



Policy on Sustainable Catering



HM Government
of Gibraltar

1. THIS DOCUMENT

HMGOG prioritises sustainable development and is working towards embedding sustainability across government. It is committed to acting responsibly as well as to encouraging wider adoption of sustainable catering practices. Through this policy, the Government acknowledges the leadership role it can play in driving change for sustainability across the public service, business and local community.

This policy identifies what it understands by sustainable catering and the Government's sustainability commitments as they apply to the procurement of food and food services. It follows best practice in the area of sustainable catering and has been informed by discussions with various stakeholder groups including the Sustainable Gibraltar Food Working Group¹.

Food served during official meetings and functions as well as government supported events² will be subject to the commitments outlined in this document. A separate document outlining sustainable catering considerations as they apply to catering outlets such as government hospitals and homes and schools is required.

2. WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE CATERING?

People's wellbeing and the health of our planet rely on food choices that respect planetary boundaries and human rights. Sustainable catering is about selecting and engaging with catering suppliers to promote good practice and support more responsible food choices. It seeks to respond to a growing awareness of the environmental and health impacts of our diets and the need to procure and handle food responsibly whilst achieving best value for money.

1. This group was formed in September 2018 to lobby and support moves towards the adoption of sustainable food practices across Gibraltar

2. Including Calentita and GMF



3. ADOPTING SUSTAINABLE CATERING PRINCIPLES

Through this policy, the government commits to the following sustainable catering principles:

3.1 Reducing the Carbon Footprint of our Food

There are multiple ways in which the carbon footprint of food can be reduced. Between 20% and 29% of global greenhouse gas emissions come from food production, with red meat being the biggest contributor. A diet based on fruits, vegetables and grains has the least impact on the environment, with pork, chicken and fish creating a moderate impact, and beef and lamb the greatest footprint.

Reducing food miles and choosing organic options can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions that result from the production and transport of food. Transporting food requires petroleum-based fuels, and many fertilizers are also fossil fuel-based.

Switching from bottled water to tap water will reduce our carbon footprint. The carbon dioxide emissions associated with one litre of mineral water in a glass or PET bottle throughout the entire product lifecycle are around 200 to 400 times higher than that of one litre of tap water³.

Choosing energy efficient equipment and adopting sustainable practices that minimise water and electricity consumption whilst preparing, cooking and storing food can also reduce the carbon footprint of food.

HM Government of Gibraltar is committed to contracting caterers that:

- i) reduce red meat options and offer more vegan and vegetarian dishes catering menus;*
- ii) where possible, opt for organic food;*
- iii) avoid bottled water and provide tap water and where applicable refillable stations;*
- iv) opt for food choices that have lower food miles. This includes sourcing regionally rather than further afield; and,*
- v) can evidence that they have taken steps to minimise energy and water consumption through efficient administration, equipment selection, usage and disposal, food storage, preparation and cooking.*

3. Jungbluth, N. (2006): Vergleich der Umweltbelastung von Hahnenwasser und Mineralwasser, Manuskript für die Informationsschrift SVGW und die Zeitschrift gwa



3.2 Limiting Waste

Minimising both the pre-consumer and post-consumer waste is essential to keep both costs low and reducing the amount of food waste at events. Large amounts of pre-consumer food waste can also be donated to food charities to reduce the amount thrown away. Post-consumer food waste should be used for composting and crucial anti-contamination steps should be carried out to reduce un-usable food.

Government is committed to contracting caterers that:

- i) reduce all food waste by limiting quantities by making realistic estimates of the number of people and their eating habits;*
- encourage caterers to monitor waste to see where reductions may be made;*
- ii) when unavoidable waste occurs and where composting is possible, separation should be done and taken to a composting centre;*
- iii) make arrangements for leftover food to be donated to local charities and those in need;*
- iv) consider alternative products that minimise the longevity of waste (e.g. plastic straws with paper alternatives); and,*
- v) only open packaged food items and drink bottles if they are expected to be consumed.*

3.3 Sustainable Procurement

There are multiple sustainability dimensions that should be considered when procuring food. The Government is committed to providing meat, poultry, dairy and eggs from sources using practices that conform to high environmental, social and animal welfare standards.

