Making policies work for Sustainable Travel

A Sustainable United Nations study
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Acknowledgements

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I. Introduction

Background

1.1 The United Nations Chief Executives Board (CEB) adopted in October 2007 the United Nations (UN) Climate Neutral Strategy, committing all United Nations system organizations to measure their climate footprint, to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible, and to consider purchasing offsets to compensate for remaining emissions.[1]

1.2 The implementation of the UN Climate Neutral Strategy is coordinated by the Environment Management Group (EMG)[2] and supported by the Sustainable United Nations (SUN) facility[3] and an inter-agency network of environmental sustainability focal points (IMG)[4].

1.3 In December 2009, the first common greenhouse gas inventory, covering the climate footprint of 49 United Nations system organizations, was released.[5] Half of the total footprint (approximately 1.7 million tons of CO_2 equivalent), based on 2008 data, was caused by air travel.[6] Reducing the travel footprint would result in a corresponding reduction in travel expenditure in the United Nation system, estimated at approximately US$ 1 billion per year.[7]

1.4 In June 2010, SUN, supported by IMG, the Inter-Agency Travel Network (IATN) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), released the "Guide to Sustainable Travel in the United Nations", which provided an overview of the different ways that United Nations system organizations could encourage more sustainable and climate friendly travel practices.[8] One of the main conclusions of the guide was that existing travel rules, policies and practices act as barriers to implementing sustainable travel in the United Nations and thus there was a need to further study how these barriers could be overcome. The Chairs of the CEB High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) requested that such a review be conducted and that SUN, with support from IATN, carry out the assignment.

1.5 The objective of this short report is to summarize the barriers and enabling measures found in current United Nations travel policies and procedures; also, to make specific

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[1] CEB/2007/2, Annex I
[2] The Environment Management Group (EMG) is a United Nations system-wide coordination body established to enhance inter-agency cooperation on environmental issues. Its membership consists of the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations, including the secretariats of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, plus the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organization.
[3] Sustainable United Nations (SUN) is an initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which aims to support the United Nations and other organizations to achieve climate neutrality and overall sustainability
[4] In 2008 a network of climate neutral focal points (known as an Issue Management Group or IMG) was set up across the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to implement the decision to move towards a climate neutral United Nations. Today the IMG is called the IMG on Environmental Sustainability Management.
[5] Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN (2010 edition).
[6] Ibid.
[7] « Review of Travel Arrangements in the United Nations system », JIU/REP/2010/2.The figure reflects purchases of air tickets for 2008.
[8] "Sustainable Travel in the United Nations," UNEP SUN, 2010.

recommendations for revising existing policies in order to reduce the system's travel footprint. The study is premised on the observation that while individual travellers can take voluntary action to reduce their travel footprint, for effectiveness system-wide senior management must adopt/adapt policy guidelines/rules to facilitate reaching this goal.

Methodology

1.6   The report was prepared by SUN between March and November 2011 in collaboration with the travel managers of the IATN and members of the IMG. It is based on a review of the travel policies and rules currently in effect, complemented by a brief questionnaire and selected interviews about how they are applied (see annex II). The examples cited in the report of particular organizational experience are provided with the permission of those consulted.

II.   Sustainable Travel

Definition and rationale for sustainable travel in the United Nations System

2.1   Sustainable travel has been defined as "travel where the associated environmental, social and economic impact is minimized, without negatively affecting the ability of the organization to deliver its mandate."[9]

