



IFLA Section
**Environment,
Sustainability and Libraries**

IFLA Guidelines for Green Libraries

– Step-by-Step Implementation Manual –

Edited by the IFLA Guidelines for Green Libraries Working Group
of the IFLA Environment, Sustainability and Libraries (ENSULIB) Section

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Introduction

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) developed the IFLA Guidelines for Green Libraries to support libraries worldwide in advancing environmental, social, and economic sustainability. These guidelines recognise libraries as powerful community institutions that can lead by example, reduce their environmental footprint, and foster knowledge, inclusion, and resilience.

This Step-by-Step Implementation Manual builds on the principles outlined in the Guidelines by offering a practical, step-by-step pathway for action. It translates strategic sustainability concepts into achievable measures that libraries of all types and sizes — public, academic, school, national, and special — can adapt to their local context.

The manual also aligns library sustainability efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations. By connecting daily operations and community programmes to global priorities such as quality education, climate action, reduced inequalities, and sustainable cities and communities, libraries contribute meaningfully to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Through leadership, collaboration, and continuous improvement, libraries can serve as visible, trusted hubs for sustainability — demonstrating that even small, practical actions can support global transformation.

The manual was developed by an international team of librarians, including members of ENSULIB and other IFLA Sections, under the coordination of Petra Hauke. ENSULIB gratefully acknowledges the dedication and collaborative efforts of all contributors whose knowledge and experience helped shape this practical resource.

Libraries may implement steps gradually according to available resources, local priorities, and institutional goals.

Part 1: How to Build a Green Library – Practical Foundations

Step 1 – Commit to Becoming a Green Library

Establish a clear institutional commitment to sustainability.

- ☐ Discuss sustainability within leadership and staff.
- ☐ Build a Green Library Team.
- ☐ Integrate sustainability and the library's role as a community sustainability actor into the library mission, strategy, and governance documents.
- ☐ Adopt a formal commitment to environmental, social, and economic sustainability.
- ☐ Develop a realistic implementation and resource strategy.
- ☐ Connect efforts with relevant SDGs.
- ☐ Add one sustainability objective to the next annual strategic plan.
- ☐ Commit to an ongoing sustainability programme.

Output: Statement of commitment or sustainability vision

Step 2 – Staff Training and Development

Equip staff with skills and awareness to integrate sustainability into daily workflows.

- ☐ Assess staff capacity.
- ☐ Provide training on sustainability and green practices.
- ☐ Promote interactive learning experiences that foster a culture of collaboration and continuous learning among staff.
- ☐ Promote participation in international sustainability initiatives and professional knowledge exchange.
- ☐ Encourage idea sharing.
- ☐ Include ethical and local or Indigenous considerations.
- ☐ Build awareness of social responsibility and inclusion.
- ☐ Build staff capacity as sustainability facilitators.
- ☐ Identify sustainability improvements across library functions.

Output: Skilled and sustainability-aware staff

Step 3 – Operations and Maintenance

Ensure well-governed, efficient, and sustainable operations.

- ☐ Appoint a sustainability coordinator/team. In small libraries with limited staff, a single coordinator or a small cross-functional group may take on multiple roles to ensure sustainability actions remain practical and manageable.
- ☐ Define key goals and actions.
- ☐ Promote sustainable daily habits and apply green IT practices, such as switching off devices when not in use, enabling energy-saving modes, and using double-sided printing.
- ☐ Use eco-friendly cleaning products.
- ☐ Promote sustainable procurement and reuse.
- ☐ Support sustainable commuting.
- ☐ Communicate progress simply.
- ☐ Strengthen local partnerships.
- ☐ Join a green network or initiative.

Output: Sustainable and well-managed operations

Step 4 – Library Collections

Develop responsible, inclusive, and sustainability-focused collections through sustainable selection, acquisition, cataloguing, management, access, and delivery practices.

- ☐ Provide sustainability-related resources.
- ☐ Apply sustainability criteria in collection selection and acquisition decisions.
- ☐ Strengthen digital sustainability, discoverability, and equitable access.
- ☐ Incorporate sustainability principles into cataloguing, metadata, and collection management practices.
- ☐ Include diverse, local, traditional or Indigenous perspectives.
- ☐ Preserve cultural and knowledge heritage responsibly.
- ☐ Promote collaboration, resource sharing, and resource optimisation.
- ☐ Reduce environmental impacts associated with collection procurement, processing, storage, and delivery.
- ☐ Support environmental and information literacy.

Output: Sustainable, accessible, and responsibly managed collections

Step 5 – Services and Programmes

Deliver inclusive, community-driven services that integrate sustainable practices into learning, engagement, and everyday library use.

- ☐ Assess and respond to community needs.
- ☐ Create a green library action plan.

- ☐ Promote sustainability through services and community engagement.
- ☐ Offer environmental literacy, practical skills, and green livelihood programmes.
- ☐ Support entrepreneurship and green economic opportunities.
- ☐ Promote inclusion and social sustainability.
- ☐ Enable sustainable access to knowledge and community resources.
- ☐ Support citizen science and community learning.
- ☐ Extend learning beyond the library.

Output: Strong services and community engagement

Step 6 – Law, Ethics, and Traditions

Ensure compliance, ethical conduct, and respect for traditional, local, or Indigenous knowledge.

- ☐ Follow environmental regulations.
- ☐ Ensure transparency and avoid greenwashing.
- ☐ Promote fair and inclusive decision-making.
- ☐ Recognise and properly attribute traditional, local, or Indigenous knowledge.
- ☐ Respect traditional, local, or Indigenous knowledge systems.

Output: Ethical and legally compliant practices

Step 7 – Library Buildings and Equipment

Enhance sustainability, efficiency, and environmental responsibility in library infrastructure and equipment.

- ☐ Consider green building certifications.
- ☐ Minimise construction and renovation impact.
- ☐ Select durable, eco-friendly, low-emission, renewable, locally sourced furniture and materials.
- ☐ Prioritise renewable energy sources and reduce energy use.
- ☐ Strengthen energy resilience and cost management.
- ☐ Enhance water-use efficiency.
- ☐ Enhance climate resilience through locally appropriate building design.
- ☐ Optimise climate controls for collections by maintaining stable environmental conditions appropriate to preservation needs and sustainability considerations.
- ☐ Enhance accessibility, sustainable mobility, and community integration.
- ☐ Use library spaces as sustainability learning environments.