It recognises that others should not be taking unreasonable risks and making unreasonable salaries to produce and serve the food we consume. Those associated with growing/picking/harvesting food should make a living wage, and working to ensure that suppliers down the chain are doing the same. Where possible it will support Fair Trade coffee, chocolate and bananas to ensure fair prices, living wages and community benefits for farmers, workers and their families.

Fresh food is healthier, containing nutrients in forms much more readily accessible to our bodies than nutrients in processed foods. Furthermore, a lack of processing reduces the environmental impact of fresh foods. Food providers should ensure that healthy options are available, whether the customer is looking for a snack or a full meal. It recognises that where unhealthy food is readily available, it can contribute to obesity and for some can lead to life threatening diseases.



Equally, it is committed to sourcing food that is not over-packaged or relies too heavily on the use of plastic. Sustainable procurement also relates to ensuring that cultural and religious considerations are reflected in food choices as well as the way food is procured and prepared.

HM Government of Gibraltar is committed to contracting caterers that:

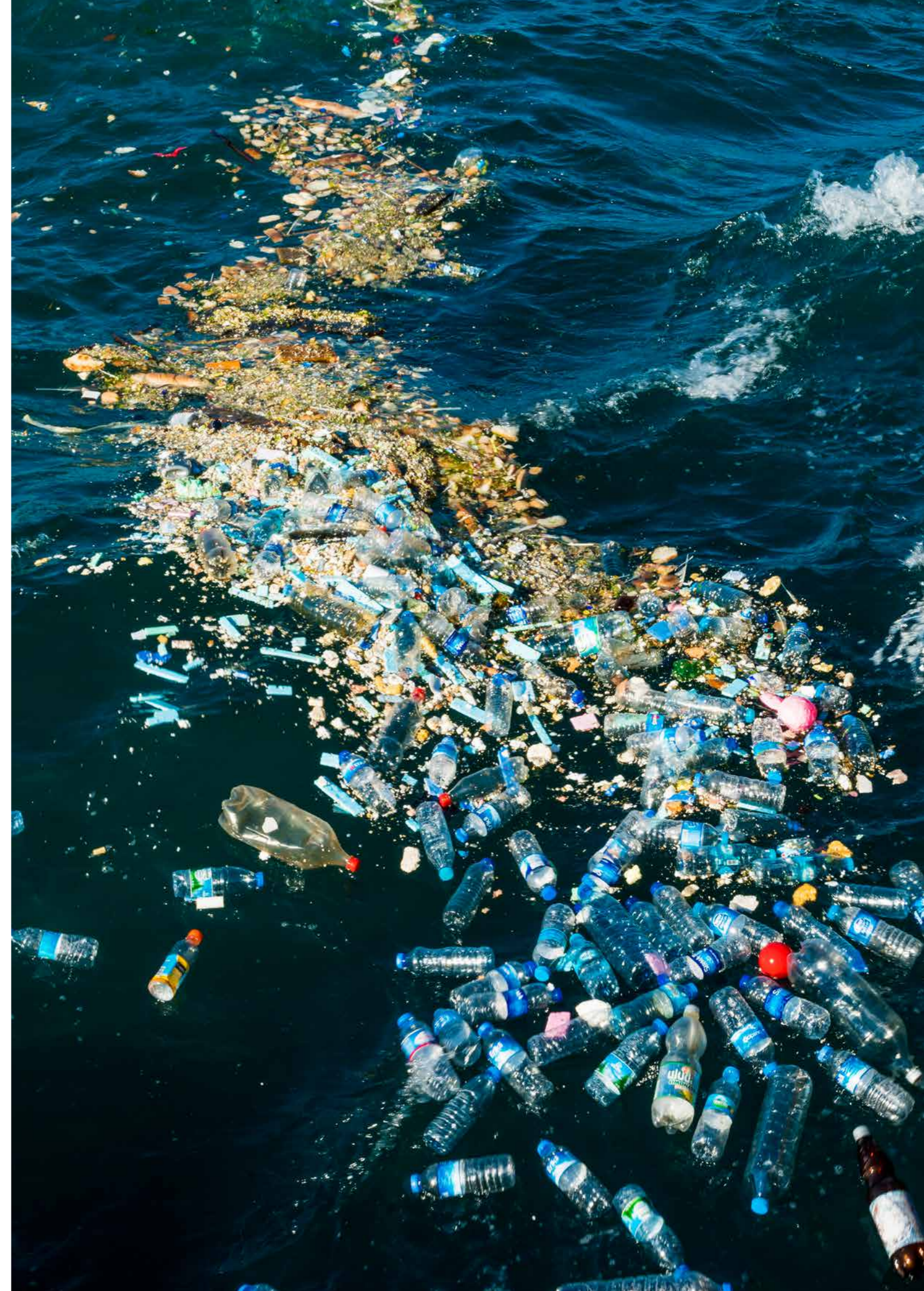
- i) opt for fairtrade products and increase the provision of Fairtrade goods where possible;*
- ii) use fish from sustainable stocks, promoting fish recommended by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS);*
- iii) use fresh, seasonal and healthy options for catering outlets and hospitality menus;*
- iv) avoid over-packaging and do not use plastic water bottles or straws;*
- v) avoid common allergens in food and offer clearly labelled food choices; and,*
- vi) understand cultural and religious sensitivities and offer diversity in food offerings.*

