

UPU: Environmental Mandate & Activities

Universal Postal Union

Environmental mandate

The links between the postal sector and the environment are clear: the impacts on climate changes in particular are undeniable. A few facts about the sector provide ample proof. It has:

- around 660,000 post offices open to the public;
- an estimated 1 million motorized vehicles travelling hundreds of thousands of km each year; and
- hundreds of intercontinental flights a day;

This means that the postal sector consumes vast quantities of natural resources (fuel, wood, metal) and, most importantly, produces considerable amounts of polluting emissions, particularly greenhouse gases, which cause climate changes.

As international efforts to tackle climate changes are constantly being stepped up, and the spotlight falls on one of its main sources – the business world – every sector of activity is putting time and effort into combating this major problem of our time. The postal sector is no exception: although postal operators bear some responsibility for the problem, they can also be an integral part of its solution.

In 2008, to face this challenge, the 24th Universal Postal Congress adopted Recommendation C27/2008 inviting the designated postal operators to promote initiatives aimed at reducing the negative effect of their activities on the environment. It also endorsed Resolution C34/2008 recognizing the importance of adopting a programme for the postal sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In response to this mandate, the UPU has developed a specific programme, the Greenhouse Gas Global Overview and Mitigation Project (GGOM), designed to measure the postal sector's carbon footprint and encourage initiatives to reduce its impact on climate change, particularly through the exchange of sound environmental practices.

Environmental activities

In line with Nairobi Postal Strategy for 2008-2012, the Environment and sustainable development team's work programme includes:

- UPU headquarters' GHG inventory and Emission Reduction Strategy
- Postal sector's GHG inventory
- Study of a carbon offsetting scheme for the postal sector – in line with the UN Secretary General's call to find sector solutions to mitigate climate change and find financial solutions
- Regional seminars - raising awareness and capacity building amongst the member countries
- MoU with UNEP
- Guides on environment protection (GHG measurement and reduction, green procurement)
- Audit of the application of the 20 priority actions for the postal sector – including environment

Links

[UPU - Home Page](#)

[UPU - Environment](#)