JOINT INITIATIVE FOR
SUSTAINABLE HUMANITARIAN
ASSISTANCE PACKAGING
WASTE MANAGEMENT

Climate Action
Accelerator

Operationalizing and Scaling-up Donors' Climate and Environmental Commitments:

an analysis of progress, gaps and opportunities.

February 2024

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ABOUT THE JOINT INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PACKAGING WASTE MANAGEMENT

Convened and funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, the Joint Initiative brings together 25 humanitarian stakeholders including UN agencies, INGOs, and bilateral and multilateral donors, to reduce the negative environmental impacts of humanitarian action, with a focus on packaging waste.

The Joint Initiative aims to promote coordination and collaboration. It documents the experiences, challenges and success stories of humanitarian organizations as they work to make their packaging more environmentally sustainable, and shares these with other actors through case studies and thematic webinars.

ABOUT THE CLIMATE ACTION ACCELERATOR

The Climate Action Accelerator (CAA) is a Geneva-based not-for-profit initiative created in 2020 with the aim of mobilising a critical mass of community organizations in order to scale up climate solutions, contain global warming below 2°C, and avoid the risk of dangerous runaway climate change. The aim is to help shift the aid, the health, and higher education sectors towards a radical transformation of their practices, halving greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 on a "net zero" trajectory in line with the Paris Agreement.

To achieve this, the Climate Action Accelerator empowers organizations in setting quantified emissions reduction targets and defining their climate and environmental roadmaps, using a state-of-affairs assessment, collaborative workshops, solutions and quantified targets, modelling a trajectory as well as cost and savings estimates.

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I. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Reducing the climate and environmental footprint of humanitarian assistance is now part of humanitarian donors' ambitions. Donors are increasingly concerned about the negative impacts of the projects they fund—in terms of environmental degradation and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions—and are addressing this through the development of environmental and climate policies and strategies, both of which they apply both to their partner organizations and internally. Collective efforts among donors – aimed at pooling knowledge, resources and ensuring greater coordination and harmonization – are also gaining traction.

The present analysis, developed by the Joint Initiative for Sustainable Humanitarian Assistance Packaging Waste Management (Joint Initiative)[i] and the Climate Action Accelerator[ii] will accomplish the following.

- Analyze how donors' climate and environmental ambitions and commitments are influencing the way they fund humanitarian assistance.
- Update the **Multi-donor Policy Landscape Analysis** published by the Joint Initiative in January 2023, and expand on this by exploring donors' efforts to reduce their own GHG emissions and become more environmentally sustainable.

Donor funding for projects or programs whose main objective is to preserve, protect, or restore the environment, or for climate change adaptation[iii] (such as projects/programs to strengthen resilience or disaster risk reduction) has not been analyzed. Rather, the focus is on how the donor community is encouraging the mainstreaming of climate change action/GHG emissions reduction and environmental considerations into humanitarian assistance (as part of climate change mitigation[iv]). This is known colloquially as the **GREENING**[v] of the humanitarian response.

The document is divided into two parts: the main section, which provides a high-level summary of where the donor community stands on these issues, and an annex, which describes the individual greening approaches of 14 donors. The findings are based on desk research, interviews, and correspondence with focal points from the donor agencies listed in the annexe. As was the case of the analysis published in January 2023, it focuses on institutional (public) donors, as they continue to represent the vast majority of international humanitarian funding[vi] and play a crucial role in shaping policies. Private donors—whilst they play an essential role in responding to humanitarian needs and are key allies in supporting the transition

towards a greener humanitarian sector—are outside the scope of this analysis.

An initial list of donors was drawn up based on their relative size and/or evidence of engagement on the issue of greening of humanitarian assistance, and a list of standard questions was developed. Some of the donors contacted declined or were unable to provide information; efforts are ongoing to engage with these donors and to include them in any future updates of this document. The level of information also varies from one donor to another, according to their ability to provide relevant information for each of the questions. This is, therefore, not an exhaustive analysis. Rather, it provides a snapshot of what a range of small, medium, and large donors are doing to help the humanitarian sector transition towards a greener future.

In addition to the information gathered from the 14 donors included in the annex, this analysis has been informed and enriched by the ongoing exchanges between the **Joint Initiative**, **Climate Action Accelerator**, and their respective partners (including donors, International Non-Governmental Organizations [INGOs], members of the Red Cross/Crescent Movement and United Nations agencies). [vii] The findings will help the **Joint Initiative and Climate Action Accelerator** to better support their humanitarian partners and will feed into the multi-stakeholder dialogue that the Climate Action Accelerator is facilitating, aimed at identifying ways to scale up efforts to reduce emissions across the humanitarian sector. [viii]

II. KEY FINDINGS

DONORS ARE SCALING UP CLIMATE ACTION BEYOND ADAPTATION

As a direct witness to the consequences of climate change and environmental degradation and rooted in its primary duty to "do no harm", the humanitarian sector is increasingly scaling up climate action. Humanitarian funding and donor priorities have traditionally been—and are still, to some extent—concentrated on anticipatory action and climate change adaptation, i.e., supporting communities to better prepare for and face the consequences of climate change. More recently, however, donors have been scaling up individual and collective efforts to mitigate the climate and environmental footprint of humanitarian assistance and supporting their partners to do this.

A major catalyst for this has been the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations' (DG ECHO's) **Minimum Environmental Requirements and Recommendations for EU-funded**

Humanitarian Aid Operations[ix] published in 2022, and also the **Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration on Climate and Environment**,[x] which acknowledges the link between increasing humanitarian needs and climate change and the role of donors to support a greener humanitarian sector. Twenty-four States[xi] and the European Union[xii] have signed the Declaration committing them, among other things, to "Foster the creation of the conditions required for international humanitarian organizations and local partners to adopt environmentally friendly practices." This envisages, for example, supporting humanitarian organizations to incorporate climate action into program design and environmental sustainability into procurement and waste management processes, promoting sustainable solutions and circular economy approaches. This is evidence of a gradual shift, over the past few years, in the way the donor community perceives its role in greening humanitarian assistance. It is now accepted as a key responsibility and a priority for donors—including during the acute emergency phase—although it needs to be further operationalized.

Donors' specific areas of focus (e.g., green energy, waste management, biodiversity) differ in line with their own political agendas. Some donors have more stringent approaches whereby they require their humanitarian implementing partners to commit to specific actions aimed at greening, whilst others simply encourage partners to do this. Notwithstanding, it is generally agreed that biodiversity, waste management, and GHG emissions reduction are all equally important and interconnected parts of the climate and environmental "puzzle."

Humanitarian actors are also making significant strides towards greening. This has been spurred on partly by the **Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations**, which, to date, has been signed by 381 humanitarian organizations and is supported by 13 donors (the most recent being Australia in October 2023), local and regional governments, government agencies, and departments. Through the Charter, signatories sign up to seven principles including a commitment to maximize the environmental sustainability of their work and rapidly reduce their GHG emissions. There are also promising initiatives underway to facilitate coordination among humanitarian organizations and to help them concretely implement the Charter. A key example is the Humanitarian Carbon Calculator (HCC), which was developed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with input from a wide range of humanitarian stakeholders and which allows organizations to assess the direct and indirect GHG emissions associated with their activities.

The Crisis and Support Centre (CDCS) of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs: An Increased Focus on Climate Issues

Instrumental in the development of the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration, the CDCS is currently developing a new 4-year humanitarian strategy (2023–2027), which will have a strong focus both on supporting climate adaptation initiatives and measuring and mitigating the emissions of humanitarian programs and organizations. CDCS' growing interest in funding and supporting climate action is the result of its ongoing and close dialogue with its French civil society partners. It has increasing expectations of its partners with regards to greening humanitarian action both at the project and organizational levels.

As part of its funding mechanism, the CDCS allocates a 10% "flexible" cost to partners, which can be used without the need to obtain prior verification from CDCS. This is seen as an opportunity to finance low-carbon activities (e.g., environmental expertise, carbon assessment, purchase of low carbon items) and is considered by the CDCS as an alternative to having a specific budget line to fund partners' greening/emissions reduction efforts.

COLLECTIVE EFFORTS AMONG DONORS ARE GAINING TRACTION

The donor coordination platforms and working groups on climate and environmental issues reflect donors' willingness to move forward together, learn from each other, avoid duplication, and harmonize approaches as far as possible. Discussions are underway to increase collective understanding of certain topics such as offsetting and to share best practices on budgets for greening and indicators to measure this. Given the growth in the number and size of pooled funding in recent years[xiii], it is important for donors to explore how to strengthen the integration of climate and environmental issues in the management of pooled funds.

Donor Groups Working on Environmental and Climate Issues

1. The formal Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration on Climate and Environment working group that focuses on following the implementation of the Declaration's four commitments. This group, which meets twice a year, is facilitated by DG ECHO.
2. The informal donor coordination group aimed at exchanging best practices and learning with a special focus on greening and climate change mitigation. This group is facilitated by DG ECHO, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).
3. An informal group of donors, who meet on an ad hoc basis to discuss the funding of the Climate and Environment Charter Secretariat. This group is convened by the organizations that are jointly involved in the Secretariat: the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Whilst the greening of humanitarian assistance has also been discussed on an ad hoc basis as part of the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) Initiative, this is not currently among the Initiative's priority issues.[xiv] Given that the GHD brings together 42 donors, including some of the largest and most influential, and in light of its aims to encourage and stimulate principled donor behaviour and, by extension, improved humanitarian action—this constitutes a "missed opportunity".

DONORS' APPROACHES TO PARTNERS: NON-PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACHES REMAIN THE NORM

Whilst all donors encourage their partners to demonstrate—when designing their humanitarian responses—how they will reduce their climate and environmental footprint across the project, to date only DG ECHO formally requires partners to do this, through its **Minimum Environmental Requirements and Recommendations for EU-funded Humanitarian Aid Operations**[xv] (MER), which became mandatory in 2023 and that now apply unconditionally. Based on discussions with individual donors, they do not generally plan to adopt more prescriptive approaches vis a vis their partners, for the reasons outlined above.