Output: Sustainable and efficient facilities

Step 8 – Monitoring and Evaluation

Track, assess, and improve sustainability performance.

- ☐ Conduct audits and analyse resource use.
- ☐ Define metrics, collect and analyse data.
- ☐ Monitor environmental and community impact.
- ☐ Collect user feedback.
- ☐ Report outcomes to stakeholders.
- ☐ Use results for continuous improvement.

Output: Continuous improvement and transparency

Part 2: Quick Start Checklist (With practical examples)

Step 1 – Commit to Becoming a Green Library

Establish a clear institutional commitment to sustainability.

- ☐ Discuss sustainability with leadership and staff.
Example: Host a one-hour sustainability meeting to brainstorm priorities.
[Appendix A.1.1:](#) Internal Sustainability Commitment Letter
[Appendix A.1.2:](#) One-Hour Internal Briefing Session “Becoming a Green Library”
- ☐ Build a Green Library Team.
Example: Include representatives from staff, management, and possibly community partners.
[Appendix A.1.3:](#) Invitation to Join our Green Library Team
- ☐ Integrate sustainability and the library's role as a community sustainability actor into the library mission, strategy, and governance documents.
Example: Include a sustainability policy in the strategic governance documents.
[Appendix A.1.4:](#) Sustainability Integration Policy
- ☐ Adopt a formal commitment to environmental, social, and economic sustainability.
Example: Publish a short “Green Library Statement” on the library website.
[Appendix A.1.5:](#) Commitment Statement on the Library Website
- ☐ Develop a realistic implementation and resource strategy.
Example: Identify low-cost, medium-term, and long-term sustainability actions; explore grants, partnerships, sponsorships, and community support; and align implementation with available resources and budget cycles.
- ☐ Connect efforts with relevant [SDGs](#).A.1.
Example: Align activities with [SDG 4](#) (Quality Education) and [SDG 13](#) (Climate Action).
[Appendix A.1.6:](#) Climate Learning and Action Programme
Example: Display a poster in the library entrance showing the library's commitment to the SDGs
[Appendix A.2.1:](#) Poster “This Library supports the SDGs”
Example: Use the ENSULIB “What is a Green Library?” poster template (PowerPoint format) to create a locally adapted and translated version, and display it prominently in the library to communicate the concept of green libraries to users and staff.
[Appendix A.2.2:](#) Poster “What is a Green Library?” ([ENSULIB template](#))
- ☐ Add one sustainability objective to the next annual strategic plan.
Example: Reduce paper use through digital communication and double-sided printing.
- ☐ Commit to an ongoing sustainability programme.
Example: Commit to ongoing sustainability education and *community* engagement activities.

Output: Statement of commitment or sustainability vision

Step 2 – Staff Training and Development

Equip staff with skills and awareness to integrate sustainability into daily workflows.

- ☐ Assess staff capacity.

Example: Survey staff sustainability knowledge and practices.

[Appendix A.1.7:](#) Staff Sustainability Survey

- ☐ Provide staff training on sustainability and green practices.

Example: Offer an online *course* on energy efficiency or eco-friendly procurement.

[Appendix A.1.8:](#) Sustainable Office Practices – Online Course

- ☐ Promote interactive learning experiences that foster a culture of collaboration and continuous learning among staff.

Example: Organise a “[Climate Fresk](#)” workshop for staff.

Example: Hold regular staff meetings or “green check-ins” during staff meetings to share ideas, progress, and challenges.

- ☐ Promote participation in international sustainability initiatives and professional knowledge exchange.

Example: Engage for example in Erasmus+ or similar initiatives to exchange knowledge and learn from other libraries’ green practices.

Example: Share your own experiences through presentations at national and international conferences and use these opportunities to discuss approaches, challenges, and lessons learned with the wider professional community.

Example: Showcase your achievements by submitting your project for the [IFLA Green Library Award](#) or other national or regional sustainability awards.

- ☐ Encourage idea sharing.

Example: Create a staff “Green Ideas” suggestion box or digital form.

[Appendix A.1.9:](#) Front Page “Green Ideas Box”

- ☐ Include ethical and local or Indigenous considerations.

Example: Invite local or Indigenous speakers for workshops or online sessions.

[Appendix A.1.10:](#) Invitation to local or Indigenous Speaker / Organisation

- ☐ Build awareness of social responsibility and inclusion.

Example: Provide training on diversity, equity, inclusion, and culturally respectful engagement.

- ☐ Build staff capacity as sustainability facilitators.

Example: Provide training on environmental literacy and guiding users to reliable sustainability information.

- ☐ Identify sustainability improvements across library functions.

Example: Conduct staff reviews of acquisitions, cataloguing, services, and administrative workflows to identify opportunities for reducing environmental impact, improving resource efficiency, and embedding sustainable practices across all library operations.

Output: Skilled and sustainability-aware staff

Step 3 – Operations and Maintenance

Ensure well-governed, efficient, and sustainable operations.

- ☐ Appoint a sustainability coordinator/team. In small libraries with limited staff, a single coordinator or a small cross-functional group may take on multiple roles to ensure sustainability actions remain practical and manageable.
Example: Assign one staff member to track recycling, energy use, and green projects.
[Appendix A.1.11](#): Green Library Weekly/Monthly Tracking Form
- ☐ Define key goals and actions.
Example: Reduce paper use by 30% within 12 months.
[Appendix A.1.12](#): Green Library Paper Reduction Policy
- ☐ Promote sustainable daily habits and apply green IT practices, such as switching off devices when not in use, enabling energy-saving modes, and using double-sided printing.
Example: Configure devices such as PCs, monitors, and printers to energy-saving modes, reducing idle power consumption, and switching off unused devices to optimise electricity usage.
- ☐ Use eco-friendly cleaning products.
Example: Switch to eco-labelled cleaning products and reusable cleaning materials.
- ☐ Promote sustainable procurement and reuse.
Example: Buy recycled paper, refillable pens, or second-hand furniture when possible.
- ☐ Support sustainable commuting.
Example: Encourage staff to use public transport, bikes, or walk when possible.
- ☐ Communicate progress simply.
Example: Include a short “green update” in the annual report or newsletter.
- ☐ Strengthen local partnerships.
Example: Collaborate with schools or [NGOs](#) on sustainability activities.
- ☐ Join a green network or initiative.
Example: Sign a green library pledge like the [Green Libraries Manifesto](#) or connect with other libraries to share ideas.