3.4 Reusable, Recyclable and Biodegradable tableware

Countless plastic plates and paper cups end up in landfill every day. The optimal choice for dinner service is china (or other reusable dinnerware), as this has the lowest environmental impact and is the most pleasant for diners. Recognising that reusable dinnerware is not always available or appropriate, other options include compostable dinnerware and recyclable dinnerware. While neither is comparable to reusable dinnerware, they are better options than conventional plastic-ware. The caveat is that they must be used properly; in many cases, diners dispose of recyclable and compostable dinnerware in the incorrect receptacles. Where appropriate, finger foods can reduce the amount of dinnerware required but are not always possible or suitable.

HM Government of Gibraltar is committed to contracting caterers that:

- i) use reusable crockery instead of disposables, where it is appropriate;*
- ii) provide reusable/biodegradable products instead of polystyrene or non-recyclable plastics; and,*
- iii) separate and manage waste responsibly.*



3.5 Responsible Catering Business

Responsible catering businesses would involve supporting the local community through promoting diversity, good supplier relations, charitable giving and community service. Good governance is also key to sustainable catering.

HM Government of Gibraltar is committed to contracting caterers that:

- i) engage local suppliers, promote diversity and support local community through charitable giving, apprenticeships, work-placements or community care.*
- ii) Adopt sustainable practices in their workplace*
- iii) are transparent and accountable regarding their business and*
- iv) employment practices.*