Donors encourage or require partners to consider questions of greening mainly during the proposal development process and to report back on these issues in narrative reports, or final project evaluations. As such, donors' attention is currently mainly focused on what their partners plan to do short term, at the project or program level, rather than on their commitments to greening at structural and organizational level.

Some donors may request (or insist that) partners conduct initial environmental assessments/screenings of their proposed humanitarian actions, to identify potential environmental risks or activities likely to create significant emissions and to address these through mitigation plans. Other donors request partners to demonstrate, in their application forms, how climate and environmental issues have been considered or mainstreamed into the action, alongside other cross-cutting priorities such as gender. With some exceptions, donors are mainly focused on reducing the negative environmental footprint of humanitarian assistance, rather than on optimizing or promoting the positive environmental impact humanitarian organizations and programmes can have.[xvi]

The way donors approach unearmarked or core funding for humanitarian organizations and pooled funding (allocated to mechanisms such as the Central Emergency Response Fund [CERF][xvii] and Country-based Pooled Funds [CBPF][xviii]) differ, with pooled funding being subjected to less stringent checks and rules in general (including with regards to greening). This is due, mainly, to the specific processes and mechanisms used to allocate this type of funding. Given the significant volume of funding that is channelled through pooled funds (CERF 33.4 million USD in CERF and 1 billion USD in CBPF in 2022),[xiv] this constitutes a significant opportunity for donors to push for greener humanitarian operations and lower emissions.

Furthermore, some donors' approaches to INGOs and United Nations (UN) agencies often differ, the latter not being specifically asked to demonstrate how their

proposed actions take climate and environmental considerations into account. This is based on the fact that UN agencies may already have their own environmental management systems in place, although in practice these are not systematically applied across all humanitarian contexts.

> **Mainstreaming the Environment in Humanitarian Action and Emergencies: The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation**
>
> In 2020, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) published its comprehensive **Guide to Mainstreaming the Environment in Humanitarian Action and Emergencies** (in Spanish). This Guide aims to support AECID staff and partner organizations to avoid or mitigate the potentially negative impact of humanitarian operations on the environment. It provides tools and guidance on how to avoid some of the main environmental problems that occur in contexts where humanitarian operations are ongoing including soil degradation (desertification, deforestation); water degradation: (pollution, over-exploitation); degradation of biodiversity (losses, invasive species, genetic contamination); and atmospheric degradation (pollution, climate change).
>
> In the information note for partners explaining its March 2023 call for proposals for humanitarian action grants, AECID stipulates that "all interventions must prioritize environmental protection and the fight against climate change" in line with the approach described in the Mainstreaming Guide.

The results of environmental assessments and screenings as well as partners' responses to questions in application forms are considered by donors but are not generally decisive; i.e., they are not used to score proposals or decide on whether to fund the humanitarian action or partner in question. Similarly, it is unlikely that a proposed humanitarian action that does not consider greening will be rejected and funding withheld for this reason. Where environmental "red flags" are identified during screening or assessment of proposed actions, partners are generally invited to mitigate these.

Whilst some donors may request partner organizations to have an environmental policy or management systems in place, none require as of yet that partners have GHG emission reduction targets, or strategies, in place.

A SIGNIFICANT ROLE, YET TO BE FULLY HARNESSED

Donors have a significant role to play in greening the humanitarian sector, but this is not yet fully exploited. Donor's approaches and expectations towards their partners remain non-prescriptive (as described above), while exchanges with humanitarian organizations indicate that they expect and would appreciate greater guidance and drive from their donors on greening.

According to the donors interviewed as part of this analysis, there are several reasons for this, which include a lack of internal capacity or resources to further support their partners in reducing their climate and environmental footprints, or a reluctance to place additional requirements on their humanitarian partners or make procedures to apply for funding more burdensome. Other donors reported that they are hesitant to ask their partners to take action on greening without providing them with additional funding to support this process or without the ability to monitor the impact of such actions. Finally, some feel that they lack the legitimacy to ask partners to green their projects without first taking steps to do so themselves.

Furthermore, donors' global climate and environmental commitments and policies are not yet applied consistently and systematically in the field, and continued efforts are needed to ensure that policies and requirements are understood and applied by both partners and donor agency staff alike, in order to ensure that they are operational and fully harness donors' role in the transition towards a greener humanitarian sector.

In developing new ways of working to reduce their climate and environmental footprints, humanitarian organizations look to their donors for support, guidance, training, and funding—both to start and to scale up efforts. Although this has been slow to arrive in some cases, humanitarian organizations have pursued, undeterred, their own initiatives to measure and reduce their GHG emissions, and to maximize the potentially positive impact of their work in terms of the environment and sustainability.

DEDICATED HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR GREENING REMAINS RARE

Currently, there is little dedicated (i.e., additional) funding available from humanitarian donors to support their partners to green their humanitarian operations and organizational structures (e.g., to measure their carbon footprints, recruit environmental advisors, solarize their premises). Several donors reported that they expect their partners to use non-earmarked funds to meet the costs of greening. This could be explained by a general fear of diverting funds from core humanitarian activities, a lack of general knowledge on the cost of greening, or in

some instances by current funding mechanisms (e.g., focus on project-based funding and short-term funding cycles).

As mentioned above, humanitarian funding allocated to climate-related activities continues to be channeled primarily into supporting disaster-affected communities to better prepare and adapt to the consequences of climate change. For example, the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) allocates 5% of its annual budget to anticipation. The **Annual progress report of the signatories of the donor declaration on climate and environment**,[xx] confirms this point, stating that: "Overall, most of the reporting Signatories have integrated climate action into the institutional framework of their humanitarian response, in particular disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation."

According to discussions with some of the Joint Initiative's partners, those organizations that have undertaken specific activities to green their operations (e.g., exercises to measure their GHG emission, staff costs linked to the creation of new strategies and systems) have mainly paid for this with their own core budgets, with funding from private foundations, or by allocating part of indirect costs (overheads) from projects to this.

There are, however, some exceptions, which include the funding provided by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation to support the ICRC's **Climate and Environment Transition Fund** (a multi-year fund to help transition ICRC into a climate-smart, adaptable, and more sustainable organization) or the funding provided by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Dutch Red Cross to cover staff costs related to the development of a Climate and Environment Action Plan.

Elsewhere, donors are supporting projects aimed at greening humanitarian response:

Examples of Donor Funding for Projects to Build a Greener Humanitarian Response

Some of these projects aim(ed) at identifying solutions for the whole sector, for example:

- The use of DG ECHO's Innovation Fund to carry out a life cycle assessment and research aimed at reducing the environmental footprint of metalized laminated sachets used for Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) such as Plumpy'Nuts. These sachets are used in large quantities and by many actors across the humanitarian sector. They are not reusable and are currently not recyclable, meaning they generate significant waste in the communities where they are used.
- The use of DG ECHO's Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) budget to train staff across several humanitarian organizations to conduct environmental screenings using the Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+). A total of 700,000 EUR were provided in 2021.
- Other examples include the allocation, by the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), of funds from the International Climate Initiative (part of the German government's international climate finance commitment) to a project run by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to help humanitarian actors solarize diesel-based energy systems in five countries in the Sahel.
- The Joint Initiative for Sustainable Humanitarian Assistance Packaging Waste Management: Convened and funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, the Joint Initiative brings together 26 humanitarian stakeholders including UN agencies, INGOs, and bilateral and multilateral donors, to reduce the negative environmental impacts of humanitarian action, with a focus on packaging waste.
- The WREC* "Environmental Sustainability in Humanitarian Logistics" Project: The WREC Project – funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, DG ECHO, and UPS foundation – seeks to reduce the adverse environmental consequences of humanitarian logistics through awareness, practical guidance, and real-time environmental expertise.
- The Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+) supports humanitarians in identifying environmental risks linked to their projects (modules include WASH, Shelter, Food Security) and to the operating context.
- Support for the recruitment of staff for the Secretariat of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations.

*WREC stands for Waste management and measuring, reverse logistics, environmentally sustainable procurement and transport, and circular economy

THE DIALOGUE GAP IS SLOWING DOWN OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

As mentioned above, it is currently rare for donors to provide their partners with specific (additional) funding to green their humanitarian operations and, with the exception of DG ECHO, guidance on how to meet the cost of greening. This is due, in part, to the need to gather more precise data on the cost of greening, through benchmarking exercises and cost analyses. There is also a wish among donors to be flexible with partners, allowing them to innovate and propose ideas to green their operations, rather than providing them with an exhaustive list of what they will fund.

However, in the absence of guidelines or formal communication from donors, humanitarian organizations report that they are reluctant to include extra costs for greening in their budget to cover, for example, more expensive (albeit sustainable) relief items or fuel-efficient vehicles. A dialogue gap has therefore arisen between humanitarian organizations and the donor community on the issue of greening. Meanwhile, some donors report that they very rarely receive requests from organizations for additional funds to green their projects, which has even been interpreted by some as a sign of inaction or unwillingness on the part of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to explore greener solutions.[xxii]

Furthermore, donors reported that their obligation to demonstrate efficient use of humanitarian funds (including to the general public) meant that they were unsure about the use of humanitarian funding for greening humanitarian assistance. For example, purchasing more costly environmentally sustainable/ low-emission humanitarian relief items could be perceived, in their view, as diverting funding from or reducing the number of people who can be reached with life-saving assistance.

To help bridge this dialogue gap, and as part of a 1-year project aimed at producing a Roadmap to Halve the Carbon Emissions of the Humanitarian Sector,[xxiii] Climate Action Accelerator has piloted, with its partners, an analysis of the financial implications of implementing climate and environmental roadmaps (aimed at reducing emissions). This analysis includes an idea of costs, investments, and savings to be made. Climate Action Accelerator plans to share a generic high-level analysis for key solutions/items early in 2024.