Output: Sustainable and well-managed operations

Step 4 – Library Collections

Develop responsible, inclusive, and sustainability-focused collections through sustainable selection, acquisition, cataloguing, management, access, and delivery practices.

- ☐ Provide sustainability-related resources.
Example: Establish a “Green Corner” featuring books, e-books, and magazines on climate, conservation, and sustainability, and add the code 'GC' to the relevant catalogue entries.
- ☐ Apply sustainability criteria in collection selection and acquisition decisions.
Example: Consider environmental, social, and economic sustainability factors when selecting resources, such as prioritising digital formats where appropriate, choosing materials from publishers with responsible sustainability practices, and favouring durable, high-quality resources with long-term value for the collection.
- ☐ Strengthen digital sustainability, discoverability, and equitable access.

- Example:* Ensure digital inclusion for all users (devices, connectivity, accessibility tools).
- ☐ Incorporate sustainability principles into cataloguing, metadata, and collection management practices.

Example: Use metadata tags, subject headings, or collection identifiers (e.g., “Green Corner” or “Sustainability Collection”) to improve the discovery, management, and reporting of sustainability-related resources.
 - ☐ Include diverse, local, traditional or Indigenous perspectives.

Example: Build collections representing diverse cultures, languages, and identities.
 - ☐ Preserve cultural and knowledge heritage responsibly.

Example: Develop policies to protect and promote cultural heritage collections.
 - ☐ Promote collaboration, resource sharing, and resource optimisation.

Example: Participate in interlibrary loan systems to reduce duplication.
 - ☐ Reduce environmental impacts associated with collection procurement, processing, storage, and delivery.

Example: Donate withdrawn materials to schools or [NGOs](#).
 - ☐ Support environmental and information literacy.

Example: Provide curated reading lists on climate change and sustainability.

Output: Sustainable, accessible, and responsibly managed collections

Step 5 – Services and Programmes

Deliver inclusive, community-driven services that integrate sustainable practices into learning, engagement, and everyday library use.

- ☐ Assess and respond to community needs.

Example: Survey local sustainability interests and priorities such as waste management, water conservation, food security, green livelihoods, entrepreneurship, climate resilience, and job skills. Design programmes accordingly.

[Appendix A.1.13:](#) Community Survey to Identify Local Interests
- ☐ Create a green library action plan.

Example: Develop a one-page action plan with timelines, responsibilities, and community partnerships.

[Appendix A.1.14:](#) Green Library Action Plan
- ☐ Promote sustainability through services and community engagement.

Example: Co-organise tree-planting events, clean-up campaigns, water conservation initiatives, or environmental awareness activities with local [NGOs](#), schools, community groups, or municipal departments.

[Appendix A.1.15:](#) Tree-Planting Day – Invitation to collaborate
- ☐ Offer environmental literacy, practical skills, and green livelihood programmes.

Example: Host workshops on waste reduction, sustainable agriculture, food preservation, water conservation, renewable energy, urban gardening, or climate-smart practices.

Example: Provide training in upcycling, sustainable crafts, eco-friendly product development, or other income-generating activities linked to environmental sustainability.

[Appendix A.1.16:](#) Workshop on Reducing Household Waste
- ☐ Support entrepreneurship and green economic opportunities.

Example: Organise business development sessions, financial literacy workshops, and mentoring programmes for entrepreneurs working in recycling, agriculture, renewable energy, sustainable tourism, or other green sectors.

Example: Showcase local green enterprises and connect community members with training and employment opportunities.

- ☐ Promote inclusion and social sustainability.

Example: Organise multilingual sustainability workshops and activities that are accessible to women, youth, older persons, people with disabilities, migrants, refugees, and other community groups.

Example: Ensure events are *welcoming*, affordable, and responsive to local cultural contexts.

- ☐ Enable sustainable access to knowledge and community resources.

Example: Provide access to tools, information resources, demonstration kits, or shared equipment that support learning, small-scale enterprise development, agriculture, repair, or environmental projects.

- ☐ Support citizen science and community learning.

Example: Partner with schools, universities, and community organisations to monitor biodiversity, water quality, waste management, or local environmental conditions.

[Appendix A.1.17:](#) Invitation to collaborate with local schools/organisations

- ☐ Extend learning beyond the library.

Example: Arrange guided visits to community gardens, recycling facilities, conservation projects, farms, renewable energy installations, or local enterprises that demonstrate sustainable practices.

Output: Strong services and community engagement

Step 6 – Law, Ethics, and Traditions

Ensure compliance, ethical conduct, and respect for traditional, local, or Indigenous knowledge.

- ☐ Follow environmental regulations.

Example: Ensure waste disposal follows municipal recycling guidelines.

- ☐ Ensure transparency and avoid greenwashing.

Example: Publicly report library sustainability activities without exaggeration.

- ☐ Promote fair and inclusive decision-making.

Example: Involve diverse community members in planning sustainability programmes to ensure decisions reflect different needs and perspectives.

- ☐ Recognise and properly attribute traditional, local, or Indigenous knowledge.

Example: Attribute local or Indigenous authors and community knowledge properly in displays and programmes.

[Appendix A.1.18:](#) Flyer “Share Your Knowledge with the Community”

- ☐ Respect traditional, local, and Indigenous knowledge systems.

Example: Include attributed traditional, local, or Indigenous environmental knowledge in programmes.

Output: Ethical and legally compliant practices

Step 7 – Library Buildings and Equipment

Enhance sustainability, efficiency, and environmental responsibility in library infrastructure and equipment.

