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## **IFAD Action to limit its carbon imprint**

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For: **Information**

## **Note to Executive Board Directors**

This document is submitted for the information of the Executive Board.

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# IFAD Action to limit its carbon imprint

## I. Background

1. In the past few years, IFAD has embraced the responsibility of doing its share to lessen the impact of its activities on the environment – its “carbon footprint”. The steps it has taken or plans to take to this end are a small but important contribution to the global agenda to protect the environment being promoted by the United Nations.
2. In July of this year, a thematic debate took place in the United Nations General Assembly on “Climate Change as a Global Challenge”. On that occasion, the Secretary-General called on all members of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to make the United Nations system climate-neutral. Meetings of the High-Level Committee on Programme and the High-Level Committee on Management in September and the Environmental Management Group in October of this year also featured discussions of what United Nations organizations and agencies should do to become more environmentally friendly. At these meetings, IFAD’s Senior Management shared information on what IFAD was already doing to reduce its carbon imprint not only in day-to-day operations, but in particular in the new headquarters building.
3. In a letter to the Secretary-General, the President of IFAD reaffirmed the Fund’s commitment to play a proactive role in this global agenda in close collaboration with the other United Nations agencies.

## II. Steps already taken

4. In 2006, IFAD undertook a study to identify ways to improve its compliance with best practice guidelines on environmentally friendly practices and with occupational health and safety regulations. The study looked specifically at energy and water use; procurement practices; use of office materials; staff health; and acoustics, aesthetic values and landscaping.
5. As a result of the study, a set of office procedures was developed and various recommendations were issued. Some of these were implemented immediately, whereas others will be implemented in the IFAD new headquarters building. Some basic measures taken so far include:
  - (a) **Staff awareness**
    - Log-on messages were posted to promote good practice.
    - The flyer “IFAD’s Green Office” was distributed to divisional front offices in January 2007; it contains specific suggestions on how staff can contribute to more environmentally friendly offices.
  - (b) **Energy conservation**
    - Temperature and humidity level maintenance systems were installed in offices.
    - Utilities consumption was recorded, to be used as a baseline for assessment.
    - Air-conditioning and heating hours were reduced to a minimum during off-hours of the week and on weekends.
    - Use of stand-alone electrical units such as air conditioners and heaters was banned except when approved by IFAD’s medical officer.

- The air-conditioning and heating systems were modified to maximize energy efficiency.
- Traditional incandescent light fittings were replaced with high-efficiency fluorescent fittings in all common areas and in many offices.

(c) **Procurement**

- A clause was introduced in the contract with the maintenance company requiring that only cleaning products with eco-labels be used and that all waste be recycled.
- Renewable energy certificates (up to 25 per cent of the total energy consumed) are being required in the utilities tender in progress (a joint tender with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme).

(d) **Waste collection and recycling**

- Garbage disposal is differentiated into three bins (paper; glass and plastic; and others).
- A specialized waste removal company has been engaged to remove and recycle waste.
- IFAD has negotiated the free disposal of large quantities of paper generated during the "office cleaning" events that staff have recently been encouraged to take part in.

(e) **Printing**

- The feasibility of using recycled paper for the colour printing of IFAD business cards is being verified.
- The printers and copy machines used are compliant with the European directive on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment.
- Multifunction printers, set for double-sided printing, are being installed. These printers will replace various devices (network and individual printers, copiers) and are expected to greatly reduce energy and paper consumption.
- Electronic systems for the transmission of correspondence and records keeping are being adopted more aggressively to reduce costs and the energy used in printing.

(f) **Baseline establishment and monitoring**

- For the past two years, IFAD has been keeping track of utilities consumption and the costs of all energy-related activities.
- Ways to use these data as the basis for environmental accounting, for monitoring future performance and for benchmarking with external entities are being examined.

6. In line with its commitment to proactively respond to climate change and take specific actions to reduce its carbon imprint, IFAD created three working groups in September 2007: one on policies; a second on operations; and a third on zero carbon imprint (ZCI). The ZCI working group is focused on the adoption and communication of practices and measures to reduce IFAD's carbon imprint and contribute to achieving climate-neutral facilities.

### III. IFAD's new headquarters

7. From the start of the renovation of the new headquarters building, IFAD has attached high priority to reducing the building's overall impact on the environment and making it environmentally friendly. The building was designed to safeguard occupants' health and reduce the use of energy and water. It has been renovated using, as far as possible, modern construction practices and materials that respect the environment.
8. This priority influenced the criteria used in the selection of the building systems, which included the following:
  - (a) High-performance building envelope facade to reduce energy use, increase indoor environmental quality and comfort, and lower greenhouse gas emissions;
  - (b) High energy efficiency standards for heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems; boilers, elevators; lights, power transformers, pumps, air duct insulation; motion and daylight sensors; and the building management system;
  - (c) High-quality indoor environment through the careful choice of lighting solutions, sound proofing, air quality, acoustic performance; temperature and humidity control; an efficient exhaust system; low-emitting construction materials; and a layout that permits the free flow of personnel and achieves an aesthetically pleasing work environment;
  - (d) Protection of the outdoor environment through zero chlorofluorocarbon emissions from the air-conditioning and fire suppression systems, and no pollution from the lighting; and
  - (e) Use of natural and recyclable materials for the construction of the building and for the furniture purchased.