2.2   The United Nations General Assembly "recognizes the need for efficient and effective air travel to effectively implement the mandates of the United Nations through the facilitation of direct contacts."[10] The more recent CEB commitment to move towards climate neutrality makes timely a review of current policies and procedures for official travel to reflect the emphasis now placed on reducing the system's climate footprint. Some organizations have already taken this step. For example, the World Food Programme (WFP) has a manual to define and illustrate its travel policy and associated rules and regulations. It stipulates the principles of safety, cost, transparency, accountability and the environment, and goes on to say, "WFP must move towards more sustainable travel and trips should only be undertaken when necessary. Conferencing technology such as video conferencing and phone conferencing and personalized video link are more cost effective and environmentally-friendly alternatives to travel". The World Health Organization (WHO) in December 2010 informed its staff that the "Organization has made a commitment to reduce travel costs and reduce the impact our travel has on the environment. A reduction in travel costs and reducing our impact on the environment can only be achieved with less travel. Telephone and Videoconferencing should be used as much as possible as these technologies offer a less expensive way for staff to be involved in meeting and conferences. "[11]

2.3   The implementation of sustainable travel is a shared responsibility, involving and committing executive heads, programme managers and the individual traveller. The role of organizational heads is to adopt a sustainable travel policy and, where additional costs or resources are required to implement the policy, seek governing/legislative body approval. The role of Departments/Divisions is to translate the overarching policy into sustainable travel procedures and rules. The individual traveller can also be mindful of the environmental impact of his/her travel and modify behavior accordingly.

Recommendation 1: That for consistency with the Chief Executives Board-approved Strategy for a Climate Neutral United Nations, United Nations organizations incorporate environmental considerations into their travel policies and procedures.

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[9] See, « Sustainable Travel in the United Nations, p. 10 (UNEP). "Environmental" includes internal as well as external environment, i.e. safety and health are also covered by this definition.
[10] A/RES/65/268, IV (4), 24 May 2011.
[11] WHO Information Note 36/2010 on Travel Efficiencies, 9 December 2010.

Travel –Balancing of Interests/Priorities

2.4   When organizations procure travel for business needs, the choice can be driven by any or a combination of three main motives:

        a. Travel costs (excluding per diems);
        b. GHG emissions and emission reduction targets;
        c. Health/Performance requirements of staff member travelers.

    Accentuated by the recent financial crisis and resultant budget cutbacks, the cost factor is generally the most influential. The cost issue is also embodied in most United Nations entities' travel policies or instructions, i.e. "travel is by the most direct and economical route".

2.5   With the adoption of the United Nations Climate Neutral Strategy, an additional criteria came into play: which option would generate the lowest climate footprint. If GHG emissions were the primary factor, travel would be by the most direct route, notwithstanding the fact that the most direct route may not be the cheapest.[12]

2.6   Finally, often lost in the equation are the health/performance requirements of the traveller and issues of work/life balance. In many instances, a traveller is asked to fly out on a Saturday, as the ticket price is cheaper, thus foregoing quality family time. This element of work/life balance tends to be given the lowest priority. Generally, the choice is driven overwhelmingly by cost.

Recommendation 2: That the travel policies and procedures of United Nations organizations specify the criteria to be applied when considering travel options: cost, environmental impact and staff well-being.

Developing a sustainable travel policy – Key elements

Mode of travel

2.7   The current United Nations travel policy assumes that the normal mode for all official travel will be by air.[13] The implication is that any other form of travel is considered an exception. Given the United Nations' climate neutral initiative, given also the rising price of fossil fuels and tougher environmental laws world-wide, the United Nations would be better served by adopting a more flexible approach to travel modes, making explicit provision for consideration of alternatives to air travel where alternatives are feasible.

2.8   Several international organizations based in Europe indicate a preference for **rail travel** over short-haul air travel within Europe. This is primarily for reasons of efficiency and staff

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[12]Prior to establishing the hub and spokes (H&S) system, airlines operated point-to-point routing which was often not the most cost-efficient. The logic behind the H&S concept is to concentrate traffic in one airport-(the hub) from smaller airports (spokes), in order to then transport grouped passengers from one major hub to another.
[13]ST/AI/2006/4, Section 5 « Travel by direct route and normal mode and section 5.1 "On travel by the most direct and economical route, either by air or by the fastest available surface mode of transportation when air travel is not feasible."