- ☐ Consider green building certifications.
Example: Design to meet [LEED](#), [BREEAM](#), [DGNB](#) or *equivalent* standards to guide sustainable construction.
- ☐ Minimise construction and renovation impact.
Example: Reuse existing structures and recycle demolition waste to reduce environmental impact.
- ☐ Select durable, eco-friendly, low-emission, renewable, locally sourced furniture and materials.
Example: Choose [FSC-certified](#) wood furniture with low-[VOC](#) finishes from local suppliers.
- ☐ Prioritise renewable energy sources and reduce energy use.
Example: Install solar panels and use [LED lighting](#) with motion sensors to cut energy demand.
- ☐ Strengthen energy resilience and cost management.
Example: Use solar power, battery storage, smart energy monitoring, and efficient backup generators to ensure reliable library services, reduce operational costs, and increase resilience to power interruptions.
- ☐ Enhance water-use efficiency.
Example: Use rainwater harvesting and low-flow fixtures to reduce water consumption.
- ☐ Enhance climate resilience through locally appropriate building design.
Example: Incorporate natural ventilation, shading devices, reflective roofing, insulation, green infrastructure, moisture management, and flood-mitigation measures to improve comfort, reduce energy consumption, and increase resilience to local climate conditions.
- ☐ Optimise climate controls for collections by maintaining stable environmental conditions appropriate to preservation needs and sustainability considerations.
Example: Use smart [HVAC](#) systems with sensors to maintain stable conditions efficiently.
- ☐ Enhance accessibility, sustainable mobility, and community integration.
Example: Provide bike parking, step-free access, accessible transport options, and flexible community spaces.
- ☐ Use library spaces as sustainability learning environments.
Example: Display energy systems such as solar panels with interpretive signage.

Output: Sustainable and efficient facilities

Step 8 – Monitoring and Evaluation

Track, assess, and improve sustainability performance.

- ☐ Conduct audits and analyse resource use.
Example: Track energy and water bills monthly, monitor recycling rates.
[Appendix A.1.19:](#) Sample Energy Monitoring Audit

- Define metrics, collect and analyse data.
Example: Count sustainability workshops per quarter.
[Appendix A.1.20](#): Sample Metric: Sustainability Workshops Held per Quarter
- Monitor environmental and community impact.
Example: Track participation in sustainability programmes.
- Collect user feedback.
Example: Provide post-workshop surveys.
- Report outcomes to stakeholders.
Example: Publish an annual sustainability report for staff and community.
- Use results for continuous improvement.
Example: Adjust future programmes based on feedback and data.

Output: Continuous improvement and transparency

Appendix

A.1 Templates

A.1.1: Internal Sustainability Commitment Letter

Subject: Building Our Future: A Commitment to Becoming a Green and Sustainable Library

Dear Colleagues,

Libraries are trusted places for knowledge and community leadership. We also share a growing responsibility to support environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

The [International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions \(IFLA\) Guidelines for Green Libraries](#) and the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) show the key role libraries play. Libraries help advance education, climate action, equality, and community wellbeing.

Sustainability is not an add-on. It strengthens and modernises our library's mission.

Why commit to sustainability?

- **Environmental responsibility:** We can reduce energy use, waste, and resource consumption. This lowers costs and shows leadership.
- **Social impact:** We can promote inclusion, environmental awareness, and community engagement. This increases our relevance.
- **Economic sustainability:** Efficient operations and long-term planning protect our future.
- **Institutional reputation:** A visible commitment builds trust and public value.

Sustainability does not require large investments. We can start with simple actions: reducing paper and energy use, adding sustainability topics to our programmes, building local partnerships, and supporting staff-led initiatives. Commitment matters most.

By committing to sustainability, we align with international standards and support global goals. We also empower staff to bring new ideas and strengthen our role as a forward-looking institution. This is a shared effort: leadership sets the direction, and staff bring the solutions.

Let us reaffirm our mission to serve people today and in the future, and take this step toward becoming a Green Library. We can start with small steps that lead to lasting change.

Sincerely,

[Name / Position]

[Contact email or phone number]

A.1.2: One-Hour Internal Briefing Session

Becoming a Green Library

Objective

This session introduces key principles from the [IFLA Guidelines for Green Libraries](#). Staff will discuss how to apply these principles in the library.

Duration: 60 minutes

0–5 minutes: Welcome and Purpose

- Explain the goal of the session.
- Explain why sustainability matters for the library.

5–15 minutes: Introduction to Green Library Principles

- Summarise key ideas from the IFLA Guidelines for Green Libraries.
- Highlight environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

15–30 minutes: Current Practices Overview

- Share examples of current practices in the library.
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement.

30–45 minutes: Group Discussion

- Ask staff to share observations and ideas.
- Discuss simple actions the library can implement quickly.

45–55 minutes: Priorities and Next Steps

- Agree on two to three initial sustainability actions.
- Assign responsibilities where possible.

55–60 minutes: Wrap-Up

- Summarise the key points.
- Encourage ongoing engagement and learning.

Materials Needed

- Summary of the IFLA Guidelines for Green Libraries
- Notepad or shared document for recording ideas

Outcome

Staff share a common understanding of green library principles. The library commits to initial action.

A.1.3: Invitation to Join Our Green Library Team

Subject: Invitation to Join Our Green Library Team

Dear [Name],

We are forming a Green Library Team to guide our sustainability efforts. We would like to invite community partners with expertise in environmental education to join this work.

We would be delighted if you could join our Green Library Team and take part in our quarterly meetings. Your knowledge and experience would help us plan and improve our sustainability practices, programmes, and community engagement.

We will hold the meetings [insert format: in person or online] and expect each meeting to last about [duration]. We will share the agenda in advance and welcome your input on relevant topics.

Please let us know if you are interested, or if you would like more information.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

Kind regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Position]

[Library Name]

[Contact email or phone number]

A.1.4: Sustainability Integration Policy

Sustainability Integration Policy

(For inclusion in library strategic governance documents)

Public Library

The Library integrates environmental sustainability, climate responsibility, and equitable access to services into its governance, operations, and community engagement. These are core parts of its public mandate.

Academic Library

The Library advances the institution's teaching, research, and service mission. It embeds environmental sustainability, climate responsibility, and inclusive access within its strategic planning, resource stewardship, and academic support functions.

School Library

The Library supports the school's educational mission. It incorporates environmental sustainability, climate awareness, and equitable access to learning resources into its policies, programmes, and daily practices.

Special Library

The Library advances the strategic, professional, or research goals of its parent organisation. It embeds environmental sustainability, climate responsibility, and equitable access into how it manages specialised collections, information services, operations, and stakeholder engagement.

National Library

The Library integrates environmental sustainability, climate responsibility, and equitable access into its governance, operations, preservation activities, and public services. It also advances its role as a steward of the nation's knowledge and documentary heritage.