3.6 Communication and Awareness

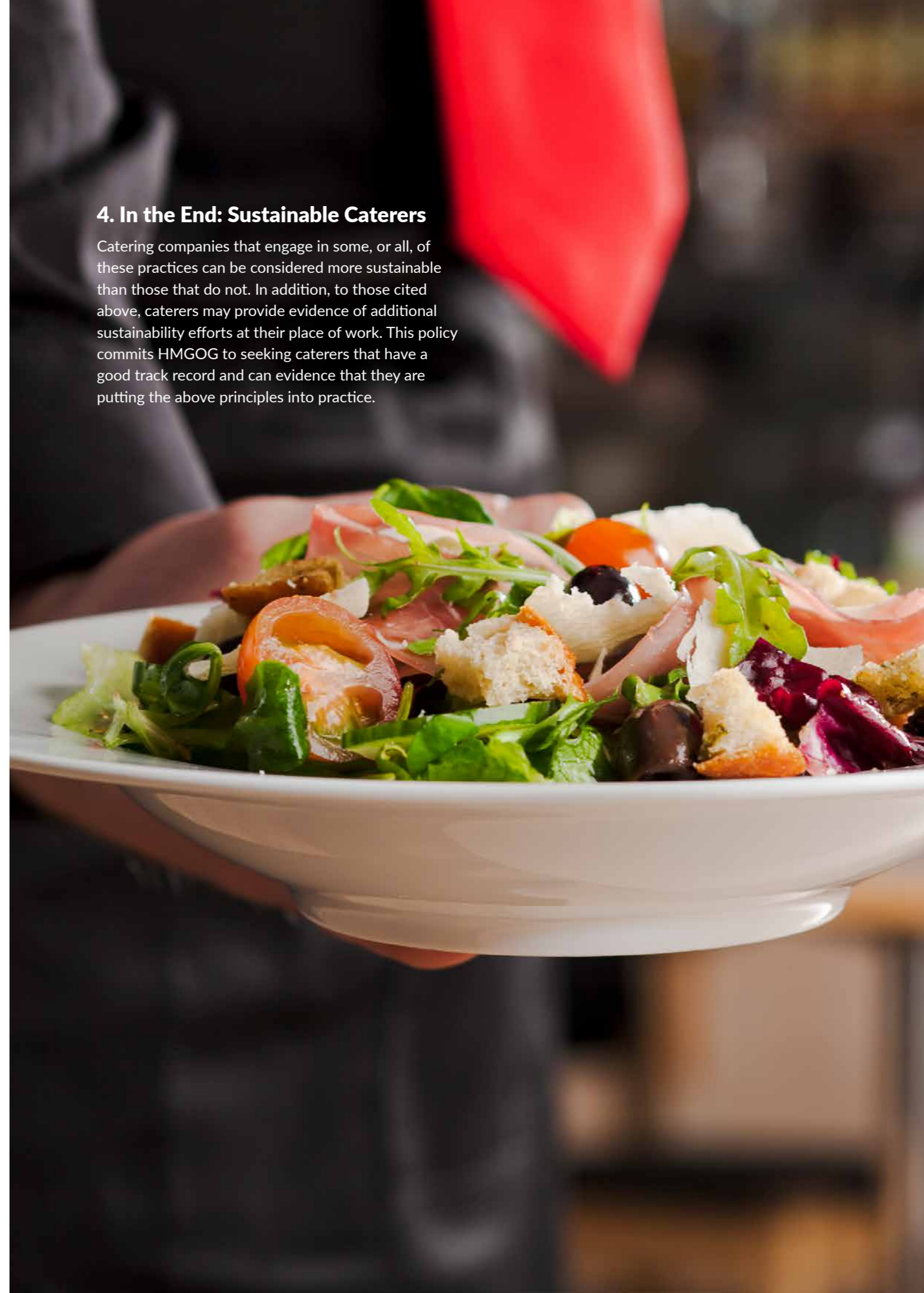
This sustainable catering policy recognises the value of actively promoting the benefits of a diet that is healthy as well as environmentally as socially sustainable. This can be done by enhancing consumer awareness through guidance, product information and awareness campaigns as well as training and education of those engaged in food sourcing and preparation.

HM Government of Gibraltar is committed to contracting caterers that:

- i) build responsibility for sustainable issues into the roles of all catering staff and support this with appropriate training;*
- ii) communicate issues and specific information regarding sustainability initiatives of food to those consuming it;*
- iii) create notice-boards, website and street stalls notices formally communicating commitment and steps being taken towards sustainability; and,*
- iv) have Twitter or Facebook accounts where they post details and photos to highlight sustainability choices and achievements.*

4. In the End: Sustainable Caterers

Catering companies that engage in some, or all, of these practices can be considered more sustainable than those that do not. In addition, to those cited above, caterers may provide evidence of additional sustainability efforts at their place of work. This policy commits HMGOG to seeking caterers that have a good track record and can evidence that they are putting the above principles into practice.



