



GCSP
Geneva Centre for
Security Policy

Climate and Environmental Roadmap

March 2024



The Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) is an international foundation that aims to advance global cooperation, security and peace. The foundation is supported by the Swiss government and governed by 55 member states. The GCSP provides a unique 360° approach to learn about and solve global challenges. The foundation's mission is to educate leaders, facilitate dialogue, advise through in-house research, inspire new ideas and connect experts to develop sustainable solutions to build a more peaceful future.



Climate Action Accelerator

The Climate Action Accelerator, a non-for-profit initiative, aims to mobilise a critical mass of community organisations in order to scale up climate solutions within a 'planetary boundaries' framework, contain global warming below 2°C and avoid the risk of dangerous runaway climate change. The aim is to help shift the aid, health and higher education sectors towards a radical transformation of their practices and programmes, pursuing emissions reduction targets (-50% by 2030) and a 'net zero' trajectory in line with the Paris Agreement, as well as greater resilience.

Geneva Centre for Security Policy

Maison de la paix
Chemin Eugène-Rigot 2D
P.O. Box 1295
1211 Geneva 1
Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 730 96 00
E-mail: info@gcsp.ch
www.gcsp.ch

Cover photo: stevanovicigor, Envato Elements



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Foreword

In the face of **unprecedented global challenges**, we recognize climate change as one of the major ones facing humanity today and a growing obstacle to security, international cooperation, and lasting peace. It is imperative for international organisations, foundations, NGOs, and individuals to acknowledge their **responsibility in combating climate change**. Climate change is not a distant threat; it is happening now, and its urgency cannot be overstated.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), global temperatures have risen by approximately 1.1 degrees Celsius since the pre-industrial era. The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming warns that if we continue our current trajectory, we could surpass the critical threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius as early as 2030, with **catastrophic consequences**. In 2023 alone, the World Meteorological Organization reported a staggering 47% increase in extreme weather events compared to the previous decade. These events are not just statistics; they represent lives lost, homes destroyed, livelihoods shattered and increased risk of conflict and instability.

But climate change is **not merely an environmental concern**; it is intricately linked to peace and security. As temperatures rise and resources become scarcer, competition for essentials like water and land intensifies, leading to new conflicts or aggravating existing ones. Climate change can compound structural vulnerabilities, such as political grievances, inequality, gender-based violence, economic instability, and mass migration. In essence, climate change acts as a multiplier of preexisting vulnerabilities, **undermining our efforts towards sustainable peace**.

The Paris Agreement and the Global Agenda 2030, among other legal frameworks, reflect an escalating recognition by governments and international entities that environmental concerns must be woven into the fabric of addressing global challenges. However, the translation of these **commitments into action** lags significantly behind. Compounded by emerging conflicts, ongoing geopolitical tensions, and economic instability there is a risk of diverting attention away from the **interconnectedness between climate change, security, and peace**.

Equipped with such understanding and with the ambition of navigating and anticipating today's challenges, the GCSP has recognized climate action as a **key question in its ongoing strategy** development process. For us the **critical nexus between climate and security** underscores a fundamental truth: without addressing our impact on climate change, **peace remains an elusive goal**.

Peace, therefore, cannot be achieved in isolation from climate action.

Over the years, we have been integrating the analysis of this nexus into all our activities, from our courses to our dialogues, to our events both from a state and human security perspective, to better prepare security professionals and forward-looking leaders of the future.



Our organisation is proud to have incubated the Climate Action Accelerator (CAA) within its **Creative Spark**, with which we worked to co-construct our roadmap. Amongst our core actions, we would like to highlight our rigorous assessment of our carbon footprint. By **understanding our baseline emissions**, we developed targeted strategies to reduce our carbon footprint and contribute meaningfully to global mitigation efforts.

This roadmap outlines our journey from awareness to accountability, tracking our progress towards reducing emissions by 50% by 2030, aligning with Switzerland's ambitious target of net-zero emissions by 2050. Through commitment, collaboration, and innovation we **aim to inspire others to join us in this critical endeavor**. Together, we can forge a path towards a more sustainable, secure, and peaceful future.





I. Why are we taking action?

We recognise climate change as one of the major challenges to face humanity today, and a growing obstacle to peace, security and lasting sustainable development across the world. According to the IPCC, in order to limit warming to 1.5°C, "global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) would need to fall by about 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching 'net zero' around 2050." (IPCC, 2018). **Doing our part, tracing our own roadmap and decarbonisation pathway, is our responsibility as global leaders, educators and thought leaders in a rapidly changing world.**

The climate change, peace, and international cooperation nexus

Climate change can exacerbate food, water, and livelihood insecurity, with cascading effects such as increased competition over natural resources, social disruptions, and displacement. This can lead to increased tensions, instability and conflict in a country or region.

