

10 questions about sustainable transport Checklist: optimizing the CO₂ footprint

In order to limit global warming, CO₂ emissions must be substantially reduced by 2030. Since the logistics sector accounts for 24% of the total CO₂ footprint, supply chain and logistics professionals have an important responsibility to contribute to this substantial reduction. Use this checklist to find out what you can do to take control of transport-related CO₂ emissions.

At the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in 2015, close to 200 countries agreed to try to limit global warming to a maximum of 1.5 degrees. But according to the UN environmental agency UNEP, the latest climate plans of around 120 countries show that the Earth is heading for a 2.7 degree temperature increase this century. For the 1.5 degree target to stay within reach, greenhouse gases (such as CO₂) will need to be reduced by 55%. In the most recent edition of its Emissions Gap Report, UNEP concludes that countries' climate plans still fall way short of achieving the desired reduction. Likewise, many companies lack concrete objectives in this context. The CO₂ policy is still primarily a boardroom issue rather than being part of the daily operations.

Transparency about carbon emissions

However, it is not inconceivable that CO₂ reporting will become a mandatory part of the annual accounts. Moreover, customers are increasingly asking for information about the emissions related to the products and services they purchase. It is important to get a grip on this, because the transport of products from the warehouse to the customer is a key source of carbon emissions.

Businesses that can be transparent about this and report the figures voluntarily, even when they are not legally obliged to so, send out a clear signal that they are shouldering their responsibility. In contrast, companies that do not report their figures are at risk of being suspected of below-average performance.

Assess your progress

To help you assess your progress in the transition to sustainable transport, Supply Chain Media and BigMile have developed this checklist for transport companies and their clients. You can use it to determine which steps you still need to take to truly optimize your transport-related CO₂ footprint.



Checklist for sustainable transport

	Yes	No
1. Do dashboards in your software systems give you insight into the current CO ₂ emissions of your end-to-end supply chain?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you have insight into all the individual components that are responsible for CO ₂ emissions in your end-to-end supply chain, and do you know the current CO ₂ emissions for each component?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is all the data necessary for calculation of the CO ₂ emissions available to you from your supply chain partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is CO ₂ reporting already a standard activity within your company?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you provide shipment-level CO ₂ reports to your customers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is CO ₂ a topic during price negotiations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have company-wide reduction targets been defined and have you drawn up a concrete action plan for each component?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Is the action plan linked to KPIs that are actively used as the basis for decision-making?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Can you demonstrate the concrete effect of the sustainability measures on the total emissions compared to the previous period?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Do you have insight into how partially switching to a different modality would affect the total emissions in your supply chain?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESULTS

0-3 questions answered with Yes:

Well begun is half done, as they say. If you don't already have customers or clients who are asking for a CO₂ report, you realize that it's just a matter of time until it happens. You can't afford to wait, so start by gaining a baseline measurement of the end-to-end supply chain emissions. You can then break that down into the individual components and set these up in your software system as the basis for reporting.

4-7 questions answered with Yes:

You have insight into the actual emissions. You know precisely the level of emissions generated by each part of the supply chain and you are also able to report on this. The next step is to work with your management team to set reduction targets, including an action plan for achieving them.

8-10 questions answered with Yes:

You're doing a good job. You have real-time insight into the CO₂ emissions of the various components in your supply chain. Therefore, you know exactly which part is generated by transport and are able to report on this. Ways for you to excel could include making further optimizations, partially switching to other modalities or calculating the effect of increasing your use of electric vehicles.