APPENDIX 1

HMGOG will ask caterers to provide answers to the following questions when submitting catering tenders. Through posing these questions to all caterers, it hopes to encourage more sustainable practices and make informed decisions when procuring catering services.

Questions to assess sustainability practice of caterers

	<i>Has a response been provided by the caterer?</i>	<i>Has criteria been met?</i>
Reducing the Carbon Footprint of our Food and Drink		
Alternatives to red meat: What alternatives to red meat do you offer? What proportion of your menu is vegetarian or vegan?		
Energy and water: How can you evidence steps taken to minimise energy and water consumption (e.g. equipment selection, food storage, preparation and cooking)		
Food miles: Can you confirm where the ingredients come from and how far they have travelled?		
Drinks: Do you avoid bottled water and provide tap water and where applicable refillable stations?		
Limiting Waste		
Limiting waste: What steps have you taken, and continue to take, to reduce all food waste?		
Monitoring waste: Do you monitor waste to see where reductions have and may be made?		
Managing waste: Where there is unavoidable waste how do you separate this?; and,		
Alternative to plastic: What alternative products do you use that minimise the longevity of waste (e.g. plastic straws with paper alternatives)		
Sustainable Procurement		
Fairtrade: Are the coffee, bananas, sugar and/or chocolate you offer Fair Trade certified?		
Sustainable Fish: Is your fish local or sustainably sourced and certified? Seasonal menus: Can you offer a seasonal food? Do you have local/regional suppliers you could source these ingredients from?		



Sustainable Procurement (cont.)	<i>Has a response been provided by the caterer?</i>	<i>Has criteria been met?</i>
Organic: Which ingredients are you able to procure organically? Do you have the means to confirm their certification? Can you cater a meal using all or mostly certified organic ingredients?		
Fresh: Will you prepare all of the items you serve? What will be frozen or purchased fresh?		
Healthy: Are you able to offer a healthier menu (e.g. lower in calories), either exclusively or as one option for an event? How many vegetarian dishes can you offer?		
Allergens: Do you avoid common allergens in food and offer clearly labelled food choices?; and,		
Cultural and religious sensitivities: How do you cater for cultural diversity and religious sensitivities in food offerings?		
Reusable, Recyclable and Biodegradable tableware		
Dinnerware: Are you able to serve on china and/or offer reusable serving ware or crockery?		
Tablecloths and napkins: Can you use reusable tablecloths and napkins? If the above is not an option, are you able to serve on compostable dinnerware? How about recyclable?		
Waste Management: Do you provide any materials to assist clients to process their waste properly?		
Responsible Catering Business		
Local engagement: Do you engage local suppliers, promote diversity and/or support the local community through charitable giving, apprenticeships, work-placements or community care.		
Sustainable Workplace: Can you provide evidence of sustainable practices in your workplace?		
Governance: Do you adopt transparent and accountable business and employment practices?		

	<i>Has a response been provided by the caterer?</i>	<i>Has criteria been met?</i>
Communication and Awareness		
Staff Roles and Training: Do you build responsibility for sustainable issues into the roles of all catering staff and support this with appropriate training?		
Communication: Do you communicate issues and specific information regarding sustainability initiatives of food to those consuming it; Are you able to provide dietary information and/or food miles on the menu you serve? and,		
Commitment: Do you create notice-boards, website and street stalls notices and other means of formally communicating your commitment and steps being taken towards sustainability;		
Other:		
Other ways: In what other ways can you evidence your sustainability credentials?		
Reporting: Are you able to provide checks and reports at the end of events or contract to confirm how you have met your sustainability commitments?		
Catering Contract: Are you able to provide your sustainability credentials and offer in the sustainable catering contract?		