Where conflict already exists, the impacts of climate change can aggravate or prolong it, making it more difficult to reach and sustain peace. Conflict can in turn disrupt or impede climate action, either through the active destruction of energy, water, and agricultural assets, or by delaying or blocking mitigation and adaptation interventions.

Switzerland's position & our mandate

Switzerland aims to have net-zero greenhouse emissions by 2050. The strategy sets out climate policy guidelines up to 2050 and establishes strategic targets for key sectors, building on the measures and targets of the revised CO₂ Act. It will lead to a 50% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2030 and put Switzerland on track to meet its 2050 climate target. With the GCSP strategically anchored in Geneva and our mandate interconnected with that of the Swiss Confederation's, it is key for our climate ambitions and our vision of a sustainable future to align.

Vision and ambition

At the GCSP, we envision a future where peace and sustainability are inseparable pillars, where the well-being of nations and its citizens is intricately linked to the health of our planet. As we design, train, think, and engage, we will take into consideration our own impact and footprint and endeavour to model environmental stewardship, through collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to responsible leadership.



II. Our commitments



1 Sustainable design and delivery
We factor in climate and environmental risks and consequences as a cross-cutting issue in the design, planning and delivery of our courses, dialogues, and events.

2 Carbon footprint reduction
We will reduce our carbon emissions by 50% by 2030, compared to 2019, without purchasing carbon offsets.

3 Travel
We will reduce the air travel mileage induced by our activities by 45% by 2030 and promote the use of trains instead of European short hauls. In 2026, 100% of our flights will be made with sustainable travel choices.

4 Sustainable procurement
By the end of 2024, we will include environmental criteria in a procurement handbook, to guide us in each of our decisions regarding suppliers, goods & services.

5 Community engagement
We encourage our participants and alumni to contribute to our emissions reduction target, through better monitoring, engagement and awareness raising.

6 All members of our staff have a part to play in reaching our goals and are provided the means and the tools to act.

7 We are leaders in our community, advocating for rapid climate action in the diplomacy, security, and development ecosystem.

8 Low-carbon events
We organise low-carbon events, respecting planetary health diet meals, sourcing locally and seasonally and reducing waste.

9 Good office practices
We will implement good office practices, banning single-use plastic, optimising our office space and promoting best digital practices.



