



Save the Worker

We can't do it without you

Right now, the habitats of all workers– *homo sapiens laboratus* - are under threat. As more energy is wasted, and the ozone layer is further depleted, our climate becomes less and less suitable for these fragile but beautiful creatures.

No-one wants to lose this valuable species...
but what can you do about it?

Little changes make a big difference over time, and can directly impact quality of life for the endangered laboratus. Even more encouraging, workers themselves can lead the way.

At British Gas Business, we're delighted to do our bit in helping workers preserve their environment with this brief guide and supporting materials. By making greener choices regarding migration patterns, habitat, and resources, all of us workers can look forward to a more secure future.

Worker habitats

We hope to raise awareness about the plight of all types of workers found in the British Isles. Here, we identify laboratii by their natural habitat, which varies with each worker's primary activity.

The actions suggested in this booklet and supporting materials apply to all workers, although certain tips are more relevant for some workers than others. However, even a migratorius who does not spend much time using computers or an outdoorius who relies only superficially on indoor heat and light may find that greener habits will also improve their health and home habitat.

laboratus indoorius
(la-bōr'-a-tūs ĩn-dōr'-ee-ūs)



Many workers are found indoors: some remain stationary, alone or in social groups, for most of the daily work cycle, while others stay on their feet to create patterns of movement and interaction throughout the day. The more mobile *laboratus indoorius* tends to remain stationary only when eating or otherwise resting.

laboratus migratorius

(la-bōr'-a-tūs mī-gra-tōr'-ee-ūs)



Another notable species of worker is entirely migratory, and can be found at various indoor and/or outdoor locations throughout their annual work cycles. The *migratorius* may spend several hours a day in transit, relying heavily on petrol-powered vehicles. The *migratorius* easily adapts to various habitats and is prized for its ability to interact with a number of other *laboratii*.

laboratus outdoorius

(la-bōr'-a-tūs out-dōr'-ee-ūs)



Finally, the robust *laboratii outdoorius* engage in their daily routines entirely outdoors, but may roost indoors briefly for food or rest.

Migration adaptation

Vehicle emissions are one of the main climate change culprits that workers can help offset. Those who adapt their travel patterns to be more environmentally friendly can help reduce vehicle emissions and even improve their own health.

Two wheels, not four

Migrating via two wheels – ‘cycling’ – is a natural for biped workers, as they are already quite used to getting around on two legs, not ‘all fours’. Even those who need to drive or use public transport might cycle for part of their journey.

Cycle to Work scheme

Employers can buy bikes and related safety equipment tax-free and then loan them to employees. See details at www.dft.gov.uk or www.cyclescheme.co.uk

Rack it up

See if bike racks can be provided to visibly encourage cycling among workers.

Green the fleet

When cars are an essential part of a business, the dominant human worker (*laboratus bossus*) might be persuaded to adapt greener driving options. See environmentally responsible car hire and purchase options at sources like www.bridgetgreen.com and www.greenconsumerguide.com/commercial

Use footpower

Again, the *laboratus* can enjoy a more natural mode of migration and prevent some carbon emissions in the process by walking to the workplace.

Park and walk

Park farther away from work or home and walk the remaining distance. It’s a nice chance to wind down and get a little exercise.

Stay home

For the desk-loving *laboratus indoorius*, telecommuting may make leaving the nest optional at least part-time, saving travel emissions and expense.

Flock together

Workers who live and work in similar areas can reduce vehicle emissions and costs by carpooling. Ask around at work, or try www.carshare.com

Habitat improvement

Managing energy output wisely is one of the best and easiest ways for workers to make their habitats more sustainable. Carefully monitoring light and heat usage is key.

Use daylight – it's free!

Keep windows and skylights clean and clear, and enjoy the calming influence of warm, natural daylight instead of artificial lighting wherever possible.

Switch off

You can save up to 15% off your lighting bill just by turning off lights in empty rooms and corridors - especially at the end of the day.

