

MARCH 2023

SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN COMMUNITY

*“If you can’t measure it,
you can’t manage it.”*

– Peter Drucker



SSCA HIGHLIGHTS OF THE QUARTER

Humanitarian Carbon Calculator: Signatories of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations committed to working towards reducing the impacts of the climate and environmental crisis and their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, but organizations cannot reduce what they cannot measure. The Humanitarian Carbon Calculator was developed through consultations with over 100 humanitarian organizations, experts and ECHO, the humanitarian aid department of the European Commission. These consultations helped define a [methodology](#) for estimating an organization’s GHG emissions that would both be specific to the humanitarian sector and follow an international standard (the GHG Protocol).

The Humanitarian Carbon Calculator was piloted by ten organizations. The resources developed to support organizations in their carbon accounting exercises, which explain the steps they must take, the data they need, key reduction levers and more, can be found on the [Humanitarian Carbon Calculator web page](#). The tool and the resources are an important first step, but they will need to be continuously reviewed and improved with the help of many humanitarian organizations. There is a long journey ahead and using the same methodology and emissions factors will be the first step towards alignment across the humanitarian sector as we embark together on the path to slowly building the best way to measure emissions for carbon accounting.

As you test the Humanitarian Carbon Calculator and the methodology and emissions factors, please share your feedback, suggestions for new emissions factors, etc. using the forms you will find on the [Humanitarian Carbon Calculator web page](#). If you missed the presentation of the tool in January 2023, you could watch it [here](#).

“GREENING” THE OFFICE

A meeting about greening the office was held at the end of 2023. Organizations shared what they are doing to make their offices more sustainable. The recorded meeting and the presentations can be found [here](#).

SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGE (SSCC)

To encourage thinking about sustainable solutions within the Red Cross and Red Crescent community, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) launched the SSCC in January 2021. **More than 213 proposals** have been received from **33 different countries**, with interesting ideas and suggestions on how to make the Red Cross and Red Crescent supply chain more sustainable. While many were not specifically related to the supply chain, three initiatives stood out and received funding for project development. If you want to know more, click [here](#).



Bambana box made of bamboo and banana leaves, developed by the Nepal Red Cross Society

TWO RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Eco-design tarpaulin (UNHCR/IFRC/ICRC)

After compiling the findings of RISE Research Institutes of Sweden, the three organizations validated the proposed specifications for the eco-design tarpaulin, which are expected to provide the following improvements on the tarpaulin currently used:

- contains 15% high-quality recycled polyethylene (high quality ensures durability will not be affected)
- lighter weight with reduction from 190 gsm to 170 gsm
- increased mechanical strength: tensile (+50%), tear (+100%) and fastening points (+33%)
- introduction of minimum requirements for resistance to cuts and punctures
- introduction of a new fastening system (still under development).



New eco-design tarpaulin ensures reduced environmental impact

A comparative life cycle analysis (LCA) of the two tarpaulins shows a reduction in environmental impact for every change in the specifications (see table below).

CONFIRMED SUCCESS IN REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	
SPECIFICATION	IMPACT
15% recycled polyethylene	Reduces global warming potential (GWP) by 8% and fossil resource use by 8%
14% lighter in weight	Results in 14% reduction in all 11 LCA impact categories
Extended life span (double)	Potentially reduces the impact of tarpaulin distribution by up to 50% (only in the case of redistribution to the same beneficiaries)
Long-term UV resistance	Avoids the release of microplastics and chemicals into the environment and allows second use and recycling
Industrial recycling	Reduces GWP by 41% and fossil resource use by 57%
Low-tech local recycling (at concept stage)	Reduces GWP by 54% and fossil resource use by 78%

For more information, you can find a [short summary here](#). Experts on the subject might like to take a look at this [longer version](#). If you are interested in knowing more about the LCA, check out the following:

- [LCA of the current tarpaulin](#)
- [LCA of the new tarpaulin](#)
- [Comparison of different raw materials \(LCA\)](#).

Alternative Polypropylene bag Project (ICRC/UNHCR/WFP)

Summary is available [here](#). [Click here](#) for more information about the main materials available as alternatives to woven polypropylene for dry foods and non-food packaging, and take a look at the [multicriteria analysis of those materials](#).

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

The ICRC is working on the project Reducing sustainability risk per item. The project is following the steps shown below.

- Agree on nine key sustainability criteria to focus on from the list of 33 criteria initially proposed.
- Review the long list of items that the ICRC purchases, taking into account volume and criticality for sustainability. Around 200 items were selected to focus on.
- Carry out a risk assessment for these items to assign risk scores.
- Identify mitigation measures and determine the operability of potential solutions, for example, feasibility and cost (ongoing).



