
Adaptation Fund Board
Forty-sixth meeting
Bonn, Germany

OPTIONS FOR REDUCING THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF THE ADAPTATION FUND

Strategic Issues

- Carbon footprint management is becoming an increasingly important element of corporate management. This trend is particularly noticeable in many of the Fund's contributor countries that, for example, impose legal reporting obligations on organizations regarding their carbon footprint.
- The Fund is committed to understanding its own carbon footprint as a complement to its work for adaptation action in developing countries in order to reduce its contribution to climate change.

Purpose

1. This board paper presents a report on the carbon footprint of the Secretariat as contained in Annex A to this document and shares findings on the practices of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) related to the carbon footprints of their funded projects under implementation.

Recommended Decision

2. The Adaption Fund Board, having considered document AFB/B.46/12, refers to its decision B.42/55 requesting the Secretariat to do a comparative analysis on practices, methodologies and cost estimations of the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund for estimating the carbon footprints of projects, decides to take note of the information contained in this board paper.

Background

3. At the 39th meeting of the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board), the topic of the carbon footprint of the Fund's operations was introduced by a Board member, and the Board agreed to pursue its discussion on the matter at its fortieth meeting.

4. At the 40th meeting of the Board, the Secretariat presented document AFB/B40/Inf.6 to provide an overview of the carbon footprint of the administrative functions of the Adaptation Fund. Following the discussion on the matter, the Board requested the Secretariat to consider possible options for reducing the carbon footprint of the Adaptation Fund and to report to the Board on the matter at its 41st meeting. (Decision B.40/79)

5. At the 41st meeting of the Board, pursuant to decision B.40/79, the Secretariat presented possible options for reducing the carbon footprint of the Fund contained in AFB/B.41/6 for the Board consideration. The Board discussed the presented options, but no consensus was reached on this

agenda item. The Board decided to continue the discussion on the matter at the 42nd meeting of the Board. (Decision B.41/35)

6. At the 42nd meeting of the Board, the Secretariat presented document AFB/B.42/10, and the Board made the following decision:

Having considered the information contained in document AFB/B.42/10 and following best practice at an international level, the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) decided to request the secretariat:

(a) To present a report on the carbon footprint of the Secretariat for Scopes 1, 2 and 3 (as presented in document AFB/B.42/10) based on the methodologies from the Greenhouse Gas Protocol¹, in conjunction with the annual performance report, to the Board for consideration, and to aim to make the report more comprehensive as more data becomes available, including the estimated carbon footprint of Board meetings;

(b) To do a comparative analysis on practices, with the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, methodologies and cost estimations for estimating the carbon footprints of projects and to the Board for consideration at its forty-third meeting.

(Decision B.42/55)

7. At the 44th and 45th meetings of the Board, it did not discuss this agenda item owing to a lack of time. Consequently, this paper is being re-submitted for consideration by the Board at its 46th meeting.

8. Pursuant to paragraph (a) of Decision B.42/55, the Secretariat distributed a report on the carbon footprint of Secretariat operations for fiscal year 2024 at the 45th meeting of the Board in October 2025. As carbon footprint data is only available one year in arrears, data for 2025 will be only be available later this calendar year.

Findings on GEF and GCF related to the carbon footprints of their funded projects

9. The Secretariat conducted a desk review of whether these organizations have practices or initiatives in place to measure or reduce carbon footprint associated with their funded projects and programs under implementation and found none. This was also confirmed by interviewing Secretariat staff of both organizations.

10. Both organizations provide funding for climate change mitigation projects. What they do have are guidelines to harmonize how greenhouse gas emissions are calculated and reported for climate change mitigation projects, and neither organization has practices nor initiatives to measure the carbon footprint of project being implemented by their agencies itself such as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from air or land travel of project teams and shipping of project equipment.

