

Greening the Post

Press kit

Executive Office and Communication Directorate



December 2009

Dear Journalist,

The following press kit is designed to help you better understand the global postal sector, its major players and its environmental activities.

The sector is a major industry, employing more than 5 million people and operating thousands of buildings and vehicles around the world. The UPU has recently announced the results of its first global inventory of greenhouse gas emissions produced by postal vehicles and buildings and is committed to helping the postal sector become greener. The inventory is a major step forward. Details are available in the press release included in this guide.

The guide is broken down in several sections:

- Introduction
- Overview
- UPU press release on global inventory
- Questions and answers
- Milestones
- Best practices
- Raising awareness through philately
- *Turning a shade of green*, cover story from the December 2009 issue of *Union Postale*, the UPU's flagship magazine
- Media contacts
- Where to find photos about the postal sector

We hope this guide is helpful as you cover worldwide initiatives to curb the impact of climate change and the negotiations during the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen.

If you have any questions regarding the global postal sector, please don't hesitate to contact me or, for information about the European postal sector, my colleague Cynthia Wee at PostEurop. We are both listed in "Contacts" at the end of this guide.

Regards,



Rhéal LeBlanc
Communications Programme Manager

The global postal sector

The global postal network is the world's largest physical distribution network. Every day, Posts deliver billions of pieces of mail processed in thousands of post offices using as many vehicles, motorcycles, airplanes, boats and trains. What's more, the post offices and 5.5 million postal employees consume electricity, water and paper, which all have an impact on the environment. The UPU is working with its member countries, their designated postal operators, its restricted unions and United Nations and international organizations to properly measure greenhouse gas emissions generated by the postal activity and find ways to reduce them.

Many Posts already have elaborate environment programmes and use electric vehicles, have rationalized delivery routes, established energy budgets or made their buildings more environmentally friendly.

Quick facts and figures

Letters (domestic and international) processed annually	438 billion
Parcels (domestic and international) processed annually	6 billion
Number of vehicles used by Posts globally	An estimated one million
Number of postal employees worldwide	5.5 million
Number of postal establishments part of the global network	More than 660,000
Mail volume travelling by air	4,790 million tonne-km performed
Estimated carbon emissions produced by postal vehicles and post offices in the UPU's 191 member countries	26 million tonnes
Percentage of global CO ₂ emissions produced by postal vehicles and buildings worldwide	0.07%

Major postal organizations involved in climate change action

Global organizations

Universal Postal Union

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) is an intergovernmental organization consisting of 191 member countries and the United Nations specialized agency in charge of postal services. The UPU sets the rules for the exchange of international mail among member countries and is responsible for ensuring that its members respect their universal postal service obligation.

Number of member countries: 191

Date established: 1874

Website: www.upu.int; www.upu.int/climate_change/en/index.shtml

Environment programme: The UPU is committed to protecting the environment and has had a group working on environmental issues since 1994. At the 2004 Bucharest Congress, the Sustainable Development Group was created and became responsible for focusing attention on the greening of the Post. This group was reconstituted following the 2008 Congress held in Geneva. The group's activities focus on sharing knowledge, resources and best practices among member countries. In addition, sub-groups are studying how the postal sector could better utilize renewable energies and how to promote the use of alternative vehicles for mail delivery. In 2008, the UPU and the United Nations Environment Programme renewed their commitment to continue working together on environmental issues, and worked on a methodology to calculate greenhouse gas emissions produced by public postal operators in order to produce the first global inventory of CO₂ produced by the Posts of the UPU's 191 member countries.

Status at UN Climate Change Conference: As a UN specialized agency, has observer status and will be the voice of the worldwide postal sector

Regional organizations

PostEurop

PostEurop is a restricted union of the UPU. It represents 48 European public postal operators that link 800 million people daily, operate 175,000 retail counters and employ 2.1 million people. PostEurop was created in 1993 to optimize postal operators and services in Europe, and foster greater cooperation between its members. In the interest of all its members, PostEurop is committed to supporting and developing a sustainable and competitive European postal communications market accessible to all customers and ensuring modern and affordable universal service. PostEurop has

been very active on the issue of the environment and shared data collected among its members for the UPU global inventory of greenhouse gas emissions.

Number of member countries: 48

Date created: 1993

Environment programme: PostEurop is the first UPU restricted union to have launched an environmental initiative in 2007 with its Greenhouse Gas Reduction Programme, addressing climate change. The aim is set at reducing CO₂ emissions by 10% across all programme participants by 2012. The programme provides its members with a methodology to report CO₂ emissions and a tool to calculate it. Twenty-six European Posts currently participate in the programme, thus affecting the communities they serve. Fourteen of the members have already reported their emissions in 2008 and 2009. Following the principle of environmental solidarity, these most experienced members share their knowledge with the less experienced members for the whole benefit of the European postal sector. The UPU is benefiting from PostEurop's work and the restricted union remains an important catalyst for engaging member countries involved in the global inventory.

Websites: www.posteurop.org; www.sustainablepost.eu

Status at the UN Climate Change Conference: Will be represented by the UPU

Of 16 other restricted unions associated with the UPU, PostEurop's environment programme is the most comprehensive.

Posts

The Posts of many industrialized countries have adopted environmental programmes or made an effort to develop and offer environmentally friendly products and services. The Posts of developing countries are also doing their part by incorporating government guidelines in their policies, building energy-efficient installations or using green vehicles to deliver the mail. Posts from both industrialized and developing countries are also active in raising awareness of environmental issues and climate change through philatelic issues. Over the years, a great many stamps have been issued on these themes. See section related to this issue for a sample of examples.

Private sector

Other private organizations or associations, such as International Post Corporation, an industry organization of 24 postal operators from the industrialized countries, and the Direct Marketing Association in the United States or the Federation of European Direct and Interactive Marketing have their own environment programmes and are working with their members to reduce carbon emissions produced by their activities.

Berne (Switzerland), December 3, 2009

Posts produce at least 26 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually, UPU's first global inventory reveals

Head of UN agency urges worldwide postal sector to act to reduce emissions and grow the business at the same time

According to its first worldwide survey, the Universal Postal Union – the United Nations specialized agency for postal services – estimates that Posts in its 191 member countries generated at least 26 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2008 through the operation of postal vehicles and buildings.