DONORS' INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS: AN EMERGING PRIORITY

There is strong political will and formal commitments to greening among donors and their governments, as outlined above. To start to operationalize these commitments, some donors have published their own emissions reduction targets, sometimes based on their own internal carbon accounting exercises (albeit partial) or sometimes aligned with national-level strategies.[xxiv] Furthermore, because of the travel restrictions put in place by States to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus, many donors have revised their travel policies, which has led

to a general reduction of emissions from staff air travel. Although these decisions were not driven (or at least not entirely) by carbon-reduction objectives, the result is nonetheless positive. However, tackling emissions from air travel alone will have a negligible impact unless such changes are coupled with significant efforts to measure, reduce, and mitigate donors' own climate and environmental footprints and those of the projects and organizations they fund.

USAID's Internal Commitments to Reduce Air Travel–Related Emissions

As described in the Special Objective Doing Our Part' of the USAID's **Climate Strategy** 2022-2030, USAID has made a priority to reduce the agency's environmental and climate footprint. As such, the agency aims "to transform [its] own workforce, operations, and policies to reduce carbon emissions substantially, adapt to the climate crisis, and further climate justice – and support and expect [its] implementing partners to do the same".

USAID has committed to achieving net zero emissions from operations by 2050 and has identified that its greatest emissions reduction opportunities are for facilities energy use, business travel, acquisition and assistance and supply chains, and workforce commuting. With regards to travel-related GHG emissions, USAID challenged itself to achieve a 30% reduction by the end of the 2024 fiscal year as compared to the fiscal year 2022 baseline. In order to achieve this, the Bureau of Management provides each unit with their travel data (and related GHG emissions) as a way to raise awareness among staff. Decision-making tools to help make climate-conscious informed travel decisions are also provided, and virtual participation in meetings and events are also greatly encouraged.

MONITORING OF CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS: AN AREA FOR COLLECTIVE IMPROVEMENT

The **Annual progress report of the signatories of the donor declaration on climate and environment** highlighted that more consistent measuring and monitoring of the environmental impacts of projects/programs and partners' commitments to mitigation are required by donors:

"An area for collective improvement is the monitoring and measuring the environmental impacts of projects and programmes as only two Signatories explicitly reported doing so. The reporting demonstrated that more efforts are needed to support humanitarian organisations in their organisational-level change…" (page 4)

Although efforts to screen projects/programs, identify climate and environmental risks, and suggest mitigation measures are increasingly noted, donors are working together to try to better monitor the concrete implementation of greening at field level.

In the future, donors hope that capacity and resources will enable them to conduct field visits to explore these issues with partners and to capture results in terms of reduced climate and environmental footprints of the projects/programs that they fund. Donors may also be able to report on economic efficiencies gained through actions such as reduced travel and energy costs.

In December 2023, DG ECHO published a set of 48 **voluntary environmental indicators** as a way to help partners monitor the implementation of the Minimum Environmental Requirements (MER). These indicators were co-developed through a consultative process with humanitarian stakeholders and are designed to be easy to report on, to avoid organizations having to collect additional data. Other donors may follow suit or use ECHO's example to develop their own indicators.

A GREATER HARMONIZATION OF APPROACHES WOULD BRING BENEFITS

Donors' approaches to greening and their priorities differ, with some focused more on climate and others on greening of logistics, waste, environmental assessment, etc. Donors' own mechanisms, legally binding frameworks, and political commitment frame their funding and partnership approach with regards to the environment and climate.

Based on research conducted as part of this document, no evidence was found of a direct contradiction between donors' approaches to greening. However, organizations fear that donors' growing interest in greening may translate into increased and more complex procedures when applying for and reporting back on the use of funding, which—unless donors make a concerted effort to synchronize approaches—are likely to vary from donor to donor. This could potentially complicate existing procedures, putting additional pressure on organizations and their local partners.

Humanitarian organizations have also noted that donors' policies or commitments regarding climate and the environment are not consistently applied across sectoral programs (e.g., WASH, health, construction) or across regions. Not only would a more consistent approach help to ensure that greening is prioritized by donors and organizations in all contexts, including in acute emergencies,– it would also help organizations know what to expect from donors and to adapt to this.

THE ROLE OF LOCAL ACTORS IN GREENING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Both the Donor Declaration and the Climate and Environment Charter recognize the role of local actors in the fight against climate change and the adoption of more

environmentally friendly practices within the humanitarian sector. They commit donors and humanitarian organizations, respectively, to building the capacity and strengthening the leaders of local partners, and to harnessing the potential of local, traditional, and indigenous knowledge and practices, among other things.

Linked to this, there is growing recognition of the potential benefits of localization for a greener humanitarian response. These include reduced GHG emissions as a result of the reduction of air travel of international humanitarian staff and the possibility of capitalizing upon local and traditional ecological knowledge. Local procurement may also play a role, although this may not necessarily have a lower climate and environmental footprint than international procurement: a lot will depend on how and where the locally procured goods and items were produced.[xxv]

Better research into the climate and environmental benefits of a more localized humanitarian response and stronger linkages between donors' localization and greening strategies would help to stimulate localization, thereby bringing the humanitarian sector closer to its target to provide at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders.

III. CONCLUSIONS

There is increasing awareness among donors of the need to reduce the climate and environmental impact of humanitarian assistance, and growing action in this respect. Whilst it is recognized that donors are restricted—in the way they allocate funds—by their own legal and policy frameworks and that they may lack resources and internal capacity on greening, it is important that they continue to share lessons, innovate, and explore, together, new ways to green humanitarian assistance. Donors have both the ability to influence this process through their funding and a crucial role to play in setting expectations and standards. Building on existing donor coordination mechanisms, working towards greater harmonization of approaches and standards and their operationalization in the field, and further linking greening to localization efforts, will help them to better achieve this.

Nevertheless, reducing the climate and environmental footprint of humanitarian assistance remains a shared responsibility, and one that all actors within the sector should strive towards at all levels. Cross-cutting approaches should be used to develop appropriate solutions from the bottom up. To this end, it is essential to maintain a constructive dialogue between donors on the one hand, and humanitarian organizations, including local partners, on the other.

ANNEX: ANALYSIS OF DONORS' INDIVIDUAL APPROACHES AND PRACTICES

The following section analyzes how individual donors' political commitments on climate and the environment influence the way they fund their partners to deliver humanitarian assistance and the steps they are taking to reduce their own climate and environmental footprints. An initial list of donors was drawn up based on their relative size and/or evidence of engagement on the issue of greening of humanitarian assistance, as well as a list of standard questions. However, some of the donors contacted declined or were unable to provide information for the purposes of this document. It is therefore not exhaustive but, rather, provides a snapshot of what a range of small, medium, and large donors are doing to help the humanitarian sector transition towards greater environmental sustainability. Given that some are more advanced than others, it was not possible to include the same depth of information for each donor.

A SNAPSHOT OF DONOR PROGRESS

DONOR	SUPPORTER OF CHARTER?	SIGNATORY OF DONOR DECLARATION?	ASKS/REQUIRES PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS TO DEMONSTRATE GREENING WHEN APPLYING FOR FUNDS?	EXISTING POLICY ON THE ELIGIBILITY OF PARTNERS' OFFSETTING COSTS?	MEASURES OWN EMISSIONS?
Canada – Global Affairs Canada	Yes	No	Partners must explain how the environmental risks and opportunities will be mitigated or seized, respectively.	Yes (see Directive)	No
Czechia – Ministry of Foreign Affairs	No	Yes	INGOs are encouraged to demonstrate greening. Different approaches are applied to local partners and to UN agencies.	No	No
Denmark – Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Yes	Yes	Partners are encouraged to green their operations at organizational and project levels.	No	No
European Union – DG ECHO	Yes	Yes	Partners must demonstrate how their humanitarian response takes the Minimum Environmental Requirements into account.	Not yet – part of future ambition	Yes
Finland – Ministry of Foreign Affairs	No	Yes	Partners are asked to identify and mitigate potential environmental impacts of proposed projects. They must have ECHO partnership certificates.	No	No

DONOR	SUPPORTER OF CHARTER?	SIGNATORY OF DONOR DECLARATION?	ASKS/REQUIRES PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS TO DEMONSTRATE GREENING WHEN APPLYING FOR FUNDS?	EXISTING POLICY ON THE ELIGIBILITY OF PARTNERS' OFFSETTING COSTS?	MEASURES OWN EMISSIONS?
France: Crisis and Support Centre (CDCS)	Yes	Yes	Partners are asked to mitigate potential risks in terms of emissions and provide evidence that they have environmental strategies/ policies in place.	No	No
France: French Development Agency (AFD)	Yes	Yes	Partners funded through the civil society instrument are encouraged to mainstream greening into project proposals. For more development-focused projects, the estimated carbon footprints must be calculated.	Drafting a position paper on this	Yes
Germany – German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO)	Yes	Yes	Partners are asked to identify and mitigate the potential environmental impacts of proposed projects using environmental assessments.	No	Yes
Ireland – Department of Foreign Affairs	No	Yes	Partners are asked to respond to general questions as to whether an environmental assessment has been conducted or adequate consideration given to climate action.	No	No
Spain – Agency for International Development and Cooperation (AECID)	Yes	Yes	Partners must respond to questions about how they have integrated environmental issues into project proposals, and this information is decisive (i.e., used to score proposals).	No	No

DONOR	SUPPORTER OF CHARTER?	SIGNATORY OF DONOR DECLARATION?	ASKS/REQUIRES PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS TO DEMONSTRATE GREENING WHEN APPLYING FOR FUNDS?	EXISTING POLICY ON THE ELIGIBILITY OF PARTNERS' OFFSETTING COSTS?	MEASURES OWN EMISSIONS?
Sweden – Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)	Yes	Yes	INGOs must perform an environmental assessment of the proposed project. UN agencies are exempt from this requirement.	No	No
Switzerland – Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)	Yes	No	Partners are encouraged to assess and mitigate their environmental and carbon footprints at structural/ organizational and project/ program levels.	Yes	No
The Netherlands – Ministry of Foreign Affairs	No	Yes	The majority of funding is core funding. Partners are encouraged to integrate climate and environmental considerations in their annual plans	No	Yes
United States – Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (USAID)	Yes	Yes	Partners are encouraged to mainstream climate and environmental issues across their projects.	No	Yes

1. CANADA - GLOBAL AFFAIRS CANADA (GAC)

GENERAL APPROACH

GAC manages Canada's international development and humanitarian assistance and has been committed to reducing the environmental footprint of humanitarian assistance for many years. Organizations must explain how the environmental risks and opportunities will be mitigated or seized, respectively, and are encouraged to detail how their environmental and climate change policies guide their analysis and risk mitigation strategies.