### IV. Conclusions and next steps

9. IFAD has taken various initiatives to offset its carbon emissions and limit its impact on the environment. The new headquarters building – and the way in which it has been renovated – demonstrates this commitment. IFAD Management is promoting energy conservation in various ways and is encouraging staff to be proactive in protecting the environment not only in the office but also in their own homes and personal lives.
10. Finally, IFAD is exploring the possibility of obtaining LEED certification<sup>1</sup> for the new headquarters building. When obtained, this certification will represent recognition by a third party of the building's high performance with respect to water savings, energy efficiency, material selection and indoor air quality.

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<sup>1</sup> The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ of the United States Green Building Council.

## Terms of reference – Zero carbon imprint

### Background

1. Given the impact of climate change on sustainable development, and following discussions at the 29 June 2007 consultation of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination/High-Level Committee on Programme as well as the debate in the United Nations General Assembly and the Secretary-General's call for United Nations agencies to become carbon-neutral, IFAD Senior Management has decided that IFAD should play a more proactive role in this global agenda. In conjunction with other United Nations actors, IFAD will define its role on climate change.
2. IFAD has created three working groups to define how IFAD intends to respond to climate change and what actions it will take to reduce its carbon imprint. These groups will concentrate on policies, operations and zero carbon imprint (ZCI) generation. The groups will collaborate to develop a report by 15 November 2007.

### Objectives

3. The objectives of the ZCI working group is to adopt and communicate measures that will reduce IFAD's carbon imprint and assist in helping to achieve a climate-neutral United Nations system premise.

### Scope

4. The ZCI working group will examine the activities managed by the Finance and Administration Department (FAD), which impact on climate change in two important ways: by generating carbon emissions through energy and paper consumption; and by influencing external business partners:
  - (a) The first category includes facility management, paper usage and travel. Measures to reduce carbon emissions in this category entail new expenses, but can reduce long-term costs. These will also require attitude and behaviour changes among managers and staff.
    - **Facility management.** Office building energy consumption constitutes a significant part of the world's energy consumption. Achieving maximum efficiency would require a substantial investment in restructuring IFAD buildings' energy systems. However, some measures have been taken in our current premises since the issuance of the Green Office Procedures at the end of 2006. More is being done in the new headquarters building, which has adopted a "green building and sustainable energy programme". These policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated, as appropriate.
    - **Paper usage.** Production of papers results in extensive cutting of trees. The working group, in consultation with The Administrative Services Division, will review current policies and practices in the printing and handling of documents and other records, and propose changes that will reduce the use of papers and maximize use of electronic copies.
    - **Travel.** Air travel is a major source of energy consumption and carbon emission. Given the large number of IFAD staff members travelling long distances, the group will propose more energy-efficient travel policies to reduce our carbon imprint. These may include: longer sojourns to reduce repeated trips to the same destination; travel to multiple destinations within the same trip; the use of airlines committed to environmental protection, and increased reliance on video and audio conferencing.
    - **Attitude and behavioural changes.** The ZCI working group will review, and if necessary revise, the flyer "IFAD's Green Office" distributed in January 2007.

- (b) The second category includes procurement and investment activities. IFAD may influence climate change positively by capitalizing on its role as a business consumer. By making commitment to reduce carbon emissions a business requisite, IFAD can influence the companies it does business with. The group will review existing environmentally friendly principles and propose how these could be conveyed to and adopted by IFAD's business partners, which may, in turn, affect their competitors.
- **Investments.** IFAD can show its commitment to environment protection by selecting investment managers who endorse and promote environment protection principles and corporate social responsibility, using or promoting environment-friendly products and clean energy. IFAD's investment guidelines already incorporate United Nations Global Compact principles whereby all external managers are committed to undertake and promote greater environmental responsibility.
  - **Accounting standards.** IFAD will review the possibility of incorporating an environmental accounting section (or sustainability report) in the annual report to account for the progress made by IFAD each year in respect of the climate change initiative.
  - **Procurement.** IFAD can show its commitment to environment protection by requesting suppliers to confirm that they subscribe to green policies (for example, by giving preference to products with eco-labels).
- (c) In addition, the ZCI working group will explore the possibility of accounting for and reporting on the investments related to the environment made by IFAD in the context of its projects and internal processes (facilities, travel). By doing so, IFAD will not only be able to determine the expenses sustained for environment-protection purposes but, more importantly, account for and report on its own carbon footprint in accordance with generally accepted principles of environmental accounting.
5. In addition, the working group will also take the lead in advocacy and awareness-raising to encourage managers and staff to adopt environmentally friendly principles not only in the workplace but elsewhere.
6. Finally, the working group will also liaise with other United organizations, selected organizations (such as the United Kingdom's Department for International Development) and through the High-Level Committee on Management, report on IFAD's activities and collaborate in any undertaking that will help achieve a climate-neutral United Nations community. Subject to the allocation of expert resources, the working group will explore in its final report the definition of baseline and performance indicators in the various areas concerned. Monitoring of these indicators will require an assessment of the regular resources available in the various FAD divisions.

### **Composition of the working group**

7. The Assistant President, Finance and Administration Department (FAD) will chair the climate change working group for Administration. The Director, Administrative Services Division (FA), will act as secretary to the working group, which plans to meet once a month.
8. The group will comprise representatives from:
- The External Affairs Department policy reference working group.
  - The Programme Management Department operations working group.

- FAD Directors for each area within the scope of the working group (i.e. facility management, procurement, investment, accounting and travel).
  - Information and Communication Division focal point in the policy reference working group.
9. In addition, the group will invite experts in environment-related fields, as and when required.