These Posts, employing more than 5 million people, operate a global network of more than 600,000 post offices and almost one million postal vehicles. They represent the planet's largest physical distribution network. The United Nations Environment Programme estimates total annual worldwide greenhouse gas emissions at 38 billion tonnes, meaning that postal operations produce 0.07% of these emissions.

Posts in industrialized countries emitted around 11 million tonnes of CO₂, or 41% of the total, while those in the developing and least developed countries released 15 million tonnes, or 59% of the total.

A commitment

On the flip side, many Posts have environmentally friendly practices, with thousands of letter carriers delivering mail on foot or using bicycles. In France, for example, it is estimated that La Poste's 100,000 letter carriers cover the equivalent of 50 trips around the world every day. And Japan Post uses 10,000 bicycles, France's La Poste 28,000 and the Belgian Post 4,200. Posts are also increasingly investing in alternative vehicles.

On the eve of the World Climate Summit in Copenhagen, the postal sector is committed to curbing climate change and finding more eco-friendly ways to process and deliver mail items.

"This first global inventory is a major step forward in our efforts to combat climate change," says UPU Director General Edouard Dayan, who will attend the Copenhagen conference on 15 and 16 December. "The UPU will work with all its partners, including the United Nations Environment Programme, to encourage the polluters of today and tomorrow to reduce their environmental impact in the long term. Sound management of environmental issues can drive growth. In taking up the challenge of green growth, businesses can rethink their logistics chain processes, improve their efficiency, plan long-term energy saving measures, develop new products and services less harmful to the environment and project a responsible business image," adds Dayan, whose agency is looking into setting up a financing mechanism to compensate Posts' carbon emissions.

The survey results are based on Posts' replies to a UPU questionnaire sent to all member countries, together with data from PostEurop, a European postal organization, which also gathers data on the carbon footprint of its members.

A total of 99 Posts completed the questionnaire, representing a response rate of 52%. For the others, the UPU drew up estimates based on key variables such as the country's postal traffic, number of post

offices, number of postal staff, surface area of the country, population, level of development, and national greenhouse gas emissions provided by the World Bank.

The questionnaire was restricted to emissions produced by postal installations and vehicles. The UPU will continue to refine its survey in 2010, by including data on indirect emissions, such as those generated by private operators and subcontractors, air transport, waste management, or the manufacture of envelopes and parcels. The UPU distributed a guide to all its member countries to help them gather data and make the necessary calculations to draw up the inventory.

The UPU will represent the postal sector at the UN Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen.

Other key results

- Broken down by region, the 26 million tonnes are generated as follows: Americas (6.5 million tonnes); Europe (8 million tonnes); Africa (1 million tonnes); Asia (10 million tonnes); and Oceania (0.4 million tonnes).
- Five Posts* from industrialized countries and five from developing countries are among the 10 biggest generators of emissions; between them, these ten Posts account for some 65% of global postal emissions.
- Five Posts* from least developed countries, four from developing countries and one from an industrialized country are among the 10 least polluting Posts.

*The UPU pledged that only a general regional mapping would be drawn up, with individual member countries' results communicated to those countries only.

For more information on postal initiatives to combat climate change, visit www.upu.int/climate_change/en/

About the Universal Postal Union

Created in 1874, the UPU, based in Berne (Switzerland), is an intergovernmental organization and the primary forum for cooperation between governments, Posts and other stakeholders of the worldwide postal sector. In addition to maintaining a genuinely universal network that provides modern products and services, it establishes the rules for international mail exchanges among its 191 members and makes recommendations to stimulate mail volume growth and to improve the quality of service for customers. Some 5.5 million employees process and deliver 433 billion domestic letter-post items annually, as well as some 5.5 billion international items and over 6 billion ordinary parcels. About 660,000 postal establishments make the postal network the largest physical distribution network in the world. The UPU celebrated 60 years as a specialized agency of the United Nations in 2008.

The global postal sector and its involvement in protecting the environment

Who are the actors of the global postal sector?

The global postal sector has many players, including the Posts of the Universal Postal Union's 191 member countries. These Posts are responsible for delivering the universal postal service. Additionally, there are thousands of private operators and stakeholders, such as equipment manufacturers, trade unions, direct marketers, catalogue and magazine producers, e-commerce retailers, etc. who use the post to have goods delivered, security printers who produce stamps and other philatelic products, and many more. The world's Posts employ 5.5 million people, but it is estimated that the sector employs up to nine million people if related areas are taken into account.

How many post offices are there in the world?

More than 660,000.

How many postal vehicles are there in the world?

The UPU estimates that there are close to one million postal vehicles moving the mail daily around the world. Many additionally use motorcycles. A conservative estimate is set at 250,000.

How much mail travels by air?

The postal sector is a large user of air transport to deliver the mail. According to the International Civil Aviation Organization, airplanes carry an estimated 4,790 million tonnes-kilometre performed.

Impact of postal operations on the environment

What is the UPU doing to measure the postal sector's greenhouse gas emissions?

The UPU is creating awareness among its member countries of the carbon footprint being left by their official Post and helping them to measure the emissions. In June 2008, the UPU launched its GHG Global Overview and Mitigation Project (GGOM) to quantify this footprint.

What exactly is the GHG Global Overview and Mitigation Project?

There are three basic aspects of the project. First, it involves a guide developed by the UPU to help Posts capture the most basic information about their carbon footprint, including emissions produced by the buildings and vehicles they operate. Second, the UPU has conducted a survey among its 191 member countries to collect the data regarding those emissions. Finally, the UPU is working with its partners to develop a Standard Protocol, which will be a more detailed measurement of carbon

emissions produced by Posts (emissions produced by postal buildings and vehicles, but also by sub-contractors' activities). The aim is to establish a methodology specific to the postal sector for measuring greenhouse gas emissions resulting from all postal activities. Based on these calculations, the UPU is creating a regional map of emissions to provide an assessment and visual representation of the postal sector's impact on climate change.

What is the objective of the guide?

