

POST GREEN TEAM TOOLKIT



One **ant** by itself may appear diminutive in size, yet when it enlists the help of others, **ants** can carry resources of incredible size back to their nest. Through communication and cooperation, **ants** have been known to carry objects 100 times their own weight, which is equivalent to two humans being able to carry a small car.



In honor of Earth Day 2013, U.S. Ambassador Charles Rivkin and Deputy Mayor Pierre Schapira plant a tree in a Paris public garden, emphasizing the importance of environmental stewardship and cooperative action on climate change, and advancing eco-diplomacy.



POST GREEN TEAM TOOLKIT

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A Message from the Secretary

I'm counting on Chiefs of Mission to make climate change a priority for all relevant personnel and to promote concerted action at posts and in host countries to address this problem. I've also directed all bureaus of the Department to focus on climate change in their day-to-day work. Here's what this guidance means in practice:

- I. Lead by example through strong action at home and abroad***
- II. Conclude a new international climate change agreement***
- III. Implement the Global Climate Change Initiative***
- IV. Enhance multilateral engagement***
- V. Expand bilateral engagement***
- VI. Mobilize financial resources***
- VII. Integrate climate change with other priorities***

U.S. Secretary of State Kerry congratulates members of OBO's Energy and Sustainable Design Team (Green Team) for their exceptional work



Image Source: U.S. Department of State

Climate change has special significance for the work we do here at State, and so do clean water, clean air, sustainability, and energy. We're talking about the future of our earth and of humanity. We need to elevate the environment in everything we do. There's nothing I'm more proud of than when we send one of our diplomats somewhere to really get out in the field and engage, to solve a problem, and to make something happen. I want all of you to feel empowered to think and operate that way on climate change. That's our mission as diplomats and that's our call to conscience as citizens of this fragile planet we inhabit. So let's get to work.¹

John F. Kerry
Secretary of State

Post Green Team Toolkit



Introduction

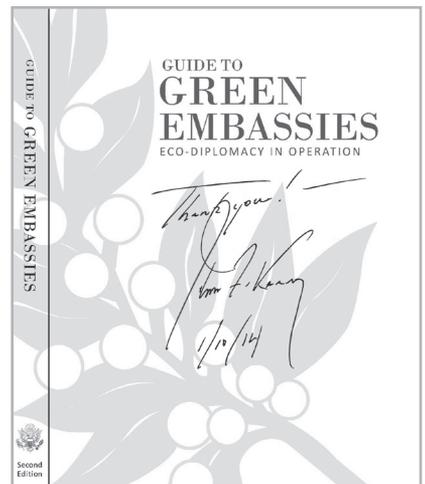
The Department of State recognizes over 150 Post Green Teams established and operating around the world. These green teams consist of champions who assume the role of eco-diplomats for the Department. They foster, facilitate, and inspire change that supports the federal performance goals, established by federal mandates. These teams enroll co-workers to support the Department's Greening Diplomacy Initiative (GDI) and the work of the Department's Greening Council. The Greening Council's mission is as follows:

“To improve the Department's environmental footprint and increase efficiencies, by harnessing expertise in policy, management, and public diplomacy from grass roots to senior management, in order to cultivate and institutionalize sustainability efforts, measure and report progress, and challenge others by fulfilling our environmental commitments and highlighting our successes.”

Generating and managing change isn't easy, which is why the Post Green Team Toolkit was developed. The Toolkit works in concert with and is a companion to the **Guide to Green Embassies: Eco-Diplomacy in Operation** (referenced in this document as the *Guide*). The *Guide*, shown in Figure 1, serves as a textbook, while the Toolkit serves as a workbook and toolbox containing a number of templates that are easy for Post Green Teams to use in implementing greening activities.

The tools were developed to provide additional guidance, reduce duplicative efforts, increase environmental impact, and assist in behavior change activities that are needed to achieve federal performance goals (see page ii of the *Guide*). Thus, this Toolkit should help

Figure 1: The *Guide to Green Embassies* is the signature tool that serves as the source for hundreds of potential greening activities



Source: U.S. Department of State

Post Green Teams to initiate and organize their team, manage their greening activities, and communicate results.

The steps identified within each section of the Toolkit serve as guidelines to help teams stay aligned with post management. Most of the steps were collected from successful Post Green Teams, and therefore serve as a best practice roadmap to successful selection and implementation of greening activities. However, each green team will have their own unique characteristics, experiences, and operations, so follow the course of action that works best for your team.

The tools are organized to include **three key phases of team development**: *Organizing for Sustainability*, *Greening Activities*, and *Results* (Figure 2). Each grouping of tools is divided into these key phases, as indicated by circles, with significant steps indicated by open circles, which also represent opportunities to brief post management.

Figure 2: Post Green Team development



Image Source: U.S. Department of State

Organizing for Sustainability

The first phase to developing an effective green team is building a solid team foundation. This involves gaining post management approval, recruiting team members with key skill sets, and defining team member roles and responsibilities. During the early stages of formation, teams should focus on developing a common understanding of the environmental opportunities and challenges of their post and establishing a vision and mission, as well as defining regular team meeting schedules and procedures. The tools associated with this phase are as follows:

- **The Guide to Green Embassies:** ‘Using this Guide’: This chapter of the *Guide* provides many tips associated with setting goals, planning, and effective behavior change techniques that help increase staff engagement in greening activities. The *Guide* provides over 50 strategies that can be implemented by post to reduce its environmental footprint, increase indoor environmental quality, and align with federal performance goals.
- **Post Green Team Recruitment Signage:** This template has been created to be easily modified to recruit new team members.
- **Post Green Team Charter:** This tool helps formalize newly formed or existing teams and can also be used to gain green team support from post management.
- **Post Green Team Meeting Minutes:** This template helps teams and their stakeholders remain informed, regardless of their ability to attend meetings.

