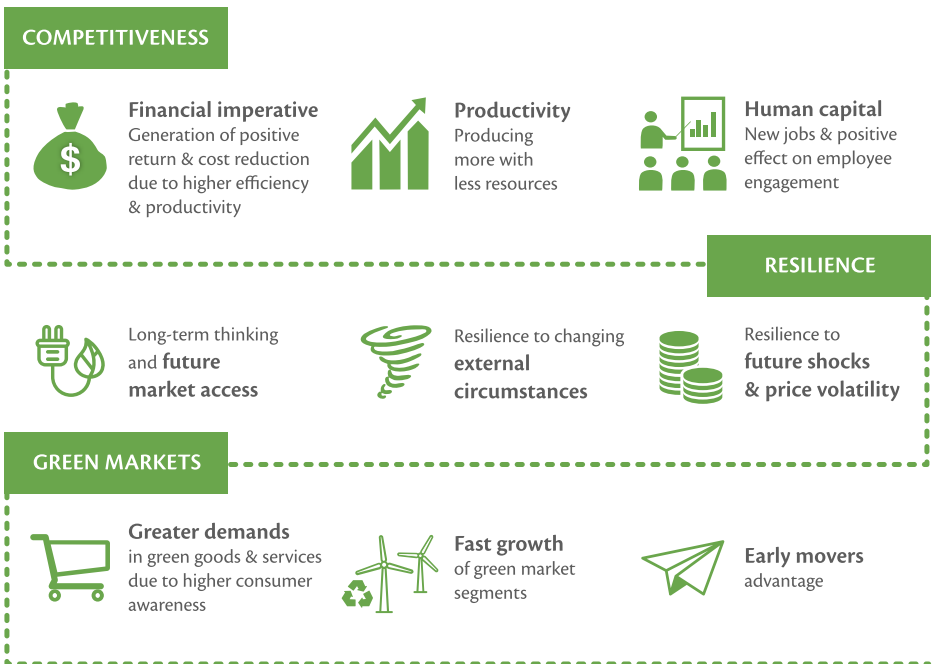


## Why a Green Business?

Residents and consumers in the UAE are increasingly expecting companies to operate in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. Being conscious of its wider impact, a green business can meet the demand for new requirements from the market and be prepared for future legislation.

The green business can actually save costs from raising efficiency in resource use, improve its reputation and competitive advantage in the marketplace, and become resilient to changing environment and unexpected events. This practice will also keep the staff happy, healthy and productive and attract quality workforce as well as more customers.

Eventually, the green business can generate more profits while managing to address its needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own – that is, it contributes to sustainable development.



### Green business opportunities

Source: UN-ESCAP (2015)



# 1. Green Office

You can start greening business from your immediate surroundings – workplace. The typical office uses energy, water, and other diverse goods and resources which provide lots of opportunities for going green by making small changes and adjustments in what and how to use.

Green office actions may not cost much. Their effective implementation can actually save you money, raise operational efficiency, and provide a cleaner, healthier environment for your staff.

## How to take action?

### 1 Keep a record of consumption

- Electricity and water use
- Paper use
- Types and amount of waste generated and recycled
- Amount and sustainability of office equipment and consumables, etc.

### 2 Set targets & write a policy

- Define quantitative targets on efficiency or sustainability of electricity, water, paper, waste, and other consumption items
- Set targets as overall percentages of current use or consumption per employee/floor space, etc.
- Make the targets time-bound; set interim targets where helpful
- Outline what measures you plan to take to achieve the set targets

### 3 Engage staff in action

- Ensure all employees to be informed of the green office targets & policy
- Establish a green office team and recruit staff from relevant departments
- Allocate clear responsibility for action to each team member
- Provide regular updates to employees through various communication channels and events

### 4 Monitor progress & upgrade

- Monitor the record of consumption regularly
- Review the progress against the set targets and timeline
- Report the progress to the management and staff (and to the public, if relevant)
- Revise targets and measures according to the progress and the challenges faced

What can you do?

REDUCE ENERGY



Turn on energy-saving mode and turn off when not in use



Minimize number of photocopiers/printers



Set AC temperature at 24°C



Ensure good insulation



Use energy-efficient light bulbs

REDUCE WATER



Install low-flow faucets and dual-flush toilets



Fix dripping faucets, pipes and toilets



Request cleaning staff to reduce water usage

REDUCE MATERIALS



Get equipment repaired before purchasing a new one



Segregate waste for recycling and dispose hazardous materials safely



Minimize paper use and printing



Store data electronically & adopt e-communication tools



## 2. Green Procurement

All organizations acquire products, materials, or services to run their business. Those inputs then become part of their products/services, which may be purchased by consumers or serve other businesses.

