

# Sustainable Sourcing Policy

April 2021



Penguin  
Random House  
UK

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## 1. Introduction

As the UK's leading publisher, our most important role is through the books we publish and their power to change minds and behaviour. Alongside this, it is also vital that we consider how we can, in our own operations, innovate and improve efforts to reduce our environmental impact. Thinking and acting for the planet underpins everything we do, every day.

This policy highlights some of the keyways in which we aim to meet the high expectations of our authors, customers and partners when it comes to sustainable sourcing. It also forms part of our wider environmental commitments as part of our company-wide [Sustainability Policy](#).

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## 2. Scope

This policy focuses on two of our key sustainability commitments:

- **Zero by 30:** Zero by 30: reduce our carbon footprint to become climate neutral in our direct operations by 2021, and in our wider supply chain by 2030.
- **Sustainable sourcing:** ensure 100% of our paper and other core materials are ethically and sustainably sourced.

The aim of this policy is to highlight the work we are doing across our indirect supply chain; from the materials we source, the suppliers who manufacture our books, to how we transport our product within our supply chain.

Our indirect supply chain is where our biggest impact lies, with most carbon emissions coming from the processes used in paper and printing production. So, we are committed to ensuring that our supply chain is not only climate neutral, but also sustainably sourced.

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## 3. Principles explained

### 3.1 Sustainable paper sourcing

As a book publisher, paper is, by far, our most used material and we are committed to only using sustainably sourced paper through responsibly managed forests. We recognise the importance of the ecosystems and forests around us, as well as the key part they play in providing biodiversity, fresh water, oxygen and shelter for animals as well as indigenous communities. We know unsustainable forest management can lead to deforestation, climate change, pollution and habitat loss, excess waste, decreased biodiversity and poses a risk to surrounding populations living near those lands

Therefore, we use the below initiatives and targets to mitigate our environmental impact, ensure all our paper is responsibly sourced and ultimately drive global demand for sustainable forest management standards.

**Forest Stewardship Council (FSC™):** We produce 100% our books on FSC™ certified mix or recycled paper. FSC™ safeguards forest biodiversity and local communities and is a globally recognised hallmark of responsible paper sourcing. We are certified publishers of FSC™ (FSC-C018179) and aim to continue to work collaboratively with FSC™ to drive our shared goals of producing products from sustainably managed forests.

**Paper Mills & Printers:** The majority of our mono paper (black and white books) comes from one paper mill in Sweden, who have strong environmental credentials. This is due to the sustainable initiatives they have put in place, which includes having robust environmental accreditations, obtaining wind and hydropower energy using leftover materials, allocating 20% of forest area for conservation purposes and by planting at least two trees for every one felled.

While we do not purchase our illustrated book papers directly, we do ask our printers to purchase these papers on our behalf and for them to be FSC™ certified. This is so we can certify paper types, gain visibility of where the pulp comes from, and ensure we continue to source sustainable paper.

**Carbon Footprint:** We are working to better understand the specific carbon emissions the different types of paper we use have. As part of this work, we commissioned research in 2020 with an independent environmental consultant to review current virgin paper options alongside recycled alternatives. We have now considered these findings, and actively embedded these into our day-to-day purchasing practices.

**Laws & Legislation:** We comply with all applicable laws, including the EU Timber Regulations, which ban such actions as illegal logging and trafficking of wildlife, including plants and plant products.

### 3.2 Responsibly managed production

It is important that the suppliers we use have systems and processes in place to ensure product, factory and worker safety, as well as help mitigate any environmental impacts through production. Our indirect supply chain contributes the most to our carbon footprint so it's vital that we have the below initiatives in place;

**Environmental & Ethical Management Systems:** To continue to reduce our environmental impact, we ask all of our suppliers to obtain an ISO 140001 standard, which confirm they have a certified environmental management system in place. We audit our printing suppliers regularly against health and safety ILO conventions, and we have processes in place to work with them to address any ethical or environmental issues discovered during the audit.

**Chemical Management:** We only use chemicals that are acceptable to use as stated by either REACH (European) or PROP 65 (Californian) legislation. We expect all our suppliers to comply with applicable global legislative and regulatory requirements, ensuring they keep up to date, with our help, on any upcoming legislative changes. To certify product safety, we test our books at random and our component products frequently, continuing to work with our suppliers to ensure all products are safe from harmful chemicals.