Greening Activities

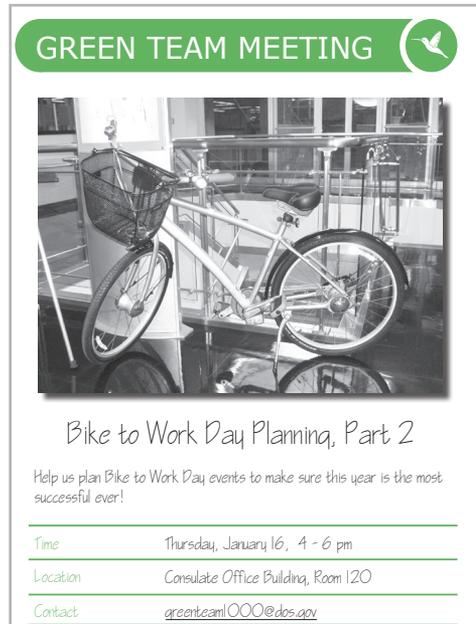
The second phase of green team development is focused on supporting the actions of greening activities: advocating and raising awareness of important sustainability issues, scheduling events and activities, developing a sustainability work plan, tracking actions and results, and keeping upper management informed. The focus of this phase is activating and motivating behavior change; reducing water, energy, and material impacts; and communicating, educating, and increasing awareness of federal performance goals, Department of State policies, and best practices.

Greening Activities have been organized into three types: personal, social, and structural. The types generally track from easy and less impactful to harder and most impactful. Thus, guidance in this Toolkit helps teams identify quick wins through personal changes, create social events that raise awareness of environmental concerns and eco-diplomacy goals, and implement structural changes to policies and the physical environment, all of which are needed to create a well-rounded, and successful green team implementation plan.

The tools associated with this phase are as follows:

- **Post Greening Activity Request:** This template can be used to request resources needed to implement a greening activity.
- **Environmental Observances List:** This tool contains an extensive list of environmental observances along with some details and resources for more information; teams may consult the list when considering a post activity to see if it can be coordinated with a global observance date.
- **Event Planning Guidance:** This aid provides a list of tips and best practices for planning a sustainable event or activity.
- **Post Event Signage:** These templates can be used to create awareness of and increase attendance at green team events (Figure 3).
- **Post Awareness and Behavior Change Signage:** These templates can be used to raise awareness about green technologies or behavior changes that can help achieve desired results.
- **Sample Green Operating Policies:** These template policy tools can be used to create new post-specific policies or plans.
- **Guide to Green Embassies Strategy Spreadsheet:** This tool allows teams to sort through all of the strategies in the *Guide* to determine which may be most appropriate to implement, based on post characteristics and specific benefits and commitments required for the strategies.
- **Post Greening Activity Briefing:** This template and example presentation can be used to communicate the status of current greening activities, as well as to announce new greening activities.
- **Social Media Guidance:** This resource provides guidance on when and how to engage a wider audience in post's greening activities through social media.

Figure 3: Templates for event signage are provided within the Toolkit



Source: U.S. Department of State

- **Post Green Team Implementation Plan Template:** This template allows teams to document sustainability goals and summarize key metrics from greening activities in their implementation plan.

Results

The third phase of green team development is focused on measuring and communicating results externally and internally by recording achievements resulting from greening activities. Examples of communications include briefing management, sharing greening success stories on the [GDI Awards Sounding Board](#), and celebrating accomplishments through social media and @StateGDI on Twitter and Facebook. Success stories submitted via the GDI Awards Sounding Board are used in the [GDI Success Stories Map](#), which is available for both the public and senior Department leaders to learn about posts' sustainability initiatives. Communicating demonstrated measurable results can help Post Green Teams establish credibility. Whether a smaller, self-identified success, such as hosting a sustainability training session, or the culmination of a larger initiative, communicating and rewarding positive measurable impacts help a team maintain momentum and garner additional support from their colleagues and management. Publicized positive results may also inspire Post Green Teams and champions at other posts to pursue excellence in their own sustainability work. The tools associated with this phase are as follows:

- **GDI Shared Resources Library:** This folder, located on GDI's SharePoint site, is a green team resource, where teams can reduce duplication by referencing other green teams' work for ideas, inspiration, and materials.
- **Post Green Team Case Study:** This template and example provide the guidance structure to complete a case study and share the results of greening activity implementation.
- **Greening Success Story Guidance:** This tool aids in the process of writing and submitting a greening activity success story.
- **Post Greening Activity Report:** This document allows a Post Green Team to summarize the outcome of the initiative, including costs, effort, and observed results.
- **Green Award Templates:** These templates allow Post Green Teams to honor individuals by presenting them with a certificate that recognizes their contribution to a greening activity.

Organizing for Sustainability

The following content directly and purposely aligns with the ‘Using this Guide’ chapter of the *Guide*. Green teams should read ‘Using this Guide’ before beginning the activities found within this section to better understand how to successfully form, organize, and plan greening activities. Each of the three sections below is relevant to a newly forming Post Green Team. Experienced green teams that are already organized should review each section to determine which steps should be implemented to formalize and strengthen their team and processes.

Formalize the Team

Developing a collaborative and action-oriented team should be the main focus of the first few meetings of a newly forming Post Green Team. The following steps provide guidance on using these key foundational meetings to formalize standard protocol for meetings and activities, and to generate interest in and commitment to the team.

1. **Develop** support. Gain approval from immediate supervisor(s) before making a recruitment call to form a green team. Share a copy of the *Guide* with management and ask them to read the Foreword and Introduction.
2. **Organize** for the meeting. Use the **Post Green Team Recruitment Signage** to communicate the recruitment call and announce the inaugural meeting (Figure 4). In addition, take time to personally recruit critical stakeholders to join the team, people who can help remove roadblocks and identify opportunities. Valuable members typically contributing to Post Green Teams include: PA; FM; IMO; GSO; RSO; CLO; FMO; economic, political, and ESTH

Figure 4: A template for green team recruitment is included in the Toolkit



Source: U.S. Department of State



officers; fleet managers and drivers; PAS, SHEMA, and gardeners. Consider the list of those indicated in the *Guide*: 'Using this Guide'. Share a copy of the *Guide* with these potential team members and ask them to read the Foreword and Introduction.

