

The International Bureau on its way to climate neutrality

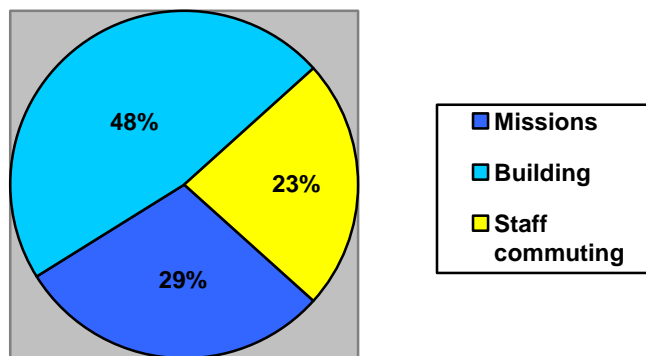
What impact does the International Bureau of the UPU have on climate change?

As part of its secretariat activities, the International Bureau (IB) of the UPU uses various natural and industrial resources: paper, ink, cardboard, plastic, etc. It also uses electricity and fuel to light, heat and air-condition the UPU headquarters building. Finally, IB staff duties also include missions which involve travel, usually by air.

Even if the IB tries to reduce these activities, they all have an impact on climate change, as they are all sources of pollution, particularly greenhouse gas emissions.

Has this impact been quantified?

Yes, it was measured for the first time in August 2009 as part of the inventory carried out for all the UN agencies. With the aid of two tools developed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the IB was able to measure its greenhouse gas emissions source by source. The result for 2008 was around 1,500 tonnes of CO₂e. The three sources of these emissions were the building, the missions, and IB staff members' travel to and from work.



What is the International Bureau doing to reduce its carbon footprint?

In order to set an example and to be a showcase for the postal sector, the International Bureau (IB) has already undertaken numerous actions aimed at reducing its carbon footprint. The main measures already in place at the IB are:

- 1 Missions
 - The vast majority of air travel by UPU staff is now in economy class (regarding the size of seats in business and economy classes, more people can fly in economy, which means that the carbon footprint of each traveller is less important in economy than in business).
 - For short journeys with good transport links, staff are asked to opt for travelling by train. As an incentive to staff choosing this option, they may travel first class, and the UPU offers to pay for a half-fare card for them to travel on public transport in Switzerland
- 2 The building
 - Replacement of the lighting system in 2008: a 70% saving on electricity
 - Appointment of a cleaning company offering a more ecological service
 - Clean disposal of stamps and international reply coupons, which are recycled to make paper towels

- 3 Responsible procurement
 - The UPU has already benefited from UNEP expertise by jointly organizing a three-day training session on responsible procurement, entitled *"Responsible procurement within the United Nations: buying for a better world"*
- 4 Other initiatives
 - Insertion of the logo "Unite to combat climate change" on 10 million international reply coupons in circulation between 2009 and 2013
 - Trials of videoconferencing at the UPU's major annual meetings in 2009.
 - Replacement of all traditional paper with FSC-certified paper (45 tonnes in 2008)

And to go even further, the International Bureau has decided a plan of action in the months ahead. Among these actions, we can mention:

1 Missions: First and foremost, the UPU wants to rationalize its business travel. This calls for investment in new methods of communication, aimed in particular at facilitating the use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing. When travel is unavoidable, UPU-trained local and regional experts will be called on more and more, in order to keep distances travelled for missions to a minimum.

2 Responsible procurement: By training field procurement managers, the legal department and the logistics service at headquarters in eco-responsible procurement, the UPU aims to mobilize all its staff and to strengthen its policy in this area.

3 Management of buildings: The renovation of the facade of the UPU Headquarters building will be based on environmental specifications and should lead to a 58% saving in annual energy consumption (scheduled for 2010).

4 Natural resources: The use of recycled paper is currently being studied, as is the gradual introduction of a "paperless" policy for big meetings and conferences.

5 Partnerships: The organization wishes to strengthen its partnerships with experts such as the UNEP and environmental organizations in order to further its work on achieving climate neutrality.