Use only what you need

Lights too bright in corridors? Remove or switch off alternate fittings. Or consider installing motion-sensitive light systems.

Keep 'em clean

Clean light fittings annually. Dirt reduces lighting efficiency, which naturally encourages workers to turn more lights on.

All clear?

Keep radiators clear. Don't block radiators with furniture - it reduces efficiency and output.

Location, location

Check that thermostats are sited out of draughts and away from either cold or hot spots.

Mind the gaps

Keep windows closed in cold weather. If staff are too warm, turn the heating down instead.

Pick a number

Indoorius workers are naturally most comfortable between 20°C and 23°C. Find the temperature that suits the majority of your flock (unanimous agreement may prove difficult). Then resist the temptation to set the thermostat above this point – energy costs rise by 8% for every 1°C increase (*source: Energy Carbon Trust*).

Let's clear the air...

One of the least-known facts about the typical *indoorius* habitat is that the air inside can actually be more polluted than the air outdoors. With the average indoorius spending up to 12 hours in an enclosed area, air quality is an important issue – yet one that is relatively easy to address.

Some common sources of indoor air pollution include new carpet; paint; mould and mildew build-up, particularly in ventilation systems; restroom air fresheners; chemicals emitted by copying machines; and formaldehyde and other chemicals that can seep out of pressed-wood products like particleboard, plywood panelling and fibreboard.

Keep it moving

Circulate the air indoors wherever possible. When the outside temperature permits, let in fresh air. (Bear in mind, however, that opening windows when heating or air-conditioning systems are running can be wasteful).

Go au naturale

No, you don't have to go naked – just consider non-synthetic alternatives. Many chemically-sensitive *homo sapiens* opt for carpet made from wool or cotton rather than synthetic fibres; *laboratii* can also choose cabinets made from solid wood and finished with water-based varnishes rather than those constructed from particleboard or fibreboard.

Ventilate

Make sure that copying machines and other equipment are located in rooms that are properly ventilated.

Flex your green thumb

Make plants and flowers part of the office environment. Apart from their aesthetic appeal, they actively improve the air quality. According to a NASA study, many indoor plants absorb air pollutants through their leaves and roots and convert them into breathable air. Within 24 hours, some plants can remove up to 87% of toxic indoor air.

Conserving resources

Reducing waste means more sustainable resources for all workers, and it only takes small modifications in routine daily activities to make an impact.

Slim down

Re-evaluate packaging needs and designs to see where you can eliminate materials altogether or substitute environmentally friendly ones.

Make recycling easy

The *laboratus* has plenty enough to do without having to hunt down the recycling bin. Place recycling bins in high-traffic areas, including the conference room and kitchen as well as by the copier and fax machines.

Think before you print

Don't print out e-mails unless you have to! Forward messages electronically and pick up the phone instead whenever possible.

Make yours a double

Copy on both sides of the paper. This is especially efficient for internal documents and drafts. To encourage this habit, set the default on photocopiers to duplex (double-sided copying).

Unplug

Turn off photocopiers. A photocopier left on overnight wastes enough energy to make 35 cups of tea.

Don't fill 'er up

Unless you're making tea for the whole flock, don't boil the whole kettle. Save energy and time – just heat enough water for one.

Shrink to fit

Reduce documents to fit two pages onto one. Use for circulating rough drafts or file copies of documents.

Choose recycled paper

Stock the copier, printer, and supply cabinet with recycled paper products. It takes 60% less energy to manufacture paper from recycled stock than from virgin materials.

Shut it

Turn your computer monitor off when you leave the office, rather than leaving it on standby. A typical monitor left on overnight wastes enough energy to laser print 800 pages.

Don't buy it

Eliminate unnecessary subscriptions. Cancel newspapers, newsletters, and magazines you don't read or can access online.

Do a proper paper audit

Determine the kind and volume of paper waste your company generates, so you can take the most effective steps to use less. (See the further information sources at the end of this booklet for guidance.)

Air drying vs hand towels?

