

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT MITIGATION ROADMAP 2024



The MSF Climate & Environment Mitigation Roadmap 2024

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Introduction

Concerns about climate change and environmental degradation have influenced actions in MSF since long. From 2020 onwards, MSF made formal commitments to environmental action such as the reduction of its carbon and environmental footprint, both in the Strategic Plans of the MSF entities as well through some important commitments.

It was in 2020 that MSF committed to the [MSF 2020 Environmental Pact](#).

In 2021 MSF made the ambitious pledge to reduce its carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 compared to 2019 for emissions in scope 1, 2, and 3 and set a [movement-wide carbon reduction target](#).

In 2022 MSF signed the [Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations](#). By signing, MSF committed to climate actions as well as actions to preserve biodiversity and prevent environmental degradation.

The Institutional Members (IMs) of the movement each carry their own responsibility to contribute to the collective ambitions. Today, in May '24, all the Operational Centres (OCs) and European Supply Centres (ESCs) of MSF have developed a roadmap and are translating these into action plans to work towards the 50% carbon reduction target and the prevention of environmental degradation. A still small but growing number of non-operational IMs developed plans as well. Today, the IMs who developed roadmaps are together responsible for over 95% of MSF's carbon footprint.

Some of the solutions require specific action for the IMs while other solutions require or benefit from an MSF-wide approach. Existing and ad-hoc working groups, (Transformational Investment Capacity supported) project teams, and MSF-wide support structures hosted by the International Office and other IMs, work on these common dossiers.

The MSF Climate & Environment Mitigation Roadmap 2024 is a compilation and summary of the roadmaps and action plans of the IMs published or shared in draft before June '24. It has as aim to give a global overview of how the ongoing and planned actions will contribute to reach the movement wide ambitions. As a global overview, the document refrains from going into detail of the actions proposed and from listing the full overview of actions proposed by each IM¹. Annex 1 *Solutions by domain* however lists the main actions to achieve these ambitions.

This roadmap also describes the first ideas of a monitoring and mutual accountability mechanism which will serve to monitor the progress the IMs and MSF as a whole make on reaching our goals, and how we will hold each other accountable to the pledges we made.

¹ <https://msfintl.sharepoint.com/sites/ClimateSmartMSF/SitePages/Roadmap-BaU.aspx>

MSF's Climate & Environment Mitigation Ambitions

Expected results

The table below shows the expected results for actions in the various domains. Together with the *structural effects*² these should help MSF to reduce the carbon and environmental footprints by 50% by 2030.

Domain	Expected results by 2030			
Energy	Energy consumption reduction of 30-40%	60-70% of the energy used from renewable sources or a 60-75% reduction in CO ₂ /kWh		
Transport & Travel	10-40% fuel consumption reduction in MSF fleet usage	30-35% reduction of business air travel	40-50% emission reduction related to freight	Air freight – Sea/Road freight ratio reduced to 20%
Goods & Services	25-30% emission reduction linked to purchased Goods & Services	100% of suppliers with spend > 100k€ assessed against sustainability criteria		
Waste	?-50% reduction of waste			

Realizing a 50% carbon reduction requires us to look at almost all aspects of our work. Annex 1 *Solutions by domain* lists the main solutions we will work on as to reach our reduction ambitions.