The guide explains how the UPU draws up its global inventory and reminds member countries of the need for their active cooperation in gathering the data needed to produce it. The guide describes the procedures to follow to participate in and contribute to the UPU's inventory, thus ensuring harmony between data received, calculation and results.

What is the Standard Protocol?

The Standard Protocol is a more elaborate tool to measure all greenhouse gas emissions produced by postal sources, including vehicles, buildings, waste management and sub-contractors, for example. The Standard Protocol is being developed by the UPU in association with its restricted union PostEurop and International Post Corporation. It is expected to be completed in 2010.

What is the estimated carbon emissions produced by Posts worldwide?

According to a survey of its member countries, the UPU estimates that world's Posts produced 26 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in 2008.

What does this figure include?

For this first inventory, the UPU has measured the greenhouse gas emissions produced by the operation of postal buildings and vehicles. These are the two main sources of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions emanating from most of the Posts. Most vehicles run on fuel from non-renewable sources (petrol) and causes pollution (fine particles, methane, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, etc.); and buildings have to be lit, heated, air-conditioned, etc. using large amounts of fuel and electricity. The questionnaire asked member countries to supply data about the consumption of fuel for vehicles, the fuel and electricity consumption of buildings, staff numbers, and the number of premises occupied and the surface area they cover. In future, the UPU will expand the scope of its research to include indirect emissions, which emanate mainly from business travel, waste treatment or subcontractor activities.

How is the 26 million tonnes broken down by region?

The figure of 26 million tonnes breaks down geographically as follows: Asia, nearly 39%, Europe 31%, the Americas 25%, Africa 4% and Oceania around 1.4%.

Are there individual numbers for each country?

Yes, but the UPU agreed to give each country its own results and not share individual results publicly. However, the numbers are aggregated by region.

How did the UPU collect this data?

In collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, the UPU developed a methodology to collect the data from the postal operators of its member countries through a questionnaire. It also worked closely with PostEurop, one of its restricted unions, which provided CO₂ emission data from 14 European Posts taking part in the entity's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Programme.

How many Posts responded to the survey?

99, for a global response rate of 52%.

What level of emissions do these 99 postal operators produce?

They produced 19.2 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2008.

How do you come to a global figure with only 99 member countries having responded to the survey?

When extrapolated to include the official Posts of all 191 member countries, the figure of 19.2 million tonnes rises to 26 million tonnes.

What criteria did you use to calculate these estimations?

Based on the numbers provided by respondents, estimates were calculated for the Posts of the other member countries of the UPU. These estimates are based on a comparison of emissions arrived at using a number of variables specific to each country, including the area, population, density, postal traffic, number of post offices, number of employees, level of development, geographical region and national greenhouse gas emissions provided by the World Bank.

What percentage of global emissions do these 26 million tonnes represent?

The Posts of UPU member countries are responsible for an estimated 0.07% of total annual greenhouse gas emissions worldwide, which the United Nations Environment Programme estimates to be 38 billion tonnes.

How does the postal sector figure compare to other industries?

According to the International Air Transport Association, air transport produces an annual 705 million tonnes of carbon emissions or 2% of the global total. Sea transport produces 1.02 billion tonnes (3.3%), according to the International Maritime Organization. However, a direct comparison of these figures with those of the UPU's preliminary survey is not possible because the air and sea transport inventories take indirect emissions into account. As well, some of the emissions generated by these modes of transportation are likely to have been caused by the postal sector, which uses both to move the mail.

Will the UPU inventory be expanded to include indirect emissions?

Yes, the inventory will be carried out annually and aims to be exhaustive and to produce increasingly accurate results. In future, the scope of research will aim to include indirect emissions, which emanate mainly from business travel, waste treatment or subcontractor activities.

How do you intend to reduce emissions?

In partnership with Posts and other partners, the UPU will promote the exchange of good practices between Posts and the transfer of technology to developing countries. It will also propose to its member countries a variety of measures aimed at reducing their carbon footprint, developed in collaboration with UNEP. The UPU Council of Administration has also approved in November 2009 a proposal to create a project group to study the feasibility of setting up a financing mechanism to compensate carbon emissions by postal operators.

When will the UPU propose measures to reduce emissions generated by the postal activity?

In 2010.

Will the survey be conducted again?

Yes, the UPU intends to conduct the survey again among its 191 member countries in 2010 and will look to expand the scope of the survey.

Are the problems in dealing with the reduction of carbon emissions the same in industrialized and in developing countries?

With 191 countries with widely varying geographical situations, cultures and levels of development, the UPU has to incorporate these differences in order to involve all Posts in combating climate change. But, whereas the industrialized countries have sufficient funds earmarked for financing programmes to cut their carbon footprint, developing countries often have other priorities (quality of service, etc.) and smaller budgets. Whereas the developing countries need technical assistance to measure their greenhouse gas emissions, the industrialized countries want recognized procedures put in place to offset emissions that they cannot reduce any further. The UPU can serve as a forum for the exchange of good practices and offer its member countries assistance and expertise.

Who are the UPU's partners in combating climate change?

The UPU's main partners in combating climate change are the Posts of its member countries, its restricted unions, such as PostEurop, other international and regional organizations, and of course the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme.

Who is PostEurop and what is the nature of the UPU's relationship with it?

PostEurop is the first UPU restricted union to have launched an environmental initiative in 2007 with its Greenhouse Gas Reduction Programme, addressing climate change. The aim is set at reducing CO₂ emissions by 10% across all programme participants by 2012. The programme provides its members with a methodology to report CO₂ emissions and a tool to calculate it. Twenty-six European Posts currently participate in the programme and thus affecting the communities they serve. Fourteen of the members have already reported their emissions in 2008 and 2009. Following the principle of environmental solidarity, these most experienced members share their knowledge with the less experienced members for the whole benefit of the European postal sector. The UPU is benefiting from PostEurop's work and the restricted union remains an important catalyst for engaging member countries involved in the global inventory.

How is the UPU working with other restricted unions on the issue of climate change?

The UPU organizes joint seminars on sustainable development and develops training concerning the calculation method used to measure the carbon footprint and the action to be carried out to reduce it at regional level. Following seminars conducted at the Pan-African Postal Union (PAPU) in Africa in 2007, the UPU is working with Asia-Pacific Postal Union (APPU) this year and will work with the Postal Union of the Americas, Spain and Portugal (PUASP) in 2010.

