About ITU

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the UN specialized agency responsible for telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs). Its membership, comprising 193 governments, over 700 private companies and 20 academic institutions, has called for ITU to take the lead in engaging the global community (including the UN system and the ICT industry, as well as academia and NGOs) to address climate change through the use of ICTs. ITU is based in Geneva, Switzerland, with 12 field offices around the world.

Get involved in ITU's
Climate Change Programme

www.itu.int/climate

"**ITU is moving forward the agenda to promote the use of ICTs as an effective tool to combat climate change and achieve environmental sustainability.**"

Dr Hamadoun Touré
ITU Secretary-General

"**Climate change is the moral challenge of our generation ... ITU is one of the most important stakeholders in terms of climate change.**"

Ban Ki-moon
UN Secretary-General

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Acting on Climate Change: the role of ITU

Moving the agenda forward

How ITU is moving the agenda forward

Building a sustainable future with ICTs

Information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as satellites, mobile phones or the Internet, play a key role in addressing major challenges related to climate change and sustainable development. ICTs are fundamental to monitoring the climate and helping countries to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. By raising awareness of the role of ICTs, ITU is assisting society with the transition towards a green economy by promoting innovative solutions that can ensure a sustainable future.

Greening the ICT sector

While ICTs enable a low carbon future, these technologies also contribute to around 2-2.5 per cent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. ITU is engaging the public and private sectors through the development of new global ICT standards, methodologies for measurement, and policies and strategies that minimize the environmental footprint of the ICT sector.

"Delivering as one" with the UN

Within the UN system, ITU has the unique competence in the ICT sector. This makes our work relevant to nearly all aspects of developing an integrated UN approach to the relation between ICTs and climate change. ITU is actively contributing to the work under the UNFCCC and the preparatory process for the UNCSD 2012 (Rio+20). By providing inputs from the ICT sector, ITU is joining UN efforts to "deliver as one." ITU is also among the lead UN agencies striving to achieve climate neutrality in its operations.

3 Action areas:

Monitoring climate change

ITU, as the steward of the international spectrum, allocates the necessary radio frequencies and orbit resources as well as approves international standards for the interference-free operation of applications and radio communications systems (terrestrial and space) used for climate monitoring, weather forecasting, remote sensing, and disaster prediction and detection.

Adaptation and capacity building

As a core function of its work with developing countries, ITU assists its Member States in the use of ICTs to adapt to climate change. Two prominent examples of this area of activities are the use of ICTs to implement early warning systems for natural disasters and the use of communications for disaster relief operations.

Mitigation and resource efficiency

As the preeminent global body for ICT standardization, ITU is playing an important role in limiting and ultimately reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. By developing technical standards to limit and reduce the power requirements of ICT equipment and services and to reduce e-waste. ITU is actively promoting environmental sustainability.

...and 3 examples

ITU has developed, together with more than 60 organizations and major ICT companies, a set of methodologies to assess and minimize the life cycle impact of the ICT sector on GHG emissions both in terms of its own emissions and the savings created through ICT applications in other industry sectors.

ITU has developed technical standards and approved the Digital Broadcast Plan, which reduces the consumption of hundreds of thousands of powerful transmitters. by ten times.

The ITU global standard for a universal energy-efficient mobile phone charger will save up to 82,000 tonnes of redundant chargers a year and at least 13.6 million tonnes of CO_2 annually. This is one of the many standards developed by ITU to reduce e-waste.