welfare (connections direct to city centres, less unproductive time, more uninterrupted rest/work time) but the environment also benefits hugely[14]. Some organizations state in their rules that certain sectors shall only be by train, e.g. Paris-Geneva, Paris-London.[15] Some specify that if air travel were undertaken for these routes, the standard of accommodation would be economy, whereas for travel by train, first class is authorized. One organization, United Nations Volunteers (UNV), even overrides the strict interpretation of "most direct and economical" by allowing a margin of 15% over the cost of the (economy class) airfare when choosing to travel by rail to destinations that can be reached within six hours. This is a good example of cost-effectiveness and climate-friendliness in action.

Recommendation 3: That United Nations organizations not give automatic preference to air travel when other cost-comparable and time-efficient modes are available. Travel policies can be aligned with the CEB strategy for a climate neutral United Nations by reflecting the desirability of selecting more climate-friendly and cost-effective modes of travel where those are feasible.

Standard of accommodation: General

2.9   Currently, the thresholds for air travel in business class vary by organization, notwithstanding efforts to harmonize standards system-wide.[16] In most United Nations organizations, access to travel in business class, once the organizational threshold has been met, is a staff entitlement that managers cannot overrule. Of course, the traveller is not obliged to travel business class, he/she can opt for a lower standard, but this has to be the traveller's decision. Yet from a programme perspective, travel in a lower class may be warranted in instances where there is a limited travel budget and the choice might be to travel in economy or not travel at all. The United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) provides an example of an agency that offers flexibility to the manager: "for travel on mission where the average time, including the necessary stop-overs and connection time is eight hours or more by the most direct route possible, staff **may** (author's emphasis) travel in the class immediately below first class (often called business class). The classes of air travel mentioned above represent maximum entitlements."[17]

Recommendation 4: That the travel policies of United Nations organizations encourage staff to choose a lower standard of air travel accommodation (economy) than their maximum entitlement (business), by not restricting the voluntary economy class choice to the lowest fare.

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[14] The carbon intensity of rail travel is considerably lower than short-haul air travel, eg, London to Paris or Brussels by Eurostar generates one tenth the CO_2 per passenger of flying http://www.eurostar.com/UK/uk/leisure/about_eurostar/environment/greener_than_flying.jsp.
[15] UNESCO, UNEP
[16] The CEB set up a joint Finance and Budget Network/Human Resources Network Working Group to consider this question. While the working group has met often, to date, no firm decisions have been adopted so far. See JIU report on "Review of travel arrangements within the United Nations system, p. xx, JIU/REP/2010/2.
[17] Section VIII, para 2.1 and 2.2, of Item 1500 of the UNESCO manual dated 23 November 2007.

Other considerations

Travel Planning/Bundling of Travel

2.10 Most United Nations organizations require that staff plan travel in advance, primarily in order to capture early booking cost advantages. Savings can also result from combining trips to the same geographic area over a similar time frame. The advantages are not limited to cost, either. Effective planning can also result in lower GHG emissions, in less time on the road for the traveller, and in pause for thought about the value added for the organization from the proposed travel.

Recommendation 5: That consideration of the advantages of advance planning and bundling of missions in terms of cost, environmental impact and traveller wellbeing become an integral part of procedures for approving travel.

Virtual travel

2.11 Travel is undertaken to achieve varying communication objectives, be they in the form of meetings, workshops, consultations, interviews or training events. Once upon a time, the only way to do this was for all participants to physically travel to the same place. Nowadays, it is possible to achieve many of these objectives by other means. Technological developments have produced increased quality and reduced costs for e-communication tools, such as e-mail, video-conferencing and online conferencing. The table below on meetings related to the High Level Committee on Management (HLCMin 2010 is illustrative.[18] The HLCM is setting an example to be followed.

