



Climate Neutral UN

A United Nations system-wide commitment to climate-neutral and environmentally-sustainable practices.

Why this initiative?

- On World Environment Day, 5 June 2007, the UN Secretary-General pledged to contribute to global efforts to safeguard the planet by making the in-house practices of the United Nations more climate-neutral and environmentally sustainable.
- At the October 2007 meeting of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), Executive Heads of UN agencies, funds and programmes committed to move their respective organizations towards climate neutrality.

Objectives

- Estimate the greenhouse gas emissions of UN system organizations consistent with accepted international standards;
- Undertake efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Analyze the cost implications and explore budgetary modalities of purchasing carbon offsets to eventually reach climate neutrality.

Activities

- The UN Environment Management Group (EMG) has been coordinating the UN system's efforts to move towards climate neutrality, working through a network of climate neutral focal points from each organization. Support has been provided by the UNEP Sustainable United Nations facility (SUN). Work has been underway to develop

common methodologies, tools, guidelines for emissions reductions, and to provide training and technical support.

- A suite of tools has been developed, including greenhouse gas calculators, manuals, training materials, guidance documents and best practices. The topics covered range from greenhouse gas inventorying, the greening of meetings and emissions reductions in buildings, to efficient lighting and sustainable procurement. These materials are in the public domain for use by institutions and individuals seeking to reduce their own climate footprint, at www.unemg.org/climateneutralUN.

Results

A common methodology is being used by organizations of the UN system to calculate greenhouse gas emissions from their operations. Worldwide, the UN's climate footprint from facility operations and travel in 2008 is estimated at approximately 750,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent, plus an additional one million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent from the UN peacekeeping operations.

Half of total greenhouse gas emissions are from air travel, one third from electricity and heating

of facilities, 12 percent from official vehicles and 5 percent from refrigeration and air conditioning.

Efforts are underway to reduce the UN's greenhouse gas emissions, especially by improving the efficiency of buildings and raising staff awareness. A number of organizations have already put into place offsetting initiatives.

Moving forward

Efforts will be made to improve the accuracy and completeness of the UN greenhouse gas inventory, by developing better methods and improving data collection systems, data quality and coverage especially of field offices.

In 2010, the UN system will build on initial efforts by preparing coherent emis-

sions reduction strategies for each organization, addressing all major sources, together with performance indicators to measure progress over time.

In the future, the UN system's climate neutral strategy will be scaled up into a broader effort to "green" the UN system by addressing, in a holistic and systematic manner, the full range of sustainability issues.

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CEB climate change action framework

Five focus areas and four cross-cutting areas have been identified in response to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiation process and in pursuance of the broader mandates and capacities in the United Nations system:

Focus areas

- Adaptation
- Technology transfer
- Reduction of emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD)
- Financing mitigation and adaptation action
- Capacity-building

Cross-cutting areas

- Climate knowledge: science, assessment, monitoring and early warning
- Supporting global, regional and national action
- ➔ **Climate-neutral UN**
- Public awareness-raising

<http://www.unsystemceb.org/climatechange/cop15>

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