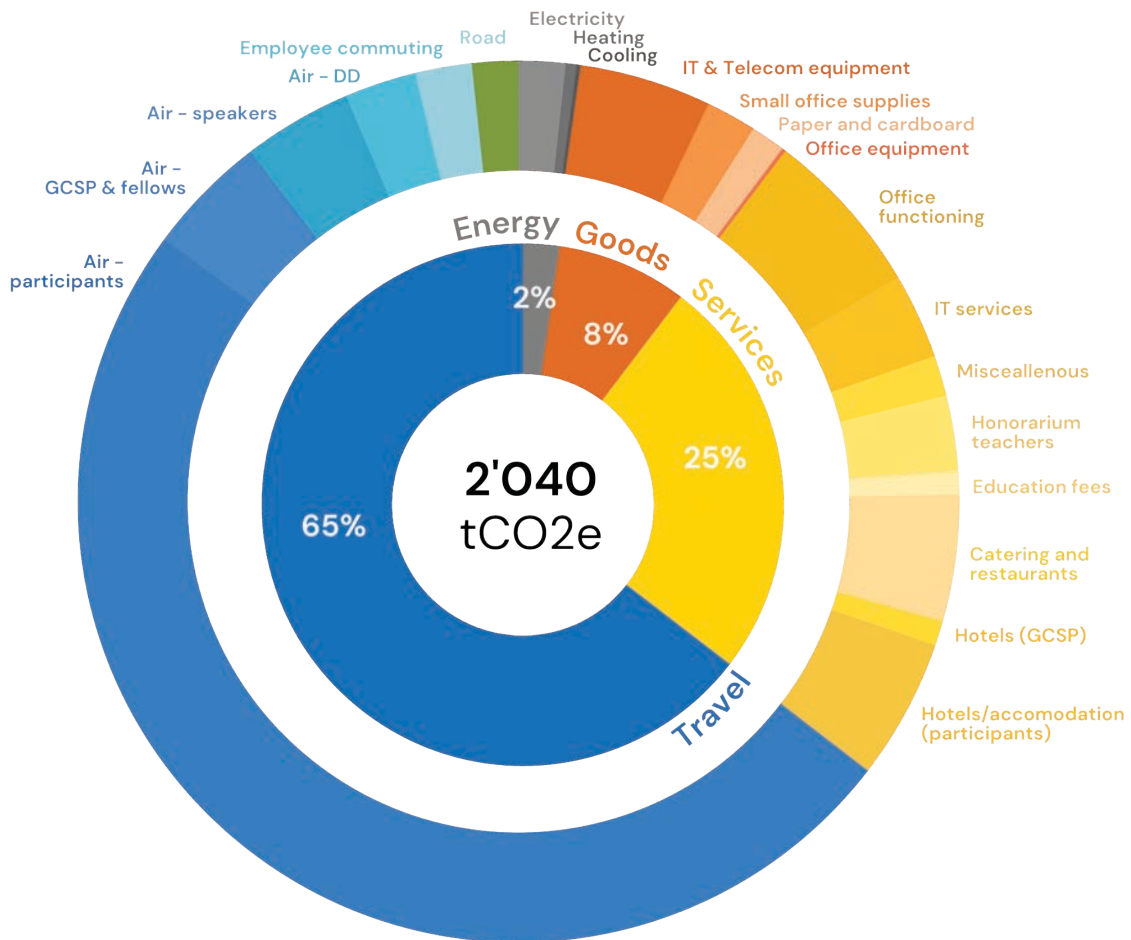
III. Reducing our carbon footprint

Understanding our baseline emissions

The climate and environmental impact of GCSP's activities was assessed using a methodology that complies with the international standard ISO 14064 and follows the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol, including both direct and indirect emissions (scopes 1, 2, and 3).

Our 2019 footprint is estimated at 2'040 tCO₂e. It includes all the sources of greenhouse gas emissions for which the GCSP is accountable in accordance with the GHG Protocol. The operational scope includes the Maison de la Paix office in Geneva, a staff of 73 people and 14.3 M CHF budget in 2019.

2 large categories represent 90% of our total emissions: travel and the purchase of services. Specifically, the international travel of course participants as well as services linked to events and travel like catering and accommodation contribute a large share of emissions.



[Discover the carbon footprint report here.](#)



Our reduction strategy: 11 solutions to reach our target

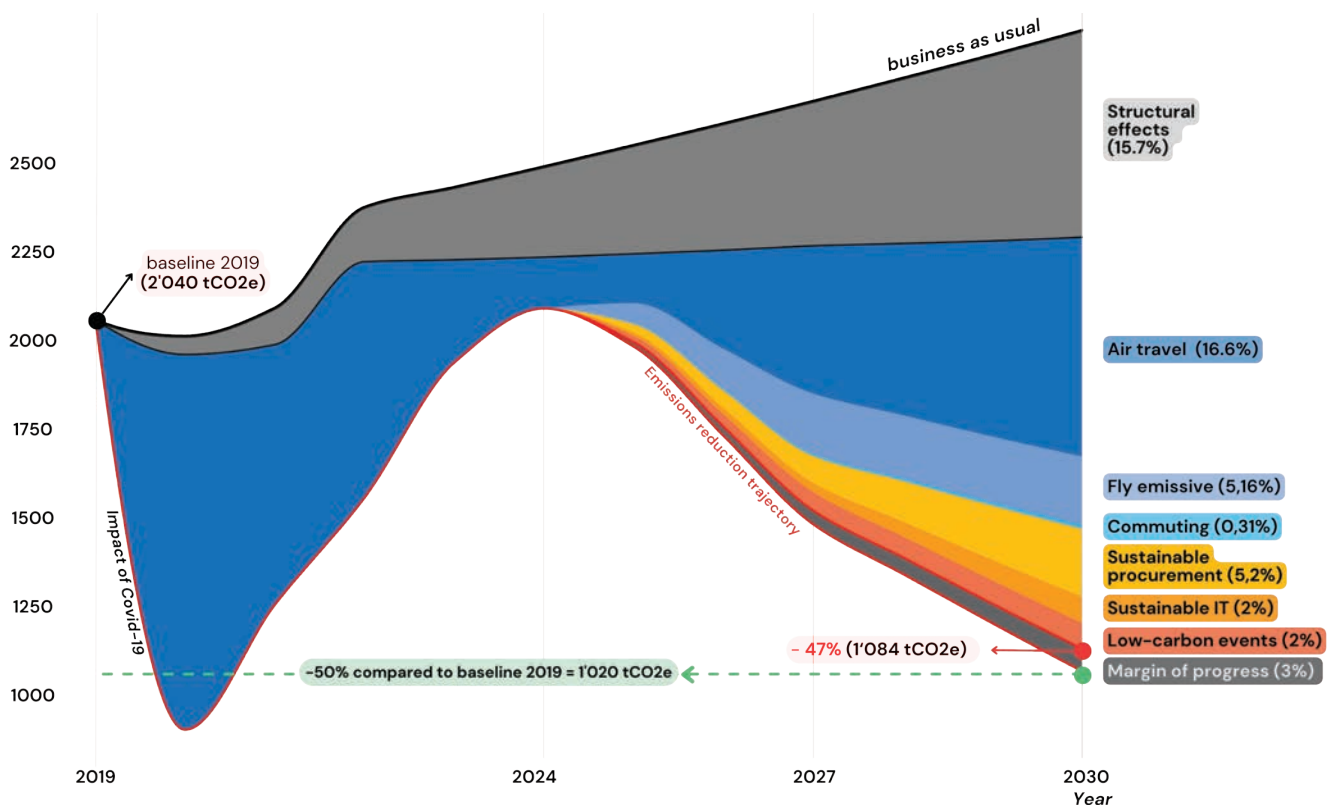
In collective intelligence, we selected 11 tailored solutions that form the foundation for a decarbonisation path aiming to halve our emissions by 2030, compared to our baseline emissions in 2019. **Among these, 5 hold particular significance, contributing to over 90% of the effort in reducing emissions: reduce business air travel, fly less emissive, purchase alternatives with lower impact, make digital equipment more sustainable and organise low-carbon events.**