Meeting	Face to Face	Video/ Teleconferencing	Percentage
HLCM	3	7	30/70
Human Resources Network	8	17	32/68
Finance and Budget Network	3	14	18/82
Information and Communications Technology Network	5	15 (est)	25/75
Procurement Network	2	10 (est)	16/84
TOTAL	21	63	26/74

Recommendation 6: That options for virtual meetings be considered as an alternative to travel wherever appropriate and feasible.

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[18] Source: CEB Secretariat

Selection of meeting locations and use of local staff

2.12 Many events/meetings are organized in locations with few airline services or available connections, some even requiring avoidance of unsafe airlines, thereby generating expensive, indirect and time-consuming itineraries. Because the selection of meeting locations can often be driven by political considerations, the option of nominating local/regional representatives to attend such events should be fully exercised, thereby avoiding financially and environmentally expensive itineraries.[19]

2.13 ICAO has developed software that, based on the city of origin of each meeting participant and the number of participants, generates the optimal meeting location in terms of travel-related CO2 emissions. While other factors might also affect the decision on venue, the calculator supports an environmental-friendly planning process[20]. The issue of travel at meetings, travel avoidance though teleconferencing and offsetting of travel emission is also tackled by two SUN publications: the "Green Meeting Guide 2009," [21] which was designed to assist hosts of small to medium-sized meetings of up to 200 participants to run them in an environmentally sustainable way and the "Sustainable Events Guide" for large gatherings which includes a special section on the ICAO calculator and the offsetting of travel emissions.

Recommendation 7: That the capacities of staff nearer at hand be taken into account when designating meeting representation, and that the ICAO venue calculator be used to support the selection of meeting locations.

Measuring CO_2 Emissions[22]

2.14 ICAO has developed an impartial, peer-reviewed Carbon Emissions Calculator that estimates the CO_2 emissions from air travel. The calculator allows passengers to estimate the emissions attributed to their air travel through a simple interface that requires entry of origin and destination airports and class of service. The calculator makes a distinction in terms of the CO_2 emissions allocated to a passenger in cabin classes "economy" and "premium", and weights those with a ratio of 1:2. The methodology used by the calculator applies the best publicly available industry data to account for various factors such as aircraft types, route specific data, passenger load factors and cargo carried.[23]

2.15 In April 2009 the EMG adopted the ICAO Carbon Emissions Calculator as the official tool for all United Nations entities to quantify their air travel CO_2 footprint, in support of the United Nations Climate Neutral initiative.[24] Interfaces to the calculator have been made available to United Nations environmental sustainability focal points, travel offices and enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, as well as, through a special agreement, to

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[19]International Organizations of Geneva (IOG) Travel Managers' proposals for Sustainable Travel and United Nations Greening Initiatives, 7 June 2010.
[20] http://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/Pages/Tools.aspx
[21]http://www.greeningtheblue.org/resources/meetings
[22]The current study does not consider CO_2 emissions from other travel modes such as train, buses/cars and ships.
[23]Source : ICAO
[24]http://www.unep.org/climateneutral/Resources/CarbonEmissionsCalculator/tabid/929/Default.aspx

Amadeus.[25]These special interfaces facilitate the aggregation of travel emissions data. The ICAO calculator is updated (improved) annually and 52 United Nations organizations are using it.[26]

2.16 The 2011 edition of the UNEP publication, "Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN," lists the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) for 54 reporting institutions. Of these, 22 indicated that in 2011 the share of air travel is over 65% of their respective aggregate of GHG emissions. [27] Thus, for United Nations entities planning on meeting their climate neutrality goals, and especially for those with a higher share of GHG emissions resulting from air travel, the reduction of air travel is a must.