3. **Review** the *Guide*, the Greening Council Charter, and the **Post Green Team Charter**.
4. **Hold** an annual kick-off meeting. Use the **Post Green Team Meeting Minutes** tool for guidance on general agenda standards and to assist in organizing notes. Following are some suggestions for the meeting agenda.
 - **Introductions:** The individual or group of individuals who championed the meeting should share why formalizing a Post Green Team is important. If meeting attendance isn't too large, ask participants to introduce themselves (name, title, and department). If there is time, encourage them to share why they are interested in the green team and what they hope to contribute.
 - **Discussion questions:** To engage discussion from those in attendance, ask some simple, but provocative, questions to emphasize why the post needs a green team and why individuals should volunteer to be a part of it. Some sample questions include:
 - Has anyone participated on a green team at another post? If so, what lessons were learned?
 - What sustainability challenges do you think we face at this post?
 - What kinds of projects, activities, and goals do you hope can be implemented by the green team?
 - What do you think motivates people to change their behavior?
 - What should be our green team's focus and why?
 - **Resources:** Introduce or reintroduce the *Guide*, note where it can be found online, and describe the kind of information included. Introduce the **Post Green Team Toolkit**, and direct those in attendance to its location and tell how it can be used. Explain where to find the Greening Diplomacy Initiative and OBO Green Page on SharePoint.
 - **Charter:** Present the **Post Green Team Charter**. Go over the intent of the charter and encourage people to share their thoughts on the Greening Council's mission statement and guiding principles.
 - **Next Steps:** Ensure that the meeting ends with a summary of the next steps for advancing the formalization of the green team. Next steps should include further review of the charter, as needed, and

establishment of team roles and responsibilities. Set a time to reconvene. Be sure to record meeting minutes and new agenda items for the next meeting, using the **Post Green Team Meeting Minutes** tool.

U.S. Embassy Paris volunteers clean up the Seine River as part of Sustainable Development Week



Image Source: U.S. Embassy Paris

5. **Determine** rules of order. If interest is high and there are ten or more team members, consider adopting a formal process to manage future meetings to ensure respect and open communication. *Robert's Rules of Order* can be used to manage group discussions to create simple or more rigorous meeting processes.

- **A Summary of the Guiding Principles of Robert's Rules of Order**
 - All members are equal and should have equal rights and access to participation.
 - All members have the right to participate in discussion, if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.
 - All members have the right to know what is going on at all times.
 - Matters should be considered one at a time according to their importance.
 - There should always be full discussion on a matter before action is taken.
 - Discussions and actions should focus on propositions rather than on persons.

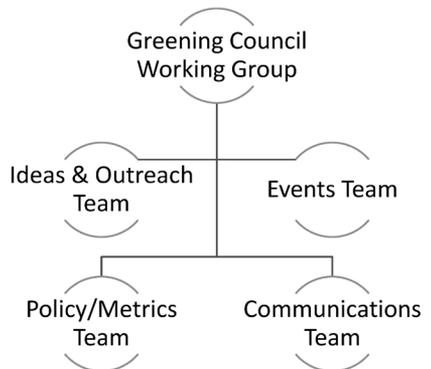
- Under normal circumstances, the majority rules and makes all decisions.
- A two-thirds majority is required for extraordinary questions or propositions.
- Silence by the assembly gives implied consent and the assembly may move forward as if the matter has been adopted.
- Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.

Establish Roles

All Post Green Teams need dedicated leaders to help keep the green team focused, committed to common goals, and able to track greening activities, from initial idea to reports of success. The following steps help ensure that the right leaders are identified, and their roles and responsibilities are clearly articulated and recognized by all members of the team.

1. **Identify** strengths and weaknesses of the team. Review the strengths of participants in the inaugural meeting and identify and recruit critical participants who might have been missing. Valuable team members are listed within Step 2 of [Formalize the Team](#).
2. **Define** framework. In the meeting, identify a leader or chairperson of the Post Green Team. Leadership responsibilities are outlined in the *Guide: 'Using this Guide', [Organizing for Sustainability](#)*. Be sure that the leader meets the qualifications and aptitude, and has a desire for the position. Establish a term for the leader, such as one or two years.
3. **Define** roles and responsibilities. Discuss adding other roles to the team to help give each participant an opportunity to demonstrate results. The team may want to establish roles following the committee categories of the Greening Council Working Group: Policy & Metrics, Communications, Ideas & Outreach, and Official Events (Figure 5). Details on these roles can be found in the [Greening Council Charter](#). Alternatively, your team may want to organize roles around the categories of the annual [GDI Activities Survey](#): Facilities, Transportation, Procurement,

Figure 5: The Greening Council is organized into teams that implement key functions of greening activities



Source: U.S. Department of State

Information Technology (IT), Recycling, and Leading by Example. Although not required, a team may elect to create a staff position dedicated to accomplishing sustainability goals. If you wish to formalize a position such as a Greening Coordinator, Energy Manager, and/or Resource Conservation Specialist, refer to the **GDI Shared Resources Library** for examples of these documents.

Adopt a Charter

Before individuals formally assume their roles, be sure to obtain the approval of their supervisor(s), using the **Post Green Team Charter**. This document records the time commitment that members plan to contribute to the team and helps the team achieve support for implementing future greening activities.

1. **Hold** a charter adoption meeting. During this meeting, review the Greening Council’s mission and guiding principles and determine if they fit the needs of your post. Supplement or augment them as required to connect with the priorities of your Post’s context and host country’s concerns. Figure 6 provides a list of action-orientated words that can be used to refine the charter. Discussing these words collaboratively can help build consensus on unique adjustments to the charter to make it more meaningful to your team.
2. **Complete** the **Post Green Team Charter**. This tool should be shared with your supervisor(s) to gain approval. If you have already formed a green team, use the charter document to formalize your group. Once the charter has been authorized, your team should begin to meet formally on a regular basis to plan, implement, and celebrate greening activities undertaken by the team.