Canada supports the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations, and internal discussions about potentially signing the Humanitarian Donors' Declaration are underway.

FUNDING

As far back as 2014—and to comply with federal legislation in this respect (the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012, now replaced by the Impact Assessment Act, 2019)[xxvi]—GAC put in place an Environmental Integration Process (EIP) which involves the systematic environmental screening and review of all development and humanitarian initiatives it funds.

The EIP screening tool is publicly available and can be used by organizations applying for funding when designing and planning initiatives. The tool is also used by GAC officers when reviewing project proposals to determine the depth of environmental analysis that is required, based on the initiative's potential environmental opportunities and risks, taking into account the sector, context, and scale. This, in turn, determines whether the proposal will need to be specifically reviewed by an environmental specialist. There are two sorts of exemption to the need for an environmental analysis in this process: firstly, for emergency humanitarian responses— which the Impact Assessment Act defines as "emergency"—and, secondly, where the proposed project would have a negligible negative and positive impact on the environment.

For all project proposals, except where the above-mentioned exemptions apply, organizations are required to carry out an environmental analysis of their proposed project, which is guided by specific questions in the application form, where applicable. The information provided is not, however, used by GAC to score proposals; i.e., this would not determine whether a project receives funding or not. The Impact Assessment Act means that GAC could, in theory, refuse to fund a project if it is judged that it would have significant adverse environmental effects. In practice, however, GAC works collaboratively with its partner organizations to

ensure that they identify and mitigate the environmental risks of their proposed projects. GAC applies the same environmental requirements to NGOs and multilateral organizations alike, and project proposals are screened in the same way, although different application forms are used. GAC takes an interest in whether partner organizations have environmental policies in place, although this is not a requirement. Where this is not the case, partners are actively encouraged to develop such policies or strategies.

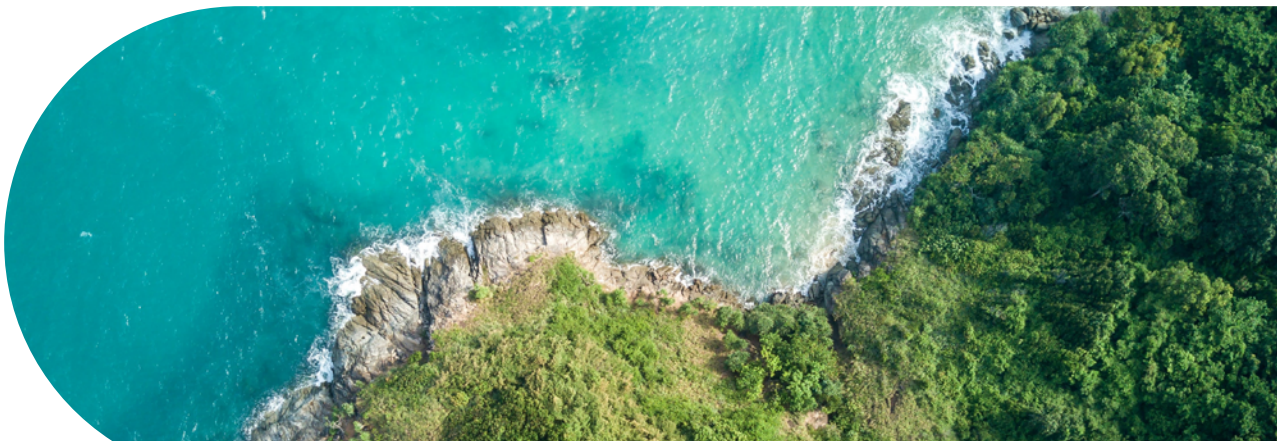
In terms of reporting back on how environmental mitigation measures set out in project proposals have been concretely implemented in the field, partners are asked to describe this in their standard progress reports and their final narrative reports, although sometimes only a few lines are dedicated to this. GAC has thus far had limited capacity to monitor implementation in the field, and environmental specialists do not as of yet systematically review annual reports.

GAC does not provide specific budget lines for the greening of humanitarian assistance. With regards to offsetting costs, GAC recently developed a Directive on the Eligibility of Carbon Credits for International Development Assistance. The purpose of the Directive, which considers that only carbon credits for air travel are eligible activities, is to provide guidance on eligible expenses and the eligibility criteria for recipient organizations in the context of projects funded through GAC.

Finally, GAC promotes localization as well as the consideration of traditional and Indigenous ecological knowledge.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy 2020–2023 – Update: Global Affairs Canada mentions that GAC is striving to reduce GHG emissions from its facilities and fleet. It also notes that GHG inventory training will be offered to allow employees to develop carbon footprint baselines for the department, against which GHG reduction initiatives can be measured, and to identify areas where GHG reduction projects may have the highest impact. However, as of yet, GAC does not measure the carbon footprint of its operations on a larger scale.



2. CZECHIA – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

GENERAL APPROACH

The Department for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance, part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is responsible for providing funding to development and humanitarian initiatives. Along with the Czech Development Agency and in consultation with Czech NGOs, the Department is in the process of drafting a development cooperation and humanitarian strategy, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its aid, including from a climate and environmental perspective. This strategy will be aligned with the national climate strategy, which includes a brief chapter on external cooperation. It is also influenced by the fact that Czechia has signed the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration.

The new strategy will be structured around several cross-cutting priority issues, including climate and gender. It will be accompanied by practical tools and guidelines for the Department's humanitarian and development partners (consisting of Czech (I)NGO such as Adventist Development & Relief Agency [ADRA], Caritas Czech, and People in Need; and local partners including NGOs, municipalities, hospitals, schools, and international organizations). The strategy will provide guidance but will not create specific environmental/climate obligations for partner organizations in this sense, particularly given the different levels of capacity and resources of the Department's diverse partner organizations. The strategy will, however, be used as the basis to inform all calls for proposals for development and humanitarian assistance and project proposals will be evaluated against it.

FUNDING

All requests for funding for humanitarian assistance are scored using three criteria: efficiency and effectiveness, "do no harm" and impact. As such, projects are analyzed to ensure they do no environmental harm.

Currently, when providing funding for UN agencies, the Department does not require them to provide detailed information on how they will integrate environmental sustainability into their projects or green their activities at the application stage. This is based on the assumption that UN agencies already have adequate environmental management systems in place to ensure the environmental sustainability of their projects. A flexible approach will be applied to local partners, who will be encouraged to use their own tools and approaches to ensure environmental sustainability, where they are already doing this. Project proposals from Czech (I)NGOs will, however, be analyzed more closely, given that many have sufficient capacity and some policies and systems. The Department encourages the sharing of tools and resources among its Czech partners, with the aim of trying to standardize the way in which greening is taken into account.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

The Ministry carries out periodic evaluations to take stock of its environmental impact and to identify more environmentally friendly ways of working. Relevant data is collected by the Ministry's environmental /climate focal point and shared with the Office of the Government (central body of state administration). There is a working group within the Ministry, which aims to identify, learn from, and if possible replicate good practices or approaches used by other ministries with regards to GHG emissions reductions/greening.

3. DENMARK - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

GENERAL APPROACH

Denmark has ambitious climate goals, including a 70% reduction of emissions by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050 as detailed in its Global Climate Action Strategy. These goals are reflected in its development strategy (which covers development and humanitarian assistance), in which Denmark aims to invest significantly in climate action, with a focus on adaptation and, to a lesser extent, mitigation. Denmark is one of the first donor agencies to have begun supporting the Climate Charter (in May 2022), and it has also signed the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration.

In terms of the greening of humanitarian assistance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a two-pronged approach:

- **Organizational level:** the Ministry selects a certain number of humanitarian organizations to work with throughout a 4-year period and concludes Strategic Partnerships with them. As part of this process, it encourages partners to green their operations and to develop environmental policies and strategies at organizational level. At the end of the 4-year period, there is an evaluation of the partnership which assesses, among other things, how partners have concretely implemented their policies. This applies more to the Ministry's NGO partners than to the UN agencies that it funds, based on the assumption that they have their own environmental management systems in place.

- **Project level:** the Ministry has an ongoing dialogue with its humanitarian partners on how to reduce the climate and environmental footprint of their humanitarian operations and has piloted the funding of more sustainable relief items in some contexts. When selecting projects and partners to fund, the Ministry uses a list of criteria, which include environmental issues, and partners are asked to respond to questions about the environmental impact of their projects.

FUNDING

The Danish government has decided that 30% of Danish official development assistance (which includes humanitarian assistance) will be allocated to "green initiatives", of which 25% will be allocated to climate (mainly adaptation – at least 60%) and 5% to activities aimed at protecting biodiversity. Currently, the Ministry does not provide its partners with specific budgets for the greening of humanitarian assistance.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

Given Denmark's ambitious carbon reduction targets (70% reduction of emissions by 2030), the Ministry is working to reduce its own emissions, including in field offices/embassies where renewable energy, recycling, and sustainable procurement activities are being piloted.

4. DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID OPERATIONS (DG ECHO)

GENERAL APPROACH

The European Union supports the Climate and Environment Charter and has signed the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration. Since 2020, DG ECHO has played a key role in steering the humanitarian sector towards increased environmental sustainability. Its **Minimum Environmental Requirements and Recommendations for EU-funded Humanitarian Aid Operations**[xxvii] (MER) became mandatory in 2023, after an initial phase in which they were piloted by partners, and feedback was collected on the process. As a result, all project proposals submitted to ECHO must include the proposed project's potential environmental risks and the mitigation measures to address them, in line with the MERs. ECHO is also developing sector-specific and cross-cutting **indicators** to help partners track their environmental commitments.

ECHO is currently strengthening the capacity of its own field operations and staff to equip them to better support their partners in the application of the MERs and plans to develop position papers outlining some environmental "red lines" to guide this process. These will include, for example, the decision to discontinue the funding of items or activities that—based on a cost/benefit analysis over time—are deemed to be environmentally unsustainable (e.g., diesel generators, water trucking beyond the acute emergency period), or to encourage the systematic provision of cash rather than in-kind food as an option for food assistance.

