Carbon Footprint Management for Printing Houses

Carbon accounting is on the rise in the printing industry. One of the key drivers is the significant savings gained from strategically lowering the carbon footprint by accounting for emissions in the full life cycle of printed products. Furthermore, carbon neutral claims on print products are a strong competitive advantage in an increasingly environmentally conscious marketplace.

NEPCon's Carbon Footprint Management Service
NEPCon's Carbon Footprint Management (CFM) Standard provides a benchmark for carbon management and specifically targets the wood and paper industries. It is designed to support companies in being ambitious with their reductions efforts while meeting increasing demands from investors, consumers and the general public. CFM certification provides assurance that your carbon reduction efforts are effective and technically sound.

NEPCon has delivered sustainability services to the forestry, timber and paper sectors for more than 15 years. We pride ourselves on the guidance and technical know-how we provide to our clients in FSC, LegalSource and Carbon Footprint Management certification and training, supporting businesses to be impactful with the CSR strategies and communicate their efforts to investors and consumers.

Accounting for carbon in the print and paper industries
Many printing houses opt for certification to gain access to on-product claims for carbon neutrality. A carbon footprint of a print product is defined by the carbon emissions related to all life cycle stages of a finished print production based on a specific paper quality. Managing its carbon footprint requires companies to measure and reduce the carbon emissions their own production process as well as upstream and downstream processes if possible. Since there is an overlap in data collection between corporate and product footprinting, companies may find added business value and efficiency in developing their corporate and product footprint in parallel.

Printed product life cycle
These are the typical life cycle stages and related emissions generating processes of a print product.

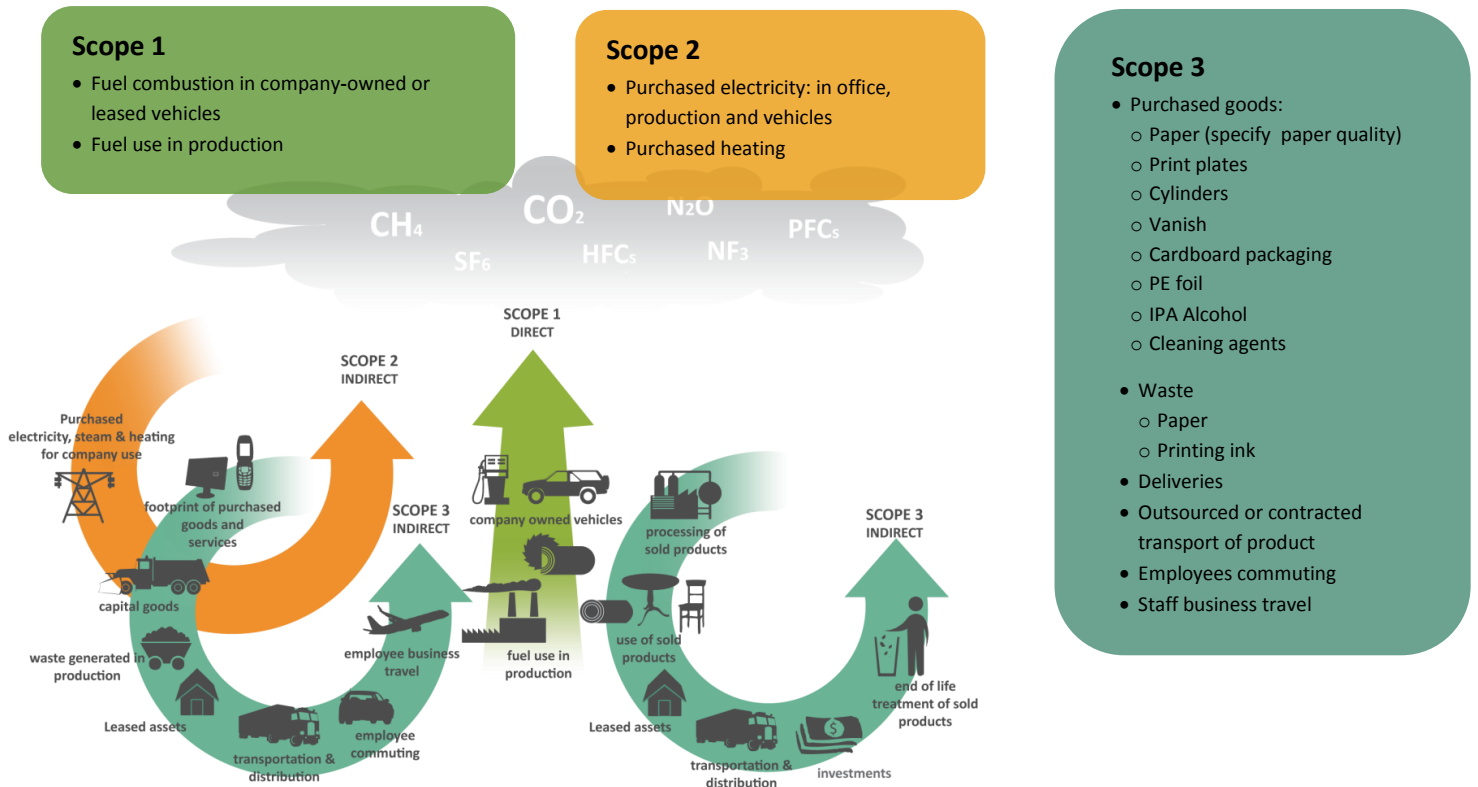| Raw material acquisition | Paper pre-processing | Prepress Press Dampening Postpress Binding Packaging | Distribution Storage | Usage | End-of-life Waste Recycling |

