

CO₂ emissions

If you can't avoid them – compensate!

During the Finnish Presidency, event organisers are helping to compensate for the CO₂ emissions caused by air travel.

Participants in events organised in Finland will either have emission compensation paid on their behalf as a gift, or be offered an easy voluntary channel to right their own personal CO₂ balance.

Instead of presenting official gifts to each guest, the organisers will be making donations on behalf of each participant towards climate change mitigation and adaptation projects in developing countries. Similar steps will also be taken at other meetings being held during Finland's EU Presidency.

The Finnish event organisers will also invite participants in various meetings to compensate for the emissions produced

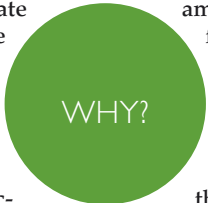


SIMON HÖGSBERG/CORILLA

during their air travel either through an organisation specialised in such offsetting, or by donating a suitable sum to the Siemenpuu Foundation.

Why is it so important to compensate?

Air travel has the fastest growing impact on climate change. In cases where there is no practical alternative to air travel, it is still possible to try to compensate for the consequent emissions. Flyers can effectively



remove an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by paying for measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, or by avoiding further emissions through their own actions.

Air travel emission facts

1. **One single short** haul flight produces roughly the same greenhouse effect as running a small car for three months.

It has been estimated that air travel may account for as much as 10% of current global warming.



3. **Emissions into the upper atmosphere** are three times more harmful than emissions at ground level. Carbon dioxide emissions can remain in the atmosphere for about 100 years.

How will this be done in practice?

The Ministry of the Environment will compensate for the CO₂ emissions caused by the air travel to and from certain meetings by making a suitable donation on behalf of each participant to climate change mitigation and adaptation projects in devel-

HOW?

oping countries, instead of giving them a traditional material gift. The donations have been scaled to correspond roughly to the greenhouse emissions generated by an average European traveler visiting Finland by plane.

How to offset your own air travel emissions

- The Siemenpuu Foundation has been set up by several Finnish NGOs to support environmental projects in developing countries, including climate projects. The greenhouse gas emissions per passenger of a return flight between Helsinki and Brussels amount to about 720 kg CO₂. An investment of 15 in Siemenpuu's climate projects

can compensate for these emissions. The Siemenpuu Foundation's bank account number is 800014-70640856 (FI32 8000 1470 6408 56).

- Detailed formulae have been developed for calculating personal CO₂ emissions and suitable forms of compensation. Examples are available at www.carbonneutral.com and www.atmosfair.com.

Greening the Presidency

This offsetting of CO₂ emissions is just one example of how the many ideas in the Finnish EU Presidency's handbook on "Responsible Meetings" can be put into practice.

During the Finnish Presidency all event-organisers are being urged to promote sustainable consumption, and choose environmentally friendly and locally produced goods and services.

Environmental considerations are not the only issues for responsible organisers to con-

sider when planning conference facilities, side events, services and meeting materials. The Responsible Meetings handbook also stresses the importance of gender equality and other socio-cultural issues. By following these guidelines for responsible meetings, Finland aims to build on the "Greening of the Presidency" initiative previously adopted by the UK and Austria during their recent presidencies.

More information: www.vnk.fi



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Where will your money go?

Donations are invested in:

- the exploitation of sustainable and renewable energy sources
- improvements in energy efficiency
- solar panels
- efficient wood-burning stoves

developing countries working for ecological democracy, environmental protection and the prevention of environmental threats. The Siemenpuu Foundation is primarily funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

In the Sikasso region of Mali the Siemenpuu Foundation funds small-scale renewable energy projects run by local grassroots organisations and local communities

These locally designed and managed projects build up technical know-how while also improving local residents' access to energy and helping them to use natural resources sustainably.

The donations made by the Finnish Presidency will contribute to small-scale climate change adaptation and mitigation projects in Mali.

The Siemenpuu Foundation was founded by 15 Finnish NGO's or Foundations working with environmental and development issues. The foundation supports civil organisations in

WHERE?

For more information, see www.environment.fi

CarbonNeutral Company
www.carbonneutral.com

Atmosfair – a joint initiative of forum anders reisen and the environment and development organisation, Germanwatch. The German Federal Environment Ministry supported the initiative.
www.atmosfair.com

Siemenpuu Foundation
www.siemenpuu.org

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