We will share the results of the project, but if you want to have a look at the methodology used, items identified and the reasoning behind the risk scoring, the table with the 200 items can be found [here](#). If you are working on something similar, please contact us so we can complement the work.

Sustainable procurement presentation

Raising awareness and training are essential tools for a successful ecological transition. That is why the ICRC is training its procurement teams at the main delegations in sustainable procurement, following its [Sustainable procurement guidelines](#). You can find the presentations in different languages at the following links: [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#). Please don't hesitate to reuse them and share ways to improve them further with us.

Sustainable transport

Planning is the key to reducing CO2 emissions by prioritizing sea and road over air transport. In addition, sending full containers is always better than shipping half-full containers. The study done by the ICRC included analysis of four countries with the most air transport and showed that even if the shipped containers are half-full (reefer or not), it is still profitable to send them by sea. Although this may have repercussions on the lead time, we save around 94% of CO2 emissions by doing so.

TURNING SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS INTO REALITY



Sustainable seeds procurement

The agricultural and procurement teams have worked together over recent years to improve the sustainability of the agricultural projects the ICRC implements. If your organization is implementing agricultural projects too, please take a look at this [interesting short document](#) on sustainable staple food crop seed procurement in the humanitarian context, which provides insights on what to buy, what to avoid, effective policies, good practices, etc. Whenever possible, seed treatment with chemical and pesticides should be avoided. If this is not possible, this [brochure on how treated seeds should be managed](#) can help our beneficiaries avoid common mistakes. If you think it can be improved, please let us know.



Managing packaging waste case study

The ICRC Afghanistan team participated in the Sustainable Supply Chain Challenge, replacing the plastic packaging of hygiene kits distributed in prisons with recycled cardboard and improving the supply chain to make it more sustainable. The Joint Initiative for Sustainable Humanitarian Assistance Packaging Waste Management (Joint Packaging Initiative) has developed a case study about it ([English](#), [French](#)).



ISO 14001 certification (environmental management)

Like other organizations, the ICRC has worked hard and finally got the ISO 14001 certification for its logistics centre in Douala (Cameroon). If you want to know more, check out this [short presentation](#) which describes the main activities, achievements and obstacles.



Recycling paper in Satigny at the ICRC's main logistics centre in Switzerland

After checking the legal requirements for printing, recycled paper is now available for all our printers at the Satigny facility, the ICRC's main logistics centre located in Switzerland. If you want to learn more, please check out this [infographic](#). If you would like to do something similar at your own office, you can use this [infographic template](#) and adapt it to your needs.



Repository of best practices

You can find more than 30 best practices on sustainable supply chains [here](#). Please don't hesitate to [share your feedback](#) on how they can be improved and/or use the [template](#) to share your successful practices with others.



WHAT'S NEW IN THE FIELD: FROM ACROSS THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Emergency hospital carbon accounting tool - Norwegian Red Cross (Norcross)

The Norwegian Red Cross has taken action to make its emergency response more sustainable, establishing a two-year project with a specific focus on environmental sustainability. One of the focus areas is emergency hospitals. Work has been carried out to establish the carbon baseline, considering the emissions of each of the hospital's products and using the average-data method (explained in the Humanitarian Carbon Calculator methodological guide). Norcross has reused most of the emissions factors and some of the data on the mass (kg) of items that were used in the tool developed by the Canadian Red Cross to measure the CO₂ of an emergency response unit. It differs in that it is a simplified tool, based on a complex background document. It follows the Humanitarian Carbon Calculator methodology, and the emissions factors, which are different, are now being reviewed to make them consistent with the Humanitarian Carbon Calculator emissions factors. If you want to know more, have a look at the [web page](#) where the tool, a video presentation and more can be found.

Environmental Quick Guide (Green Response, IFRC)

Have you checked out the [Environmental Quick Guide](#) developed by the IFRC through the Green Response Working Group? It is now available in [Spanish](#) and [French](#) and will soon be published in Arabic and Russian). Have a look too at the two-page leaflet [Green Response Essentials](#) which provides very useful tips on getting started. For more information, contact [Richard Casagrande](#).

Kenya Red Cross

Innovation fablab in Lamu is equipped with modern digital fabrication tools for prototyping, promoting the innovative concept of 'circular economy,' and reusing waste. For more information contact [Derrick Mugasia](#).

