



Sustainability Policy

Our group aims to contribute with our research and teaching to finding solutions to the world's most pressing challenges, including the climate crisis. At the same time, researchers create a particularly large amount of carbon emissions, especially from travelling to conferences. As a group of researchers with international projects and a global focus, it is impossible to completely avoid all negative environmental impacts of (air) travel. For example, some trips may simply be inevitable to gather relevant data and conduct field research. We also don't want to miss direct, personal contact with scientists with whom we work. However, we strive to drastically reduce our environmental footprint, while continuing to conduct our research and teaching activities successfully. We have discussed this challenge openly in our team, and together we have taken strict measures aimed at travelling more ecologically and organising our events as environmentally friendly as possible. We aim to reduce flying to the minimum, transparently report about our emissions, price negative externalities of these emissions and use the money to support climate-friendly development and policies and, finally, be a role model for other research groups.

Team travel policy:

- No air travel if the location can be reached in less than 8 hours by train. Trains can be more expensive than flights. We book our train as soon as our conference/event attendance is confirmed and make use of special offers.
- Upgrades to first class are possible for trains, in case of long journeys (>8h) or during times of high train occupation (not night trains). Hours in the train are working hours.
- To destinations not reachable by train we only fly if there is an extraordinary professional interest in participation. An extraordinary professional interest exists if, in addition to the presentation of a (new or significantly revised) paper, other activities are agreed upon. These might include: the organization of a panel or an event before/after the conference, active participation in a panel discussion, a research meeting with a cooperation partner or experts as well as interviews, invited talks or archive visits at the conference location and nearby research institutes.
- We limit ourselves to 2 flights per person per year. We work with a banking system: the flight budget might be transferred to the next year if not used or may be transferred to another member. This allows for some flexibility.
- Unless not otherwise possible, we only book direct flights to avoid proportionally higher emissions from multiple take-offs and landing. This may involve the smart combination of different modes of transport.
- Exceptions to all measures above may be applied in case of special care obligations, emergencies, or disability reasons. Special career opportunities (e.g., job interviews, decisive talks, etc) may also allow for exemptions.
- For budgetary reasons and to exchange knowledge on 'best practices' for reaching certain destinations, we share our planned conference visits in the group meetings ahead of time and log them into the dedicated Excel sheet.



Reporting:

- When submitting our expenses, each member calculates the emissions from transport (air travel, ferries, and car journeys) and enters them in the dedicated Excel sheet. Emissions from air and car travel can be calculated, for example, using myclimate.ch.
- Instead of offsetting our emissions through conventional offset schemes, the compensatory amount is paid into a shared pot. At the end of each year, the research team commonly agrees on a climate advocacy organisation to donate the money to.
- We report our team's carbon emissions from travel (air travel, cars, ferries) each year in our annual report.

Organization of conferences and events:

- The travel policies specified for our team also count for conferences and events. Exceptions specified above also apply to our guests. Virtual connections should always be checked as an alternative and, if necessary, given preference.
- During conferences, retreats, and other events, we offer vegan and vegetarian food. Exceptions apply depending on availability, allergies, or special dietary requirements.

Team members are invited to review, update, and amend measures.