What is the UPU's relationship with the United Nations Environment Programme?

Back in 1999, the two organizations signed a memorandum of understanding based on exchanges of information. They renewed their cooperation in 2008, signing an agreement based on mutual technical assistance, with the particular aim of combating climate change.

The UPU and the UN Conference on Climate Change**Who is speaking on behalf of the postal sector at the UN Climate Change conference in Copenhagen?**

The Universal Postal Union, the UN specialized agency for postal services and an intergovernmental organization of 191 member countries, is the organization speaking on behalf of the postal sector. It has the status of observer during the conference.

How is the UPU participating in COP15?

As a United Nations specialized agency, the UPU will participate in UN side events at the conference. On December 15, the UPU will take part in a side event dealing with the UN's climate neutrality effort organized by the United Nations Environment Programme. UPU Director General Edouard Dayan will also take part in the high-level meeting hosted by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on December 16.

A UPU banner created to support the Seal the Deal campaign are also part of the Climate Maze set up in a dedicated square of the Danish capital. The eight-metre long banner made of organic cotton has been stamped and signed by postal CEOs across the world and other members of the global postal sector.

How is the UPU supporting the Seal the Deal campaign?

As a UN agency, the UPU participates in the UN's major communication campaigns to combat climate change, promoting the "UNite to combat climate change" campaign and the "Seal the Deal" campaign, which seek to urge the negotiators in Copenhagen to sign a new global climate agreement. The UPU developed two eight-metre long banners to support Seal the Deal and had public signing with members of the postal sector during POST-EXPO 2009 in Hannover, Germany, in late September and early October as well as during the annual session of the UPU Council of Administration (October 23 – November 13, 2009). Hundreds of people signed the banners during these events, as well as the online petition that is to be presented to world leaders in Copenhagen.

UPU's involvement in protecting the environment and responding to climate change

16 December 2009

UPU Director General participates in a meeting chaired by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and bringing together the heads of all UN programmes and agencies part of the UN Chief Executive Board.

15 December 2009

UPU Director General participates in the United Nations Environment Programme's side event devoted to the Sustainable UN project and presents results of the International Bureau's efforts to become climate neutral.

5-17 December 2009

The UPU's Seal the Deal banner is on display in the Climate Maze set up in Copenhagen during the UN Climate Change Conference. The eight-metre long banner made of organic cotton is stamped and signed by dozens of postal-sector leaders, including Deutsche Post CEO Frank Appel, La Poste France CEO Jean-Paul Bailly, Poste Italiane's Massimo Sarmi and UPU Council of Administration chairman Ambassador Bishar Hussein, from Kenya.

3 December 2009

UPU announces the results of its first global inventory of greenhouse gas emissions produced by the operation of postal vehicles and buildings in its 191 member countries.

12 November 2009

UPU invites delegates to its Council of Administration to sign the Seal the Deal online petition and the eight-metre long banners the UPU has created to support the Seal the Deal campaign.

12 November 2009

The UPU Council of Administration approves a proposal to create a project group to study the feasibility of setting up a financing mechanism to compensate carbon emissions by postal operators.

29 September – 1 October 2009

Participants at POST-EXPO 2009 in Hannover, Germany, are invited to sign the UPU's banner designed to support the Seal the Deal campaign. Frank Appel, CEO of Deutsche Post DHL, and

Edouard Dayan, UPU Director General, videotape a message to world leaders about why it is important to seal the deal in Copenhagen. (See video at www.sealthedeal2009.org)

22 September 2009

UPU joins the Seal the Deal campaign and unveils two eight-metre long banners designed as envelopes and carrying the message "Save the Planet". They are addressed to world leaders meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December, and one of them is included in the Climate Maze in Copenhagen, during the UN Conference on Climate Change.

1 September 2009

The World Meteorological Organization and the UPU publish a philatelic book on climate change.

5 June 2009

The UPU, PostEurop (a UPU restricted union) and the International Post Corporation (an industry organization of postal operators) announce they will create the Greenhouse Gas Inventory Standard for the postal sector, offering a common quantitative greenhouse gas reporting methodology for all postal operators, based on internationally recognized sources, such as the Greenhouse Gas Protocol of the World Resource Institute/World Business Council for Sustainable Development, the International Energy Agency, the Global Reporting Initiative and ISO standards 14 000, 14 064 and 14 065. This Standard Protocol will harmonize the methodology for collecting data by each organization and deliver results for the entire postal sector. The Standard is expected to be ready in early 2010. The designated postal operators of the UPU's 191 member countries will use the Standard to collect all possible emission sources relating to their postal activities. It is a tool for understanding the calculation methods used to do an inventory of CO₂ emissions.

1 April 2009

The UPU's International Bureau announces several measures taken to make the organization more climate neutral, as part of its involvement in the Sustainable United Nations Programme.

12 December 2008

The UPU reiterates its commitment to helping postal operators worldwide better manage their CO₂ emissions at the United Nations climate change conference in Poznan, Poland.

24th Universal Postal Congress (July-August 2008)

Congress adopts Recommendation C 27 / 2008 inviting the designated postal operators of member countries to promote initiatives aimed at reducing the negative effect of their activities on the

environment. Resolution C 34 / 2008 recognizes the importance of adopting a programme for the postal sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

24 July 2008

The UPU Sustainable Development Project Group teams up with PostEurop, a restricted union representing 48 European public postal operators. PostEurop agrees to share the results gathered through its greenhouse gas reduction programme, established in June 2007 to measure, analyze and report on CO₂ emissions for 19 participants. All participants support the further collaboration with the UPU Sustainable Development Project Group.

June 2008

The UPU launches its Greenhouse Gas Global Overview and Mitigation Project and sends out its first questionnaire to its 191 member countries asking them to calculate the greenhouse gas emissions produced by their vehicles and buildings.

5 May 2008

UPU and the United Nations Environment Programme sign a new agreement to work together to slash the CO₂ emissions caused by members of the postal sector.