When calculating the emissions of your printing products, you have two options;

1. Calculate the carbon footprint of a number of standard print products
2. Use a carbon calculator to calculate the carbon footprint of each print product

Some printing houses purchase carbon neutral paper, in which case emissions only need to be accounted for from production through to end of life. The technical soundness of any carbon neutral product purchased and included in your carbon footprint will be assessed by your NEPCon auditor during the certification process.

Accounting for corporate carbon emissions

Exactly which emissions sources are relevant for your organisation depends on your business. You will need to be objective in evaluating which emission sources should be included and which can be justifiably left out. Our auditors can guide you to make the right decisions based on requirements of NEPCon's CFM Standard. Most relevant emissions sources for printing industry organisation are listed below:

Scope 1
- Fuel combustion in company-owned or leased vehicles
- Fuel use in production

Scope 2
- Purchased electricity: in office, production and vehicles
- Purchased heating

Scope 3
- Purchased goods:
  - Paper (specify paper quality)
  - Print plates
  - Cylinders
  - Vanish
  - Cardboard packaging
  - PE foil
  - IPA Alcohol
  - Cleaning agents
- Waste
  - Paper
  - Printing ink
- Deliveries
- Outsourced or contracted transport of product
- Employees commuting
- Staff business travel

How to calculate your emissions

To calculate the carbon footprint, follow these five simple steps:

1. Set boundaries: identify the boundaries of your corporation, identifying sites and functions covered in the scope
2. Identify emissions: sellect all significant emission sources in Scope 1, 2 and 3 (Greenhouse Gas Protocol)
3. Collect data: internally and outside of your organisation
4. Choose calculation method: use NEPCons CFM calculator or develop you own
5. Find emissions factors: you will use these to convert your collected data into a carbon footprint.

This calculation is the carbon footprint baseline. It helps you to identify emissions hotspots and opportunities for reducing emissions. The baseline is the reference for your carbon footprint management plan and reduction targets.

Resources for paper and printing

To learn more about carbon footprint management in the paper and printing industries, explore the below resources or contact NEPCon's climate team:

- ISO 16759 (2013)
- Paper profiles from individual paper producers
- CEPI Ten Toes of Paper's Carbon Footprint
- INTERGRAF (2010) recommendation

Contact

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