Figure 6: Consider modifying your team’s mission statement using the following action orientated words

Tenants of teamwork	
Listen and collaborate	Contribute to a positive environment
Lead by example	Treat each other with respect
Adapt and adjust	Strive for continuous learning
Promote inclusiveness	Innovate
Demonstrate transparency	Champion teamwork
Recognize excellence	Value accountability
Celebrate diversity	Honor commitments

Source: U.S. Department of State

Greening Activities

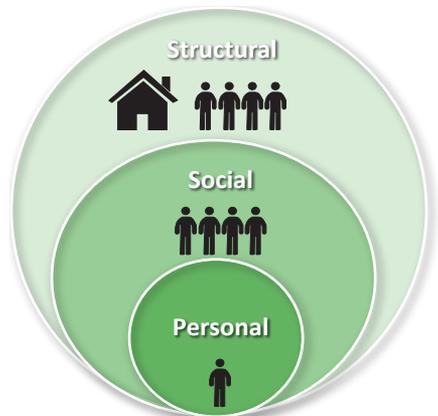
As discussed within the *Guide: 'Using this Guide', Influencing Occupant Behavior*, Post Green Teams can make a major difference in the impact of U.S. operations on their host countries' environments and local economies, as well as in the lives and health of embassy personnel by implementing greening activities. Effective and highly integrated Post Green Teams can, through careful planning, communication, and management, undertake many activities throughout the year that implement lasting change and demonstrate eco-diplomacy to their host countries. Newly formed teams should carefully select and implement a few greening activities in their first year to ensure a foundation of success. The team can build upon those successes to implement more and increasingly-comprehensive activities.

Posts can categorize greening activities in many ways. One of the most successful ways is to organize them by type (Figure 7):

- **Personal:** Typically the easiest to implement, personal commitments to take action and lead by example can be made by every member of a Post Green Team.
- **Social:** The most visible and best ways to generate interest in a Post Green Team are events, meetings, and celebrations to raise awareness of specific environmental concerns or to increase behavior change that can support the Greening Council's mission and federal performance goals.
- **Structural:** Changes to policies and the physical environment, through signage or modifications of systems (equipment or operations), can be an extremely effective way to increase environmental performance.

For more information on the definitions of Personal, Social, and Structural greening activities and how they can help create positive behavior changes in personnel, refer to the *Guide: 'Using this Guide', Influencing Occupant Behavior*. To prioritize greening activities, green teams should compare the unique content of each type of activity

Figure 7: Each greening activity can be organized into one of three types



Source: U.S. Department of State



with post context to identify which greening activities have the best chances to achieve post greening goals. Teams can create meaningful implementation plans by understanding post environmental context, such as the existing condition of facilities, the local environmental and political challenges in host countries, the state of multi-lateral environmental negotiations, the Greening Council's mission, and federal performance goals. The following sections offer a series of questions and examples to help teams identify which activities to implement.

While not necessarily true for implementation of all greening activities, generally the level of outreach, stakeholder engagement, labor, budget, time, and experience required increases from personal to social to structural. Accordingly, the context questions addressed within these sections (personal, social, structural) build on each other; social builds on personal, structural builds on social. Additionally, consider how each greening activity will either be an internal or external outreach activity. Generally, internal post activities require less formality and approval in order to be implemented, whereas external events may be more challenging, but ultimately advance top-level goals for the Department and provide post more visibly.

Personal

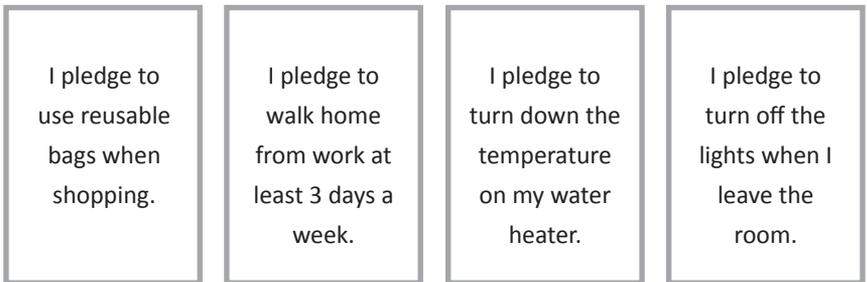
Personal greening activities can be powerful ways to connect with each person on the green team. Activities will be unique to each individual, offering visible opportunities for every member of the green team to lead by example, according to personal beliefs and backgrounds. This connection to foundational beliefs is key to success.

- 1. Review** the definition of personal greening activities. Review the *Guide: 'Using this Guide', Influencing Occupant Behavior, Personal* as a group and discuss its content during one of the first green team meetings.
- 2. Understand** your personal context. Ask yourself the following questions to help identify personal beliefs that are aligned with post's characteristics, to assist in selecting a personal greening activity:
 - Is there an environmental issue that you believe in deeply and have committed your time to addressing in the past?
 - Is there an environmental issue in your host country that you want to address?
 - Is there a favorite outdoor activity that you want to engage others in participating through the protection of the natural environment?
 - Are there inefficiencies at the post that can be addressed through changes in individual behavior that you want to lead?



- Do you have a role model who implements simple greening activities that you try to follow?
- 3. Identify** personal greening activities. The *Guide* contains a number of suggestions for personal greening activities that can be found in each strategy under the section entitled Staff Engagement, found at the end of each chapter. Explore the website ‘A Billion Acts of Green’ and the GDI Shared Resources Library ‘Personal Greening Activities’ folder to identify small but impactful behavior change opportunities. Use post characteristics to determine which actions resonate with the team, offer the biggest opportunities for improvement, and best demonstrate the team’s personal commitment to environmental stewardship in the host country.
 - 4. Take** a green pledge. One way to promote personal greening activities is to take a green pledge and to circulate it for others to see (Figure 8). Some green team members may elect to keep their pledges private, but a public display of pledges within post promotes discussion among co-workers and encourages others.