Carbon offsets

2.17 While the UNITED NATIONS Climate Neutral Strategy does not commit United Nations organizations to purchasing offsets, it does require them to consider the budgetary modalities and financial implications of doing so. [28]In the Strategy, the CEB decided that United Nations organizations should purchase only those offsets generated under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). While a few organizations are considering the establishment of a general fund to purchase offsets on behalf of the organization,[29] and some have made specific high-profile events climate-neutral,[30] most have yet to hold consultations with their governing bodies on the related budgetary implications.[31] To cater for those organizations which are ready to purchase offsets for whatever aspect of their operations, in September 2011, Senior Officials of the Environment Management Group approved a recommended approach for voluntary offsetting of greenhouse gas emissions[32]. Logically speaking, the more emissions that require offsetting, the higher the cost to the organization.

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[25]Amadeus provides transaction processing power and technology solutions to both travel providers (including full service carriers and low-cost airlines, hotels, rail operators, cruise and ferry operators, car rental companies and tour operators) and travel agencies (both online and offline). The company acts both as a worldwide network connecting travel providers and travel agencies through a processing platform for the distribution of travel products and services (through its Distribution business), and as a provider of a comprehensive portfolio of IT solutions which automate certain mission-critical business processes, such as reservations, inventory management and operations for travel providers (through its IT solutions business).
[26]Source : ICAO
[27]Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN (2011 edition), p.12
[28]Sustainable Travel in the United Nations, p. 25
[29] These include possible UNDP, OECD and UNESCO.
[30] Includes CBD, FAO and UNFCCC, Sustainable Travel in the United Nations, p. 22.
[31] Moving Towards a Climate Neutral UN, (2009 edition) p. 13.
[32] EMG SOM 19 September 2011, recommendation 6.2, http://www.unemg.org/

III Implementation of Sustainable Travel Policies

Staff travelers

3.1   It is the individual traveler, who undertakes the official travel, who creates the travel-related climate footprint for their organization. While staff members can be encouraged to travel less, they might do so more enthusiastically if in response to some form of incentive. A United Nations organization should not provide financial incentives to staff for reducing the organization's climate footprint, but some other form of recognition might help achieve that goal.

3.2   For example, organizations can create awareness of their travel footprint through creative methods. In 2009, the Green Team of the United Nations Volunteers initiated a "Carbon Culprit Award". The "winners" were selected on the basis of the GHG emissions generated by individual travellers and the staff member with the highest level of emissions was awarded the top prize … of a chunk of coal. The first winner was the UNV Executive Coordinator, who accepted the award in her stride and at the prize giving ceremony stressed the need for all staff to adopt measures to reduce their climate footprint. As a result of this heightened awareness, UNV's travel footprint was significantly lower the following year. This reduction was only possible because UNV senior management were willing to be "put on the spot" in order to set a strong example.

Recommendation 8: That executive heads of United Nations organizations establish schemes to recognize staff members who have reduced their travel-related climate footprint, thereby raising the awareness and importance of this issue within their respective organizations.

Managers

3.3   Managers play a key role in implementing a sustainable travel policy. They are responsible for ensuring effective travel planning and can question the purpose/need for travel undertaken by staff under their supervision. They can also require staff to confirm that such travel cannot be replaced by "virtual" travel. Also, if given the discretion, they can promote the use of economy class travel. Managers can be held accountable by senior management for the implementation of their organization's sustainable travel policy and efforts to achieve climate neutrality.

Recommendation 9: That managers, prior to authorizing official travel, certify that consideration has been given to achieving the purpose of travel via alternative forms of communication, including web-based and tele/video-conferencing.

Travel units

3.4   Travel units are responsible for ensuring that staff adhere to their organization's travel policies, procedures and rules. The travel manager does not usually establish the travel policy, but his/her participation at the drafting stage is highly recommended: it is the travel

manager who will monitor the policy's application and who interacts regularly with staff on travel-related operations. As such, travel managers must be fully conversant with GHG emissions considerations and with the organisation's travel footprint in order to answer questions from staff member on the issue. Below are two common questions which staff often direct to their travel manager.

