



## Minutes

### Carbon Working Group

April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Watch the recording here: <https://youtu.be/DKpazuv5mCQ>

In recent years, humanitarian actors have become increasingly aware of the potential negative impact of their operations, and even of the crises themselves, on the natural environment. These impacts can result from the implementation of programmes in the countries where they are deployed, as well as from the logistics deployed, both at headquarters and internationally. Based on the results of their initial carbon assessment, NGOs will be able to implement targeted measures to reduce the impact of their activities, design dedicated action plans to reduce GHG emissions and support innovative low-carbon projects.

This type of experience-sharing and the design of tools for the collective is at the heart of the mandate of this working group, which is making progress on specific operational issues.

**This session shared the work done so far and discuss the WG's outlook with participants.**

### 1. The REH and the Working Group

The REH ([Réseau Environnement Humanitaire](#)) is a network of francophone humanitarian and development practitioners, working together to reduce the environmental footprint of aid. It exists since 2012, and formalised in 2021. There are over 250 members, including more than 30 organisations. The network has 4 working groups to operationalise its work:

- One on **waste management**
- One on **sustainable procurement**
- One on **environmental assessments**
- One on **carbon**

The WG has been around since 2021, growing out of a consortium of organisations aiming to assess their carbon footprint (consortium CHANGE). Since its creation, they have been collaborating with other groups and networks ([HCC development](#), WREC scope3, ...).

Since 2023, they have welcomed new organisations and widened the purpose of the WG, and so they split the WG into 3 sub-groups, that will be presented right after.

#### They are:

1. Action guides: building and sharing best practices and practical tips on specific decarbonizing actions
2. Specialized Workshop: developing a workshop tailored for the Aid sector to help raise awareness and build action plans in our countries of operation
3. Carbon footprint: calculation and monitoring

The current members of the WG are: Action Contre la Faim, Alima, Climate Action Accelerator, CARE France, Électriciens Sans Frontières, Handicap International/Humanity & Inclusion, Médecins du Monde, Médecins sans Frontières, Oxfam, Première Urgence Internationale, Solidarités International, Terre des Hommes and Groupe URD.

**Q** : How do you see the different partnerships working together (like REH, WREC, CAA)?

**R** : We try to coordinate as much as we can with the other groups, and some take part in the working group actually as we try to avoid overlaps and to complement each other.

## 2. Sub-group on action guides

One of the sub-WG, is working on developing action guides. Because they have seen that identifying what to do is not always enough to know how to do it! So they are developing small guides on specific decarbonizing activities, which include:

- **Technical** information
- Key steps for **implementation**
- **Tools** and examples from other organizations
- Budget

They collectively decide on the most relevant actions to cover (avoid duplicating existing work, answer the real challenges when considering those actions). They have started working on **flight reduction** as it is one of the main sources of GHG emissions.