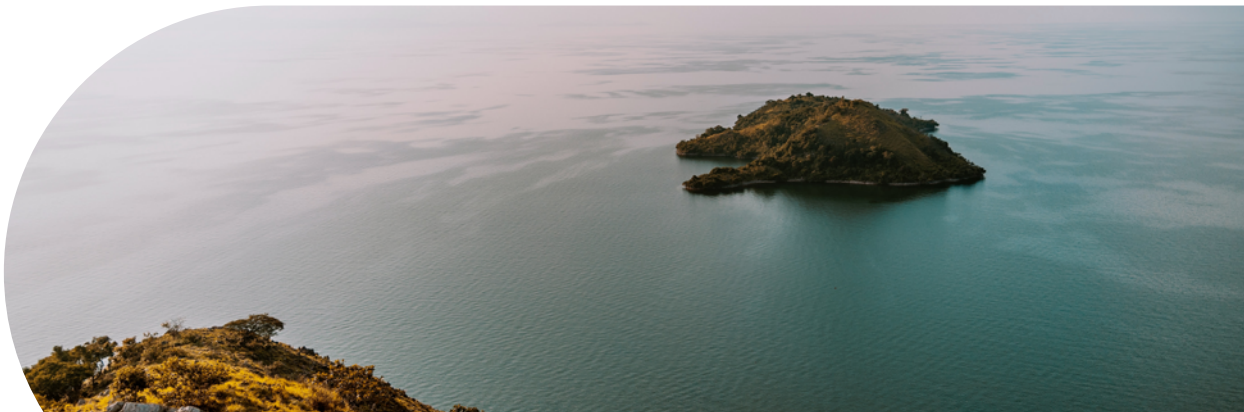
ECHO's approach has to date been largely focused on supporting its partner organizations to reduce environmental and carbon footprint at the project level, although as part of its future ambitions, it aims to support partners to make structural, organization-level changes. While ECHO does not provide specific funds to its partners to conduct carbon audits or recruit dedicated staff members working on environmental/sustainability issues, it funds sector-wide initiatives to build capacity and fill gaps in technical expertise. These include the funding of experts embedded in the Waste Management Measuring, Reverse Logistics, Environmentally Sustainable Procurement and Transport, and Circular Economy (WREC) (Environmental Sustainability in Humanitarian Logistics) project and training for humanitarian organizations in the use of the NEAT+ to conduct environmental assessments for humanitarian operations.

FUNDING

The MERs are designed to be integrated in project proposals through a mainstreaming approach, which means that efforts to green humanitarian assistance should be integrated in partners' overall project budgets.

ECHO seeks to avoid "penalizing" projects that may cost more because of environmental sustainability measures. It therefore applies a flexible approach when considering measures that provide an environmental benefit yet are costlier and do not necessarily lead to financial savings over time (e.g., implementation of waste management systems, purchase of organic fertilizer, or distribution of energy efficient cooking solutions and fuels), on condition that these are justified and linked to the MERs. Overall, partners are encouraged to address environmental sustainability throughout the whole project cycle from the proposal stage onwards, and to provide justification for any additional costs arising from this, linking it clearly to the MERs and demonstrating the environmental benefit.

In the context of the Grand Bargain, and to improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of humanitarian aid, ECHO has stepped up efforts to increase multi-year funding (i.e., initial contracts of at least 24 months). Where the available financial envelope allows, agreements could be signed for an action lasting 24 months or more with the full budget committed upfront, provided that proposals submitted by the partners contain convincing and strong gains in efficiency and effectiveness.



INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

As part of the European Green Deal, all departments including DG ECHO have to comply with the target of halving their emissions by 2030. Carbon audits of European Commission premises in Brussels have been conducted, but this is not yet the case for the decentralized EU Agencies, EU Delegations, nor for the global network of ECHO field offices. The European Commission also has an Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) certification process; DG ECHO has received certification at the headquarters level. Furthermore, it has taken a voluntary initiative to green its field offices. Triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission has also revised its internal travel policy and made commitments to reduce emissions related to staff travel by 50% by 2024.

5. FINLAND – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

GENERAL APPROACH

In 2019, Finland published a climate-smart foreign policy, which aims to mainstream climate change into all levels of foreign policy, including Finland's humanitarian assistance, and promote a global transition towards low emissions/climate resilient societies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is therefore exploring how to mainstream climate change and greening into humanitarian assistance in practice. Given that it is a medium-sized humanitarian donor, the Ministry will be inspired by and draw on the practices and policies of larger donors and existing resources. Finland has signed the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration. It is not yet a supporter of the Climate and Environment Charter, although this is under discussion.

FUNDING

Currently, the Ministry does not require humanitarian partners (Finnish NGOs) to integrate greening into their project proposals. However, partners are asked to respond to questions in the application form about the potential environmental impact of the proposed project, and how these will be minimized. The answers to these questions are, however, unlikely to determine whether a project is selected for funding or not, and issues such as cost, feasibility, results, and risk management are more likely to be decisive. Partners are required to report against the same questions in the narrative report, so the Ministry is able to monitor to some extent whether concrete action has been taken to minimize the environmental risks in line with the project proposal.

In addition, the Ministry will only fund organizations that have an ECHO partnership certificate, meaning that they already comply with a number of environmental requirements.[xxviii] The Ministry does not provide specific funds to its partners for the greening of humanitarian assistance.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

The Ministry's Unit for Climate and Environmental Diplomacy is responsible for monitoring and reporting on Finland's climate and environmental financing commitments and influence, as well as promoting consideration of climate change and biodiversity loss in development policy. The Ministry has not yet begun to measure its own carbon footprint but has an internal Environmental Program aimed at raising awareness and improving environmental performance in terms of practices and attitudes, procurement, travel, premises and waste management.

6. FRANCE: CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRE (CDCS)[xxix]

GENERAL APPROACH

France was instrumental in the development of the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration and recently published its 4-year humanitarian **strategy** (2023–2027) which contains a strong focus on climate both in terms of adaptation and measuring and mitigating emissions, thus aligning with the four commitments of the Declaration.

CDCS' growing interest in funding and supporting climate action is the result of its ongoing and close dialogue with its French civil society partners. It has increasing expectations of its partners with regards to greening humanitarian action both at the project level (for example, project proposals are screened, and partners are asked to analyze and take measures to mitigate potential risks in terms of the environment and emissions) and at an organizational level (partner organizations are asked to provide evidence that they have environmental strategies or policies in place).

CDCS, like other donors, remains focused on adaptation. Its climate marker[xxx] is also being used to

track the number of projects that address climate-related needs (either directly or by mainstreaming this across the project). In 2022, this accounted for 22% of projects funded by the CDCS.

FUNDING

CDCS does not allocate specific budget lines to its partners to support greening or decarbonization; rather, it hopes that the 10% indirect cost budget line is used by partners to cover these costs.

CDCS also allows partners to use 10% of the project budget for "flexible costs", meaning partners can use this 10% as they see fit, without the need to obtain prior verification from CDCS. This cost can be used to finance low-carbon activities for example.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

France's national reduction commitments, taken in the Paris Agreement, have not yet trickled down to the humanitarian department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. No carbon footprint assessment has been carried out, although this is likely to be done next year as part of the action plan for the first year of implementing the humanitarian strategy.

7. FRANCE: FRENCH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (AFD)

GENERAL APPROACH

France supports the Climate and Environment Charter and signed the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration.

Although it mainly supports development cooperation, the AFD also funds certain activities carried out by its partner organizations to cover populations' basic and urgent needs in countries in crisis, as part of its work to further the Humanitarian Development Peace nexus. Funding is allocated to partner organizations mainly through two mechanisms: through its civil society instrument, which is for the French organizations and those from the Global South, and through calls for proposals for response in both development and humanitarian contexts.

FUNDING

For humanitarian/development nexus assistance projects funded through the civil society instrument, as well as for any other project, AFD places a strong focus on biodiversity and climate change, and partners are encouraged to mainstream these issues in their project proposals. However, under these funding mechanisms, AFD supports projects that are generally low in emissions (it does not support, for example, infrastructural projects). AFD therefore focuses in less detail on how

partners plan to reduce emissions in their projects within this funding stream as compared to others.

For more development-focused projects, AFD applies a stricter approach whereby project teams systematically calculate the estimated carbon footprint of the proposed project. Proposals are then analyzed and checked by "climate/nature" technical experts from within the agency, and if a project is considered to have significant carbon emissions, this can lead to funding being refused.

While funding adaptation projects has been a strong focus of the AFD's bilateral cooperation as well as its partnerships with NGOs, supporting NGOs' mitigation efforts (e.g., greening) has not been encouraged in a formal way nor financially supported to date.

There are ongoing discussions within AFD on how to support its partners to meet the costs of greening, through indirect costs or other. AFD is also drafting a position paper on carbon credits and how the AFD Group[xxxi] could potentially finance carbon projects with multiple co-benefits (biodiversity, social) on the voluntary market, and participate in carbon funds.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

AFD has measured the carbon footprint of its headquarters and field offices since 2008, covering all three scopes, but for its own emissions only. Including emissions from the projects that the agency funds (and that are implemented by partner organizations) in the scope of this exercise is under discussion, although it is unlikely that it will be considered in the near future. The AFD has developed an internal roadmap aimed at reducing GHG emissions, which targets various scope 3 emissions (energy consumption, purchasing, Green IT, etc.)

8. GERMAN FEDERAL FOREIGN OFFICE (GFFO)

GENERAL APPROACH

Germany's overall climate foreign policy sets out ambitious commitments to intensify adaptation as well as greening efforts in cooperation programs. As an offshoot of this, the humanitarian branch of GFFO has made it its priority to focus funding and support on adaptation activities, allocating 5% of its annual budget to anticipation (e.g., the funding of the anticipation hub) to better prepare and adapt to natural hazards.

The greening of the humanitarian sector is an increasing area of interest for GFFO, and it has growing expectations of its humanitarian partner organizations asking them, for example, if they have conducted environmental assessments, identified potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures etc.