Q. "Why does it matter if I fly or not? The aircraft will fly anyway!"

A. Because you are concerned about your personal (or your organization's) climate footprint, not that of the aircraft. Secondly, even if your personal absence from the aircraft counts for comparatively little, the accumulated emission reductions that can result if all staff in large organizations, such as the United Nations, apply more restrictive travel habits, will be significant. Finally, even if the aircraft will still fly, it will fly with less weight, which reduces its emissions.

Q. "Why does it matter if I travel business or economy class? Is it not more important for the climate footprint if the traveler is light or heavy?

A. Passengers typically constitute 10-25% of the total weight of an aircraft. Other weight includes fuel, baggage and the aircraft itself. If you consider transport of passengers as the main reason for the aircraft to fly, it makes sense to distribute the weight of fuel, baggage and the aircraft proportionately to each passenger. Since first, business and premium economy seats take a larger share of the available space in the cabin than economy class seats do, passengers in first/business/premium economy are awarded a larger share of the weight of the airplane, and of the associated GHG emissions. The weight of the individual passenger is not so important since a passenger's weight only constitutes one part of the weight awarded to him/her (or to the seat he/she is using).[33]

3.5   Some travel units are also responsible for the recording of GHG emissions generated by travel. Travel Management Companies (TMCs) can assist in this regard, but not all travel is purchased through TMCs, eg, staff members might purchase their own tickets or avail themselves of the lump sum option (for which specific emission calculation methodologies have been established). The identification and entering of such travel data into the ICAO calculator is resource-intensive and travel units need adequate training and resources to fulfill this task.

Recommendation 10: That United Nations organizations provide the means to facilitate the capture of travel data for climate neutrality purposes, and ensure that travel managers receive training to be able to implement sustainable travel practices.
Travel Management Companies

3.6   Travel Management Companies are generally attuned to their client's need to implement environmentally-friendly travel policies. If tasked, they can provide the traveller with the CO_2 emissions consequences of each itinerary and, if given access to the ICAO Calculator, also provide the organization with CO_2 emission statistics for all of its travel.

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[33]Sustainable Travel in the United Nations, p. 22.

Also, because travel management companies have direct contact with the individual traveller, they can provide advice as to which itinerary would be most climate-friendly.

3.7 Some Travel Management Companies might bill their clients for such services, resulting in an increase in the transactional cost of travel. Whether there is an extra charge or not, organizations need to ensure that the data gathered is put to a useful and measurable purpose: contributing to reducing the organization's climate footprint.

IV.   Conclusions

4.1   Travel is intrinsically linked to the way the UN implements its mandates. It allows experts to support countries, people to meet and exchange or develop news ideas. It brings support, food, medicines and equipment to areas that are deprived. It is at the core of our work.

4.2   As with many other tools for the delivery of United Nations system mandates, however, travel can and should be made more efficient. Agencies, funds and programmes need to be able to deliver more with less travel.

4.3   One impediment to reducing travel is a tendency to see it as the only way to deliver our mandates. An important cultural shift is needed to shake off out-dated assumptions and associations: meeting = travel, conference presentation = travel, brainstorming with distant colleagues = travel. Instead, we would do better to focus on the "service" that the travel makes possible - exchange of ideas, presentation of work, development of a partnership, delivery of training - and explore whether the same "service" could be delivered in a more efficient way, benefitting both the work-life balance of the staff member and the budget of the organization. Teleconferencing, video conferencing, on-line meetings, representation by UN colleagues on the ground, etc, are all potential alternatives to hopping onto a plane.

4.4   Things are already moving in this direction. Consultations in October 2011 with United Nations system travel managers, under the umbrella of the IATN, revealed that some organizations are already applying themselves to making their travel more efficient and to more consistently considering alternatives to travel. A number of the above-listed recommendations are already being implemented by agencies on a daily basis. In order to further encourage that, and in response to a request from travel managers, a series of Frequently Asked Questions for easy reference when dealing with questions from staff travelers is provided in Annex I to this report.