Our decarbonisation trajectory

In a business-as-usual scenario, the GCSP’s emissions would continue to increase over the coming decade, with an expanding academic and diplomatic dialogue offer to students and professionals around the world. Reducing emissions by half therefore means decoupling the growth of our activities from its related carbon emissions.

With this in mind, GCSP plans to reduce its carbon footprint by at least 45% by 2030 to 1’084 tCO₂e, compared to its baseline emissions in 2019, excluding offsets in the carbon accounting. In intensity, meaning compared to the projected business-as-usual emissions in 2030 (2’280 tCO₂e), the GCSP would reduce its emissions by 62%.

GCSP decarbonisation trajectory





Explaining structural effects

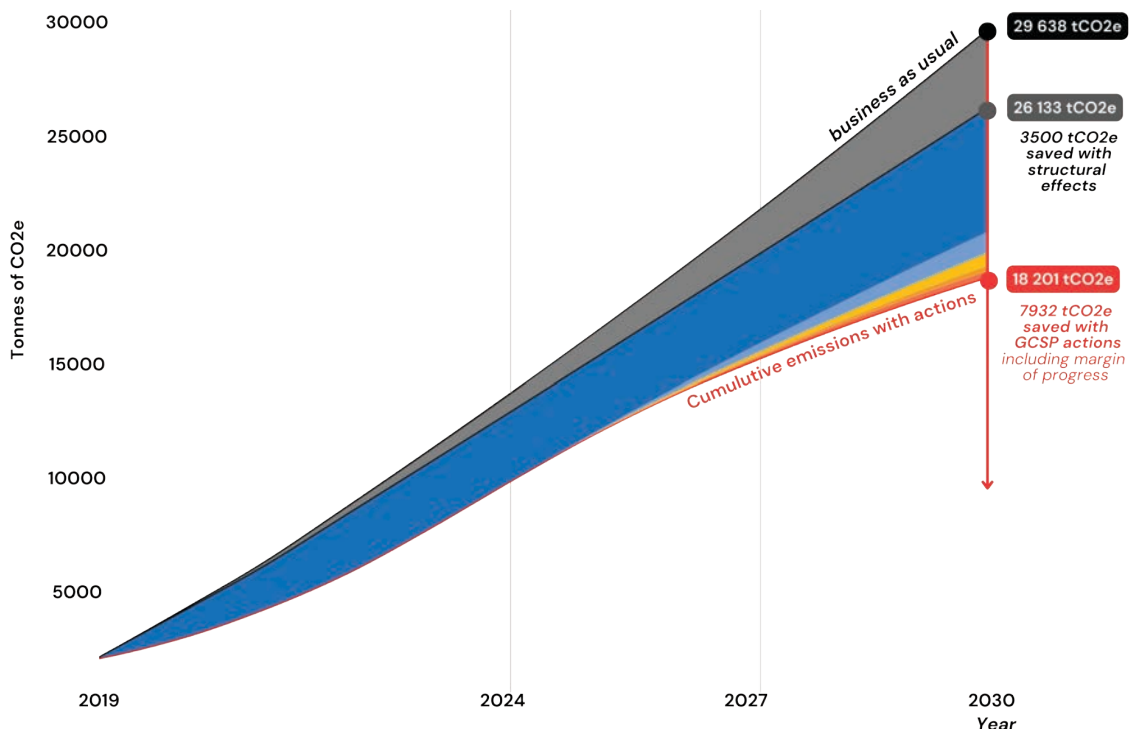
Structural effects are integrated into carbon reduction trajectories, to acknowledge that, regardless of an organisation's specific choices, societies are collectively progressing toward decarbonisation. The energy mix of electricity production is shifting towards more carbon-free sources, and gains in fuel efficiency are impacting the emissions of transportation. Moreover, industrial and manufacturing sectors are transitioning to less emissive production processes. Due to the weight of travel and procurement in GCSP's footprint, these structural effects are estimated at 15.7% by 2030.

What is the margin of progress?

