



# Smart Office Toolkit – Compiling an Action Plan

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## What is an action plan?

An action plan, sometimes referred to as an Environmental Management Plan (EMP), outlines the specific activities that need to be done to ensure that the policy is implemented. Your action plan should build on your strategy and policy, but drill down to the details on what needs to be done by when, and by whom.



Different documents need to interlink and support each other:

- The **strategy** provides the overall plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim.
- The **policy** is the foundation and formal commitment of the organisation.
- The **action plan** provides specific actions and targets.
- The **monitoring and evaluation** allows to track progress.

## Why do we need an action plan?

Action plans help people know what needs to be done to complete a task, project, initiative or strategy. An action plan generally includes steps, milestones, and measures of progress, as well as responsibilities, specific assignments, and a timeline. Action plans are an important part of strategic planning.

The action plan can form the basis for each green team meeting where feedback can be given around the various actions that need to be implemented. It will continuously be updated and is a working document, instead of a static document. There is no standard format for this, although it is recommended to create it in a table format, using an Excel spreadsheet, for example.

## What is included in an action plan?

An action plan should be able to answer the following questions:

- What specific **actions** are needed to address the goals?
- **Who** needs to take responsibility for each action?
- **When** does it need to be completed by?
- **What** is the current status of the action?
- What are the **targets** that can be used to measure success?

Tracking your ongoing progress can be included in your action plan, so that you can ensure continuous improvement.

Goals should be 'SMART':



For examples of action plans, visit [www.capetown.gov.za/smartoffice](http://www.capetown.gov.za/smartoffice).