24 April 2007

The UPU's Sustainable Development Project Group develops 20 priority actions for postal operators. Several focus on the environment. They include:

- Measure the volume of harmful emissions generated by postal vehicles (including those of subcontractors and supply chain), and take actions to reduce fuel consumption (technological, logistical and drivers' behavioural solutions).
- Develop postal infrastructure which has the lowest possible environmental impact.
- Use renewable electricity where possible and develop the use of on-site renewable energy sources (solar, wind, geothermal).
- Save on energy and develop awareness-raising activities to educate staff (information, training).
- Develop products that consume fewer natural resources (using recycled paper, paper from sustainably managed forests, reusable wrappings and packaging, etc.).
- Develop a global approach to waste management: sorting, recycling and recovery of main waste (paper, cardboard, wood pallets, PCs and peripherals, postmen's bicycles, sorting frames, etc.), based on the waste management hierarchy (eliminate, reduce, reuse, recycling, energy recovery and disposal).

April 2007

A sub-work group is created to analyze the benefits of using alternative vehicles, to develop partnerships with the automobile industry and to advise Posts on the purchase of new vehicles.

April 2005

The working group on Posts and Environment (1994) integrates sustainable development issues and becomes the Environment and Sustainable Development Working Group.

SUSTAINABLE UNITED NATIONS - HOW THE UPU IS BECOMING CLIMATE NEUTRAL**2010 – 2011**

Renovation of the façade of the UPU headquarters building in Berne. Taking into account environmental considerations, this renovation work should cut the International Bureau's energy consumption by 58%.

July 2009

New international reply coupons, bearing the United Nations Environment Programme logo "UNite to Combat Climate Change", are put into circulation. Ten million reply coupons are expected to be in circulation between 2009 and 2013.

23-25 June 2009

The International Bureau holds a three-day training workshop on responsible procurement, organized in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme, entitled "United Nations Sustainable Procurement: buying for a better world".

March 2009

The International Bureau selects a cleaning firm, whose services reflect environmental criteria, particularly in the choice and frequency of cleaning processes used.

2003-2008

The International Bureau electrical plant is renovated and movement sensors are installed in the washrooms to avoid electricity waste. Electricity savings in 2009 ranged in the 70%.

April 2007

The International Bureau holds the first international symposium on sustainable development challenges facing the postal sector. It addresses topics relating to climate change and opportunities for Posts in the areas of transport, construction and “green” products.

2006

Replacement of traditional paper by FSC-certified paper produced from sustainably managed forests. The International Bureau used 45 tons of paper in 2008.

Leading by example

Best “green” practices from the postal sector

Having long recognized the impact of their activities on the environment and climate change, many postal operators are trying to be more ecological. Several of them have even voluntarily set carbon-emission reduction targets. Here are some examples of best practices internationally.

Target setting

- Royal Mail in Great Britain has set a target of reducing transport-related CO₂ emissions by 20%. Between 2003 and 2008, the road transport element of its mail operation's CO₂ emissions reduced by 13.4%. During the same period, the CO₂ emissions related to air and rail transports reduced by 11.5%.
- Deutsch Post DHL's goal is to improve its CO₂ efficiency across all of its operations, including subcontracted transportation services, by 30% by 2020 (compared to a 2007 baseline). The operator has already entered into discussions with subcontractors on ways to measure and reduce their footprint, and has taken its first steps toward achieving the 2012 milestone of a 10% CO₂ efficiency improvement in its own operations.
- PostEurop, a UPU restricted union representing 48 European Posts has set a target of reducing, by 10% by 2012, the 2007 levels of CO₂ emissions produced by its members participating in the European-wide Greenhouse Gas Reduction Programme. Fourteen participating postal operators (Österreichische Post, Correios de Portugal, Deutsche Post, La Poste Belgium, Hellenic Post, Itella, Groupe La Poste, Magyar Posta, Post Danmark, Post Italiane, Posten AB, Posten Norge, Royal Mail, Swiss Post) reported their carbon emissions in 2008 following PostEurop's common methodology. These postal operators share their reporting knowledge with the other 12 members (TNT Post, Guernsey Post, Malta Post, Poczta Polska, Posta Romana, Posten Åland, Turkish PTT, Bulgarian Posts plc, Cyprus Post, Poste Srpske, Montenegro Post) in order to encourage further participation to reach the overall reduction target.

Improving vehicle performance

- Dutch operator TNT uses more than 100 hybrid or electric vehicles throughout the world.
- Royal Mail has installed special technology in around 8,000 vans and trucks to help it operate them more efficiently. This will potentially reduce the operator's carbon output by 7,000 tonnes and save 2.5 million litres of diesel in 2009.
- The United States Postal Service (USPS) currently uses 43 electric vehicles and 300 vehicles powered by compressed natural gas. In one year, the USPS has increased its usage of

alternative fuel by 68%.

- Swiss Post uses 250 electric scooters and 140 vehicles powered by natural gas to deliver the mail, making its fleet the largest in Switzerland. Natural gas-powered vehicles produce 10% fewer carbon emissions than those powered by diesel engines, which results in a reduction of 59 tons of CO² per year.
- Japan Post intends to progressively replace its 22,000 vehicles with electric ones.
- The Belgian Post installed solar panels on the roof of its mail processing center in Gand. They produce 400,000 kilowatt-hour a year, representing 10% of the facility's electricity needs.
- DHL is testing a deep-sea cargo ship equipped with a giant sail to transport freight between Germany and Venezuela. Depending on the wind's force, fuel costs could be cut by 10% to 35%.
- Chronopost, the French Post subsidiary, has signed a charter to voluntarily reduce its carbon emissions by road transport. To meet its goals, Chronopost will modernize its fleet and train its drivers on fuel-efficient driving.

Improving building efficiency

- To save energy and significantly cut its annual energy consumption by about 5.4 GWh, New Zealand Post uses solar energy and has built new buildings that let in natural light throughout the day.
- DHL's sites and mail processing centres are certified ISO 14001, which guarantees that the environment is respected in the daily management of the buildings. Efforts focus mostly on fuel and electricity consumption.
- The USPS has inaugurated a green roof on one of its main buildings in New York. The roof is expected to reduce the amount of contaminants in storm-water runoff and generate lower heating and air-conditioning bills.

