

Greening the Blue

Creating a more sustainable United Nations

Commitments



- 2007 pledge by UN Secretary-General

“...explore ways of making the United Nations more climate friendly and environmentally sustainable, and to develop a climate-neutral approach to its premises and operations.”

- 2007 approval by Chief Executives Board of Climate Neutral Strategy

“...commit to moving our respective organizations towards climate neutrality...for our facility operations and travel...,”
specifically to:

- * Estimate greenhouse gas emissions
- * Undertake efforts to reduce them
- * Explore cost implications of purchasing offsets

Actions

- Sustainable United Nations facility (SUN)
- Inter-agency network (50 UN entities)
- Achievements:
 - *Inventories of UN's greenhouse gas emissions
 - *Common guidelines for reducing emissions
 - *Greening the Blue communication platform

Reductions: Facilities

- **The Challenge**

- Second largest source of emissions (about 40%) from 530 locations around the world

- **The response**

- Energy efficiencies, renewable sources

- Renovations of UNHQ New York will achieve over 40% reduction in emissions

- Guidelines have been produced to assist in the purchase, design and retrofitting of UN buildings



Reductions: Travel

- The Challenge

- The major source of greenhouse gas emissions for most UN organizations (over 90% for some)

- The Response

- Measures to reduce emissions from travel through reduction, replacement, efficiency, monitoring, reporting and staff incentives
- Reflecting environmental considerations in travel rules

Reductions: Staff Engagement

- The challenge

- The UN employs over 200,000 staff, including 60,000 peacekeepers

- The response

- www.greeningtheblue.org provides information to UN staff
- Staff are encouraged to be more sustainable in the workplace
- Many organisations have established 'green groups' to assist with this



Where to next

- Organizational emissions reduction strategies (27 undergoing approval)
- Sustainability Management Systems (CO2 plus water, waste, other)

UNHQ New York

- from ad hoc to systematic

- Senior Advisor, Sustainability (May '11)
- Senior-level Steering Group (Dec '11)
- Greening UNHQ volunteers

Lessons and challenges

- Senior management ownership, visible leadership
- Longer-term approach to human and financial resources
- Effective communication

UN and Missions together

- Rio+20 – negotiating credibility

"The UN's ability to walk the talk on climate change is defining our credibility and, thereby, our ability to deliver our mandates"

(Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon)

- Green Missions page on www.greeningtheblue.org – forum for learning by sharing

Thank you

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

Julie MacKenzie

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