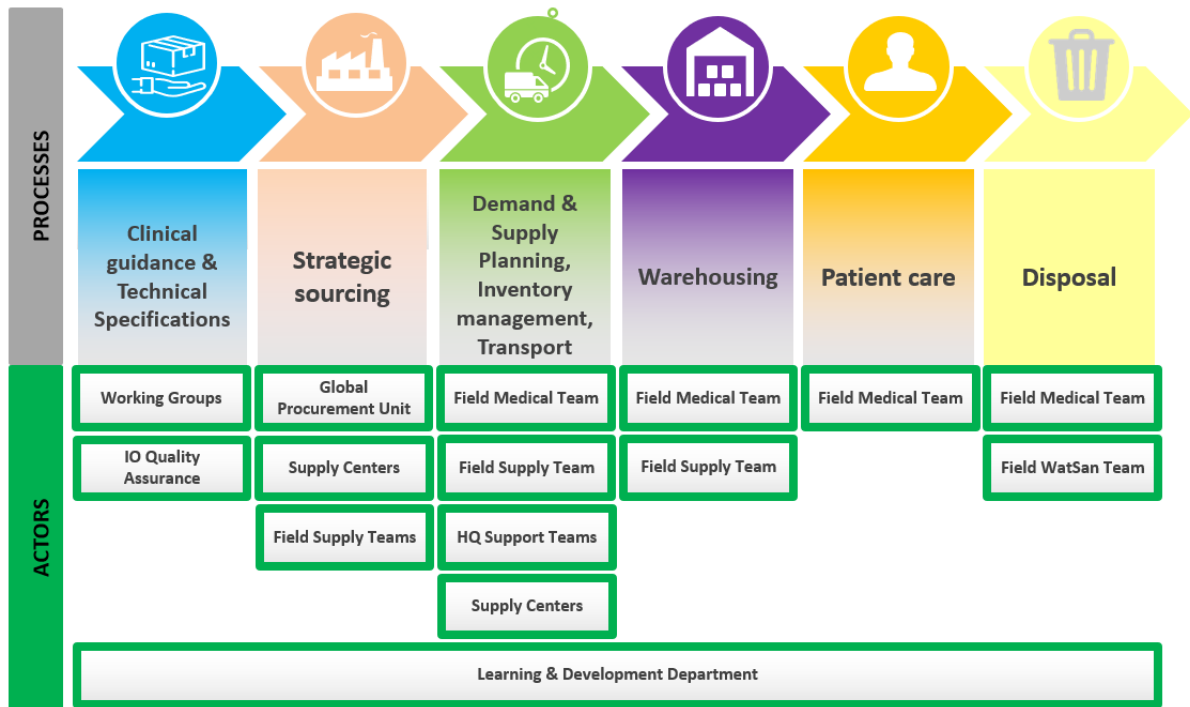
Collective efforts

The MSF-wide C&E Roadmap clearly concludes on the similarity of action to be performed by IMs towards the reduction target. This brings a unique opportunity to join efforts to boost faster and further the action and collectively look at the advancement.

Laying the individual roadmaps next to each other, shows for certain ambitions the interdependency between the IMs and the collective, and the interdependency between work to be carried out in the field, the HQ specialist departments and HQ/ESC services; for these ambitions a coordinated and aligned action in all parts of the movement is required to achieve our common objectives, both inside the IMs as between the IMs. As mentioned in the introduction, we already work collaboratively on multiple common dossiers. While working on the execution of the roadmap other collaborations will need to be activated and coordinated in the near future.

The following graph illustrates the above, by listing all who need to be involved if we want to reduce our carbon and environmental footprint related to the use of medical gloves, an article contributing almost 4000 tonnes carbon equivalent to our carbon footprint.

² Structural effects are applied to carbon reduction trajectories in order to account for the fact that regardless of the individual choices of a given organisation, societies as a whole are decarbonising



Different teams are needed to carry out actions like revision of guidance on the use and technical specs of gloves, and to find the most sustainable version and supplier of the gloves as well as to ensure the quality of the product.

Other teams have to ensure we do not order gloves in too large quantities, and that the gloves are transported and stored in a responsible way.

Medical staff will have to follow the protocols as to prevent overuse of gloves, and once used, ensure they are collected so they can be disposed of in a responsible way by their WatSan colleagues.

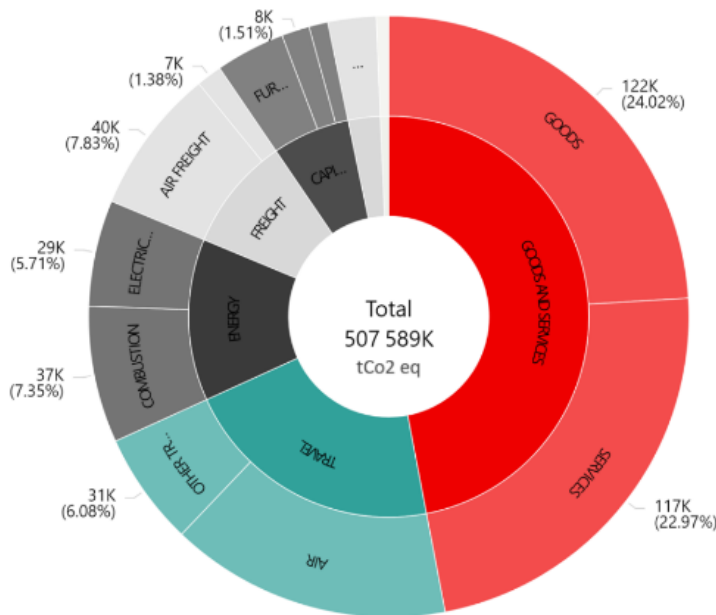
And all involved in these processes need to be well informed and instructed on the role they have to play.