GFFO seeks to encourage its partners in this sense, rather than imposing requirements on them. This may change in the future, however, as GFFO is currently working on the adoption of standards, ideally in harmonization with the existing requirements of other donors. As a supporter of the Climate Charter (and a signatory of the Donor Declaration), GFFO encourages its partner organizations to sign the Charter.

FUNDING

GFFO favors an incremental approach to the funding of greening and is gathering more evidence on the costs related to this in order to be able to evaluate funding possibilities. Although it is not systematized or formalized in contract agreements as such, GFFO currently funds environmental mitigation measures identified by partners upon request.

GFFO also funds "standalone" environmental/humanitarian initiatives aimed at the greening of humanitarian assistance. Examples include desalination in vulnerable contexts, **Sustainable Energy** in refugee camps across the Sahel (replacing diesel generators with solar panels) and funding for the Climate Action Accelerator's sectoral roadmap for halving the emissions of the humanitarian sector as well as its development of a climate-resilient low carbon modus operandi for African organizations.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

As part of the German government's strategy, the Foreign Office is committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2045. As such, a carbon footprint assessment has been carried out and various activities have been implemented (revision of travel practices or waste management at the office).

9. IRELAND – DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

GENERAL APPROACH

In the **Programme for Government and the Climate Act 2021**, Ireland committed to halving its GHG emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050 at the latest, something which the Climate Action Plan (2021) will support.

Since Ireland's signature of the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has been increasingly interested in the link between environmental sustainability, climate action, and humanitarian assistance, but the greening of humanitarian assistance is not yet a budgetary priority. However, there are plans for Ireland to begin supporting the Climate and Environmental Charter, something that is expected to further stimulate and guide reflection on greening.

DFA supports a range of partners including UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and INGOs (such as Concern, Trocaire, and World Vision) to carry out humanitarian assistance. Through its Humanitarian Unit, DFA has an ongoing dialogue with its partners on how to increase the environmental sustainability of humanitarian assistance.

FUNDING

When organizations apply for funding to DFA, they are required to respond to general questions as to whether an environmental assessment has been conducted or adequate consideration has been given to climate action. Although partners' responses to these questions are unlikely to be decisive (i.e., to influence whether the organization receives funding or not), where environmental assessments reveal potential risks, DAF would be required to justify why the funding of the project is going ahead. Partners are also asked to outline, in their annual narrative reports, whether they have taken steps to reduce the environmental and climate impact of their project, based on Rio Markers scores 1–4.[xxxii]

In acute emergencies, DFA may adopt a less stringent approach regarding the potential environmental impact of humanitarian assistance, as the priority would be to identify a qualified and trusted partner organization, with the capacity to deliver a rapid response and save lives.

As yet there are no plans to introduce mandatory requirements for partners to green their activities and reduce their carbon emissions or to measure their carbon footprint. DFA is encouraging partners to join voluntary initiatives such as the Climate and Environment Charter. Ireland places a significant emphasis on the provision of quality humanitarian funding, and more than 80% of Ireland's

humanitarian funding is unearmarked, meaning that these funds could in theory be used by their humanitarian partners to fund their greening and decarbonization efforts.

DFA is exploring the innovative use of climate financing to green humanitarian assistance, and last year around 3 million EUR of climate financing was channelled through the Humanitarian Unit for this adaptation and mitigation efforts. DFA's Climate and Humanitarian Units are working together to strengthen synergies in this respect.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

DFA is committed to the Green Foreign Ministry initiative, which has the potential to reduce the Department's carbon footprint related, for example, to travel and IT. Irish Embassies abroad are also tracking their flights, travel, and electricity; data collected are being used to influence greener practices.

10. SPANISH AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (AECID)

GENERAL APPROACH

In 2022 AECID's Office of Humanitarian Action managed approximately 25% of AECID's overall foreign assistance, and over the past few years has increasingly encouraged its partners to assess, reduce, and mitigate the environmental and climate footprint of their operations. AECID is one of the few donors to have developed detailed guidance on how to mainstream environmental and humanitarian action both at project and office levels. Its comprehensive **Guide to Mainstreaming the Environment in Humanitarian Action and Emergencies and Humanitarian Emergencies** (in Spanish) aims to support staff and partners in reducing negative environmental and carbon impacts of humanitarian operations and to promote positive impacts.

Spain supports the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations and has signed the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration on Climate and Environment. It is actively taking part in donor coordination efforts.

More generally, in its strategy for international cooperation (AECID Strategy 2019–2026), links between the environment and humanitarian action are identified as

issues to be considered, i.e., environmental damage resulting from relief operations, environmental damage as a result of crises, and climate change as a factor that contributes to humanitarian crises.

FUNDING

AECID prioritizes environmental protection and mitigation in its project selection process, using a scoring mechanism to assess the level to which project proposals integrate environmental issues. In its 2023 call for proposals for humanitarian grants,[xxxiii] AECID allocated 50 out of 100 points to the content of proposals, assessing this based on several factors (context analysis, needs assessment, alignment with the Nexus approach, proposed monitoring plan, etc.) As part of this assessment, AECID paid particular attention to how proposals took climate and environmental issues into account (e.g., analysis of the environmental context, prevention or mitigation of potential climate and environmental risks, use of environmentally responsible resource management) Likewise, proposals were assessed on their level of coherence with the objectives and priorities of Spanish Development Cooperation (20 of out 100 points were awarded for this), with a particular focus on complementarity with cross-cutting approaches including the Sectoral Strategy for Gender in Development and the Strategy for Environment and Sustainable Development.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

Spain mainly works through humanitarian organizations for the implementation of humanitarian assistance but also implements a limited number of emergency responses through its START team (Spanish Technical Aid Response Team, Emergency Department). Several actions have been undertaken by AECID to "green" teams deployed as part of emergency response operations through, for example, solar lighting, solar chargers, or solar-powered devices.

11. SWEDEN – SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY (SIDA)

GENERAL APPROACH

Sweden supports the Climate and Environment Charter and has also signed the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration.

Sida has been striving for more environmental and climate considerations in its development assistance for a number of years now. Given that most Sida-funded projects operate in contexts where humanitarian assistance and development overlap,[xxxiv] these considerations are now also embedded in the agency's humanitarian assistance. **Sida's 2021–2025 Humanitarian Strategy** considers the environmental footprint of humanitarian assistance to be a cross-cutting issue and focuses on the increased environmental sustainability of projects, as well as climate considerations both from an adaptation and mitigation perspective.[xxxv]

Sida has integrated environmental considerations into three aspects of its work with Swedish humanitarian partner organizations.

At the strategic partnership level:[xxxvi] before entering into a partnership with an organization, Sida assesses to what extent its programs aim to have a positive impact on the environment and climate, and which tools and strategies the organization has in place to assess and manage potential climate and environmental risks.

At a project level: when applying for funds from Sida, partners are required to perform an environmental assessment of the proposed project and to integrate climate and environmental considerations in proposals. Sida has developed various tools to support its partner organizations, and Sida staff, to do this. For

example, its step-by-step guide for environmental integration, Toolbox, and **online environmental help desk** assist all Sida staff in the embassies in mainstreaming these issues into their work.

At an organizational level: Sida also encourages partner organizations to take measures to reduce their carbon dioxide (CO2) footprint, for example "by reducing the amount of air travel in parallel with the development of digital solutions in Sweden, at local offices and at the partner organizations' locations".[xxxvii] The agency has also developed guidance and checklists for its partners to help them to reduce the climate and environmental footprints of their field offices (see **Greening the Office**).

The approach described above does not apply to UN agencies, which receive approximately one-third of Sida's funding for both development and humanitarian work. Sida's support to the UN agencies (in particular the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], and World Food Programme [WFP]) is mostly unearmarked, and multi-year funding and is guided by Swedish governmental policy for multi-laterals as well as organization-specific cooperation strategies. Whilst Sida does not request its UN partners to mainstream environmental and climate considerations into their humanitarian assistance, there is some level of assumption that these partners already have systems and strategies in place to reduce the environmental and climate impact of their work.

FUNDING

The focus of Sida's climate and environmental funding for 2022 has been on programmes aimed at environmental protection, increasing biodiversity, and strengthening the alignment of Swedish development cooperation with the Paris Agreement.[xxxviii]

With regards to Swedish Civil Society Organizations, while there is no dedicated funding for greening, Sida looks favourably upon "partners who allocate resources to strengthen the integration of the environment and climate and specific interventions aimed to improve the environment/climate".[xxxix]

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

According to Swedish law, Swedish governmental agencies are required to have an environmental management system (EMS) in place, and this has been the case for Sida since 2018. A short e-learning course is available for staff and partners aimed at increasing awareness of the EMS process.

12. SWITZERLAND – SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SDC)

GENERAL APPROACH

Switzerland supports the Climate and Environment Charter. SDC's interest in addressing the climate and environmental footprint of projects it funds, as well as the footprint of its partners has been increasing over the last few years. However, the prime focus of SDC's climate work—as defined in its international cooperation strategy 2021–2024—is on strengthening climate and risk resilience, as well as greening development, with a strong focus on learning and supporting the multilateral frameworks (Sendai and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC]).

With regards to the greening of humanitarian assistance, SDC encourages its partners to voluntarily assess and mitigate their environmental and carbon footprint—both at an organizational and a project level—but this is not a formal requirement. SDC recognizes that its partners are already quite advanced in this respect and believes that an approach based on shared learning is the most effective.

FUNDING

SDC contributed significantly to the ICRC's **Climate and Environment Transition Fund** (a multi-year fund to help transition ICRC into a climate-smart, adaptable, and more sustainable organization)[xl] in 2022, although this was exceptional, and, in general, SDC does not fund partner organizations' greening efforts, which are to be covered by overhead costs. SDC does not fund offsetting costs of partner organizations and encourages partners to use offsetting as a last resort after all possible efforts to reduce environment and carbon footprints have been made. It encourages the sharing of experiences and lessons learnt among its partners in this respect.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, which the SDC is part of, is committed to reducing its carbon emissions in line with the Paris Agreement commitments, and various activities have been carried out to make sure targets are reached, including reducing (and offsetting) transport emissions, greening procurement, and reducing printing. These activities are applied both at headquarters and in field offices (embassies). Regarding its own procurement guidelines, SDC is strengthening criteria on environmentally friendly transport and provision of goods and services.

