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ON CLIMATE CHANGE

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IPCC PROGRAMME AND BUDGET
United Nations Greenhouse Gas Calculator

(Letter from the UNEP Executive Director)



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente
Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة
联合国环境规划署



Our Ref: EM/IB/Gas Calculator

3 April 2009

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to share with you the new common UN Greenhouse Gas Calculator. Calculating an organization's greenhouse gas (GHG) footprint is the first crucial step towards delivering on our collective pledge, as CEB members, to move towards climate neutrality. I hope the calculator will further assist your organization in delivering on the CEB commitment to compile an annual greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory starting 2009. By using the calculator as a common tool we will ensure that the UN organizations inventories are consistent, comparable and transparent, and based on the best-available sources of information.

This tool will serve to establish the baseline inventories of the UN system organizations as much as possible against which we can measure our efforts as much as possible to honour our commitment to reduce the GHG emissions from our daily operations. Such a baseline is vital in analysing the cost implications and budgetary modalities of purchasing offsets to achieve climate neutrality.

The UN Greenhouse Gas Calculator is the outcome of a collaborative partnership of staff members from over a dozen organizations across the UN system, who have pooled their expertise, skills and know-how, to develop a joint tool that will serve the interests of the organization as a whole – a fine example of the whole being greater than sum of its parts. I am particularly grateful to the staff of the United Nations Department of Field Support/Information and Communications Technology Division (DFS/ICTD), for their efforts, expertise, creativity and commitment.

To estimate emissions from official air travel, a complementary UN Travel Aviation Carbon Emissions Calculator has also been developed by ICAO. I am grateful to ICAO for their efforts in supporting our common endeavour and the two tools will serve to assist the UN system in completing its inventories.

The calculators are available at www.unemg.org/climateneutralun web site and will shortly be complemented by a specially designed data-mining tool to merge the results from both calculators. The data-mining tool will store results in a common password protected database, which will generate harmonized GHG inventories and performance reports. The tools will help towards external verification and credibility. In 2010 we envisage a complete on-line climate neutral data-management solution for data collection, data management and performance tracking.

The EMG will be in touch with your Climate Neutral Focal Points with regard to practical assistance in using the greenhouse gas inventory tools.

To: Members of the Environment Management Group (EMG)

Executive Office

P. O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya • Tel: (254 20) 762 3386/3416/ 3652 • Fax: (254 20) 762 4275 / 4608 • E-mail: executiveoffice@unep.org

www.unep.org



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The Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon recognizes climate change as "the defining challenge of our age" and has called on the UN system to lead by example. It is therefore important that we act as one UN and demonstrate improvements and good sustainable practices by end of this year. The EMG secretariat will report on UN climate neutrality performance to the Chief Executives Board Meeting (CEB) in October 2009. Hence, the EMG secretariat will need your reports on implementation by 1 September 2009. The report will include information on inter-agency cooperation, greenhouse gas emissions levels, relative performance and potential emissions reductions. The final report of the progress achieved will be presented to the UN Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Yours sincerely,

Achim Steiner
Executive Director and
Chair of EMG

Executive Office

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