



LIFE POLICY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACCIDENTS

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OBJECTIVE

LIFE Institute Policy regarding the treatment of environmental accidents involving LIFE Certified companies.

APPLICATION

This document applies to LIFE Certified Organizations who may become involved in situations of significant environmental accidents according to definitions contained in this document.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Depending on the nature of its business, a LIFE Certified Organization may be under a greater risk or a lower risk of suffering an environmental accident. In a situation that a major environmental accident takes place, the LIFE Certification System needs to safeguard its credibility, as well as the message conveyed by the use of the LIFE Certification logo.

Within this context, a Policy was established for cases of Environmental Accidents, defining the entire classification to be observed and the actions to be performed by the parties involved. This ensures process transparency to all stakeholders.

2. CLASSIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACCIDENT

Small and medium environmental accidents are assessed by the Certifying Body in the routine process for the evaluation and maintenance of the LIFE Certification in its Certification and Monitoring audits.

Considered as small and medium environmental accidents are those that are limited in extension to the plant of operation and to the micro-basin where the Certified Organization is located.

An environmental accident at a LIFE Certified Organization will be considered major or significant when:

- its extension exceeds the basin or the Biome where the company is located;
- its damages caused significant mortality of fauna and flora;
- if there are significant damages to threatened species and ecosystems;
- in any situation where media repercussion justifies clarifications.

* Any situation above allows an environmental accident to be classified as "major" in the context of LIFE Certification.

Next, in Table 01, note the classification to be considered in the face of an Environmental Accident.

Table 01 - Environmental Accident: Classification and Characteristics

Environmental Accident	Properties
Small	Accidents restricted to the operational unit of the business.
Medium/Significant	Accidents that go beyond the operational unit of the business, although restricted to the micro-basin of the Certified Organization’s location.
Major/Significant	Accidents whose extension exceeds the basin or the Biome of the Organization. Accidents whose damages cause significant mortality of fauna and flora. Accidents whose damages are significant to threatened species and ecosystems. * Any situation where media repercussion justifies clarification will be classified as “major” for forwarding effects in the LIFE Certification System.

3. NOTIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACCIDENT

All environmental accidents involving a LIFE Certified Organization and classified as significant must be informed by the Certified Organization to the Certifying Body and to LIFE Institute within a period of up to 05 business days, regardless of the routine assessment or monitoring period of the Certification.

The notification shall contain preliminary information about the accident, such as: cause, justification, treatment, and measures taken. The notification must be forwarded by the person responsible for the LIFE Certification in the organization.

4. TECHNICAL OPINION ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ACCIDENTS

4.1 Inspection Visit by the Environmental Accident Commission

The Certifying Body will perform an inspection visit at the Certified Organization, having to appoint a Commission consisting of experts: in the company’s activity sector; in the area related to the impacts undertaken; and in the LIFE Certification.

During the visit, the Certifying Body must have access to a dossier containing information about the environmental accident that took place, consisting of the same accountability documents provided to the responsible environmental agency, as long as containing the following minimum information: causes of the accident; routine preventive actions related to the cause detected; justification(s) for the ineffectiveness of the preventive measures; environmental aspects of the accident and the impacts related to biodiversity; containment, minimization, and mitigation actions; action plan for recovery and restoration; plan for the prevention of further accidents.

4.2 Preparation of Opinion of Environmental Accidents and Impacts on Biodiversity

The Commission must prepare a Technical Report about the environmental accident containing the main impacts on biodiversity and their relation to LIFE Certification requirements.

It is essential for the Technical Report to contain sufficient information so that the Certifying Body can prepare an Opinion about the Environmental Accident, commenting on the maintenance, temporary suspension, or cancellation of the LIFE Certification.

The Opinion on the Environmental Accident must consider as recommendation the referrals provided for on Table 02.

The Opinion, together with the Technical Report, must be delivered to the Certifying Body within 15 days of the technical visit.

A copy of this document will be forwarded to the LIFE Institute.

Table 02 - Assessment of significant environmental accidents and consequences for LIFE Certification

		Maintenance	Suspension	Cancellation	
I. Dimension of damages to Biodiversity	Small	x			
	Medium	x	x	X	
	Major		x	X	
II. Commitment of the Certified Organization	IIa. Prevention	Procedure(s) containing preventive measures	x	x	
		Prevention routine implemented	x		
		Existing Emergency Plan	x	x	
		Emergency Plan performed	x		
	IIb. Compensation	Aspects and impacts identified	x	x	
		Recovery/Restoration Plan prepared	x	x	
		Recovery/Restoration Plan implemented	x		
		Technical quality and adequacy of the Recovery/Restoration Plan	x		

4.3 Expenses

All expenses for the assessment and investigation of the environmental accident will be the responsibility of the Certified Organization.

NOTES ON DEVELOPMENT OF THIS DOCUMENT

Version 1.0: approved on 05/17/2013, by the LIFE Institute Board of Directors. Initial issue of the document.

Version 1.0: approved on 05/19/2017, by the LIFE Institute Board of Directors. Document layout adjustment, text review and code change.

Version 1.0-R1: approved on 08/31/2023, by the LIFE Institute Board of Directors. Change of document layout and insertion of the new LIFE Institute logo.