



Status of implementation of the UN Roadmap Towards Climate Neutrality by 2020

Background

On 5th June 2007, UN Secretary General (SG) Ban Ki-moon called for the UN system to become climate neutral and overall more environmentally sustainable in its management and operations. In response, the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) approved the Climate Neutral (CN) Strategy focused on UN facilities and operations and committed to:

- a) Preparing annual greenhouse gas inventories (GHG);
- b) Reducing greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible; and
- c) Considering purchasing offsets for remaining emissions.

As a result of the progress achieved across the system, the CEB subsequently expanded the scope of the Strategy and committed to:

- a) Approaching emission reductions in a more systematic and complete way through the introduction of **environmental management system (EMS)** in UN organizations progressively covering four indicators: GHG emissions, waste management, water consumption and environmental capacity building for UN staff (April 2013);
- b) Achieving **Climate Neutrality by 2020** through a combination of emission reductions and offsets and including environmental sustainability goals in the programming of facilities and operations (April 2015).

A **UN Roadmap Towards Climate Neutrality by 2020** defining how to reach these goals is also included in this last CEB commitment which provides an approach and clear milestones to UNEP and the EMG member's work in the field of internal sustainability management.

The Roadmap maintains the three pillars of “**measure; reduce; offset**” but expands them as appropriate to the four environmental indicators mentioned above.

UNEP has been designated by Secretary General as the UN agency that will support implementation of the Roadmap in the UN system within the frames of the EMG. The Secretary General also requested UNEP and UNFCCC to partner in supporting UN system organizations with offsetting GHG emissions. Partnerships with other UN organizations on other aspects of the Roadmap (waste; procurement; training; field operations) are being developed.

Current Status of implementing the Roadmap

As per September 2016, the following status of implementation of the Roadmap towards a climate neutral UN can be conveyed for each of its three steps.

a) Measure

- **Data on GHG emissions** is being collected by 65 UN entities. Currently, data from 2015 is being collected and verified by the Sustainable United Nations (SUN) facility. The publication of this data in the Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN report is planned in time for the UNFCCC COP (November 2016).
- For the first time, the UN system will release **data on waste management** efforts through Sustainable United Nations (SUN). Data on waste by 39 UN agencies will be published in the forthcoming Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN report. It is expected that as a result of training and coaching, this number will increase significantly in the next years.
- UNEP is currently procuring a new Environmental Management software on behalf of the CEB to track environmental impacts in a more advanced manner and to help UN organisations to make informed management decisions that can lead to measurable environmental footprint reductions.

b) Reduce

- Reductions in GHG emissions are technically challenging to analyse and compare at the aggregate UN-system level. For this reason, the data published on the *Greening the Blue* website¹ remains at the agency specific level.
- Owing to the recent CEB decisions on the introduction of Environmental Management Systems and the Roadmap Towards Climate Neutrality, an overall trend in the UN system towards more systematic approaches to the control and reduction of agencies' environmental impacts can be observed.
- SUN can to date report existing emissions reduction strategies, sustainability strategies or Environment Management Systems in more than 20 UN entities. These entities include the organizations with the highest relative GHG emission impacts with DFS alone representing more than 50% of the overall impact. Energy efficiency, waste management, travel and staff awareness are the most addressed topics in these strategies. However, only 12 agencies have clear and quantifiable emission reduction targets.

c) Offset

- By December 2015, 21 UN entities plus the headquarters of UN Women reached climate neutrality by purchasing offsets for their 2014 emissions in addition to their emission reductions efforts.
- The UN GHG inventory for 2015 emissions is still under verification. Based on information by UNFCCC and UNOPs, however, the expectation is that at least the same amount of entities will be climate neutral for their 2015 emissions with some previously climate neutral entities dropping off the list (UPU) and some newcomers (FAO, ITU, and the facilities of the VIC hosted agencies). The final data will be published in the Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN report in November.

¹ <http://www.greeningtheblue.org/what-the-un-is-doing>