Green purchasing

- Some Posts have adopted green-purchasing policies. Environmentally-friendly products, such as recycled paper and parcels made from recycled cardboard, are less harmful for the environment throughout their life cycle (from conception to recycling). Other operators have either added a green tax to products or have made their customers aware of the importance of protecting the environment through dedicated pages on their websites.
- Deutsche Post DHL's GoGreen programme aims to help the operator reduce its carbon footprint for every letter mailed, every container shipped and every square meter of warehouse space used by 30% by 2020.

- Canada Post's website offers a range of green products, and special pages are devoted to nature conservation.
- Swiss Post offers customers the possibility of compensating carbon emissions generated by their mail by opting for a supplement, used to finance projects aimed at halting climate change.

Raising awareness

- More and more Posts are issuing stamps focusing on environment protection and climate change to create awareness of these important issues.
- Through its programme Linea Verde, Spain's Correos sells postal products made from recycled materials online. For each item bought, a donation goes to an association that retimbers zones affected by deforestation. Since the programme was launched in 2000, about 20,000 trees have been planted on 350,000 square metres of land.




POSTAGE STAMPS, THOSE PERFECT MESSAGE CARRIERS

Many Posts are raising awareness about the need to protect the environment and fight climate change with stamps. Here are a few examples from around the world.

	Indonesia 5 June 2007, UN Conference on Climate Change in Bali
	Brazil 18 March 2009 Protection of the Poles and Glaciers
	Ukraine 18 March 2009 Protection of Polar Regions and Glaciers Vernadskyi's Antarctic station
	Romania 21 March 2009 Protection of Polar Regions and Glaciers
	Faroe Islands 23 February 2009 Fight against global warming
	Azerbaijan 3 March 2009 Protection of polar regions and glaciers

	<p>Australia 11 March 2009 One hour for Earth – Save energy</p>
	<p>Costa Rica 26 July 2006 Energy conservation</p>
	<p>Chile 29 September 2006 Energy conservation</p>
	<p>Indonesia 17 August 2005 Energy conservation</p>
	<p>India 14 December 2004 Energy conservation</p>
	<p>Tunisia 7 April 2007 National energy savings programme</p>

		<p>Republic of Korea 1 August 2008 Using low-energy appliances</p>
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Find more stamps on the WNS site:
www.wnsstamps.ch

Turning a shade of green

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The United Nations' climate-change summit, taking place in Copenhagen in December 2009, has the difficult task of convincing world leaders to commit to stop global warming. Some Posts around the world, however, require less persuasion.

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**By
Anne Césard**

The UPU has actively supported the United Nations' *Seal the Deal* campaign to mobilize worldwide support for a fair and effective agreement on climate change (see related article) and will attend the Copenhagen summit as an observer. It will take part in a number of parallel events and present the results of its first global inventory of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated by the Posts of its member countries.

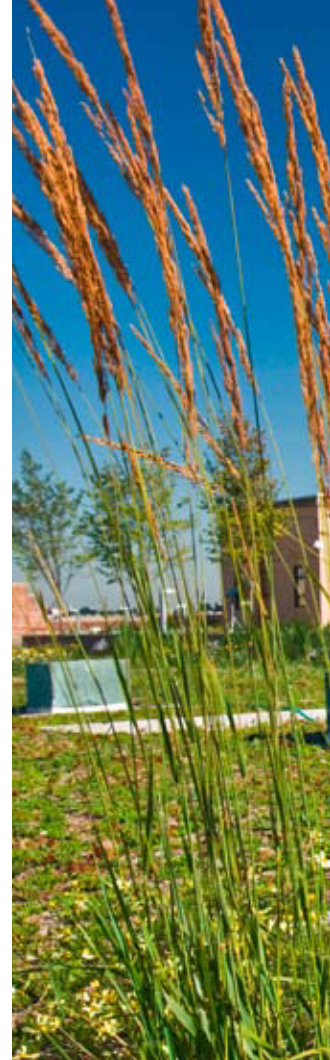
The UPU made a firm commitment at its 24th Universal Congress last year to step up efforts to promote sustainable development. Equipped with the world's largest physical distribution network, postal activities have an undeniable impact on the environment, given that transport and energy consumption in business facilities are among the primary sources of GHGs.

Marked contrast

The environmental efforts of UPU members differ markedly and are often an indication of their level of development and their widely differing values. Only a handful of carbon-footprint assessments have been carried out so far, not least because of their complexity, espe-

cially when indirect emissions are included. Indirect emissions emanate mainly from business travel, waste treatment or subcontractor activities. For example, Deutsche Post DHL estimates that some 80% of all its carbon emissions are generated by subcontractors. Assessments that have been completed have enabled some operators to measure their pollution levels and set emission-reduction targets. Even a giant like the United States Postal Service (USPS) – whose 618,000 employees, 34,000 post offices and world's largest civilian fleet of 220,000 vehicles process nearly half the planet's mail – only last October published its first detailed assessment of CO₂ emissions generated by it and its subcontractors. And it was the first US government agency to do so.

Nevertheless, green initiatives are on the increase as part of the worldwide discussion undertaken by governments, not only in industrialized countries, which have been largely responsible for the greenhouse effect, but also in developing countries. In Malaysia, the Republic of Korea and Costa Rica (see side interview), the Posts are taking the lead from government-set targets.





Manhattan's green roof Photo: USPS

Korea Post has recently jumped on the green bandwagon by unveiling its 'Green Post 2020' policy in July 2009. The strategy will implement the government's green policy, called 'Low Carbon, Green Growth'. Overall, the Post hopes to reduce its GHGs by 20% and save 57 million USD in energy costs by the year 2020. Activities to meet this objective will include constructing energy-efficient post offices with eco-friendly materials and replacing all vehicles with hybrid or electric cars by 2020. The Post will also establish the Green Growth Fund, with a war chest of 17 million USD. It will be used to support the development of green industries and will be funded by profits made by the Post on its sales of savings and insurance products.

In other countries, there have been basic awareness-raising campaigns, for example in Brazil, Romania and Ukraine, which issued stamps this year on the effects of climate change. Also 153 of the 191 UPU member countries, at the Union's request, have designated a national sustainable development coordinator.