We're stumped. There are lots of competing statistics, but no conclusive evidence in favour of either hand-drying method as the greener choice.

Take an eco-break

Next time you take a break to go hunting and gathering, bring a re-usable eco-shopper bag instead of adding another plastic carrier bag to the pile of 13bn UK consumers receive every year (*source: guardian.co.uk, Thursday February 28 2008*).

How green is this campaign?

Rest assured that the laborati who produced and delivered your campaign pack adhere to the very principles advocated in these materials.

The people who put it together

- The agency that developed the campaign recycles all computer paper and food-related waste with a scheme that includes recycled-paper bins for every desk, separate kitchen bins for plastic, paper and glass, and a recycling pickup service. The agency also participates in the government Cycle to Work scheme.
- Noël P and Dean W, the creative team, have pledged to accept no more plastic carrier bags while out on the shopping prowl.

- Jen H and Nicola F, account handlers for the campaign, pledge to walk or bike to work three times a week

- John W, The British Gas Business marketing manager overseeing this campaign, has pledged to use no disposable cups, even in coffee shops

The energy people

Power saving

- Centrica Group (parent company for British Gas Business) has used 6.77% less electricity and 8.48% less gas in its offices in 2008.

- In the main office, Toni B checks that all monitors, printers and lights are switched off at the end of the evening, and reports repeat offender to the team manager.

- Posters, emails, and PA announcements remind everyone to shut down their computers.

Paper reduction

- To date in 2008, British Gas Business has used 2.3% less paper across its regional office habitats.

Recycling

- British Gas Business has to date recycled 62% of its waste in 2008.
- Added mixed paper and mixed plastic recycling bins are making recycling more convenient.
- A giant totaliser in Centrica headquarters' reception area shows the company's progress against the recycling target. Upon reaching an exceptional target in 2007, all staff received a tube of Smarties!

Migration incentives

- Centrica sponsors a Cycle to Work scheme and recently increased the number of bike racks outside its buildings.

The Green Apple Award

- Centrica is nominated for a Green Apple Award for Environmental Best Practice in building environments. These awards are organised by The Green Organisation, an independent, non-profit environmental group.

The big question...

‘Why didn’t you just send us an email, so we could print only what we need?’

If we could be sure every work habitat we’re reaching out to had the more environmentally-friendly paper, ink, and labels at hand, this might be the greenest choice. And indeed, you can download more stickers, posters and information to share from www.savetheworker.co.uk. But to make sure the vitally important Save the Worker message reaches those who can make it happen, we had to use some tangible resources.

More information

Workers of all sorts feel more secure when they have access to plenty of information, and this campaign is just the beginning of a more complete sustainability programme. The sites listed below offer more information and support for a number of environmental initiatives mentioned in our Save the Worker campaign materials.

For more detailed guidance to immediately improving energy efficiency in your work habitat, download the British Gas Business Energy Efficiency Advice for Business Customers booklet at www.britishgas.co.uk/business/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-tips.html. It includes a handy energy checklist, planning advice, and payback evaluations plus a wealth of practical tips. Also, see the further resources below.

Advice and support for businesses

www.thecarbontrust.co.uk
www.est.org.uk (The Energy Savings Trust)
www.envirowise.gov.uk

Cycle to Work

www.dft.gov.uk
www.cyclescheme.co.uk

Greener transport

www.greenconsumerguide.com/commercial.php
www.bridgegreen.com
www.carshare.com

Sustainable materials

www.soya.be/soy-ink-benefits.php
www.fsc.org (Forestry Stewardship Council)

Need more materials to Save the Worker?

Go to: www.savetheworker.co.uk

“Now the innovative must become the usual;
we must continually act before crisis hits,
before a species is on the edge of extinction,
to safeguard habitats that are essential not
just for one or two creatures but for the
whole life web of the ecosystem”

*- Al Gore, Earth in the Balance:
Ecology and the Human Spirit*



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EFFICIENCY
FOR YOUR HABITAT**

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