A.1.5: Commitment Statement on the Library Website

Sustainability and Climate Action Commitment Statement

Our library recognises the urgency of the climate crisis and the challenge of sustainable development. We align our work with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We commit to integrating environmentally responsible practices, climate action, and social inclusion into our operations, services, and community engagement.

We pledge to:

- Reduce our environmental impact through sustainable resource management, energy efficiency, waste reduction, and responsible procurement.
- Promote climate literacy by providing access to reliable information, educational programmes, and community dialogue on environmental sustainability.
- Foster inclusive, equitable access to library services for everyone in our community. We will support and empower vulnerable and underrepresented groups.
- Collaborate with local and global partners to advance sustainability initiatives and contribute to resilient, informed communities.

We will use continuous assessment, transparency, and innovation to guide our work. Our library will serve as a model of environmental stewardship and inclusive service. We will support present and future generations.

A.1.6: Climate Learning and Action Programme

Climate Learning and Action Programme

Activities

- Organise a monthly climate literacy workshop series for children, teens, and adults.
- Create a curated collection of books, e-books, and digital resources on climate change, sustainability, and environmental science.
- Partner with local schools to support curriculum-based learning on sustainability topics.
- Host hands-on activities such as tree planting, recycling workshops, and energy-saving challenges.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SDG 4 – Quality Education

- Provides free, inclusive access to reliable information on climate and sustainability.
- Supports lifelong learning through workshops and community programmes.
- Improves environmental literacy and critical thinking skills.

SDG 13 – Climate Action

- Raises awareness about climate change and its local effects.
- Encourages community members to adopt sustainable habits.
- Engages citizens in practical climate action, such as reducing waste, saving energy, and local environmental projects.

Outcome

Community members gain knowledge and skills through SDG 4. They also contribute to climate awareness and action through SDG 13.

A.1.7: Staff Sustainability Survey

Survey to identify existing sustainability knowledge

Purpose: This short survey aims to understand current sustainability knowledge, practices, and ideas within our library.

1. Awareness

How familiar are you with sustainability concepts (e.g. environmental impact, resource efficiency)?

- ☐ Very familiar ☐ Somewhat familiar
☐ Not very familiar ☐ Not familiar at all

2. Current Practices

Are you currently involved in any sustainability-related activities at work?

- ☐ Yes (please describe): _____
☐ No

3. Existing Initiatives

Are you aware of any sustainability initiatives already taking place in the library?

- ☐ Yes (please specify): _____
☐ No

4. Skills and Knowledge

Do you have any skills or knowledge related to sustainability that could support our efforts?

- ☐ Yes (please describe): _____
☐ No

5. Training Needs

What topics would you like more training on?

- ☒ Energy and resource efficiency ☐ Waste reduction and recycling
☐ Sustainable programming ☐ Green procurement
☐ Other: _____

6. Ideas and Suggestions

Do you have any ideas for improving sustainability in our library?

(Open response): _____

7. Participation

Would you be interested in being involved in sustainability initiatives or a Green Library Team?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No

Thank you for your input. Your responses will help guide our next steps toward becoming a more sustainable library.

A.1.8: Sustainable Office Practices – Online Course

Subject: Learn Sustainable Office Practices – Online Course

Dear Team,

As part of our green library initiative, we encourage all staff to learn more about sustainable office practices.

We recommend a short online course:

Course details

- **Title:** Sustainable Office Practices: Reduce, Reuse, Rethink
- **Access:** [Insert platform link]
- **Duration:** 30–60 minutes

Topics covered

- Energy-efficient office habits (lighting, heating, devices)
- Reducing paper and single-use plastics
- Sustainable procurement and recycling practices
- Building a culture of sustainability at work

Next steps

1. Complete the course by [insert date].
2. Note one or two practical actions you can apply in your daily work.
3. Share your ideas at our next staff meeting.

Your participation helps us build a greener workplace and supports our library's commitment to environmental care.

Thank you for taking part!

Best regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Position]
[Library Name]

A.1.9: Front Page “Green Ideas Box”

Green Ideas Box

Help us grow a greener library

Do you have an idea to make our library more sustainable? We'd love to hear from you.

Share your suggestions on:

- Saving energy
- Reducing waste
- Greener services and programmes
- Community sustainability ideas

How to participate

1. Write your idea on a note.
2. Be as practical as possible.
3. Drop it in this box.

Every idea counts, big or small.

Optional

Name: _____

Department: _____

A.1.10: Invitation to Local or Indigenous Speaker / Organisation

Subject: Invitation to Share Knowledge on Sustainable Practices

Dear [Name / Organisation],

Our library is developing a green library initiative. We would like to learn from local and Indigenous knowledge holders about caring for the environment.

We would like to invite you to lead a session for our staff, on a topic of your choosing, about knowledge and practices you feel comfortable sharing. We understand that this knowledge belongs to you and your community, and we will follow your guidance on how it should be presented, credited, and used.

Proposed details

- **Format:** [In person / Online]
- **Date and time:** [Insert options]
- **Duration:** [e.g. 60 minutes]
- **Audience:** Library staff

We welcome your input on the format and content of the session. We would also like to discuss fair payment for your time and knowledge, and any protocols we should follow before, during, or after the session.

Please let us know if you are interested, and what you would need from us to make this a good experience for you.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

Kind regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Position]
[Library Name]
[Contact Information]

A.1.11: Green Library Weekly/Monthly Tracking Form

Green Library Weekly/Monthly Tracking

Library / Department: _____

Week (Dates): _____

Staff Responsible: _____

1. Recycling

Type	Amount (bags / estimate)	Notes
Paper		
Plastic		
Other: _____		

- ☐ Bins labelled and accessible
- ☐ No major contamination issues

2. Energy use (quick check)

- ☐ Lights turned off when not needed
- ☐ Equipment powered down after use
- ☐ Heating/cooling used efficiently

Unusual usage or issues: _____

3. Green projects (updates)

Project	Status (Planned / Ongoing / Complete)	Notes

4. Quick actions this week

- ☐ Reduced paper use
- ☐ Promoted recycling
- ☐ Supported a sustainability activity or event

Other actions: _____

5. Issues and next steps

Issues: _____

Next steps: _____

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

A.1.12: Green Library Paper Reduction Policy

Towards a Paper-Lite Library: Sustainability Policy

Library: _____

Effective date: _____

Purpose

To reduce paper use and promote sustainable practices in the library.

