



GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER STATEMENT

Reducing the Environmental Impact of Shelter and Settlement Responses

The Global Shelter Cluster continues long-standing efforts to support partners at global and country level to reduce the negative environmental impact of emergency shelter responses on affected populations and support climate change mitigation and adaptation. In collaboration with cluster partners and other stakeholders, these efforts have focused on strengthening sectoral capacity to provide safe, dignified, and appropriate shelter and settlement responses that are effective and efficient, advance climate change mitigation and adaptation, reduce environmental degradation and carbon-intensive resource¹ usage and aim to advance an environmental lens to humanitarian assistance.

The Global Shelter Cluster is embarking on a new five-year strategy in 2023 and reducing the environmental impact of shelter and settlement responses was identified as a strategic priority. The new strategy will align with the other calls for system-wide action on the environment and climate emergency, recognizing commitments made in the Climate and Environmental Charter² for Humanitarian Organizations.

¹ Note: The GSC believes that the burden of reducing carbon emissions should not be placed on the 50% most economically disadvantaged who are responsible for just 7% of global emissions: however, enabling and advancing adaptation and mitigation can be a co-benefit of good environmental practice for humanitarian shelter and settlement actions.

² [Climate Charter - Sign the Charter \(climate-charter.org\)](https://climate-charter.org)



MOVING FORWARD, GLOBAL SHELTER CLUSTER PARTNERS STRIVE TO STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT IN:



PRIORITIZING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS in GSC and organizational strategies, policies, guidance, and tools, while ensuring that these considerations do not reduce the efficiency of shelter and settlements assistance



RAISING AWARENESS AND STRENGTHENING CAPACITY on environmentally sustainable approaches and climate change mitigation and adaptation in global, national and local shelter responses and programming



COORDINATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS (including other clusters) to promote more effective local environmental awareness, climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts through empowering and supporting local actors



FOSTERING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH to environmental protection and climate change mitigation and adaptation and supporting nature-based solutions where appropriate in humanitarian responses



ADVOCATING FOR THE UPTAKE OF IMPROVED SPECIFICATIONS for shelter and household items to minimize negative environmental impacts, including CO₂-related emissions, and related environmentally sustainable practices during humanitarian responses.

The Global Shelter Cluster and partners will support these efforts through development of tools, methodologies and research; catalyzing discussion, debate and knowledge sharing; and supporting a range of capacity-strengthening activities to help ensure sector-wide understanding of key principles and approaches.

This Statement was endorsed by the Global Shelter Cluster Strategic Advisory Group members in July 2023