Figure 8: Take a personal pledge and display it within your workspace



Source: U.S. Department of State

- 5. Make** personal commitments part of every meeting. Ask each green team member to take turns beginning the meeting by discussing a positive behavior change that they have implemented, to inspire others.

Social

Social interactions offer an effective means to raise awareness about environmental issues and federal performance goals. Social engagements may involve internal post personnel or the external community. While social greening activities may vary by post due to diverse cultural and environmental contexts, some rules exist for implementing social engagements, so the following steps can help teams determine the most appropriate types of social events.

1. **Review** the definition of social greening activities. Review the *Guide: 'Using this Guide', Influencing Occupant Behavior, Social* as a group and discuss its content during one of the first green team meetings.
2. **Understand** your social context. Every post has a few leaders who know how to connect people to each other through effective planning and networking. Identify and engage these leaders. Additionally, green teams can use existing events, festivals, or other opportunities to help engage staff in, and implement, greening activities. Finally, connect with your Public Affairs office at post regarding the current political and economic climate in the host country to determine if there are eco-diplomacy opportunities that the Post Green Team can help facilitate. Also check with economic and information technology officers to see if there are technologies and ideas related to greening that would be an interesting way to facilitate interactions with the local community.

Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield presides over a ribbon-cutting ceremony at U.S. Embassy Monrovia's new recycling center



Image Source: U.S. Embassy Monrovia

The following questions may help uncover key opportunities for social greening activities:

- What were elements of past post events that caused them to be well attended?
- What local festivals and celebrations garner the most excitement and participation?
- Who organizes the most successful social interactions at your post?
- Are there local environmental issues that the host country rallies around, such as clean-up events; tree-plantings; or endangered species breeding, migration, and protection activities?
- What are the main sources of information that post personnel read regularly related to environmental concerns?
- What protocols for planning and running events must be followed in order to use needed post facilities or other resources?

3. **Identify** meaningful social greening activities. The *Guide* contains a number of suggestions for Social Greening Activities that can be found in each strategy entitled ‘Staff Engagement’ at the end of each chapter. Refer to the **Environmental Observances List** for an extensive list of environmental observances along with some details and resources for more information. Expand the list of dates if your host country has unique environmental observance dates.

Connect to major environmental observances with activities such as convening a panel discussion of experts, having a brown bag ‘lunch and learn’ with an international expert, holding an educational community event on the observance date, or writing an article for the local paper about how the U.S. Embassy/Consulate is supporting or leading environmental stewardship.

Finally, refer to the **League of Green Embassies** to learn what other Post Green Teams have implemented, to gain valuable insight before planning.

4. **Plan** and promote your events. Use the **Event Planning Guidance**, which contains a number of tips and best practices for planning a sustainable event or activity. Consider using the **Post Event Signage** templates; these can be easily modified to create awareness of, and increase attendance at, green team events. Consider uploading your event to the GDI shared calendar on SharePoint or emailing it to stateGDI@state.gov. Your event will be added to a centralized database of events to enable cross-post coordination.

For additional examples of many of the above documents, refer to the **GDI Shared Resources Folder** on SharePoint.

Structural

Structural changes are perhaps the most effective and challenging greening activities that a Post Green Team may elect to implement. Structural changes might involve working with post management to implement a policy change; with your FM to make system upgrades or changes to the physical environment; or with the GSO to suggest changes to procurement practices. Whatever structural greening activities a Post Green Team elects to implement, care should be taken to involve and communicate with key stakeholders so that changes are effective and implemented smoothly.

1. **Review** the definition of structural greening activities. Review the *Guide*: ‘Using this Guide’, **Influencing Occupant Behavior**, **Structural** as a group and discuss its content during one of the first meetings of the Post Green Team.



- Analyze** GDI Sustainability Survey results from past years (Figure 9), as well as **Sample Green Operating Policies**. The survey helps identify which standard policies, procedures, and performance goals post is not implementing or achieving. Compare post’s policies with the samples provided to identify potential performance gaps. Record key findings so that deficiencies can be addressed before engaging in more complex, but aligned, greening activities. View the interactive results on the GDI SharePoint site.

Figure 9: The GDI Sustainability Survey ask posts to report on their greening activities

GDI		Greening Activities Inventory FY 2013
	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
Buildings	<i>Facilities - Q1 Post is compliant with the Energy Policy Act (2005) requirement to meter all buildings by 2012</i>	Y N
	<i>Facilities - Q2 Post is using the OBO Utility Portal to track monthly utility use and cost for buildings over 464sm (5,000sf)</i>	Y N
	<i>Facilities - Q3 Post has implemented a policy to discourage individual plug-in equipment in the office (e.g. individual coffee makers, space heaters, fans, radios)</i>	Y N
	<i>Facilities - Q4 Post has implemented an energy and water conservation campaign to encourage occupant behavior modification such as turning off equipment/lights after hours</i>	Y N
	<i>Facilities – Q5 (Optional) Any successes or challenges for implementing behavior modification programs at Post that you'd like to share?</i>	
	<i>Residential Utilities - Q1 Post informs residents of their individual utility consumption and cost</i>	Y N

Source: U.S. Department of State

- Determine** the unique structural context of your post. Read the introductions to each of the chapters in the *Guide* and discuss them at a regular green team meeting . Next, compile a list of all the common characteristics that makes your post unique, to help the team identify a focus area for structural changes. Keep these notes handy for use in selecting strategies from the *Guide* as part of your implementation plan. The questions in Figure 10 are excerpted from the chapter introductions to the *Guide* to help decipher key pieces of contextual information that will assist in identifying structural greening activities:

Figure 10: Answer these questions to help your team select appropriate greening activities

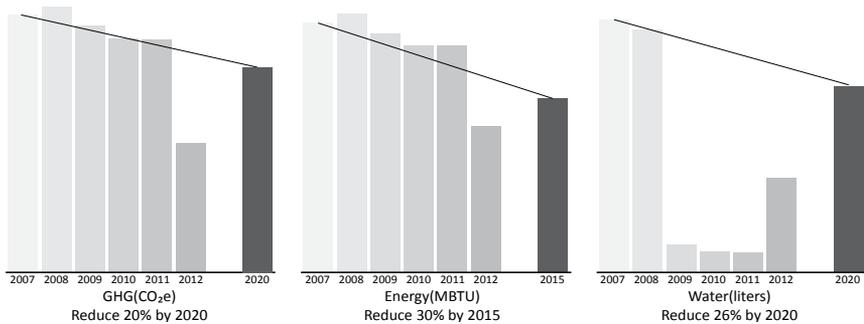
Post Context Questions	
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is post located in a low-density (less urban) location? • Is it safe to use public transportation in your location? • Do single passenger commuters make up >50% of staff? • Does post have a large vehicle fleet?
Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is post located in an urban location? • Does post lack domestic water or sanitary sewer infrastructure? • Does post get significant annual rainfall? • Is post located in an arid climate? • Does post have extensive landscaped areas?
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is post located in an area with extreme or exceptional drought? • Does post experience moderate or heavy annual rainfall? • Does post have on-site water or waste water treatment? • Are plumbing fixtures, fittings or irrigation systems > 10 years old? • Does post have a high percentage of irrigated area?
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does post have on-site prime power generation? • Was post renovated > 15 years ago? • Is post located in a harsh climate zone? • Are the lighting systems > 8 years old? • Is the office and IT equipment > 5 years old?
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is waste recycling available? • Does post have a cafeteria for more than 100 FTE? • Does post have plans for construction or building upgrades within 3 years?
Indoor Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does post have a high volume of occupant complaints? • Is the age of the building > 15 years? • Was the building last commissioned > 5 years ago? • Is post located in an area with poor outdoor air quality? • Does post have renovation plans within one year?
Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is energy cost and security a concern at post residences? • Is water cost and scarcity a concern at post residences? • Is there infrastructure for residential recycling?

Source: U.S. Department of State

- Record** the results of your assessment. Compile a list of all the questions to which you responded “yes” to categorize the common characteristics that make your post unique, in order to identify a focus area for structural changes. Additionally, keep track of other key structural contextual information that may not have been covered in the *Guide*, but which may help the team select structural greening activities.
- Review** utility data. Log onto OBO’s Utility Management, Analysis, and Reporting tool, the Tririga Real Estate Environmental Sustainability (TREES) database and review your post’s report cards for required buildings to understand how post is tracking toward the federal performance goals, and how energy and water usage trending compares year after year. For example, Figure 11 shows that the U.S. Consulate General building in Hong Kong is meeting its carbon, energy, and water reduction goals. If a building at post has not met one or more of the targets, prioritize greening activities accordingly.

The building report card also benchmarks buildings (in both usage per FTE and usage per square meter), against buildings of the same type at other posts in the same climate region. Figure 12 shows that, although the subject building is on track for energy reduction goals, it is in the mid-range for usage per square meter and the second highest for usage per FTE, within its comparison group.

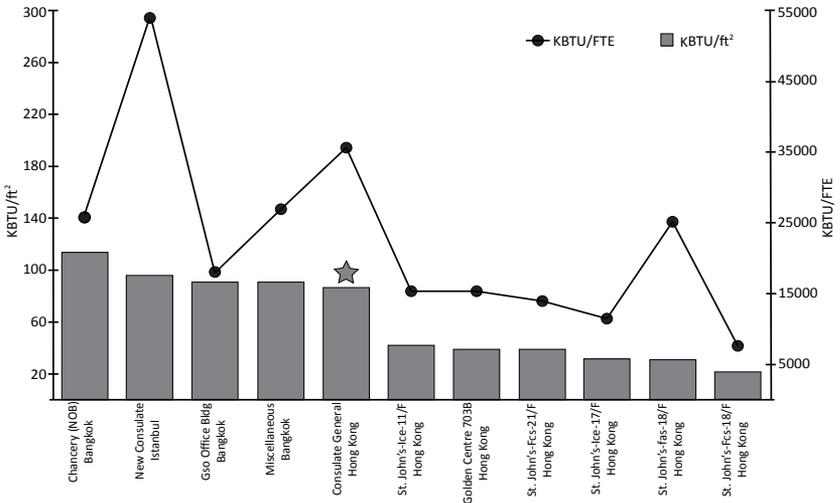
Figure 11: Sample progress toward targets from TREES report



Source: U.S. Department of State

- Identify** meaningful structural greening activities. Use the characteristics specific to post to determine the strategies that offer the biggest opportunities for improvement, and that best demonstrate to the host country the shared commitment to environmental stewardship. There are two key tools to help teams select structural greening activities:

Figure 12: Comparison of energy consumption of the U.S. Consulate General building in Hong Kong to its peers



Source: U.S. Department of State

- Sample Green Operating Policies:** This document contains a number of standard policy templates that can be used by teams to increase their GDI Survey scores. The introduction to each policy contains a table that lists time, benefit, and cost to implement, helping teams prioritize policies according to their assessments.
- Guide to Green Embassies Strategy Tool:** Use this tool to make the connection between the characteristics identified in steps three and four above and the specific strategies in the *Guide* that offer opportunities for post to make the best performance improvements. An audit should always be the first step to establish baseline conditions against which to measure improvements. From the shortlist of audits and strategies, catalog the time, benefit, investment, and team members required to rank the strategies listed according to which ones will make the most impact and are most feasible at your post. Refer to the *Guide*: ‘Using this Guide’, Strategies for more information.

