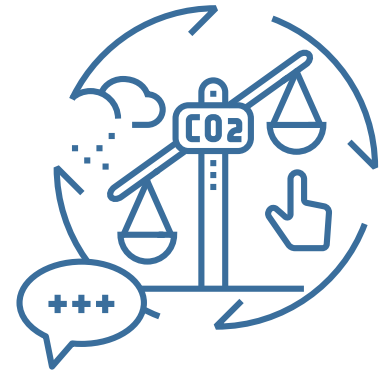


Guidelines for carbon handprint communication



What is carbon handprint?

Carbon handprint refers to the positive climate impact of a product, service or company throughout its life cycle, in contrast to commonly known carbon footprint, which refers to the negative climate impact caused by greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions throughout the life cycle of a product.

A company can achieve a positive carbon handprint by providing climate-friendly solutions to its customers. Reducing own carbon footprint does not increase the carbon handprint. Carbon handprint is a concept that helps a company to understand and communicate the benefits of its products and services that enable its customers to reduce their carbon footprint.

Quantification of the carbon handprint is based on carbon footprint calculations complying in accordance with ISO 14 067 standard consistent with a life cycle assessment (LCA) methodology. Carbon handprints are typically created by more efficient material and energy use, reducing waste, or contributing to carbon sinks.

Benefits and the communications of carbon handprint

Carbon handprint is highly beneficial to businesses, for example it helps to focus on a strategic target in product development so that customers can reduce their carbon footprints. It also helps in business renewal and gives fact-based information about the climate benefits of products or services. It helps to quantify and communicate the climate benefits to the public and helps companies to allocate their resources to climate-friendly innovations and investments. It also helps the company to communicate the climate benefits to investors.

Communicating the climate benefits according to the guidelines provided by the methodology is crucially important, since a risk for being accused of green washing exists. The most important part of communicating the handprints is to be transparent and provide as much information as possible. Needs for transparency are emphasized but at the same time the communication material must be practically feasible, easy to understand and respectful for confidentiality issues. The outcome of the Carbon Handprint Initiative has considered all these aspects.

We have collected the key principles and both must haves and recommendations to the following page. More information and step-by-step methodology for calculating the carbon handprint can be found in [the Carbon Handprint guide \(2.0\)](#). Written by VTT – Technical Research Centre of Finland and LUT University.

Key principles

Carbon handprint shall always be reported separately from

- Carbon footprints
- Offsets and credits

Carbon handprint shall not be used to claim a company is carbon neutral or climate positive.



Mandatory information

1. The description of handprint solution and baseline scenario
2. The quantity and unit of the calculated handprint in applied market and corresponding footprints (according to ISO14067 standard)
3. The main contributors / mechanisms creating the handprint
4. The year of the data applied



Recommended information

- I If the avoided emissions impact has been verified by a third party or not
- II Where additional information is available for interested parties
- III The percentage of total revenue the solutions generating avoided emissions is representing (applies to CDP)
- IV Any identified negative side-effects

