

UPU actions taken to tackle climate change

What is the UPU doing to help the postal sector reduce its greenhouse gas emissions?

First and foremost, the UPU needs to make its member countries aware of their carbon footprint. To this end, in June 2008 it launched a project to quantify this footprint, the *GHG Global Overview and Mitigation Project (GGOM)*.

Next, to involve member countries in the exercise and, in particular, to explain its importance, it is providing them with a familiarization guide to the methodology used for a calculation of this kind. By means of the guide, the UPU aims to make postal operators aware of the part they play in climate change.

Finally, in conjunction with pioneer Posts and other partners, the UPU will promote the exchange of good practices between Posts and the transfer of technology to developing countries. It will also suggest to all its member countries a series of measures aimed at reducing their carbon footprint.

What is the GGOM?

The *Greenhouse Gas Global Overview and Mitigation Project* was launched by the UPU in June 2008. Its objective is to establish a methodology specific to the postal sector for measuring greenhouse gas emissions resulting from postal activities. Based on these calculations, the UPU will create a regional map of emissions in order to provide an assessment and visual representation of postal sector impact on climate change.

The second stage of the project will be to propose a series of emission-cutting measures that UPU member countries can implement.

Are the problems the same in industrialized and developing countries?

Having a membership of 191 countries with widely varying geographical situations, cultures and levels of development means that the UPU has to incorporate these differences in order to involve all designated postal operators in combating climate change. But whereas the industrialized countries have sufficient funds earmarked for financing programmes to cut their carbon footprint, developing countries often have other priorities (quality of service, etc.) and smaller budgets.

Although motivation and involvement are equal in both groups, the means available are not. Whereas the developing countries need technical assistance to measure their greenhouse gas emissions, the industrialized countries want recognized procedures put in place to offset emissions that they cannot reduce any further.

Because of this, the UPU is needed to serve as a forum for the exchange of good practices and to continue to offer all its member countries its assistance and the expertise of its partners.

What is the UPU guide to measuring the postal sector's carbon footprint?

The first step in the process of reducing the sector's carbon footprint is to take stock of the polluting emissions associated with postal activities.

Some pilot Posts can base this inventory on recommendations made in the Standard Protocol developed in conjunction with PostEurop and IPC. However, for most postal operators, this Standard is too detailed for an initial inventory.

Given the different levels of development of its 191 member countries, the UPU has decided to draw up a less extensive inventory than the one recommended in the Standard, and has produced an "inventory guide" to explain its main points and the methodology used. The objective of this guide is to explain how the International Bureau of the UPU is going to draw up this inventory, and in particular to remind member countries of the need for active cooperation in gathering the data needed to produce the inventories. It also describes the procedures to be followed to participate in and contribute to the UPU's inventory. This will make it possible to harmonize the data received from designated operators and the calculations made, thereby ensuring consistent results.

What is the UPU's questionnaire on consumption designed to measure?

This questionnaire, which the UPU is sending out to all its member countries, asks for data on the consumption of fuel for vehicle fleets, fuel and electricity for buildings, details of staff numbers, and the number and surface area of premises occupied.

Using proven methodology, the UPU will be able to calculate their greenhouse gas emissions on the basis of this data, and thus to estimate the postal sector's impact on climate change.

As part of this initial stocktaking exercise, the UPU has decided to calculate emissions from two main postal sector sources. These sources, known as "scopes" are the vehicle fleet and the buildings. The third scope, focusing on emissions produced by subcontractors, will not be calculated in 2009, mainly because it does not reflect the reality of the majority of UPU member countries, which do not, in the main, subcontract their activities. Nevertheless, the inventory, which will be carried out each year, will, of course, aim to be exhaustive, and to produce increasingly accurate results. To this end, the UPU will take the necessary measures to calculate these emissions in future years.