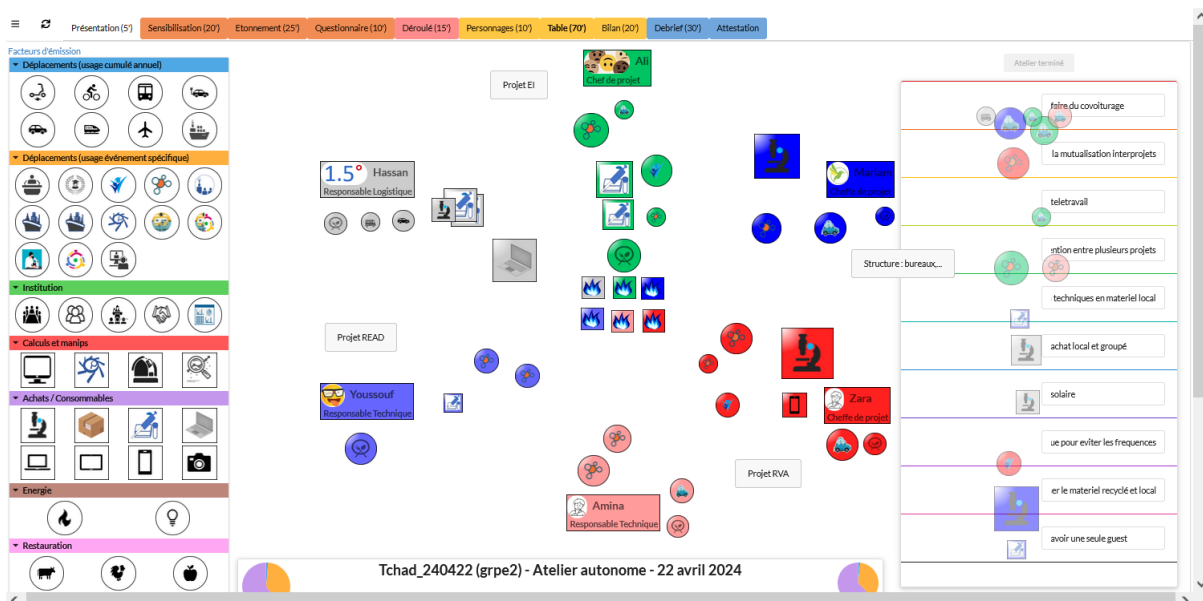
## 3. Sub-group on a tailored workshop for the aid sector

Another sub-group is working specifically on developing a workshop for **awareness-raising at the field level**. Indeed they have come from the observation that NGO emissions mostly come from field activities, in countries where current and historical emission levels are low, but that currently existing tools are targeting reduction at individual-level in high-emitting countries<sup>1</sup>. And it focuses on the individual changes rather than the organisations/positions within organisations. So sensitisation for NGOs need to focus on : awareness regarding climate change, reduction of the footprint of the organization itself, specific and additional challenges related to humanitarian contexts.

As such, the sub-WG works on:

- Developing a tool adapted to the needs and context of our countries of operation
- Ensuring that the tool can be widely used (supporting materials for facilitation)

As a basis they have worked on the workshop "[Ma Terre en 180°](#)", which was developed by a French public research agency. It is used as an online platform, and allows for "live assessment" of impact of actions on the reduction on GHG emissions. It is a **collaborative role-play** with space for brainstorming and innovative ideas and looks like this:



<sup>1</sup> Most organisations use the [Climate Fresk](#) or the [Atelier 2 tonnes](#).

They are also working on the development of **comprehensive facilitation aids** to allow non-specialists to facilitate the workshops!

**Q:** How would you rate the receptiveness of the staff at the field offices to this concept of emissions reduction during the workshop?

**R:** What we have seen is that it helps them having ideas and suggestions beyond just adding a line in their strategies saying that they will reduce their impact! Also the workshop was held remotely (Camille at distance, but the team following the workshop were all together in one room), and it seemed to work well – now the idea is to develop the aids so that other people can facilitate it!

#### 4. Sub-group working on carbon footprint

As different organisations have been joining throughout the years, all the members of the WG are not at the same state of advancement with regards to their carbon footprint calculations, such that Many of the WG members are still in the process of calculating (or updating) their carbon footprint. As such, technical support and peer-to-peer discussion are still needed for some. Moreover, even for those who have completed one carbon footprint assessment, there are many challenges around monitoring the CF evolution and measuring the impact of actions taken.

Thus, the sub-group is aiming to **provide support & tools for the monitoring of specific actions** (flights, procurement, ...).

It was suggested during the session to **develop a tool to easily calculate distances from one airport to the other, using excel integrations** → this might be an area of work for the WG! This would be very useful for those conducting the carbon footprint assessments.

#### 5. Next steps for the WG

Finalize the tools in development in each sub-WG:

- action guides
- workshops

**And share and deploy those tools with the wider community!**

**Thank you all for joining, and if you have any questions, you can reach out to [carbone@environnementhumanitaire.org](mailto:carbone@environnementhumanitaire.org)**