11. GEF has the “[Guidelines for greenhouse gas emissions accounting and reporting for GEF projects](#)” that recommends GHG emission reduction calculation methodologies for GEF’s climate change mitigation projects, which GEF Agencies to use to assess ex-ante the expected climate mitigation impact. GEF also requests the agencies to use a core indicator to capture reduction of GHG from its mitigation projects and set an overall target for an investment period. But it does not request the agencies to measure or report on GHG emissions from project implementation itself.

¹ All methodologies are based on guidance from the Greenhouse Gas Protocol with emission factors taken from governmental and international organizations such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Environmental Protection Agency and the International Energy Agency.

12. Similarly, GCF only measures the GHG emissions that are reduced or avoided by the GCF funded activities based on existing, peer-reviewed methodologies. Examples of existing methodologies and tools that may be applied include, but are not limited to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)² Methodologies, new methodologies to be developed under Article 6.4³ of the Paris Agreement, bilateral approaches such as the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)⁴, the Gold Standard⁵, the methodologies of the Technical Working Group of the International Financial Institutions (IFI TWG methodologies)⁶, the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS)⁷ and the Food and Agriculture Organization's EX-Ante Carbon Balance Tool (EX-ACT)⁸. This approach is more applicable to estimate GHG reductions at an activity level or, in other words, Scope 1 direct emission. GCF-supported initiatives do not measure the carbon footprint of projects and programs under implementation in accordance with the GHG protocol's Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3 methodologies. One of the factors is the underlying difficulties, such as the lack of data and methodologies for calculating value chain emissions, as well as the lack of an agreed-upon methodology to compute Scope 3 emissions.

13. Thus, neither the GEF nor the GCF measures the carbon emissions associated with the implementation of the funded projects and therefore has no information on methodology that can be shared with the Adaptation Fund. As a result, there was no information available for the Secretariat to conduct a comparative analysis of the methodologies and cost estimates for estimating the carbon footprint of project implementation by both organizations.

² <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-kyoto-protocol/mechanisms-under-the-kyoto-protocol/the-clean-development-mechanism>

³ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/article-64-mechanism>

⁴ https://www.mofa.go.jp/ic/ch/page1we_000105.html

⁵ <https://www.goldstandard.org/>

⁶ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/International%20Financial%20Institution%20Framework%20for%20a%20Harmonised_rev.pdf

⁷ <https://verra.org/programs/verified-carbon-standard/>

⁸ <https://www.fao.org/in-action/epic/ex-act-tool/suite-of-tools/ex-act/en/>

ANNEX A

CARBON FOOTPRINT OF THE ADAPTATION FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

Introduction

1. The Adaptation Fund (AF) Board Secretariat is hosted by the Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which administratively constitutes one of the units (GEF Vice-Presidency) in the World Bank. This report presents the carbon footprint of internal business operations for the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat for Scopes 1, 2 and 3 based on the methodologies from the Greenhouse Gas Protocol as described in Table 1 below, using available data through the initiative of the WBG on carbon inventory.

Table. 1: Three scopes under the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Initiative (GHG Protocol)

Scope 1: Direct emissions sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combustion of fuel in boilers or furnaces that are owned by the reporting organization - Generation of electricity, steam, or heat in equipment that is owned by the reporting organization - Business travel in vehicles that are owned by the reporting organization, such as company cars or corporate jets - Employee commuting in company-owned vehicles, such as shuttles and company cars - Fugitive emissions of refrigerant from chillers or other refrigeration units owned by the reporting organization
Scope 2: Indirect emissions sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generation of purchased electricity, steam, heat, or chilled water
Scope 3: Optional Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business travel in non-company-owned vehicles such as rental cars, employee cars, trains, and commercial planes

2. The World Bank’s overall data on carbon footprint is presented in a few official publications including the “[Sustainability review 2023](#) (biannual)” and “[GRI index 2025](#)”.