Goal

Reduce paper usage by [insert %] within [insert timeframe, e.g. 12 months].

Key actions

- ☐ Set printers to double-sided (duplex) by default
- ☐ Use black-and-white printing as default
- ☐ Promote digital communication and forms
- ☐ Encourage staff and users to print only when necessary
- ☐ Purchase recycled or eco-friendly paper

Monitoring

- Track paper usage monthly (reams or sheets)
- Record actions taken to reduce paper

Evaluation

- Compare monthly usage to baseline
- Adjust actions as needed to meet the [insert %] reduction

Responsibility

- **Library management:** Approve and support the policy
- **Staff:** Follow best practices and suggest improvements

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

A.1.13: Community Survey to Identify Local Interests

Green Library Community Survey

Help us design inclusive, sustainable library services (2 minutes)

1. Do you use the library?

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No

2. What sustainability topics interest you? (Choose up to 3)

- ☐ Recycling and waste ☐ Climate change or climate anxiety
☐ Energy saving ☐ Food and gardening
☐ Repair and reuse ☐ Green jobs and skills
☐ Children's environmental education
☐ Other: _____

3. What would you like the library to offer? (Choose any)

- ☐ Workshops or classes ☐ Talks or speakers
☐ Hands-on activities (for example, a repair café)
☐ Tools or resources (for example, seed or tool lending)
☐ Quiet learning spaces ☐ Support groups
☐ Online resources
☐ Other: _____

4. What might stop you from participating?

- ☐ Time ☐ Lack of information
☐ Accessibility needs ☐ Language barriers
☐ Not interested
☐ Other: _____

5. How do you prefer to take part?

☐ In person ☐ Online ☐ Hybrid ☐ Self-guided

6. What would make the library more inclusive?

- ☐ Multilingual resources ☐ Accessible spaces
☐ Child-friendly ☐ Free or low-cost
☐ Flexible times
☐ Other: _____

7. Any ideas or suggestions?

Thank you for helping us create a greener, more inclusive library!

A.1.14: Green Library Action Plan

Green Library Action Plan

Library: _____ **Date:** _____

Goal: Implement sustainability initiatives to reduce environmental impact and promote community engagement.

Key actions and timeline

Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible	Status
Energy efficiency	Install programmable thermostats; reduce after-hours heating	Q2 2026	Facilities Manager	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Waste and recycling	Introduce recycling stations and compost bins	Q2–Q3 2026	Operations Team	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Sustainable programming	Host workshops, repair cafés, and sustainability events	Q3–Q4 2026	Programme Coordinator and Volunteers	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Staff training	Deliver sustainability and local or Indigenous knowledge training	Q2 2026	HR or External Educators	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Community engagement	Partner with schools, non-governmental organisations, and local groups	Q3–Q4 2026	Outreach Team	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Green procurement	Adopt environmentally friendly purchasing policies	Q2 2026	Procurement Officer	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Indigenous knowledge	Integrate local or Indigenous ecological knowledge in services	Q3 2026	Programme Coordinator and Local or Indigenous Partners	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete

Next steps / notes

Tip: Keep this plan visible in staff areas or shared digitally to track progress and encourage accountability.

A.1.15: Tree-Planting Day – Invitation to Collaborate

Subject: Tree-planting day – Invitation to collaborate

Dear [Organisation Name / Partner],

We are pleased to invite your organisation to collaborate with us on our Green Library Team. This project promotes environmental awareness, sustainability, and community engagement through our library services.

As part of this initiative, we are planning a joint tree-planting day with local organisations and non-governmental organisations. The event will bring together community members, volunteers, and environmental advocates to contribute to our local environment and build a culture of sustainability.

Proposed activity

- Tree-planting event at [location]
- Date: [insert date]
- Time: [insert time]
- Community participation and awareness activities

We believe your organisation's experience and commitment to environmental causes would make this collaboration especially impactful. Together, we can inspire meaningful change and strengthen community ties.

Opportunities for collaboration

- Co-organising the tree-planting event
- Providing volunteers or environmental experts
- Supporting awareness campaigns or workshops
- Sharing resources and expertise

We would be delighted to discuss this further and explore how we can work together. Please let us know your availability for a short meeting or call.

Thank you for considering this collaboration. We look forward to the possibility of working together for a greener future.

Warm regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Position]
[Library Name]
[Contact Information]

A.1.16: Workshop on Reducing Household Waste

Green Library Workshop: "Waste Less – Create More!"

Target group: Children aged 6–11 **Duration:** 2–2.5 hours

Objectives

By the end of the workshop, children will:

- Understand what household waste is and why it matters
- Learn the basics of reducing, reusing, and recycling (the “3 Rs”)
- Discover simple ways to reduce waste at home
- Create something useful from waste materials

Programme outline

#	Section	Time	Activity
1	Welcome and icebreaker	15 min	“What’s in your bin?” — sort common items into Recycle, Compost, or Trash; brief discussion
2	Story time: The journey of trash	20 min	Interactive story about where waste goes, with discussion questions
3	Mini lesson: The 3 Rs	20 min	Reduce, Reuse, Recycle explained with posters or slides; quick quiz
4	Hands-on craft: Trash to treasure	40 min	Make pencil holders, tote bags, or collage art from waste materials
5	Break	10 min	Optional: snacks with minimal packaging
6	Game: Waste sorting relay	20 min	Teams race to sort items into labelled bins
7	Home action plan	15 min	“My green promise” — each child writes or draws one action to reduce, reuse, and recycle
8	Wrap-up and sharing	10 min	Children share their creations and green promises; recap key lessons

Materials needed

- Clean recyclable items (bottles, cans, paper, fabric)
- Scissors, glue, markers, tape
- Sorting bins or boxes
- Printed worksheets or posters
- Storybook or printed story

Optional add-ons

- Invite a local recycling expert
- Set up a mini “swap corner” for toys or books
- Display children’s crafts in the library

Key message for children: *“Small actions at home can make a big difference for our planet!”*

A.1.17: Invitation to Collaborate with Local Schools/Organisations

Subject: Join us for citizen science and community learning

Dear [Name/Organisation],

I'm reaching out from [Library Name] to invite [School/Organisation Name] to partner on a hands-on citizen science programme for students and families. Our goal is to connect classroom learning with real-world environmental action through biodiversity monitoring and community learning projects.