If your team wishes to pursue a strategy not found in the **Sample Green Operating Policies** or the *Guide*, ensure that proper research for feasibility, benefit, investment, time, and level of difficulty is performed. Involve subject matter experts to aid in the research and assessment so that teams fully understand what is required to achieve success. If you need assistance in locating key players outside of post, please contact OBGreenTeam@state.gov or stateGDI@state.gov.

Develop an Implementation Plan

After your team has completed their review of personal, social, and structural context, assessed the capability and resources required for each greening activity, and created a prioritized list of all proposed greening activities, it is time to develop an implementation plan. The purpose of the implementation plan is to help teams detail an approach to greening activities that accurately represents what can be achieved and aligns them with Greening Council's mission and federal performance goals to maximize return on investment. By creating an implementation plan, your green team will demonstrate to your post management that you understand the scope and scale of efforts required to help post achieve performance improvements. A clear and concise implementation plan will allow the green team to stay focused on shared goals and to apply the changes needed to achieve those goals. As a best practice, perform this task annually to align with annual budget requests and the fiscal year cycle. An annual implementation plan allows teams to be well positioned to procure necessary funds and to adjust to rotations of staff who join and depart the green team. As you read the steps below, record your thoughts about your post on the [Post Green Team Implementation Plan Template](#).

Consider creating a “greening corner” in a high traffic area to promote greening activities



Image Source: U.S. Department of State

- 1. Identify** Post Green Team sustainability goals. Use the GDI Survey and federal performance goals to identify opportunities for making the greatest impact. When selecting goals, reference the information gleaned from the review of personal, social, and structural context exercises so that the goals support the most pressing performance issues at post and the greatest eco-diplomacy opportunities within the host country. Goals should identify the current baseline and performance targets, align with federal performance goals, and serve as indicators of success.
 - **Example of Post Green Team Sustainability Goals**
 - Engage 80% or more of staff in making a personal green pledge
 - Implement one internal and one external social event

- Gain participation from Public Affairs to help communicate results
- Reduce potable water consumption intensity by 20% by 2015 using a 2007 baseline
- Reduce waste by 10% year-over-year from the outcome of the waste audit conducted in 2010
- Reduce post energy loads by 5% through behavior change

2. Prioritize and select personal, social, and structural greening activities. Using the goals identified in Step 1 and the list of greening activities catalogued by the team, begin to prioritize implementation of activities. By focusing on top priorities, the team can leverage its full expertise, time, and commitment. Resist the urge to implement activities that require more resources than the team has available, and consider identifying ‘low hanging fruit’ that will allow the team to gain early success or maintain momentum during staff rotations or during times of limited green team resource availability.

The implementation plan should clearly state the specific time and resource needs, identify funding sources, and assist in prioritizing greening activities implementation. Complete the input fields with specific quantities (Figure 13) and then go back through and prioritize greening activities implementation.

Figure 13: An implementation plan should be prioritized based on your team’s available resources

Priority	Type	Greening Activity	Benefits	Investment	Time
1	Personal	Green Pledge	Increased engagement	N/A	10 hrs
2	Structural	Efficient Fixtures	~20% Less water use	\$20,000	100 hrs
3	Social	Recycling Event	~50% Waste reduction	\$500	30 hrs
4	Structural	Vampire Energy Load Awareness Program	~2-5% Energy load reduction	\$100	60 hrs

Image Source: U.S. Department of State

- 3. Backcheck** implementation plan with resources. Assess the time commitment needed for greening activity success, and determine if you need additional resources. Consider recruiting additional members, as necessary. Defer activities that cannot be properly supported.
- 4. Complete** the **Post Greening Activity Request** for each activity. This planning tool allows teams to formalize their approach to implementing each greening activity by creating a more detailed plan. Using this tool will allow your team to create a common understanding of what

it will take to implement the activity, and the compiled information can be used to acquire formal approval and/or funding for the activity. The Activity Request establishes a common understanding of why the activity is important, how it can improve post performance, what personnel/resources are required, results that will be generated, and what managers who approve the request can expect. Note that a **Post Greening Activity Report** tool has been created that contains the same organization and fields as the request tool, to make close-out of an activity easy to implement.

5. Develop a communication plan for each greening activity. There are two components for a communications plan, internal and external.

- **Internal:** Before beginning any greening activity, it is important to consider how to communicate the activity to post personnel who may be impacted by it. An important feature of successful communications that enable further green team activities is making personal connections with post personnel who can make a difference. Keeping personnel informed and engaged goes a long way toward creating an atmosphere of green innovation. Internal assets that may be utilized to communicate to internal post audiences include e-mail, newsletters, management notices, flyers, phone calls, events, briefing checklists, info-memos, All Diplomatic and Consular Posts (ALDAC), GDI Awards on Sounding Board, **GDI Shared Resources Library** on SharePoint, and Corridor and SharePoint sites.
- **External:** Communicating your green team activities externally helps further eco-diplomacy and community engagement. Work with your Public Affairs, Public Diplomacy and ESTH officers to see how your operations and events align with broader goals, and how you can showcase your efforts in a post-wide campaign.

Determine when to communicate internally and/or externally based on the content of the message

U.S Embassy San Salvador participates in the League of Green Embassies Green Summer Challenge by contributing toward the construction of a bottle school in Candelaria, El Salvador



Image Source: U.S. Embassy San Salvador

and the desired outcome of the communication. Generally, you want to communicate all stories internally to help inform post, regional directors, PMOs, and other stakeholders. A more complex decision is whether to also communicate stories externally. Below are a few questions to ask your team to help identify whether the story should be communicated externally.

- **Does the story support post’s eco-diplomacy goals?** Review the Secretary of State’s call to action contained within the introduction of this Toolkit to look for alignment.