While the implementation of our planned solutions brings us to -47% of our footprint compared to 2019, we have chosen to include a margin of progress to reach our ideal target of -50% by 2030. This represents our commitment to constantly finding new solutions and pushing our ambition to fill this gap.

Our cumulated impact projection

Despite our commitment to halving our footprint, our activities will naturally continue to emit greenhouse gas emissions, accumulating in the atmosphere as illustrated by the graph below. We aim to implement solutions from this roadmap as early as possible for a swift emissions reduction. Additionally, the graph underscores the need to extend efforts beyond 2030, contributing to effectively curb the global accumulation of CO₂. We will consistently monitor our cumulative emissions and reflect on our approach beyond 2030 goal.



IV. Our transversal solutions for carbon reduction

Travel

SOLUTIONS



Actions



Targets

1. Reduce business travel by air

- Update or elaborate a responsible travel policy and flight decision tree (reviewing and reducing relevant reasons for travel)
- Further develop online courses and events based on COVID-19 learnings and limit number of in-person travelling participants and speakers
- Review the location choices of meetings and activities in order to reduce the need for travel, air travel in particular.
- Substitute short-haul flights in Europe with train.
- Group trips together as much as possible (meetings, trainings, courses).
- Set travel reduction targets by departments/unit and establish an internal carbon tax or budget. Fly less emissive by developing

→ By 2027, reduce by 30% the mileage travelled by air (staff and participants included) compared to 2019, and by 45% by 2030.

→ By 2027, 100% of GCSP European trips with <3h time difference (city centre to city centre) between plane and train are made by train.

2. sustainable travelling practices

- Review travel agency terms and/or adapt booking tools to favor lowest-emissions flights (economy class, direct flights and eco-responsible airlines)
- Favor economy class by default.
- Take direct flights only, when available.
- Favor the most eco-responsible airlines (the ones taking action to reduce emissions) and aircrafts
- Prohibit the acquisition of personal loyalty points from professional trips.

→ By 2027, reduce GCSP business and first-class trips by 70% and by 80% by 2030.

→ By 2026, 100% of GCSP flights are made with sustainable travel choices ('greener' airlines and aircraft, direct flights whenever possible).

→ By end 2024, carbon emissions displayed when booking a travel in the booking tool.

3. Reduce the carbon impact of commuting

- Implement remote working policy and provide the necessary support and tools (training, coworking space memberships, etc.)
- Offer public transport financial incentives (for example, subsidise or reimburse 50%). Remove any car parking subsidies.
- Develop an internal cost & emissions per month per transport mode calculator, to encourage staff to switch to soft mobility.
- Mutualise efforts and join forces with other organisations at MdP promoting sustainable commuting (e.g. set up a shared carpooling system, advocate for bike-friendly infrastructure and charging stations for electric cars).

→ By 2027, reduce emissions from commuting by 10% and 20% by 2030.



Goods & services

SOLUTIONS

Actions

4. Use alternatives with lower carbon & environmental impact

- Include environmental criteria in a procurement handbook and apply when choosing suppliers, goods and services.
- Identify alternative opportunities for most purchased goods and services or with the most significant impact
- Prioritise locally or regionally produced goods
- Favour reconditioned, easily repairable and reusable products, where relevant.
- Identify and change to more virtuous alternatives for banks, investment funds and pension funds (no fossil fuel policy, investment in sustainable economy).

Targets

→ Emissions from the procurement of goods and services have reduced by 20% by end of 2027 and by 50% by 2030.

5. Engage with suppliers

- Request visibility from suppliers on carbon value and life cycle information
- Inform suppliers about the organisation's carbon strategy and invite them to work on the decarbonisation of their operations.
- Make it mandatory for suppliers responding to RFP or open tenders to measure their carbon emissions and to put in place a reduction strategy aligned with science by a certain deadline.
- Create a pool of suppliers with other M&P organisations for selected high impact items to facilitate due diligence and to create long-term relationships with greater influence.

→ By end 2024, all suppliers are informed of GCSP's commitments and targets, and encouraged to adopt science-based targets.

→ By 2027, 40% of purchases are procured from suppliers that have set science-based reduction targets and 80% by 2030



Digital & IT

SOLUTIONS

Actions

6. Limit the growth of data and energy consumption

- Rationalise storage and exchange of documents and data, particularly video and mail
- Use automated IT systems for e-mails cleaning
- Store data in a country with low-carbon electricity
- Use greener data centers.
- Configure by default all IT equipment in economy mode, including printers (move to IT)
- Promote digital best practices (green browsers, compressing documents, sharing links versus attachments, etc...)

7. Make digital equipment and services more sustainable

- Include environmental and energy efficiency criteria in IT and telecommunication equipment procurement.
- Increase the lifespan of IT and telecommunication equipment. Stop standardised renewal in procurement policies (renewal after x years of service).
- Promote re-conditioned digital equipment with constructor warranty
- Donate locally no longer used but still functional IT equipment.
- Dispose non-reusable equipment to e-waste recycling or treatment companies.