**Carbon Footprint** For us to decrease our overall footprint we need to review and minimise our indirect supply chain emissions. Therefore, we aim to work in partnership with our printing and paper mill suppliers, setting targets to support them to make more sustainable choices, in turn reducing their overall emissions. For example, this includes more suppliers switching to, or investing in, renewable resources, reviewing shipping methods and using more sustainable processes during manufacturing.

### 3.3 Sustainable product design

We design all our products with sustainability in mind – both our core product, the book, and non-book products such as toys. Our designers and production teams consider the overall environmental impact of a product when placing orders, to support them further; we will be launching our new Sustainable Production Toolkit, which will help inform colleagues on the material choices. We are always on the lookout for new ideas to embed into our production processes, including:

**Material Choices:** We are researching new, innovative materials that could replace or reduce existing options. For this year, we are currently exploring and comparing the different types of paper, glues, inks and plastic, among other materials, used to make up our books. We will add these findings into the Sustainable Production Toolkit to support our in house teams to make more sustainable design choices. Cross-departmental experts within the business have been involved in the creation of the Sustainable Production Toolkit.

**Internal Awareness:** We continue to raise internal awareness of how to design our products in a more environmentally friendly way. This includes rolling out training on our new Sustainability Production Toolkit to all relevant teams on how to embed this into day-to-day business practices.

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## 4. Our targets and actions

The following targets are from our [Sustainability Policy](#). We have added the below action points to highlight how we will meet these targets within publishing operations.

Definition	Examples	Status
<p><b>100% of editorial and design teams will take part in Sustainable Production Toolkit training by end of 2021</b></p>	<p>Provide tools and resources, such as Webinars and one-to-one support, to equip editorial and designs teams with the knowledge on how to embed the Sustainable Production Toolkit for everyday use.</p> <p>For due diligence, we will continue to monitor and restrict the use of unsustainable finishes or materials used within our books.</p>	<p>We have pulled together a group of internal stakeholders within editorial, production and design to work on the toolkit.</p> <p>We plan to launch it later this year and train 100% of relevant staff on how to use it day-to-day.</p>
<p><b>100% of printers and paper suppliers are considered 'best practice' by our in-house team for their sustainability efforts by 2023</b></p>	<p>Within our supply chain, we continually monitor and measure suppliers' ethical and sustainability efforts.</p> <p>We review suppliers based on; worker rights at factory level, location of site, supplier spend with us, product type, supplier's sourcing methods as well as their sustainability standards.</p> <p>Once we have identified a supplier to work with, we put in place a continuous improvement</p>	<p>Over the last year, we supported five suppliers move to 'best practice' due to their high level of engagement and support in our programme.</p> <p>Priority suppliers are asked to attend bi-monthly meeting with our sustainability team to update us on their ethical and sustainable improvements.</p>

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plan that aims to support suppliers to go beyond compliance, moving into 'best practice'.

We continue to use our sustainability programme to measure and monitor all supplier progress.

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**25% reduction in the carbon footprint coming from our production suppliers, including paper mills and printers, by 2025**

Our measures for this year are for all suppliers to engage in assessing and reducing their own carbon emissions.

We also want suppliers to participate in third party programmes or initiatives where there is a focus to avoid, reduce or offset emissions.

Internally, we look to continue to print locally and to limit the use of shipping any books or products by air.

For the future we want our priority suppliers to commit to using renewable energy (preferably 100%), or equivalent, such as investing in hydropower, biofuels, solar, wind etc.

Last year, and continued into this year, we asked our printer and paper suppliers to fill out an annual carbon footprint questionnaire, so we can assess and report on their carbon emissions. We then provide our suppliers with an assessment framework on how to actively reduce their emissions and support them in doing so.

One of our largest printers made the switch to renewable energy and in turn, we saw a drop of 11% in our Carbon Data Emissions in 2019 compared to 2018 so are advocating for other printers and paper mills to use renewable resources where possible.

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## 5. Our commitment to sourcing responsibly

We are committed to sourcing responsibly. We recognise that a key area of improvement is how we produce and manufacture our products. Specifically, how we ensure the fair treatment of workers, what sustainable materials are used, how we create a transparent and sustainable supply chain, and how we continue to reduce our overall carbon footprint as a business.

The above policy sets out not only the steps we've taken to mitigate our impact on both people and planet, but also what plans we're putting in place to continue our journey going forward.