

MONITORING REPORT ON THE STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT FIVE YEARS ON (+5)

THE STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Since 2020, 15 international non-governmental humanitarian aid organisations¹ have signed the [Statement of Commitment on the Climate by Humanitarian Organisations](#), in which they made the following 5 commitments:

1. **Measure** the environmental and carbon impact of their actions on a regular basis;
2. **Reduce** their carbon footprint by setting reduction targets in line with IPCC recommendations to halve emissions by 2030 and by at least 30% by 2025;
3. **Adapt** humanitarian action to new environmental and climate challenges;
4. **Communicate** publicly any information on progress as soon as it is available, and on an annual basis;
5. **Get other players on board** to raise the bar.

2025, A YEAR OF (LONG-TERM?) CRISIS AND THE CHOICES BEFORE US

2025 was marked by a **structural crisis in the international aid sector**, with an impact at all levels, across the board: in the domains of funding, operational practice, strategy and above all human resources. Faced with this situation, organisations are trying to reconcile humanitarian imperatives and ecological aims or ambitions, **but find themselves faced with impossible choices**. Because of the crisis, more than a third of organisations have eliminated posts focused entirely on the environment and a number of environmental initiatives that would have required both time and financial resources have been postponed. Conversely, the crisis accelerated the adoption of certain environmental measures in the interest of making savings (especially a freeze on air travel). In several organisations, the crisis has reinforced the conviction that humanitarian issues cannot be de-linked from environment and climate issues. 2025 was also the year when a new key premise was recognised: the ecological transition of the humanitarian aid sector depends on proper coordination with **climate justice and environmental issues**. Recognition of this led to a **revision of the Statement of Commitment**, which is to be signed anew by organisations wishing to participate going forward.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF DECARBONISATION ... BOTH IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING!

The key commitment of the Statement relies on quantified targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Five years after the Statement was launched, monitoring indicates persistent difficulties organisations have in measuring and monitoring their decarbonisation trajectories. Carbon accounting practices still vary considerably, in their scope or coverage, in the methodologies applied, and in the frequency of review. As a result, **only five organisations are able to define a trend in their emissions trajectories**. Of these five, **two have seen an increase in emissions while three have seen their emissions fall in relation to their target commitments**. It is evidently difficult to assess decarbonisation efforts and results in the light of these results. Indeed, several organisations express their decarbonisation targets in terms of absolute values² and results may therefore owe more to variations in the volume of activity by the organisations concerned than to their implementation of decarbonisation strategies. **The twofold difficulty – implementing and measuring – means there is a tension between the quantified aims of the Statement and the operational realities faced by organisations within the sector**. It implies a need for reflection by signatories, as a group, on the most appropriate monitoring arrangements for the next phase.

¹ Action Contre la Faim, ACTED, ALIMA, CARE France, Électriciens Sans Frontières, Fondation Terre des hommes, Gret, Groupe URD, Handicap International/Humanité et Inclusion, Médecins du Monde, Première Urgence Internationale, Secours Islamique France, Solidarités International. The Croix-Rouge Française and Triangle Génération Humanitaire signed in 2024.

² See REH's April 2005 note [Reducing the greenhouse gas emissions or the carbon intensity of an organisation's output](#).

STRUCTURAL CHANGE VERSUS OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Despite these difficulties, the report shows that structural and cultural changes are indeed taking place within the signatory organisations. They all indicate that they have an environmental footprint reduction strategy, and a number of them have made changes to in-house procedures, particularly in the areas of procurement, travel and energy consumption. **Thus the environment as an issue is being more sustainably implicated in strategic frameworks and organisational discourse.** However, the changes in progress run up against **tough operational constraints**. The reduction in dedicated human resources undermines the implementation and monitoring of environmental strategies. In-country, operationalisation of change still mainly relies on focal points that are not accorded hours specifically dedicated to the issue, which means that assuring the process of change for the longer term is scarcely robust. Some environmental challenges are in any case inherent in the structural characteristics of the countries where signatory organisations are active (lack of infrastructure, management problems, governance issues, etc.). The report stresses the risk of an **increasing mismatch between organisations' aims and ambitions and their declining operational capacity.**

AN ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA THAT STILL NEEDS TO BE COORDINATED WITH ISSUES RELATING TO ADAPTATION AND LOCALISATION

The integration of climate and environment issues into humanitarian projects is progressing, especially through the increasing use of environmental screening tools. Increasingly, organisations are developing projects that aim to enhance climate resilience and have positive environmental impacts; but **these initiatives are often only occasional and tend to be unsystematic.** The environment agenda is still **not well enough coordinated with the broader question of the localisation of aid.** While organisations try to draw on local expertise and skills and strengthen the capacities of their partners and in-country actors, the process is only just beginning **But the ecological transition of the humanitarian aid sector cannot be achieved without more profound transformation of organisational models,** entailing less international travel, the building up of local capacity and an improved focus on the local context.. Coordination of issues relating to the environment, to adaptation and to localisation will be a key area for reflection and new initiatives.

IMPROVE THE COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION AND MAINTAIN A GROUP DYNAMIC

Finally, two major cross-cutting issues emerge from the report: communication and group dynamics. Despite the initiatives in hand, and despite preliminary results now being available, **the commitments made by the signatories to the Statement have only very limited visibility.** Few organisations communicate information on their emissions calculations or their decarbonisation trajectories or even indicate that they are signatories to the Statement. This undermines the Statement's political potential, and the whole idea of group accountability for actions taken. Since the crisis may be long-term, it is surely essential to do more to strengthen the collective efforts already in hand and to highlight the role of REH, and the purpose of the Statement, in order to **maintain a common framework, facilitate the sharing of experience and avoid an ecological transition that goes at different speeds for different organisations or partners.**

APPEAL TO THE SECTOR

We call on the international aid and development community to come together to discuss the **fairest and most practical approach to environment and climate issues** in projects and programmes and in the way their organisations operate. Faced with a crisis in the aid and cooperation sector – which is also a crisis of democracy – we call on our colleagues in the sector to find ways of working more closely together, not least by signing up to the commitments as set out in the new version of the [Statement](#).

The full report can be read [here](#).