Targets

- Reduce online stored data by 10% by end of 2024, 25% by end of 2026, and 50% by 2030, compared to 2019 levels.
- 100% of data storage by 2027 is located in green data centers.

- Increase the lifespan of IT equipment to 6 years on average and by 2030 buy 50% of IT equipment reconditioned.

Transversal

SOLUTIONS



Actions



Targets

8. Rationalise office space in HQ

- Adjust office space, taking into account remote work policy.

→ By end 2024, calculate occupancy rate. By 2027, adjust office space (square metres) according to results.

9. Promote good office practices and responsible behaviour

- Produce a good office practices playbook allowing staff to implement key measures with regards to energy consumption, temperature standards, waste and purchases.
- Ban single-use plastic, starting with the office.

→ By end 2024, a good office practices playbook is produced, adopted and implemented by all staff.

10. Organise low-carbon events

- Ensure respect for planetary health diet meals in catering and sourced locally and seasonally. Promote these actions in the M&P cafeteria.
- Produce a low-carbon events playbook, to reduce the need for certain services or items (for example single-use plastic, goodies and printed items).

→ By end 2027, 70% of GCSP events respect a planetary health diet for catering and 100% by 2030.

→ By end 2024, a low-carbon events playbook is produced, adopted and implemented for all GCSP residential events.

11. Raise staff and participant awareness and engagement

- Organise, promote or offer to enrol staff in a "climate fresk" or "2-ton" workshop
- Use signage and communication tools to raise staff awareness on GCSP commitments and key best practices on various issues (energy, waste, transport, IT)
- In packages to participants include GCSP's climate and environmental commitments and recommended good practices.

→ By end 2024, 100% of external communications and participant packages include GCSP's climate commitments and best practices to adopt.

→ By end of 2024, 100% of courses and events track emissions (Geneva-based activities) and by end of 2025, this tracking system is integrated into the GCSP CRM.

→ By end 2024, 100% of travel emissions are included in enrolled participant questionnaires & courses / events introduction.

→ By end 2024, organise a climate workshop (eg. climate fresk ou 2-ton) for all staff.



V. Our adaptations for sustainable design and delivery

Further to reducing our core activities' emissions and environmental impact, GCSP acknowledges that achieving these commitments necessitates adaptations in the design and delivery of core activities. From reevaluating location choices for courses and events to embracing online pedagogical training, GCSP's pursuit of sustainability underscores a holistic approach. We recognise the interconnect- edness of climate and environmental solutions with the fundamental aspects of our educational and diplomatic endeavours, and thus requiring the input from all our staff, including those designing and delivering GCSP's core activities. Below we outline these envisaged adaptations.

■ Make emissions reductions part of GCSP's brand



Integrating emissions reductions into the GCSP brand will not only align the organisation with contemporary global priorities but also showcase its commitment to sustainable and responsible practices. By incorporating a focus on reducing carbon emissions, GCSP can demonstrate leadership in addressing the interconnected challenges of security and climate change, fostering a reputation for forward-thinking and socially responsible engagement.

» Include GCSP's climate commitments and best practices to adopt in all external communications and participant packages.

Showcasing climate commitments in all external communication and participant packages will enhance GCSP's credibility, demonstrating a proactive stance on environmental responsibility while encouraging a broader commitment to sustainable practices among its stakeholders.

■ Encourage entire GCSP community to contribute to emissions reductions



Encouraging the entire GCSP community, including participants who exert influence in their respective communities, to contribute to emissions reductions not only aligns with global sustainability goals but also amplifies the impact by inspiring positive climate action beyond GCSP.

» Educate GCSP community on how to travel less emissive (sustainable travel choices)

Educating the GCSP community on adopting less emissive and sustainable travel choices is crucial, as the considerable travel emissions of GCSP participants constitute a substantial portion of the organisation's overall carbon footprint. By promoting eco-friendly travel practices, GCSP not only addresses its environmental impact but also empowers its community to make informed choices that contribute to a more sustainable and responsible approach to global security education.



Favour most sustainable choice for speakers (format, travel)

In a post-COVID era, prioritizing the most sustainable choices, such as online participation or least emissive modes of transportation for GCSP speakers, not only aligns with environmental objectives but also reflects an adaptation to changing norms, demonstrating our commitment to minimizing our carbon footprint without compromising the quality of its core activities.

■ Include tracking as a tool for awareness-raising and monitoring

Tracking and transparency on carbon emissions sources fosters awareness and a shared sense of responsibility, motivating individuals to actively engage in sustainability initiatives and contribute to the collective efforts of reducing carbon footprints.