13. THE NETHERLANDS – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

GENERAL APPROACH

The Netherlands has signed the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration but is not yet a supporter of the Climate and Environment Charter, although this is under discussion.

Reducing the environmental and climate footprint of humanitarian organizations is a key ambition of the Netherlands' 2022 International Climate Strategy.[xli] The Ministry has an increasing interest in supporting its partner organizations to better understand and measure their carbon and environmental footprint and encourages partners (voluntarily) to work on environmental sustainability in their projects. Nonetheless, the Netherlands' climate action has been and will continue to be focused on climate change adaptation.

FUNDING

The majority of the Ministry's humanitarian funding supports large, multiyear assistance programs implemented by its partners, which include UN agencies, the Dutch Red Cross, and the ICRC, and according to discussions with the agency, there is a level of expectation that these partners have suitable environmental or climate policies and strategies in place and will use indirect costs/overheads budget lines to work on greening.

Furthermore, as part of its humanitarian partnership with the Dutch Red Cross (NRK), the Ministry has provided it with specific funds to cover staff costs related to green response and the implementation of NRK's own Climate and Environment Action Plan, which aims at concretely implementing its commitments under the Charter.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

The Netherlands has had an internal sustainable development strategy (social, environment, economy) in place since 2021, which applies to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A carbon footprint assessment has been carried out and roadmaps have been developed for the head office and field offices to reduce travel, green the supply chains, and introduce sustainable energy in offices. The remaining carbon footprint is being offset through the purchase of carbon credits. The Ministry commits to report on progress on this internal strategy progress on a yearly basis.

14. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (US AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

USAID leads the U.S. Government's international development and disaster assistance through partnerships and investments that save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises and progress beyond assistance. This section will be focused on the dedicated humanitarian assistance programming while acknowledging that USAID benefits from the continuity offered by the over 80 global USAID overseas Mission offices, often co-located with U.S. Embassies, and programs in over 100 countries.

GENERAL APPROACH

USAID's Climate Strategy 2022–2030 is a whole-of-agency effort to advance equitable and ambitious climate action. Three Strategic Objectives will frame USAID's (including the Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance [BHA]) climate actions in the coming years. Critical to USAID strategy is to advance meaningful participation and active leadership of youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, and other groups who are marginalized and underrepresented. These groups are both the most vulnerable to climate shocks and possess critical networks to advance global and local climate ambition.

- **SO1.Targeted Direct Action:** Accelerate and scale targeted climate actions aimed at supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in countries most affected by the climate crisis.
- **SO2. Systems Change:** Through this objective, USAID will aim to support partner countries, communities, and international organizations to catalyze systems transformation toward a net zero, equitable, and climate-resilient world.
- **Special Objective: Doing Our Part.** Through this Special Objective, USAID aims "to transform [its] own workforce, operations, and policies to reduce carbon emissions substantially, adapt to the climate crisis, and further climate justice – and support and expect [its] implementing partners to do the same".

USAID currently encourages, rather than requires, its partners to mainstream environmental sustainability and reduce carbon emissions across their humanitarian assistance projects, and provides support and guidance at the project and activity level. In Immediate Result 2.4 of the Climate Strategy, the agency aims to strengthen coordination between humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding assistance to optimize the response to the climate crisis. This includes building the capacity and knowledge of humanitarian actors to address climate risk impacts.

FUNDING

The environmental procedures that apply to USAID's humanitarian assistance are a combination of U.S. Federal Government environmental procedures[xlii] and internal procedures.[xliii] Through these procedures, applications for USAID grants must undergo an **Initial Environmental Examination** (IEE). This is a preliminary review of the foreseeable environmental impacts of a proposed humanitarian intervention. Based on the outcome of the IEE, a further **Environmental Assessment** or a more detailed Environmental Impact Statement may be required. Where an IEE suggests mitigation measures on at least one project or activity are necessary, partners must develop an **Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan**.

Some funding applications may be exempt from this environmental examination process.[xliv] For example, actions funded by the International Disaster Assistance[xlv] are systematically exempted from the environmental examination. However, other environmental and climate technical oversight applies, as described in the **Emergency Application Guidelines** (EAGs) (see below). Exemptions may also apply in other emergency circumstances, including where rapid humanitarian assistance is required and would be slowed down by the review process. However, such exemptions are not absolute and only apply for short periods when absolutely necessary, with environmental examinations being foreseen if the disaster assistance becomes more long-term (e.g., within 1 to 3 months and concurrently with the disaster response).

In November 2022, USAID updated its **EAGs**[xlvi], which apply to NGOs applying for non-competitive awards. The updated EAGs include environmental considerations in various sectors, including food security and agriculture and pesticides. They also emphasize sustainable supply chains, with requirements in the **Environmental Sustainability in Humanitarian Supply Chain section**.[xlvii] The EAGs do not apply to Public International Organizations (e.g., United Nations agencies), which must comply with **other USAID requirements**. Environmental assessment and more stringent climate risk management requirements apply to multi-year competitive awards, such as **Resilience Food Security Activities**, which do not fall under the EAGs.

USAID is currently working on a specific IEE for emergency food assistance programs to improve the environmental sustainability of the life-saving emergency food assistance it funds. This includes efforts to build more climate-resilient supply chains and reduce impacts on land, air, and water from directly distributing food aid, while also reducing emissions and waste from in-kind food assistance.

Through its advisor role on the interagency **Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council**'s Acquisition Environmental and Contract Management Team and the **Civilian Agency Acquisition Council**, USAID is involved in developing key environmental revisions to the **Federal Acquisition Regulation**. The revisions are known as "FAR cases" and include the following.

- **Case 2021-015:** Disclosure of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate-Related Financial Risk. Purpose: to require government contractors to disclose their GHG emissions/climate-related financial risk and set science-based targets to reduce those emissions.

- **Case 2022-006:** Sustainable Procurement. Purpose: to update the Purchasing Preference guidelines for sustainable supplies and services.

- **Case 2021-016:** Climate-Related Financial Risk. Purpose: to include climate risk in acquisition planning and allow for a procurement preference related to environmental concerns.

The outcome of these cases may affect how USAID and the Federal government can reduce their upstream and downstream supply chain GHG emissions and advance environmental justice through acquisition.

Localization is a key USAID priority that links to the Agency's Climate Strategy Special Objective. In its **Localization Vision and Approach**, USAID defined ambitious targets, including directly allocating at least a quarter of all its program funds to local partners by the end of 2025, and ensuring that at least 50% of its programming takes place with local communities in the lead by 2030. USAID is advancing its localization and operational climate and sustainability priorities simultaneously as localization and climate change are intrinsically linked. The development of local partnerships is a key feature of USAID's Climate Strategy. The Strategy defines equity and locally led climate action as foundational principles and includes targets on partnership with Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, youth, and other groups who are marginalized and/or underrepresented to lead climate action. USAID's **draft Policy for Localization of Humanitarian Assistance** was shared publicly for comment in November 2022 and will be finalized in the coming months.

INTERNAL GREENING EFFORTS

USAID is reducing its operational GHG emissions and increasing its sustainability in line with **Executive Order 14008** on combating the climate crisis and **Executive Order 14057** on federal sustainability. In fiscal year (FY) 2022, USAID inventoried its operational GHG emissions from fiscal years 2008, 2019, 2021, and 2022 from its global business travel, global vehicle fleet fuel use, U.S. facilities, and U.S. workforce commuting. In March 2023, USAID used the data from the inventory to set targets for reducing its GHG emissions. Specifically, in line with U.S. government targets, USAID committed to:

1. achieving net zero emissions from operations by 2050; and
2. reducing its GHG emissions from its FY 2008 baseline by 65% by the end of FY 2030.

Through the inventory, USAID estimates it has reduced its operational GHG emissions from these sources by approximately 42% compared to its FY 2008 baseline. USAID also identified that its greatest emissions reduction opportunities are for facilities energy use, business travel, acquisition and assistance and supply chains, and workforce commuting, and through partnering and training.

USAID is acting on those opportunities. For instance, USAID challenged itself to reduce its travel-related GHG emissions from an FY 2022 baseline by 30% by the end of FY 2024. To empower and enable operating units to reduce their travel, USAID provided units with their travel data and related GHG emissions; developed guiding questions for leaders to use to make climate-conscious and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA)-informed travel approvals; and generated recommendations for when to use virtual, instead of in-person, technical assistance.

USAID plans to conduct its GHG emissions inventory annually and, in future years, partner with the State Department to expand the scope to encompass USAID's full global operations.

USAID was the second donor to begin supporting the **Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations** in December 2021 and is considering signing the **Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration**. USAID's BHA has regular bilateral meetings with DG ECHO to share lessons learned and create synergies. BHA co-facilitates, with DG ECHO and SDC, the informal donor coordination group aimed at exchanging best practices and learning of greening of humanitarian assistance.

REFERENCES

[i] The Joint Initiative is funded by the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and is a collaborative project bringing together 25 humanitarian stakeholders to help reduce the environmental impact of humanitarian assistance linked, notably, to the waste this generates. The Initiative aims at sharing practices and knowledge on environmental sustainability and waste reduction within the humanitarian community.

[ii] The Climate Action Accelerator aims to mobilize a critical mass of mid-level organizations to scale up the implementation of climate solutions, keep global warming below 2°C, and avoid the risk of dangerous runaway climate change. Its first priority is to help shift the aid, health, research, and higher education sectors towards a radical transformation of their practices, pursuing emission reduction targets (-50% by 2030) on a path to net zero in line with the Paris Agreement.

[iii] The **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change** (IPCC) defines adaptation as "… the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities".

[iv] The IPCC defines climate change mitigation as "A human intervention to reduce emissions or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases".