Long-term benefits

While these programmes may be costly, they do have a clear social and economic benefit. Faced with dwindling mail volumes, increasing energy costs, new regulatory constraints and public pressure, operators are increasingly incorporating sustainable development into their operations.

"The economic crisis has combined with ecological concerns, compounding the drop in mail volumes that began with electronic substitution," noted Stephanie Scoupe, sustainable development manager for La Poste (France). She adds: "Implementation of an action plan has not only improved our energy use but also reduced our costs. The programme, which began in 2003, is an integral part of our overall strategy." Darlene Casey, USPS's communication manager, is singing from the same song sheet. The US operator has set a target for 2020 of reducing its GHG emissions by 20%. "Our efforts are having a positive effect, not only on the environment but also on our bottom line. The energy savings projected for 2009 alone total 37 million USD."

The same can be said for Deutsche Post DHL, which believes that its GoGreen programme “is playing a pivotal role in these tough economic times”. Stephan Schablinski, senior expert with the programme, says that “with technology and energy-saving measures, we are managing to lower our operating costs”. The sustainable development budget of the world’s largest post and logistics group runs into several million euros. With a workforce of about 500,000, it intends to reduce its 2007 CO₂ emissions by 10% by 2012 and by 30% (subcontractors included) by 2020.

Several dimensions

Operators are undertaking efforts on several fronts, particularly in transport and facilities, as well as in recycling, responsible procurement and offering green products. In the area of transport, the focus has been on clean vehicles, fuel economy and efficient route management. France’s La Poste, whose 100,000 letter carriers cover the equivalent of 50 trips round the world each morning, has made a significant investment in developing its green fleet. By 2012, a total of 10,000 small vehicles, 3,000 quads and 6,000 electric bikes will be on French roads. Added to this is the eco-driving programme launched in 2007 for its 60,000 drivers, aimed at reducing CO₂ emissions by 15% by 2012. In Berlin, Germany, Deutsche Post DHL has been testing its new SmartTruck route optimization technology since April. The results so far have been time savings, reduced costs and lower CO₂ emissions.

In other parts of the world, new principles are being used in buildings management. This involves applying environmental standards to new construction projects and improving energy efficiency in existing facilities. The USPS recently installed a green roof atop one of its main Manhattan facilities. Despite a cost of four million USD, the US operator estimates that the improvement should pay for itself through improved insulation and an energy bill reduced by 30,000 USD a year.

Another example is the underground warehouse operated by Deutsche Post DHL for a food industry customer in the US, making possible energy savings of 65% (or 1,800 fewer tonnes of CO₂), compared with a traditional storage facility.

Not expensive

Posts are also busy promoting sustainable development among staff and customers alike. Australia Post announced in July that it would no longer provide plastic bags at post-office counters, representing a savings of 30,500 bags a day. In Great Britain, Royal Mail is offering businesses that meet certain ecological criteria a reduced-rate mail service called *Sustainable Mail*.

While some green programmes are very sophisticated, others are much easier to implement. “Many of our measures incur little or no cost, like switching off lights, adjusting thermostats or printing on both sides. This last measure alone saves us 86,000 USD a month,” says the USPS’s Casey. Such efforts can result in higher revenues. For example, the USPS recycles more than 200,000 tonnes of paper, plastic and other material, generating some 10 million USD a year.

UPU inventory

The UPU has completed the first phase of a study begun in 2008 to measure carbon emissions produced by the Posts of its member countries. The specific aim of this initiative was to create a regional map of CO₂ emissions to better understand the impact that UPU members have on climate change, and to lessen that impact.

To carry out this inventory, based on the methodology used by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UPU had to take into account the wide-ranging levels of development of its members. Restricted in scope for practical reasons, the questionnaire sent to all members focused on CO₂ emissions, the main GHG, and the two main sources of pollution by operators – vehicle fleets and facilities. The survey did not cover indirect emissions.

Preliminary results

In the end, 99 of the 191 UPU member countries answered the survey, a fairly high response-rate. The majority of industrialized countries took part in the inventory or 82% of replies. Developing countries, which account for almost half of the UPU’s members, also participated in large numbers (54% of replies). On the other hand, the least developed countries were under-represented: 29% of this group responded. This was despite the fact that they make up one quarter of member countries and are arguably the ones most affected by climate change.

According to the UPU figures, the emissions produced by the 99 respondent countries totalled 19.2 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2008. When extrapolated to include all member countries, this figure rises to 26 million tonnes. The UPU’s members are, therefore, responsible for an estimated 0.07% of total annual GHGs worldwide, which UNEP estimates to be 38 billion tonnes. This figure of 26 million tonnes breaks down geographically as follows: Asia nearly 39%, Europe 31%, the Americas 25%, Africa 4% and Oceania around 1.5%.

In related sectors, such as air and sea transport, inventories have also been drawn up. According to the International Air Transport Association, air transport pro-



Bangladeshi post offices adapt to climate change

duces an annual 705 million tonnes of carbon emissions or 2% of the global total. Sea transport produces 1.02 billion tonnes (3.3%), says the International Maritime Organization. A direct comparison of these figures with those of the UPU's preliminary survey is not possible. This is because the air and sea transport inventories take indirect emissions into account. Also, some of the emissions generated by these modes of transportation are likely to have been caused by the postal sector as the former help the latter to move the mail.

Important first step

This inventory is a first step that will enable the UPU to provide its member countries with technical assistance. As the UPU's Council of Administration has decided that the exercise should be repeated next year, more member countries will be consulted and the inventory's scope enlarged to refine the analysis. The Union has also published a guide explaining the methodology used to compile the inventory. It is available in English and French on the UPU website.

On its own doorstep, the UPU headquarters in Berne – with its 250-strong staff – measured its carbon footprint in 2008. This amounted to 1500 tonnes of CO₂ emissions. The data was generated for an inventory stretching across all United Nations agencies.

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Bangladesh is widely recognised by scientific experts as being one of the countries that will be most affected by climate change. This is based on its existing susceptibility to natural disasters. The most densely populated country in the world has regularly experienced cyclones, floods and drought for decades. Its postal operator has begun a process to adapt its infrastructure to the environment, says Mobasherur Rahman, Bangladesh Post's director general.