» Systematically track emissions of all activities

By incorporating emission tracking of all activities, GCSP will be able to present clear metrics and trends, enabling stakeholders, including participants, staff, and the broader community, to better understand the environmental consequences of various activities.

» Develop an anonymous carbon tracking system for diplomatic dialogue

As GCSP's diplomatic dialogue assumed a heightened role in recent years, tracking carbon emissions becomes imperative, but it should be executed in a manner that ensures the complete anonymity of participants, recognizing the pivotal role they play in promoting peace and security and safeguarding their privacy within the context of crucial diplomatic engagements. Balancing environmental responsibility with the protection of participants' identities underscores GCSP's commitment to both sustainability and the delicate nature of diplomatic efforts.

» Include travel emissions in registration questionnaires & all courses / events introductions

Communicating on event-related travel emissions and ensuring GCSP can systematically track the emissions linked to participant travel is essential, as it empowers participants with information about the environmental impact of travel choices, fostering an awareness that encourages more sustainable decisions and significantly contributes to reducing GCSP's overall carbon footprint.



■ **Make GCSP a renowned online and in-person learning experience**



We are committed to elevating GCSP's current esteemed standing to establish it as a globally recognised online and in-person learning experience, capitalising on its existing reputation in the realm of security policy.

» **Further develop online courses and events based on COVID-19 learnings and limit number of in-person travelling participants and speakers**

Expanding online courses and events will leverage GCSP's successful adaptation during the pandemic to deliver valuable online education that has already attracted an increased number of participants from all over the world, thereby promoting diversity, sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and broader global engagement.

» **Invest in online pedagogical training to deliver high value engaging and dynamic experiences for participants**

Enhancing already interactive GCSP courses offers the advantages of increased accessibility, flexibility in scheduling, real-time collaboration, and the ability to incorporate diverse multimedia elements, fostering even more effective knowledge transfer and enriching the overall educational experience for participants while accommodating a variety of learning styles and preferences.

» **Exploit CLANED's analytics and participant feedback to develop data-driven and results-based improvements in online course offerings**

By leveraging data from its online learning platform, GCSP will be able to strategically enhance its online course offerings, tailoring content and delivery methods to meet the evolving needs and preferences of its learners, ensuring a continually improved and impactful educational experience.

■ **Develop regional offerings to meet F2F needs**

Developing regional offerings will serve as a strategic approach to ensuring the preservation of face-to-face courses when necessary for pedagogical or other reasons, accommodating the diverse needs of participants in various geographic locations.



» **Review location choices and favour regional versus international courses/events whenever possible**

GCSP will strategically assess venue selections, giving preference to regional options when possible, as part of an emissions reduction strategy linked to minimising international travel impact.



■ **Minimise material distribution for courses and events**



This practice will significantly reduce resource consumption, waste generation, and carbon emissions associated with the production, transportation, and disposal of materials, contributing to a more sustainable and eco-friendly approach for all types of convening. All staff members involved in procuring items for events and courses will:

- » **Implement a low-carbon events playbook**
- » **Ensure only essential items are distributed (eliminate goodies and minimise printouts)**
- » **Favour reusable nametags, lanyards and other individualised items**





VI. Our levels of transformation

This roadmap propels us to adapt our ways of working and convening by 2030: one that does not compromise our ability to fulfil our mandate but that strengthens and aligns our mission with a sustainable future. To achieve this, we plan to invest time and resources to meet a series of internal and external conditions towards our ambition.



Leadership

The commitment to achieve our reduction targets is unequivocal and deeply embedded within our organisation. In pursuit of this objective, the roadmap will involve every staff member and every member of our community. GCSP's leadership will take the lead in driving this initiative, mobilising essential resources to achieve our target, and offering strategic impetus along with consistent progress updates.



Equipping our teams

More than a question of tools and technology, implementing solutions will be about behaviour change and our collective ability to embrace this transition, through the active engagement and participation of our staff members. While policies and guidelines will play a crucial role, the key will be in making sure all members of GCSP are empowered to contribute their ideas and initiatives in order to fulfil our commitment and keep sustainable practices last over time. This will mean investing in internal capacity building and strengthening our knowledge and skills on the topic.



Empowering our community

As our largest source of emissions is related to the international travel of our participants to our courses and events, embarking our entire GCSP community on our decarbonisation journey is very important. We will raise participant awareness on this issue, sharing our climate and environmental commitments, as well as the best practices to adopt in order to contribute to emissions reductions.



VII. Governance, measuring and monitoring

Project governance

Starting in 2024, GCSP's management will be responsible for the implementation of the roadmap with the direct support of a strategic project manager. A transversal Steering Committee will remain in place to ensure involvement, ownership and accountability. This group will disseminate, guide, and oversee actions with backing from all departments as well as from external experts and partners.

We will incorporate carbon emissions measurement into our current monitoring systems, providing transparent progress reports. We will regularly report on key indicators that track our progress, complemented by more detailed progress assessments at mid-term horizons leading up to 2030.