MSF's 2019 baseline

Carbon accounting is a new exercise for MSF. In 2022 and 2023 multiple Institutional Members of MSF calculated -with the help of external partners and newly recruited staff- our 2019 carbon footprint, using a methodology in accordance with the Green House Gas protocol.

As the carbon accounting's science is relatively new and in constant improvement, and MSF's data collection systems were not designed for carbon accounting, the "uncertainty factor" of the MSF carbon calculations is fairly high and the calculated outcome is better described as an estimation. The estimations however, allow MSF to identify their major sources of emissions and begin to act. The MSF movement is working on a Carbon Accounting Framework that will help to calculate with more increasing certainty the carbon footprint and reduction thereof.

Baseline 2019 for the MSF Movement



In 2019, the MSF Movement accounted for 507,589 tons of CO2 emissions.

The largest contributors to these emissions were the categories of *Goods & Services* and *Air Travel*.

The Operational Centres (OCs) bore the responsibility for a significant 86% of the global baseline emissions.

Recognizing the urgency of the climate crisis, the MSF Movement has set a target to reduce their CO2 emissions by 50% by the year 2030.

Through environmentally sustainable practices, we aim to mitigate the movement's environmental impact and contribute to a greener future.

More detailed data on the carbon footprint of MSF is available on the [Climate Smart site](#).

Monitoring and mutual accountability

The climate & environment ambitions of the movement go further than only our carbon footprint. And annually reporting on progress on our carbon emission reduction ambition needs more than only presenting the trend of our total carbon footprint. Especially today, in early 2024, when some IMs are still developing Roadmaps and others are translating Roadmaps into plans, we know that a downward trend in our carbon emission will not be likely to show any time soon; we first need to develop and implement changes in our way of working. We have to find, test and deploy new materials and equipment. We have to engineer new energy systems and improve our facilities in the field. We have to educate our staff and establish behavioural changes throughout our workforce. Etc.

In the process of reaching our ambitions, accountability on actions is required to ensure we monitor our path towards our desired outcomes.

CS took the lead to develop together with the OC Climate Focal Points a Monitoring and Mutual Accountability Framework. This is still work in progress (aim is to have it ready by end 2024).

The framework will facilitate internal learning and steering, and function as an accountability mechanism. The content consist of two parts:

1. a set of KPI's measuring the performance (outcomes) on key domains (at least including the reductions listed in the table in chapter *MSF's Climate & Environment Mitigation Ambitions*) for which the data will as much as possible come from the *Carbon Framework* and the *Supply Chain & Procurement Power BI*), and
2. a set of progress indicators that will help to monitor the progress on the work needed to develop/design/engineer/test/etc. the solutions and the implementation thereof.

In line with what we wrote when signing the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations, we realize that also for reporting "*not all IM's will achieve results in the same way or at the same pace*". There are differences in prioritization of action between IM's. And there are differences in reporting culture, mechanisms and implementation of tools to capture information or data between IM's. The frame will hence include information as to what extent the IMs are able to report on the indicators.

Annex 1 Solutions by domain

This chapter highlights solution directions we will use or work on to reduce the carbon and environmental footprint of our activities.

Below the 4 domains, 3 categories are highlighted; Medical practices are highlighted as these are core to our Medical Humanitarian organisation. We highlight Fundraising, and IT & Offices, as these are the core of the activities for the non-operational MSF structures. The solutions presented for these 3 categories contribute to reductions in the domains of Energy & Buildings, Transport & Travel, Goods & Services, and Waste & Pollution.

As to facilitate the better inclusion of climate and environmental considerations in our way of working, the organisation will create the *general conditions* in which C&E responsible behaviour can flourish.

0 General conditions

Governance and accountability

- Include C&E in the IMs and MSF-wide governance mechanisms and policy framework
- Include C&E in the IMs and MSF-wide monitoring and accountability mechanisms

Finance

- Include C&E considerations in the budgeting and other relevant financial mechanisms

Knowledge and communication

- Essential learning and development opportunities are provided for target staff
- Invest in awareness and promoting responsible choices

1 Energy & buildings

Energy transition is, of course, a high priority focus in our reduction trajectory. For us, this will initially involve an effort to reduce our electricity use and then to shift what remains toward renewable energy sources. Actions to reduce the energy consumption include switching to passive or more energy efficient equipment and systems, as well as promoting responsible user behaviour.

With most of our energy consumption taking place in buildings, we will pay attention to low energy consumption design, while we will also try to reduce the environmental impact of our construction activities.