Myanmar and Bangladesh Green Response

Water supply, environmentally friendly latrines, fecal sludge treatment plant, firewood reduction, greening the office practices, etc. To find out more details, contact [Nay Htet Lin](#). Want to know more? Take a look at [Green Response working group presentations](#).

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Sustainable fleet

In the last [newsletter](#), we shared information about the sustainable fleet training developed for different audiences – management, fleet team, transport users, etc. – and uploaded it to various platforms (ICRC, IFRC, FleetForum, etc.). To date, more than 600 people have completed the training, and more than 400 have started it. Are you or someone you know interested? Please share!

- [ICRC users](#)
- [Non-ICRC users](#)

IndiKit's new guidance on the use of environmental mainstreaming indicators

In this [link](#), you will find a menu of some of the most useful indicators for your environmental mainstreaming work, along with practical guidance on how to use them. People in Need developed this guidance using its own experience, a review of existing resources and consultations with environmental and M&E specialists.

Joint Packaging Initiative

Are you aware of all the [interesting publications related to the Joint Packaging Initiative](#)? For more information, please contact [Fiona Cook](#).

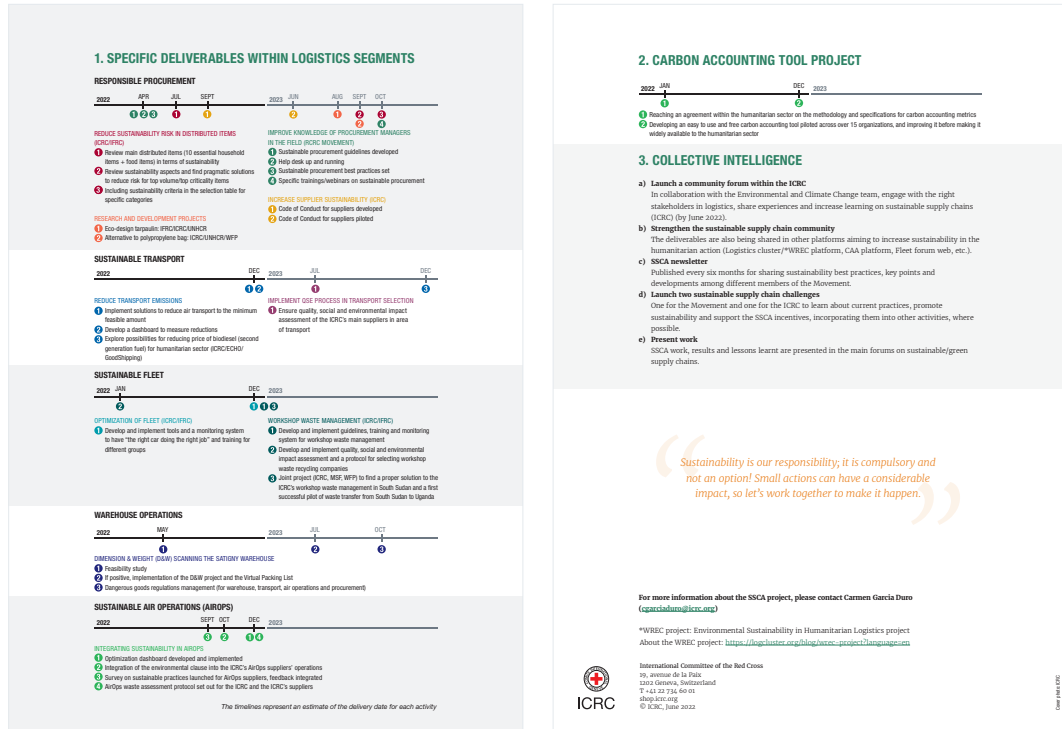
Measuring and reducing the environmental impact of UNFPA's humanitarian supply chain

Have you read CHORD's recommendations based on its [analysis of the UNFPA supply chain](#)? They are well worth a look to see how you could implement some of the lessons learned in your own supply chain!

HAVE YOU MISSED PREVIOUS SSCA NEWSLETTERS?

[SSCA Newsletter July 2021](#) [SSCA Newsletter February 2022](#) [SSCA Newsletter September 2022](#)

If you want to find out more about the SSCA project, check out the [Sustainable Supply Chain Alliance project roadmap](#).



Sustainable Supply Chain Alliance project roadmap.

Any questions, suggestions or feedback can be sent directly to the SSCA project manager [Carmen Garcia Duro](#).



International Committee of the Red Cross
19, avenue de la Paix
1202 Geneva, Switzerland
T +41 22 734 60 01
shop.icrc.org
© ICRC, March 2023



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
P.O. Box 303
CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland
T +41 22 730 42 22