How you can get involved

- Encourage students to take part in local biodiversity monitoring
- Share the initiative with your community
- Offer short talks, resources, or join our workshops

What we provide

- Project guidance, materials, and tracking tools
- Coordination of workshops and events at the library
- Promotion across our library channels

Benefits for your school

- Hands-on science experience for students
- Engaging families and the wider community
- Visibility for your school's commitment to learning and the environment

The programme will run over [timeframe], starting with a workshop on [date]. I'd love to discuss how we can tailor this collaboration to your schedule. Could we set up a brief call?

Thank you for considering this opportunity to bring science and learning to life in our community.

Warm regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Position]
[Library Name]
[Contact Information]

A.1.18: Flyer “Share Your Knowledge with the Community”

Share Your Knowledge with the Community

Our library is a space for learning, respect, and shared experiences. We warmly invite you to share your community's history, culture, and knowledge, including Indigenous knowledge, oral traditions, and local heritage, through events, talks, and exhibitions.

What can you share?

- Cultural traditions, stories, and histories
- Language, oral knowledge, and community practices
- Environmental knowledge and sustainable ways of living
- Art, crafts, music, and cultural expressions
- Local history and community experiences

Ways to participate

- Give a talk or storytelling session
- Host a workshop or demonstration
- Curate a small exhibition or display
- Collaborate on a community event or programme

Our shared values

We are committed to:

- Respectful and accurate representation of cultures and knowledge
- Ethical sharing: ensuring knowledge is presented with permission and context
- Inclusivity and diversity: welcoming all voices and perspectives
- Acknowledging origins and giving proper credit to communities and knowledge holders

Before any event, we will work with you to agree on how your knowledge is presented, credited, and used.

Why it matters

By sharing knowledge responsibly, we:

- Strengthen cultural understanding and respect
- Preserve traditions and heritage
- Support community connection and learning
- Promote sustainable and inclusive futures

Get involved!

Interested in contributing? We would love to hear from you.

Contact us at: [Library contact details]

Or speak to a staff member at the library.

We look forward to working with you, respectfully and together.

A.1.19: Sample: Energy Monitoring Audit

Energy Monitoring

Library name: Riverdale Public Library

Date of audit: 15 March 2026

Audit conducted by: Sustainability Working Group

Reporting period: January–December 2025

Indicators

Indicator	Current status	Previous period	Change	Notes / actions
Electricity consumption (kWh)	42,500	48,200	–11.8%	LED lighting installed in reading rooms
Heating/cooling consumption (kWh)	18,300	19,700	–7.1%	Smart thermostats introduced
Renewable energy use (%)	35%	20%	+15%	Switched to greener electricity supplier
Energy-efficient lighting installed	Yes	Partial	Improved	Remaining offices converted in September 2025

Observations

- Electricity consumption decreased significantly after replacing fluorescent lighting with LED lighting.
- Smart temperature controls reduced unnecessary heating and cooling during weekends and holidays.
- The library increased its use of renewable energy through a greener electricity contract.

Key achievement

Total energy consumption decreased by more than 10% during the reporting period.

Recommended actions for the next period

1. Continue monthly monitoring of energy bills and consumption data.
2. Investigate opportunities for further energy efficiency improvements.
3. Assess the feasibility of installing solar panels or other renewable energy technologies.

Follow-up schedule

- ☒ Monthly monitoring of energy bills
- ☒ Quarterly review of consumption trends
- ☒ Annual sustainability report

A.1.20: Sample Metric: Sustainability Workshops Held per Quarter

Sustainability Programme Monitoring Record

Library name: Riverdale Public Library

Reporting year: 2025

Metric

Indicator: Number of sustainability workshops held per quarter

Purpose: To measure the library's engagement in sustainability education and community outreach.

Target: Minimum of 3 sustainability workshops per quarter.

Data collection

Quarter	Workshops held	Target	Status	Notes
Q1 (Jan–Mar)	4	3	Achieved	Workshops on energy-saving, recycling, and repair skills
Q2 (Apr–Jun)	3	3	Achieved	Included Earth Day activities
Q3 (Jul–Sep)	5	3	Exceeded	Summer programme for children and families
Q4 (Oct–Dec)	2	3	Not achieved	Staff shortages limited programme delivery

Annual summary

- Total workshops held: 14
- Annual target: 12
- Result: Target exceeded by 2 workshops

Analysis

The library exceeded its annual target for sustainability workshops. Participation was strongest during Q3 due to family-focused summer activities. Lower performance in Q4 highlighted the need for improved programme planning and staff capacity.

Improvement actions

1. Schedule workshop topics at least six months in advance.
2. Develop partnerships with local environmental organisations to support programme delivery.
3. Maintain a minimum of three sustainability workshops per quarter in the next reporting period.

A.2 Posters

A.2.1: Poster “This Library Supports the SDGs”