You can make a big difference in sustainability of your own business as well as consumers and other businesses by buying green. Common considerations in green procurement include energy efficiency, low emissions, non-use of hazardous materials, and recyclability, and may extend to social aspects such as ethical conduct and community development.

### How to take action?

#### 1 Identify key purchases

- Create an inventory of procurement items and amounts
- Identify items with significant environmental impacts
- Choose target items for buying green
- Write up a commitment to green procurement and publicize internally, and where relevant, externally

#### 2 Train procurement officers

- Form a team of staff involved in specifying and procuring products and services
- Conduct a training on green procurement and get a buy-in from the team
- Identify the way to integrate green considerations into existing procurement processes

#### 3 Set purchasing criteria

- Products with credible third-party eco-labels or certifications
- Products made from recycled materials or refurbished products
- Products made from non-toxic, biodegradable or recyclable materials
- Products manufactured following green production processes
- Products that help efficient resource use or generate less emissions/waste
- Products/services from green businesses, etc.

#### 4 Engage with suppliers

- Share the green procurement policy and criteria with suppliers
- Where greener options are not available or too expensive, talk with suppliers to find the way forward
- Measure progress and impact of green procurement; continuously upgrade efforts



## What can you buy?



### Paper & wood products

- Recycled pulp and chips partly or fully used.
- Minimally or non-coated to ensure reusability or recyclability
- Minimal use or avoidance of chemicals in processing
- Virgin materials from sustainably managed forests or non-wood sources; certified by FSC, PEFC, etc.



### Stationeries & office supplies

- Use of recycled materials
- Minimal use or avoidance of chemicals
- Replaceable or refillable parts, or recyclable after use



### ICT equipment

- Minimal power use with a standby mode; certified by Energy Star
- Avoidance of hazardous substances; compliant with RoHS
- Equipped with functions to encourage efficiency in use (e.g., two-sided printing)
- Designed for longer lifetime or upgrading
- Properly treated, reused, recycled or remanufactured after use



### Vehicles & transport services

- Low-emission vehicles such as CNG-fueled, hybrid & electric
- Smaller engine sizes; rated high in the GCC fuel efficiency label
- Designed for longer lifetime
- Regularly checked and serviced
- Properly resaled, recycled or remanufactured after use
- Drivers trained for safe, efficient driving



### Office furniture

- Made of recycled or sustainably sourced materials
- Minimal chemical use and emissions in production
- Low level of chemical emissions from products
- Maintenance services provided
- Reusable or recyclable, or to be remanufactured after use



### Chemicals & cleaning services

- Minimal or non-use of harmful solvents or substances
- Biodegradable; certified with eco-labels
- Reduce packaging; option for on-site dilution
- Services for safe disposal or minimal use provided
- Safety of users fully considered



### Food & catering

- Produced with minimal chemicals or organically produced; certified with organic/fair trade labels, Global GAP, etc.
- Locally produced; water-efficient technologies applied
- Avoid over-packaging
- Minimal processing or additives
- Food waste minimized or composted



### Buildings & construction

- Designed for low energy requirement
- Use of lower-impact or bio-based materials
- Waste, noise & hazardous substances properly managed on site
- Renewable energy systems integrated
- Landscaping that requires minimal water
- Rated by Estidama, Al Safat, or LEED

### 3. Green Products

For businesses producing goods and services - particularly those in the manufacturing sector, a large part of their environmental impact comes from production processes and use of the produced goods and services.

Green products or services embrace sustainability by reducing use of materials, energy, and water and minimizing waste and emissions. You need to look these beyond production processes and consider how your products/services are distributed, used, and disposed or recovered. Considering all potential impacts at the product designing stage often provides the most optimal, sustainable solution.