Carbon Footprint of the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat

3. The Secretariats of the GEF and AF jointly occupied two floors⁹ (35,800 sq ft.) in a leased building in Washington, D.C. in the United States as of the end of fiscal year 2024 (FY24) or 30 June 2024. The share of usage by the AF was 3,326 sq ft. - approximately 10% of the two floors that were occupied by the GEF Vice-Presidency. The numbers are estimated from information that the building management provided for the whole building and apportioned for the office space of the GEF Vice-Presidency Unit, including the AF. The information was obtained through the Sustainable Development Practice Group of the World Bank.

⁹ Since April 2024, GEF Vice-Presidency has gradually expanded its office space to another floor of the same building, initially by occupying 50% of the floor. It has occupied the additional floor fully since July 2024. The said three months from April to June 2024 was a transitional period, and the carbon footprint for the additional office space is relatively minor. As such, it is not factored into the estimate for natural gas and electricity usages. The carbon footprint for the additional full floor will be reported from the FY25 report.

Scope 1 - Direct emissions sources

Combustion of fuel in boilers or furnaces (GEF and AF in total)

tCO₂eq : metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂eq)

	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Energy	981 therms of natural gas			
Emissions	5.21 tCO ₂ eq			

Scope 2 – Indirect emissions sources

Purchased electricity emissions (GEF and AF in total)

	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Energy	716,064 kWh of electricity (equivalent to 716 MWh)	716,064 kWh of electricity (equivalent to 716 MWh)	716,064 kWh of electricity (equivalent to 716 MWh)	716,064 kWh of electricity (equivalent to 716 MWh)
Emissions	212.88 tCO ₂ eq	219.60 tCO ₂ eq	214.47 tCO ₂ eq	193.94 tCO ₂ eq

Note: electricity emission carbon emission factors change over time due to fuel sources of the regional electricity grid.

- In the WBG, the second largest course of emissions is electricity usage.

Scope 3 – Optional sources

- The World Bank uses the UN International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Carbon Emissions Calculator to compute work-related air travel emissions. In the World Bank, the largest source of emissions is air travel, and the majority of the World Bank work-related travel impacts are associated with plane travel. For work-related travel, only air travel booked and paid for by the World Bank and travel by contracted car service data is collected and included.

Work-related travel emissions (AF only)

tCO₂eq : metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂eq)

	FY22	FY23	FY24
Carbon emissions, secretariat, total	134.6 tCO ₂ eq	396.75 tCO ₂ eq	537.55 tCO ₂ eq
Carbon cost ¹⁰ , secretariat, total	US\$ 6,715	US\$ 19,824	US\$ 26,859
Trees to absorb the carbon emissions ¹¹ , secretariat, total	1,178	3,479	4,713

¹⁰ The World Bank uses US\$ 50 per ton to calculate the carbon cost for travel, which is consistent with the [High Level Commission on Carbon Prices](#), convened by the [Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition \(CPLC\)](#) and co-chaired by Nobel Laureate Joseph Stiglitz and Lord Nicholas Stern and the [Global Carbon Council \(GCC\)](#) Guidance, with an understanding that the price be raised to US\$ 50-100 per ton of CO₂eq by 2030.

¹¹ The World Bank uses the methodology of [US EPA](#) to calculate the number of trees required to absorb the carbon emission. According to the EPA, those trees need to be grown for 10 years to absorb the carbon emission from the flights.

Carbon emissions per traveler in WBG, average	3.92 mtons tCO ₂ eq/traveler	7.51 tCO ₂ eq/traveler	7.49 tCO ₂ eq/traveler
Carbon emissions per staff in secretariat, average	5.85 mtons tCO ₂ eq/traveler	10.72 tCO ₂ eq/traveler	12.22 tCO ₂ eq/traveler
Distance flown per traveler in WBG, average	19,156 miles miles/traveler	23,239 miles/traveler	23,004 miles/traveler
Distance flown per traveler in secretariat, average	27,437 miles/traveler	33,361 miles/traveler	37,278 miles/traveler

6. Work-related travels captured here are those that were undertaken by staff and consultants of the World Bank. Travels that were undertaken as a group such as meeting participants including board members are not incorporated in the GHG inventory yet, and the responsible unit of the World Bank has been working on it.