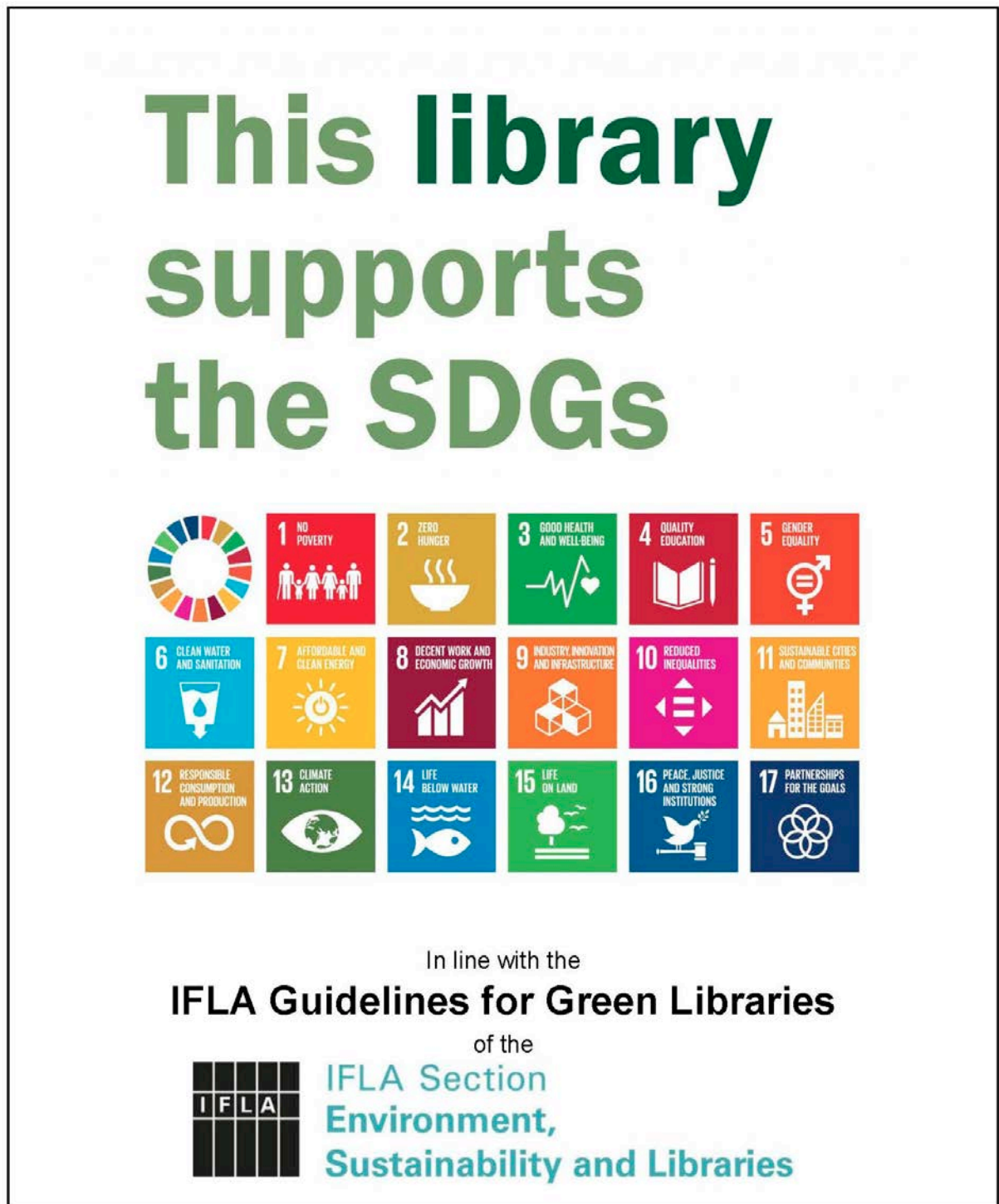


Figure 1. Poster with the message "This Library Supports the SDGs", 2026. © ENSULIB

A.2.2: Poster “What is a Green Library?”

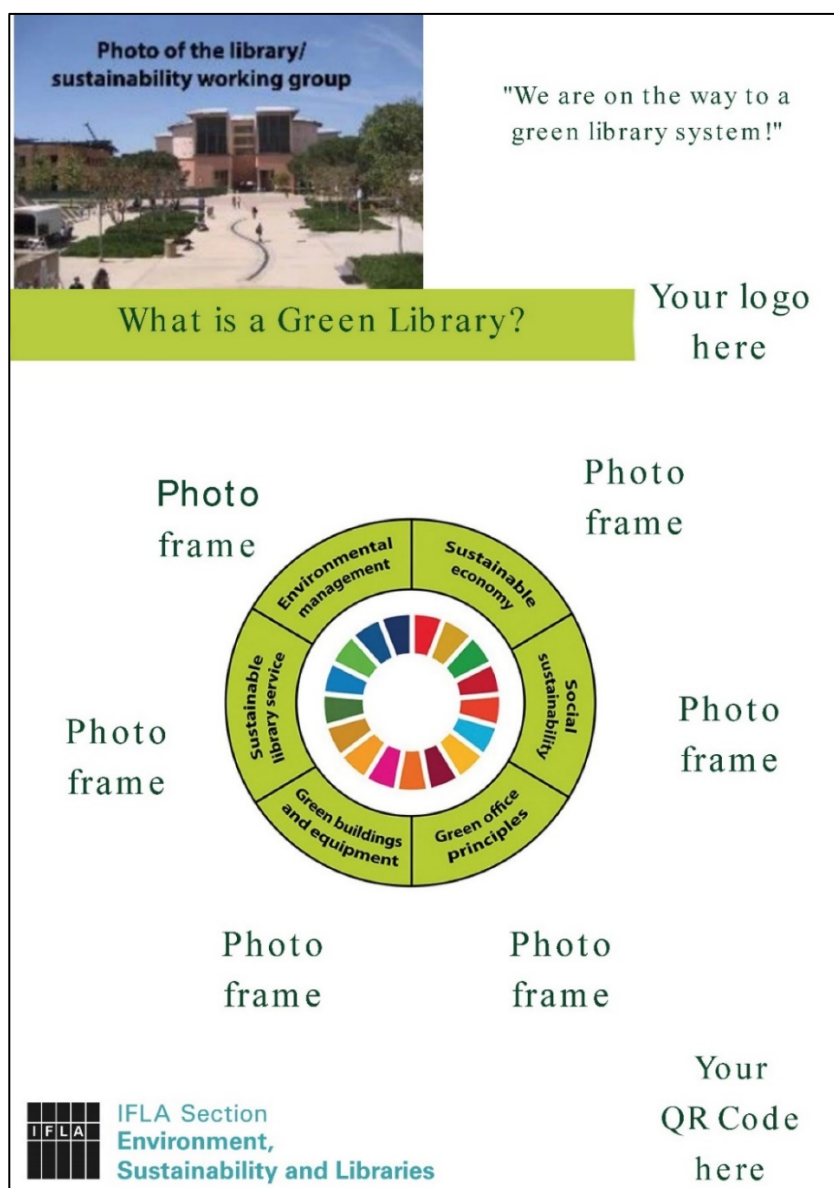


Figure 2: The Green Library Poster

ENSULIB has developed a [PowerPoint template](#) for a “What is a Green Library?” poster. The template is designed for use by all types of libraries and can easily be translated into your local language.

Display the poster in a prominent location within your library to raise awareness of sustainability and the Green Library concept. You may also wish to promote it through posts on your library’s social media channels.

The first example, available in both [German](#) and [English](#), was created by ENSULIB Standing Committee Member Janet Wagner and her team at the University Library of Freie Universität Berlin, Germany.

ENSULIB warmly invites you to adapt the template for your own library and share the finished poster with us by email at Eva.Hackenberg@goethe.de.