Favour sustainable constructions

- Consider sustainable construction planning best practices/standards to encourage sustainable design and optimize infrastructure for Field realities
- Develop specific guidelines for products that can and cannot be used in buildings

Reduce energy consumption of buildings

- Redefine temperature standards in offices, guesthouses, medical facilities and pharmacies
- Improve energy performance of buildings through sustainable design and passive measures
- Implement the most energy efficient temperature regulation

Reduce energy consumption and improve the energy efficiency of electric installations

- Monitor energy consumption and production

- Install automated regulation of electrical equipment
- Purchase energy efficient equipment
- Promote responsible choices and behaviours in all domains requiring energy use

Decarbonise electricity & energy production

- Replace as much as possible fossil fuel-based electricity with renewable energy
- Use solar energy for specific equipment
- Subscribe to decarbonated energy suppliers
- Optimise power source sizing

Reduce emissions of gases with high global warming potential

- Purchase air conditioning and cold chain equipment with alternatives for HFC gas
- Ensure responsible commissioning, maintenance, and decommissioning
- Use local, national, and regional recycling channels

2 Transport & travel

Passenger transport – by air, in particular – is a major source of carbon emissions. This is due to our operational model, which involves sending international mobile and HQ based support staff to field projects and using in many regions four-wheel drive vehicles and small aircrafts to reach remote areas.

Our activities further require a lot of products and equipment, part of which we purchase far from our field projects to ensure acceptable quality and availability; shipping all those goods – by air, in particular – contributes significantly to our carbon footprint.

Reduction of our footprint related to transport and travel will require us to reduce the need for and to change the way we plan and execute our travels and transport of goods, to look for less carbon intensive solutions, like less carbon intensive transport means, and to optimize routing.

Reduce travel and related carbon emission

- Define a responsible travel policy
- Review meeting and training locations and modalities
- Develop tools that allow employees to choose low carbon-emission travel facilitating climate-friendly decisions on itineraries, modes of transport, companies, etc.
- Optimize staffing model and consider assignment duration of International Mobile Staff

Reduce the carbon impact of commuting

- Promote public transport and sustainable transport
- Encourage partial remote work, particularly at headquarters

Optimise the fleet size, composition, and movements

- Further optimise and rationalise vehicles usage in the missions when possible
- Train the drivers on eco-driving
- Purchase adapted lowest emission vehicles

Reduce the amount of goods transported by optimising the quantities ordered

- Improve forecasting to avoid overstock

Reduce the km travelled and number of trips

- Improve the MSF supply network
- Prioritise purchase of locally or regionally produced for goods, provided the quality can be guaranteed
- Increase supplier direct deliveries to hubs and missions

Increase the percentage of sea and road freight by better goods positioning

- Ensure that storage locations are closer to use and distribution points

Increase the percentage of sea and road freight by better planning

- Limit air freight to situations and contexts where it is absolutely unavoidable
- Reduce field stock-outs requiring urgent re-supply
- Align stock strategy with demand, improve follow-up and communication on lead times, and review the backorder management

Optimise container shipments to the same destination

- Consolidate shipments between the supply centres, OCs and missions

Select transport service providers with a lower carbon footprint

- Include environmental criteria in the selection process

3 Goods & services

This domain includes -except for energy and transport services- all goods and services purchased. It contributes to almost half of our carbon footprint. It is important to highlight that there is very limited information available on the environmental impact of these two broad categories. This forces us to apply financial proxies to estimate the carbon emissions linked to them.

The categories Medical Practices, Fundraising, and IT & Offices are part of the domain Goods & Services. We highlight solutions for these categories separately. Medical Practices as these are core to a Medical Humanitarian organisation. We highlight the other two categories, as these are the core of the activities for the non-operational MSF structures.

We will first try to reduce the need for goods and services. For the goods and services, we do purchase, we will look for the most carbon and environmental options, meeting our quality standards and try to purchase from carbon and environmental responsible suppliers and providers and goods preferably produced as close as possible to the end-user locations.

Reduce unnecessary material purchases

- Improve forecasting to avoid overstock situation leading to losses
- Improve supply chain visibility

Choose items, services and suppliers with a lower environmental footprint

- Request visibility on carbon value and life cycle of items/products
- Identify lower carbon or lower waste generating alternatives for most important, relevant items
- Include environmental criteria for services and products in the sustainable procurement guidelines and/or procedures
- Include carbon and environmental impact of products in the MSF Catalogues and promote low(er) impact solutions

Reduce and optimize the volume, weight and packaging of goods

- Reduce product packaging or use more environmentally friendly alternatives

Promote and facilitate the procurement of locally or regionally produced items

- Prioritise purchase of locally or regionally produced items, provided the quality can be guaranteed. This is most important for heavy or bulky non-medical goods
- Strategically increase QA and sourcing capacity to validate regionally and locally produced goods for those commodities that require (stringent) product validation (such as medical supplies, electrical appliances, etc.)