4.5   As with many things, change takes time and requires interventions at various points along an often bumpy path. This report set out to illustrate a number of possible ways for making travel more efficient, more effective, and more sustainable. The word "sustainable" in relation to travel has a triple value: sustainable for the budget of the organizations, sustainable for the projects that are "served" by the travel, and sustainable for the health and life of the travelling staff members. Seen from this perspective, the emissions reductions are but the cherry on the cake. What is clear, however, is an unmistakable potential for a win-win-win-win.

ANNEX I

FAQs from the "Sustainable travel in the UN" report

1)   What is sustainable travel?

Sustainable travel occurs when the environmental, social and economic impact of transport is minimized, without negatively affecting the ability of the organization to deliver its mandate. Sustainable travel includes not only environmental, but also economic and social considerations, including health and safety.

2)   What's the impact of travel within the UN?

For most UN organizations travel is the major source of greenhouse gas emissions, in some cases contributing over 90 % of their total emissions. For the UN as a whole, travel is responsible for 49% of annual greenhouse gas emissions and costs over 1 US$ billion per year.

3)   What are the costs of travel?

Visible costs are the more obvious costs associated with travel, such as ticket costs, daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and terminal expenses. However, there are also hidden costs such as *staff time* (lost productivity during travel), *environmental costs* and hundreds of thousands of dollars that are spent in *purchasing offsets* for journeys that must be undertaken. Those organisations that do not offset also risk the potential *reputation cost* if they are not seen to be behaving in an environmentally responsible manner. Finally, the impact on *work-life balance* of long days, nights and work on weekends can lead to stress, less work satisfaction, and ultimately less motivated and less productive staff.

4)   How can more sustainable travel be achieved?

Travel less: E.g. replace missions with on-line communication, reduce the number of staff travelling for the same meeting, use local staff and allow staff to stay at the destination in between meetings.
Travel more efficiently: E.g. use more efficient modes of travel (e.g. go by train instead of flying), travel in economy instead of business class and give preference to airlines with modern aircrafts and direct routes.

5)   How can the need for travel be reduced?

Establishing travel reduction targets helps to ensure effective screening and approval processes are used before a decision to travel is made. Training and incentives for staff to communicate the need to reduce travel will help ensure targets are met. Other ways to reduce the need for travel include:
- Reducing the number of participants in the same meeting
- Making use of local staff

- Bundling travel
- Replacing travel with e-communication
- Using awareness raising to encourage staff to travel less
- Removing incentives to travel

6)   How can travel be more efficient?

When travel is unavoidable there are often ways in which travel can be made more efficient by:
- Travelling by train instead of air.
- Travelling in economy class instead of business class.
- Allowing staff travelling economy class, when entitled to business class travel, to stay one extra day with full daily subsistence allowance (DSA) for rest purposes.
- Providing staff with access to business lounges at the airport.
- Providing staff healthcare incentives e.g. free or discounted access to health clubs or gyms.
- Recognising staff who have voluntarily and consistently travelled in economy class when entitled to business class.
- Giving preference to airlines with modern aircraft fleets.
- Giving preference to the most direct route
- Informing travellers of the climate footprint of their travel.
- Setting emissions reductions targets for travel agents, and
- Maintaining efficient ground transport through proper maintenance of vehicles, responsible driver behaviour, using quality fuels, installing emission control technologies and making use of advanced vehicles and fuels.

7)   What role can offsets play?

Climate neutral travel means that there is no climate footprint from travel. This is virtually impossible to achieve since almost all modes of transport will generate some greenhouse gas emissions. The UN Climate Neutral Strategy requires all UN organizations to consider purchasing offsets.
For organizations which have decided to become climate neutral, the easiest approach is to keep track of the accumulated greenhouse gas emissions of all travel over a year and then purchase offsets in one go. This could also include purchasing offsets for emissions from other sources e.g. electricity use.