#### How to take action?

##### 1 Analyze lifecycle impact

- List potential environmental impacts from production and consumption of products/services
- Measure and record use of resources and emissions from products/services
- Analyze significance of impacts using lifecycle assessment (LCA)
- Identify priority impacts to tackle

##### 2 Mainstream sustainability

- Introduce an environmental management system (EMS; e.g., ISO 14001) to ensure a whole-of-organization approach
- Develop a policy to integrate sustainability into products/services and production/distribution/end-of-life processes
- Develop criteria and targets to address priority impacts

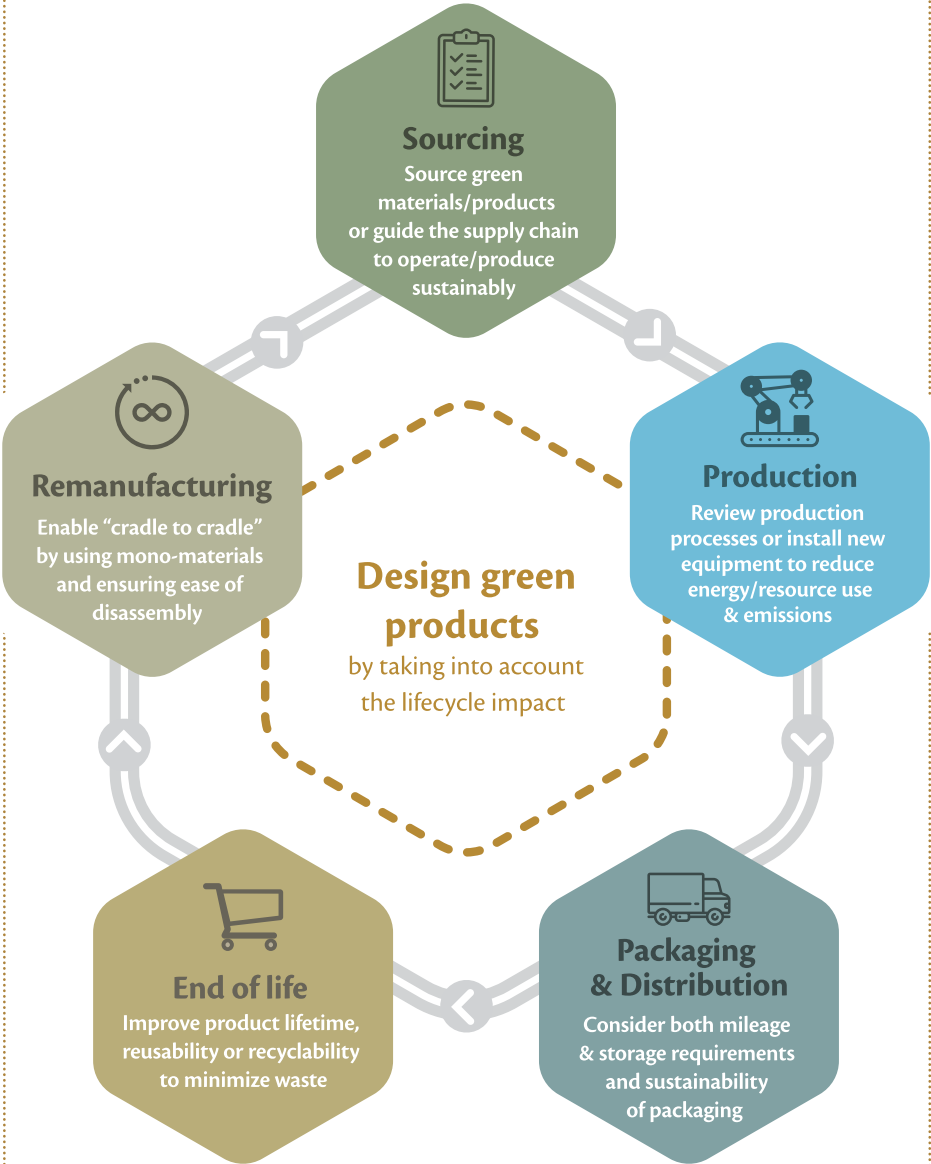
##### 3 Design green products

- Engage staff in charge of sourcing, production, and marketing into the design of products/services or processes
- Collect consumer/client voices and reflect them in designing
- Come up with options for new products, services or process configuration
- Test the options and determine optimal solutions

##### 4 Communicate with consumers

- Monitor improvement in resource use and emissions
- Apply for credible eco-labels or certifications
- Market as green products/services
- Strive for continuous improvement applying the EMS
- Compile and issue a sustainability report based on globally accepted guidelines (e.g., GRI)

What can you do?





## Reference & Further Guidance

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