U.S. Embassy Ashgabat provides an educational seminar on how to compost



Image Source: U.S. Embassy Ashgabat

- **Does the story fit into your post’s broader policy and engagement goals?** Discuss with relevant officers when it’s best to communicate your message so that it aligns with others that are planned.
- **Does the story contain sensitive information that represents a security issue?** If so, discuss the story with your RSO and other officers to ensure that sensitive information is not shared externally.
- **Can a target audience be defined?** Every communication should have a target audience – consider whom you want to reach with your story and how you can do so.

Consider the use of the following tools when trying to communicate significant activities:

- **Post Event Signage:** Templates and examples have been provided for events, awareness-building, and behavior change. Signage could be used as part of engagement strategies, to call attention to a new post policy, or provide green facts to personnel.

- **Post Greening Activity Briefing:** A template and example have been provided for the announcement, kickoff, or communication of greening activities. This could be used in a presentation, or the contents could be transferred to an email format.
 - **Social Media Guidance:** This resource provides guidance on when and how to engage a wider audience of your greening activities through social media.
 - **GDI Shared Resources Library:** This resource allows posts to see other posts' communication campaigns and materials, learn about successful communications strategies and more on the GDI SharePoint site.
 - **GDI Awards:** This resource encourages posts to submit greening success stories through the GDI SharePoint site and view previous winners.
6. **Implement** and measure each greening activity. As there are multiple types of activities (personal, social, and structural), and hundreds of options contained within the *Guide*, several **Sample Green Operating Policies**, and activities found on the [League of Green Embassies website](#), there is no one-size-fits-all approach to implementation. Take advantage of all available tools to assist with implementing your team's plan and tracking progress.
7. **Complete** a **Post Greening Activity Report**. Be sure to close out the activity by completing the report and providing it to post managers who approved the activity. Once this document is finalized, be sure to file it on the **GDI Shared Resources Library** on SharePoint.

Results

The most successful Post Green Teams are the ones that report results, to create a continuous improvement process by sharing best practices. All change agents use lessons learned from past experiences in future endeavors. It is important to celebrate individuals and teams that committed to, and completed, a successful sustainability-related undertaking. Below are some suggestions that Post Green Teams can use to celebrate their wins, catalogue their successes, and share their stories with others around the globe who are attempting similar activities:

- **Personal thank you:** A hand shake or hand-written note can go a long way toward forming an effective Post Green Team founded on mutual



respect. Reserve time at the close of each green team meeting to recognize those individuals who have gone above and beyond their duties to implement greening activities.

- **Annual Employee Evaluation Report:** Ensure all contributions to the green team are recognized and documented in each individual annual employee evaluation report.
- **Post Greening Activity Report:** Use this tool to document how a completed greening activity evolved from its inception and to document the actual results of the activity.
- **Green Award Template:** These templates provide a method for formal recognition of success and excellence exhibited by a member of the Post Green Team (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Green awards can be given to recognize significant contributions to a Post Green Team or a specific greening activity



Source: U.S. Department of State

- **Post Greening Activity Briefing:** To disseminate major accomplishments, the team should use this tool to communicate results. This editable template and completed example have been provided for briefing post and upper management on the results from greening activities, as an update on the green team implementation plan, or as part of an annual briefing. As a best practice, perform a green team briefing annually, at the end of fiscal year cycle. Creating an annual briefing allows teams to reflect on their experience from the previous year, and leverage what they learned. Consider reviewing data captured by TREES before and after greening activities and whether or not the post can report improvements on the GDI Survey that can be included in annual post briefings.
- **Post Green Team Case Study:** This template and example provide guidance to complete a case study similar to those found in the *Guide*. By creating and sharing these studies with other posts, teams can help others be inspired and spark further adoption of greening activities.
- **Greening Success Story Guidance:** This tool aids in the process of writing and submitting a greening activity as a Success Story. By submitting it for awards, Post Green Teams can gain greater recognition both inside

and outside the mission. These awards will generate national stories that will help post demonstrate eco-diplomacy and gain momentum to try additional greening activities.

- **GDI Shared Resources Library on SharePoint**: Submit implementation plans, **Post Greening Activity Requests**, **Post Greening Activity Reports**, and other tools used to successfully implement a greening activity to the Shared Resources Library on the GDI SharePoint site. By sharing tools, your team will be able to help other teams succeed, and help the Department achieve its goal of eco-diplomacy.

For additional examples of the above documents, refer to the **GDI Shared Resources Library** on SharePoint.

Figure 15: Case study templates help teams share their stories with other posts

Case Study: Native Planting

Cape Town, South Africa

Benefit	Preserves endangered species habitat, decreases potable water consumption, and reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
Team Members	OBO Design Consultants, FM, Gardeners

The U.S. Consulate General in Cape Town, South Africa, made particularly good use of native plants to reduce irrigation demands, beautify their site, and preserve local endangered species, including the leopard frog, which makes its home in the Westlake River.¹

Landscape architects specified using only indigenous plants, which are attractive and perform well under local conditions. The plants selected help prevent soil erosion, even on steeply graded slopes. Erosion control was a major challenge, as the Westlake River runs through the Consulate site.

The results of the Consulate's landscape efforts included decreased potable water consumption for irrigation, increased biodiversity, and reduced GHG emissions and the overall carbon footprint of the United States Government. The Department is demonstrating eco-diplomacy through landscape design that promotes native habitat.

Native plants foster endangered wildlife species at U.S. Consulate General Cape Town



Image Source: State Department, April 2012

Source: U.S. Department of State

Resources

 Visit <http://www.state.gov/obo/green/greenguiderefs/index.htm#toolkit>

Endnotes

¹ Excerpted from 'We Need To Elevate the Environment in Everything We Do', Posted by DipNote Bloggers, March 7, 2014



FOR MORE INFORMATION
United States Department of State
Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
Office of Design and Engineering
Energy and Sustainable Design Unit
Arlington, VA 22209

<http://obo.m.state.sbu/greenteam/Pages/PostGreenTeamToolkit>



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