

Reducing the climate impact of travel

Climate Focus travel policy

Climate Focus staff travels globally for conferences, site visits, meetings, and events. This practice is far from sustainable as it contributes to air traffic and increases greenhouse gas emissions. The global aviation industry already emits 859 Mt CO_{2e} into the atmosphere, or 2% of global greenhouse gases.¹ At the current rate, 2020 emissions could be as much as 70% higher than they were in 2005. Looking forward to 2050, it could grow another 300-700%.²

While accounting for the pure emissions from fuel consumption in flights is important, flying also releases a potent mix of nitrogen, carbon monoxide, water vapour and soot. When accounting for the release of these pollutants at higher altitudes, the ultimate emissions profile and impacts become much worse.



We have been purchasing carbon credits to compensate for our emissions. However, at a price of EUR 10 per tonne of CO_{2e} this practice hardly captures the damage being done. We are therefore adopting a travel policy that holds us accountable for our air emissions; involves a serious and sustained effort to reduce air travel; compensates emissions and supports non-for-profit initiatives fighting climate change.

We also seek to mobilise support among partners and clients for this travel policy to reduce professional air travel among climate change and development professionals.

Cornerstones of the travel policy

The travel policy follows the logic avoiding, replacing, compensating air travel:

- 1. We minimise travel whenever possible.** We will rely on local staff or local partners wherever possible. Meetings and site visits are preferably attended by our team members living closest to the location of the event. We avoid any travel to the other side of the globe for a one-day event or meeting. We give priority to tele- or videoconferencing over traveling for regular client meetings.
- 2. We travel by train or share a car for trips up to eight hours,** even if the price of a flight is lower and the flight schedule more convenient.
- 3. When air travel cannot be avoided, we will account for and compensate for the climate cost of the trip through a surcharge to the cost of the ticket.** Climate cost accounting will lead to a surcharge of an average of USD 78 / EUR 68 per tonne CO_{2e} on top of the airline fee. The surcharge will be passed on to the client and recycled for purchasing carbon credits and for supporting organisations that create awareness on climate change.

Pricing-in climate costs of travel

We determine the surcharge through a conservative approach based on a flight emissions calculation from Atmosfair³, the market leader for carbon offsetting in Germany. This calculator accounts for multiple factors

¹ <https://www.atag.org/facts-figures.html>

² https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/aviation_en

³ <https://www.atmosfair.de/wp-content/uploads/atmosfair-flight-emissions-calculator-englisch-1.pdf>

that affect fuel consumption and uses a conservative estimate of the enhanced effects flight emissions compared to similar approaches. After measuring emissions from this calculator, we apply the World Bank’s Shadow Price of Carbon⁴ to translate the emissions into a price. On average, it comes to about USD 78 / EUR 68 per tonne CO₂e. The following table shows the standard surcharge for different flight times.

The surcharge will form part of Climate Focus budgets and service offerings. The surcharge will be applied to each leg of a multi-stop flight.

Table 1: Standardised surcharges for different flight times

FLIGHT TIME (h)	EMISSIONS (t CO ₂ e)	PRICE (EUR)	PRICE (USD)
<4	0.8-1.6	€ 100	\$115
4– 8	1.6-3.3	€ 200	\$230
8 – 12	3.3-5	€ 300	\$360
>12	>5	€ 400	\$ 490

Supporting climate change projects and initiatives

We offer our clients an array of options on how we will use the proceeds of our surcharge with the goal to support a range of different strategies on how to confront climate change. We offer to

- Mitigate travel’s impacts by purchasing high-quality carbon offsets from projects, such as the [Kenya Biogas Program](#) that promotes biogas as a domestic source of energy and the [Guatcarbon REDD+ pioneer carbon project](#), located in the Mayan Biosphere Reserve and co-managed by state authorities and indigenous local communities practicing community-based forest management.
- Fund charities that recruit young people to fight environmental degradation and climate change, such as the [Alliance for Climate Education](#) in the US, [Sinfonía Trópico](#) in Colombia and the [Plant-for-the planet project in](#) the EU.

We are happy to add climate charities to this list in coordination with clients and partners.



Sinfonía Trópico is one of the climate education initiatives we recommend and support

Transparency

Climate Focus will publish its annual flights and emissions on its website together with the overall proceeds and the use of the surcharge.

Climate Focus

www.climatefocus.com

Phone: +31 20 262 10 30

E-mail: info@climatefocus.com

Netherlands:
Sarphatikade 13
1017 WV Amsterdam

Het Industriegebouw
Goudsesingel 52-214
3011 KD Rotterdam

Germany:
Schwedter Str. 253
10119 Berlin

USA:
1800 M Street NW, Suite 400N
Washington, DC 20036

Colombia:
Carrera 14 #89-48
Office 305
Bogotá

⁴ <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/911381516303509498/2017-Shadow-Price-of-Carbon-Guidance-Note-FINAL-CLEARED.pdf>