[v] Whilst there is no formal definition, this is generally accepted to refer to activities aimed at reducing the climate and environmental footprint of humanitarian aid. For the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) the greening of humanitarian responses refers to "the environmental responsibility of humanitarian actors and to actions aimed at reducing the negative environmental impacts of humanitarian operations themselves". The International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) uses the term "Green Response" to describe "a way in which we can approach our work to improve the environmental outcomes of humanitarian assistance. It minimizes harm caused to the local environment as well as reducing the global impact of the carbon emissions we generate. It can also adopt innovative solutions to have a positive impact on sustainability".

[vi] See the **Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2023** (Figure 1.3, page 28).

[vii] For example, the Joint Initiative and Climate Action Accelerator participated in a session during Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Weeks entitled 2023 "**How are donors influencing environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation in humanitarian action?**" (organized by the Joint Initiative). The Joint Initiative has also been invited to participate in several informal donor coordination meetings organized by USAID and DG ECHO on the subject of greening of aid.

[viii] In 2023, the Climate Action Accelerator is facilitating a multi-stakeholder dialogue between the humanitarian donor community and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/United Nations (UN) agencies to address the issue of funding emissions reductions efforts. The overall goal is to create a funding environment that is conducive to supporting the humanitarian sector in its efforts to reduce the sector's emissions.

[ix] "The minimum environmental requirements and recommendations were developed to address negative environmental impacts related to humanitarian responses at a project level" (see page 6, **Guidance on the operationalisation of the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations**).

[x] Adopted in March 2022 during the European Humanitarian Forum.

[xi] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

[xii] DG ECHO.

[xiii] Over recent years, pooled funds have grown in number and size. There are now more pooled funds than in the previous decade and the amount of money allocated to pooled funds has been increasing. (**Pooled Funds: the New Humanitarian Silver Bullet?** Norwegian Refugee Council, September 2022.)

[xiv] Priorities for 2023–2025 set by the Co-Chairs (Estonia and the United Kingdom) are: Coordination of the Humanitarian System and Humanitarian Space (see **https://www.ghdinitiative.org/ghd/gns/about-us/current-co-chairs.html**).

[xv] "The minimum environmental requirements and recommendations were developed to address negative environmental impacts related to humanitarian responses at a project level" (see page 6, **Guidance on the operationalisation of the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations**).

[xvi] This was one of the findings of the analysis of donors' policies carried out by the NGO Action Against Hunger (see "**Politiques Environnementales des Bailleurs de Fonds: Analyse**", Août 2023, Action Contre la Faim).

[xvii] CERF pools contributions from across the globe into a single fund and allocates money at the most critical phase of an emergency (see **UN Crisis Relief**).

[xviii] CBPFs are established when an emergency occurs or when an existing crisis deteriorates. They are managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) or UN Resident Coordinators (RCs) and in close consultation with the humanitarian community. (See OCHA.)

[xix] The Global Humanitarian Overview, December 2022, OCHA.

[xx] **Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration on Climate and Environment: First Reporting Under the Declaration** – 2023 report.

[xxi] **ICRC Climate and Environment Transition Fund** (2022).

[xxii] See "Climate change and greening of aid", **Report, High-Level Meeting of the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative**, December 2021.

[xxiii] This project, initiated by Climate Action Accelerator in 2023, intends to contribute to accelerate the transition of the humanitarian sector towards climate smart, low carbon practices, while providing individual aid organizations with guidance as to how to go about halving GHG emissions.

[xxiv] For example, USAID is reducing its operational GHG emissions and increasing its sustainability in line with Executive Order 14008 on combating the climate crisis and Executive Order 14057 on federal sustainability. Meanwhile, as part of the European Green Deal, DG ECHO has to comply with the target of halving their emissions by 2030.

[xxv] For more information, see the **outcomes of the session entitled "Is Local Procurement Always More Environmentally Sustainable**" organized by the Joint Initiative and the Global Shelter Cluster as part of Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week, April 2023.

[xxvi] The Impact Assessment Act, 2019 (IAA 2019). One key purpose of the IAA is "to ensure that projects, as defined in section 81 [of the IAA], [...] are considered in a careful and precautionary manner to avoid significant adverse environmental effects".

[xxvii] "The minimum environmental requirements and recommendations were developed to address negative environmental impacts related to humanitarian responses at a project level" (see page 6, **Guidance on the operationalisation of the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations**).

[xxviii] For example, the organization is committed to respecting high environmental standards in its procurement and waste management and developed procedures and has aligned itself with a generally accepted set of principles for environmental safeguarding (e.g., the EU's Green Public Procurement [GPP] principles).

[xxix] The **Crisis and Support Centre** (Centre de crise et de soutien/CDSC) of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs help France to respond to crisis situations against a global backdrop of large-scale disasters.

[xxx] CDCS uses a "climate marker". aligned with ECHO's resilience marker, to evaluate funding applications to the Humanitarian Emergency Fund.

[xxxi] AFD Group includes Agence Française de Développement (AFD); its subsidiary Proparco dedicated to private sector financing; and Expertise France, the technical cooperation agency.

[xxxii] **OECD's RIO Markers for Climate**.

[xxxiii] For more details go to **Convocatoria de subvenciones para acciones humanitarias** 2023.

[xxxiv] **https://www.sida.se/en/sidas-international-work/countries-and-regions/**.

[xxxv] "Activities will contribute to humanitarian actors conducting relevant environmental assessments and mainstreaming environmental and climate considerations into analysis, implementation and monitoring to reduce their adverse climate and environmental impacts".

[xxxvi] **https://cdn.sida.se/app/uploads/2020/11/30120117/Guidelines-for-cooperation-with-SPO.pdf**.

[xxxvii] **https://cdn.sida.se/app/uploads/2020/11/30120117/Guidelines-for-cooperation-with-SPO.pdf**.

[xxxviii] **https://cdn.sida.se/app/uploads/2023/06/17113300/10207232_Portfolio_Climate_Environment_2022_WEB-1.pdf**.

[xxxix] **https://cdn.sida.se/app/uploads/2020/11/30120117/Guidelines-for-cooperation-with-SPO.pdf**.

[xl] **ICRC Climate and Environment Transition Fund** (2022).

[xli] "We support not only the ambitious plan of the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG), which should ensure that citizens worldwide are protected by early warning systems against extreme weather and climate change, but also reducing the footprint of humanitarian organizations" (page 17).

[xlii] **22 Code of Federal Regulations 216 ("Reg. 216")** is the U.S. federal regulation that defines USAID's pre-implementation environmental impact assessment (EIA) process. It applies to all USAID programs, projects, activities, and substantive amendments.

[xliii] See USAID's **Environmental Procedures Hub** for more information.

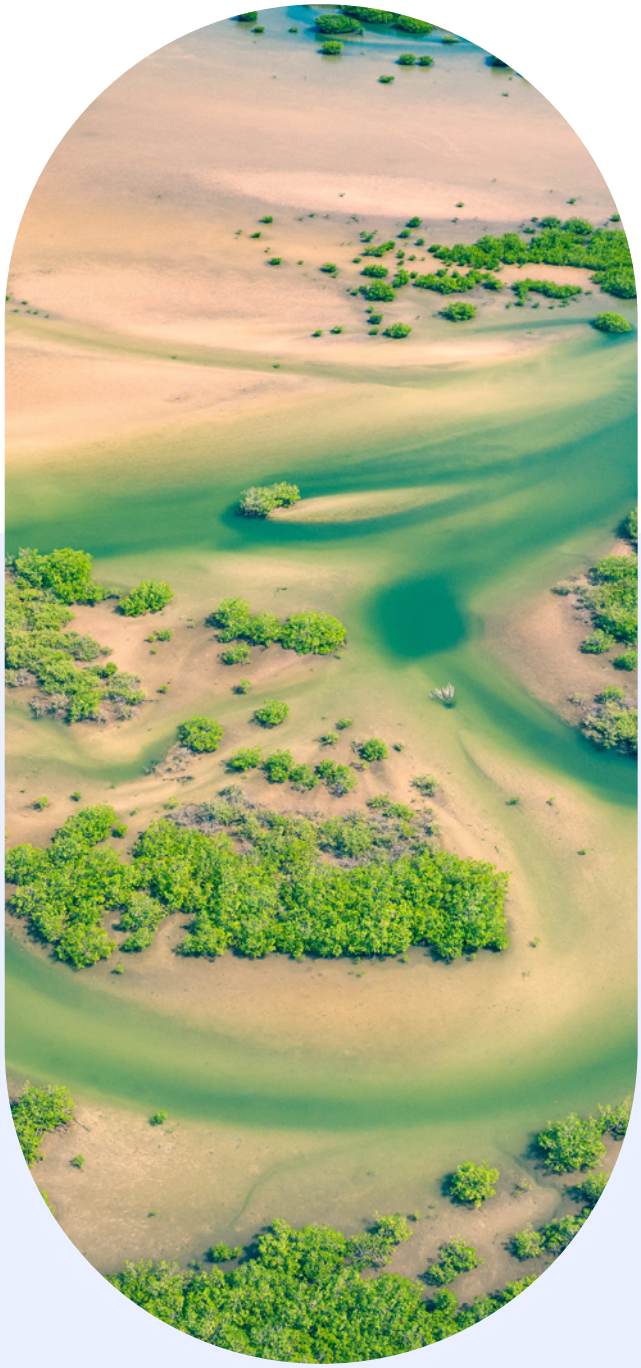
[xliv] This does not include assistance for procuring or using pesticides, nor assistance related to supply chains.

[xlv] However, the exemption only applies where International Disaster Assistance Funds are used.

[xlvi] Guidelines USAID issued under restricted eligibility conditions for emergency/disaster assistance. The guidelines apply to NGOs submitting applications to the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance for either new awards or modifications to existing awards.

[xlvii] For example, partners requesting over 50,000 USD for procurement must submit a procurement plan that includes information on how sustainability will be integrated throughout the supply chain (e.g., by reducing the environmental footprint of procurement, transport, and storage).

[xlviii] For additional information on Title II of the Food for Peace Act refer to **BHA's Emergency Food Assistance** site.



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Climate Action Accelerator

Operationalizing and Scaling-up Donors' Climate and Environmental Commitments:
an analysis of progress, gaps and opportunities.

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