8)   What should a Sustainable Travel Strategy include?

- A policy statement on the mission of the organization to reduce the environmental impact from travel.
- Decisions on how reduced travel / more efficient travel will be achieved.
- Information on how decisions will be implemented. This may refer directly to:
  the travel planning and approval process, or to associated areas, e.g. upgrade ICT to provide alternatives to travel.

- Someone should be named responsible for implementing the strategy; they should be given a budget, deadlines and support by other staff.
- Monitoring and reporting is important in tracking how travel patterns evolve as a result of the strategy. Reporting should be done both internally and externally. Internally to allow staff to take pride in the success, and externally to show stakeholders that the organization is walking the talk.

9)   How should emissions be monitored?

Owing to the different type of activities undertaken by each UN organisation and the changing size and operation of each organisation from year to year, an organisation should only measure themselves against their previous year's performance, and not against other organisations. Each organisation should monitor its climate footprint by measuring:

- Total greenhouse gas emissions. This provides the total climate footprint without any consideration of the volume of activities in the organization.
- Greenhouse gas emission per kilometer travelled (as an average for all travel undertaken). This provides an indication of the efficiency of travel undertaken, no matter how many tickets have been issued.
- Number of tickets issued per staff. This provides an indication of to what extent the relative volume of travel has been reduced, regardless of how (i.e. less missions, missions replaced by e-communication, etc.)

To carry out these measurements the following information will need to be collected:

- The total amount of greenhouse gas emissions from travel (t CO_2 eqv),
- The total distance travelled (km), and
- The number of staff in the organization (persons)

ANNEX II

SUN (UNEP) Report on Developing a Sustainable Travel Policy for UN Organizations – Sustainable Travel in UN– Questionnaire for IATN Travel Managers

SUN is preparing to review sustainable travel policies in the UN system, with the aim to identify opportunities to support UN organizations to improve sustainable travel, thereby reducing their climate footprint. The purpose of this survey is to obtain a snapshot of what kind of measures are already in place/proposed for sustainable travel, as well your ideas for what could be done in addition to promote sustainable travel. We would appreciate if responses could be submitted by Friday 21 May 2011. Thank you.

1. Please indicate your name, organization & e-mail address, so as to allow us to ask follow-up questions if needed.

2. In your view, has the number of air tickets purchased for official travel, during the last 3 years, and on an annual basis:
    a. Increased annually
    b. Remained constant
    c. Decreased annually

3. What measures has your organization undertaken (or proposed) to encourage sustainable travel?

4. In your view, what other measures do you think would help to encourage sustainable travel in your organization?

5. In your view, should CO_2 emissions calculations be performed by
    a. Travel Unit
    b. Travel Management Company
    c. Both
    d. Other – please specify

6. Please rank, from 1-5 (1 being the best option), in your view, the best incentives to encourage staff to travel in economy class and forego their business class entitlement.
    a. Offer 1 day DSA (destination) as compensation on outbound travel
    b. Offer 1 days DSA (destination) as compensation for each segment
    c. Reimburse business class lounge use at airports as justifiable travel expense
    d. Grant 1 days compensatory leave for each segment.
    e. Permit traveller to select route option in economy (even if not cheapest, most direct fare) as long as fare does not exceed business class entitlement fare.

7. In your view, should carbon offsets for air travel be purchased at the time of purchasing tickets, thereby rendering the trip "carbon neutral":

     a. All air travel
     b. Business class/Premium Economy only
     c. No purchase required

8. What should be the role, if any, of the Travel Unit in your organization to promote sustainable travel?

9. What should be the role, if any, of IATN to promote sustainable travel?

10. In your view, does your organization give ____ attention to CO_2 emissions for air travel
     a. Too much attention
     b. Adequate attention
     c. Insufficient attention

11. Are there any issues you would like to be included in the forthcoming report on Sustainable Travel?