"We are already feeling the effects of climate change. After cyclone Aila in May 2009, where the sea flooded certain areas, inhabitants have noticed that the water has yet to recede completely. Consequently, many people in rural, low-lying areas still cannot return home," Rahman said.

He added that the Bangladeshi Post has a project to modernise its post offices. Six hundred small post offices will be built in low-lying areas of the country, which suffer the most from flooding. These two-storey buildings will be constructed on stilts and offer postal services, as well as shelter in times of disaster. The post office itself will be housed on the first floor. When a catastrophe occurs, local people will be able to bring their cattle into the building's ground floor before finding shelter themselves on the post-office level. Recently approved by the Bangladesh government, the project should be completed by June 2010. **FM**



Photo: Deutsche Post DHL

Managing sustainable resources in a developing country



In these difficult economic times, do ecological concerns make sense for your enterprise?

Correos de Costa Rica: For a developing country like ours, the current economic situation is precisely one of the main reasons for reviewing our environmental policy and practices. Pinpointing where we are wasting resources, like drinking water, fuel, electricity, paper and ink cartridges, becomes even more important. It is not only a question of social responsibility but also of economy. The two are closely linked.

Do you have an environmental programme?

As a state-run enterprise, Correos de Costa Rica combines its efforts with those of the entire public sector. In 2008, we submitted an action plan to governmental authorities that is now being implemented. There is also an environment management committee made up of six staff members from different sectors of our enterprise.

What does this action plan involve?

Our entire vehicle fleet must comply with strict gas emission standards and undergo inspection by a technical body in the transport ministry. We have also launched a campaign to save paper and ink cartridges and a programme for recycling paper, aluminium and plastic. There has also been an information campaign to make all staff aware of these environmental issues.

Have you been able to gauge the impact of all these measures?

Our awareness-raising efforts to reduce unnecessary spending has enabled our procurement programme this year to save some 120,000 USD compared with 2008. We recycle on average 1.5 tonnes of paper per month. Our water consumption dropped by 17 cubic metres in January and February 2009, compared with the same period in 2008.

What are your objectives?

To give our enterprise a responsible environmental policy that can be applied at all levels.

Next to a giant like the USPS, Correos de Costa Rica is indeed a small enterprise, with its 1,242 employees (about 1/500 of the US operator's), 71 vehicles and 398 motorcycles and an annual mail volume of 30 million items.

Nevertheless, Costa Rica's operator has a very keen sense of ecological issues and its efforts mirror those of the government of this Central American country of 4.5 million inhabitants. In 2007, the Costa Rican government announced a plan to become the world's first carbon-neutral country by 2021. And, according to the 2008 Environmental Performance Index published by Yale University, Costa Rica ranked fifth in the world and first in the Americas region.

Union Postale spoke to Xinia Fallas Solano and Franklin Barrantes Montero from the Post's planning department to find out more.

Anne Césard is a freelance journalist

Postal sector urges leaders to seal the deal

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Posts have enthusiastically backed a United Nations campaign sending a strong message to world leaders on climate change.

The *Seal the Deal* campaign is designed to mobilize global support for the conclusion of a fair and effective deal at the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen from December 7 to 18. As a member of the UN family and the organization representing the global postal sector – a sector committed to reducing its own greenhouse gas emissions – the UPU has spearheaded the campaign among postal stakeholders and used it to draw attention to the need to take action.

The UPU invited postal-sector members to sign the online petition at www.sealthedeal2009.org as well as two eight-metre-long banners it created to support the campaign. Made of organic cotton, the English and French banners look like huge letters and are addressed to: WORLD LEADERS, COPENHAGEN, DENMARK. The message, SAVE THE PLANET, also appears. Hundreds of names representing postal stakeholders from operators and regulators to direct mailers, suppliers, government officials and more cover the banners.

Public signings were held at Post-Expo 2009 in Hannover, Germany, in late September and early October 2009, and at UPU headquarters during the recent session of the Council of Administration. Big names appearing on the banners include those of postal CEOs, such as France's Jean-Paul Bailly, Italy's Massimo Sarmi and Germany's Frank Appel, but also Ruth Goldway, chairman of the United States Postal Regulatory Commission, and Botond Szebeny, PostEurop's secretary general.

Sign me up

Dorcas Scantlebury, deputy postmaster general of Barbados, did not hesitate to sign her name to the banner. "We are a small island, such a tiny island. People wonder if the high tide will make us disappear one day," she said. "Small island states depend on their beaches

for tourism, an important motor of the economy. Concluding an agreement on climate change is a social and economic issue for us. We hope there will be a positive conclusion and more than a declaration in Copenhagen."

Israel Post's Wendy Eitan, director of international affairs, said she was glad that Posts were taking environmental issues on board and wanted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. "We need a group such as the UPU to disseminate information and motivate its member countries and designated operators to green their operations. Not all countries have this awareness and the UPU can play a role in creating it," she said.

The banners will be displayed later this year in the Climate Maze, a public exhibition set up by the United Nations Environment Programme, in a central square of the Danish capital, of hundreds of cloths stamped by environmentally-minded and concerned citizens. The UPU banners will show the world that the global postal sector is taking climate change seriously and is committed to doing its part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (see feature article).

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By
Rhéal LeBlanc

Photo: Marcel Bieri



A selection of photos relating to the postal sector and the environment are available at:

www.flickr.com/photos/universal_postal_union/

You will find photos of:

- Electric vehicles used by selected Posts
- Letter carriers on bicycles
- The USPS's green roof on a mail processing plant in Manhattan
- "Green" products and services offered by selected Posts
- The UPU's Seal the Deal banners
- Members of the postal sector, including CEOs, signing the UPU's Seal the Deal banner

Video

Watch a Seal the Deal commitment video (Postal leaders call for the climate change deal to be sealed) with Frank Appel, CEO of Deutsche Post DHL, and Edouard Dayan, director general of the Universal Postal Union at:

www.sealthedeal2009.org

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The global postal sector supports a deal in Copenhagen.