Reduce waste by optimizing product assortment at European Supply Centre level

- Reduce the number of references for the same type of items by collaborating with OCs to harmonise the choice of products between the different operational centres
- Reduce waste and carbon emissions by reviewing the composition of kits in collaboration with OCs.

4 Waste & Pollution

Waste threatens public health and ecosystems, and waste (management) contributes to our carbon footprint. In many of our intervention contexts, medical waste streams and wastewater management infrastructure are rare or non-existent, and we ourselves have to set up a system that is appropriate.

In the light of our commitments to carbon and environmental footprint reduction, we will increase our efforts to prevent (see also the Goods & Services category), and responsibly deal with waste.

We will first try to refuse or avoid, reduce, reuse, repurpose and recycle materials. What still ends up as waste will be treated and disposed of in responsible ways.

Avoid and reduce waste

- Reduce the use of single-use medical and nonmedical items and use reusable and biodegradable materials
- Investigate reusable or biodegradable alternatives to plastic dispensing bags when feasible, in order to reduce usage of single-use plastic dispensing bags
- Favour products donations through better anticipation of expiration dates and a strict donation policy
- Promote the repair of electronic and electrical equipment

Increase local or regional recycling

- Improve domestic waste sorting and evaluate local waste treatment streams
- Promote the recycling of electronic and electric equipment

Ensure that all steps of waste management are followed in the best possible way

- Establish and implement a waste management plan specific to each context

Limit soil, water, and air pollution

- Roll out sustainable waste disposal systems
- Responsible outsourced treatment of dangerous products
- Better monitor and treat wastewater discharges from hospitals

I Medical practices

Medical practices, products, equipment or services are central to our medico-humanitarian operations. In this category, we include solutions that while maintaining the quality and effectiveness as well as operational safety of our medical services, have less environmental impact.

The solutions listed in this category are specific solutions for the Goods & Services and Waste domains.

Adopt medical protocols with less environmental impact

- Train medical staff on updated protocols and their environmental impact

Reduce the unnecessary provision of medical items

- Rationalise the selection, ordering, and dispensing of drugs, the use of medical devices, and patient prescriptions
- Optimise the ordering, use, and maintenance of medical equipment

Identify and choose alternative medical material and products with a lower carbon and/or environmental impact

- Switch to longer lasting medical material and alternative medical products, like recycled plastic items or anaesthetic gases and inhalers with lower "global warming potential"
- Reduce the use of single usage medical materials, high warming potential and materials and items leading to local pollution

II Fundraising

The way in which we solicit our donors, both current and future, should also reflect our commitment to the environment, whether it's travel arrangements for our street fundraising teams, the amount of paper used for direct mail, or the environmental responsibility of our suppliers.

The solutions listed in this category are specific solutions for the Goods & Services, and Transport & Travel domains. We highlight these solutions separately as these are part of the core of the activities for the non-operational MSF structures.

Choose Fundraising items, services and suppliers with a lower environmental footprint

- Include environmental criteria in our selection process for products and services procurement
- Identify alternatives that produce less carbon or waste for the most important services and items, including replacing plastic items

Promote good practices and responsible behaviours related to fundraising

- Create a best practices and guidelines handbook
- Reduce emissions related to canvassers' travel via sustainable transport, local recruitment, and reducing the distance between mission sites
- Reduce the quantity of transported goods thanks to a better definition of needs and alternative organisations
- Reduce the volume of paper and electronic direct mail sent thanks to a better and optimised targeting of audiences and increased use of regular giving practices
- Optimize the volume of paper and electronic mail sent, through more personalized targeting and relationship cycles, and by increasing the proportion of regular donations

III IT & Offices

The solutions listed in this category are specific solutions for the Goods & Services, and Energy domains. We highlight these solutions separately as these are part of the core of the activities for the non-operational MSF structures.

Rationalise the amount of data storage and transfer

- Optimise growth of data usage and storage with "cold storage policies", introduction of restrictive policies (quotas), and regular deletion of unused data
- Store data in low carbon eco-friendly data centres

Expand the life cycle of IT and telecom equipment and reduce turnover rate

- Mutualise personal and professional equipment when relevant
- Purchase easily-reparable equipment and repair locally

Optimise the use of office space

Promote best practices and responsible behaviours

- Create a good office/facility practices guide including energy, waste, supplies, food, space allocation, etc. for offices and facilities
- Provide more eco-responsible meals (more organic, less meat, etc.) in offices and medical facilities