Priority projects

The success of GCSP's footprint reduction implementation over the next seven years lies within a few priority projects. A specific investment and project management effort will take place over the period 2024-2027 to accelerate the deployment of these key solutions in order to achieve the first step towards lower emissions by 2027.



Responsible **travel** policy and flight decision tool



Sustainable **procurement** handbook



Low-carbon **events** guide for all organisers



Good **office** practices playbook



High level performance indicators

Commitments	Expected outcomes
Sustainable design and delivery	For all new and existing courses, trainings and events, the carbon and environmental impact is systematically integrated, from conception and execution.
Carbon footprint reduction	Tonnes of CO ₂ e emissions are as close as possible to 1500t in 2027 and below 1100t in 2030 (-47% from the 2019 baseline)
Community engagement	By end 2024, all participants have received GCSP's climate commitments and best practices to adopt and are encouraged to contribute.
Low-carbon events	By end 2024, a low carbon events playbook is adopted and implemented by all those involved in event planning.
Travel	Tonnes of CO ₂ e emissions from air travel are as close as possible to 850t in 2027 and below 650t in 2030 (-52% from the 2019 baseline)
Sustainable procurement	Tonnes of CO ₂ e emissions from procurement are as close as possible to 550 in 2027 and below 350 in 2030 (-48% from the 2019 baseline)
Good office practices	By end 2024, a good office practices playbook is produced, adopted and implemented by all staff.



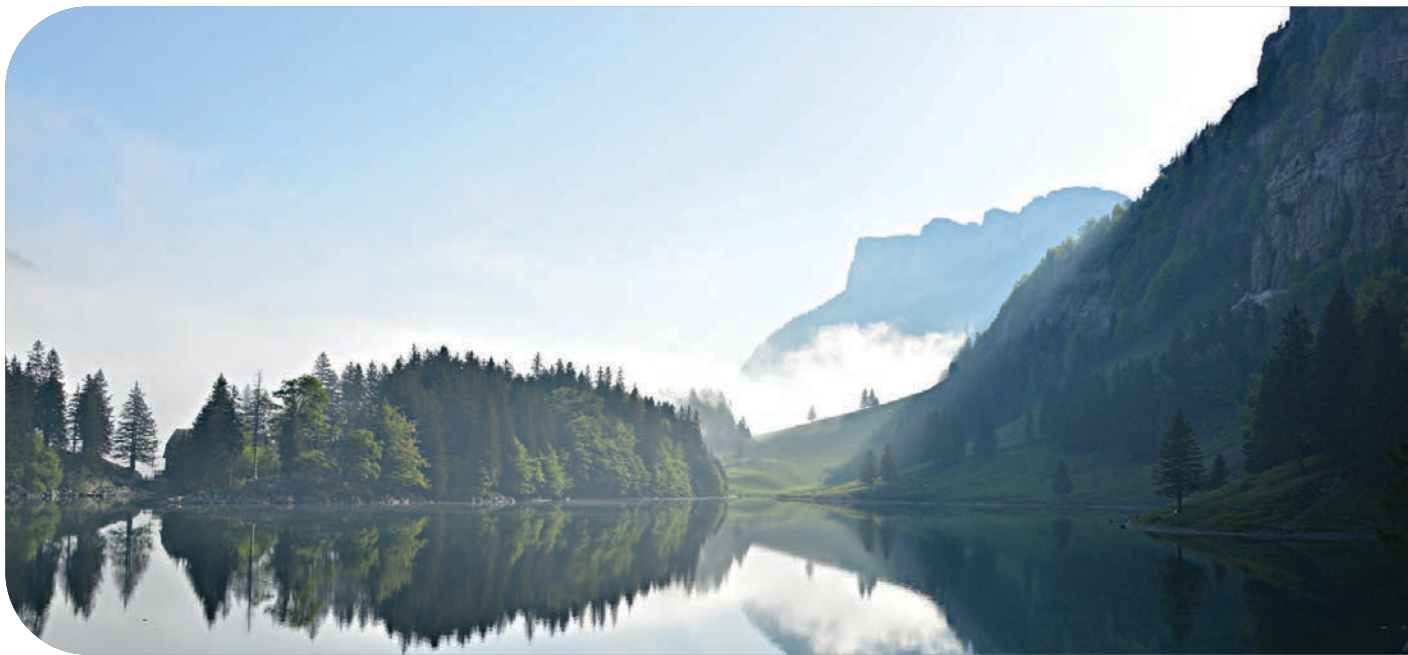
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Geneva Centre for Security Policy

Maison de la paix
Chemin Eugène-Rigot 2D
P.O. Box 1295
1211 Geneva 1
Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 730 96 00
E-mail: info@gcsp.ch
www.gcsp.ch



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