

# **Report for Servas International By the Ethical Travel Team (SIETT) August 2019**

## **1 Summary**

This report describes the major causes of the climate crisis and the significance of travel, and in particular, air travel. It refers to evidence that shows that the efforts to date, and in the foreseeable future, of the United Nations (by excluding air travel from its deliberations) and the International Air Transport, will not significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from air travel.

Reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change state that an increase to 1.5°C will be reached by around 2030 if emissions continue to be released at the current rate. We refer briefly to evidence that this will have a devastating impact on human life on Earth, and that it is our belief that a 2°C plus warming world will very likely not be avoided.

This report describes and recommends the use of a footprint analysis and the use of offsetting carbon emissions at both an individual, national and international level of Servas. We make a number of suggestions about guidelines and actions at all three levels that could, and should, be considered and adopted in some form by Servas, to implement actions following the footprint analysis in order to reduce or eliminate the cause of the emissions.

Servas began after the Second World War as a way of connecting people so they could increase their knowledge of others with different cultures and traditions and build friendships across boundaries. It was primarily a way of building peace through travel and hosting. We suggest that this basic purpose be reassessed. Today the greatest threat to a peaceful world is the destruction of our environment, reflected in particular through a changing global climate. How can we respect and care for Earth, and promote ways of peace, while walking our talk? Are there other ways of doing this that do not involve travel and hosting? Can we reinvent ourselves to work towards a safe and flourishing world using methodologies and strategies that have minimal negative impact on the planet?

## **2 Introduction**

This report came out of the decision at the 2018 Servas International General Assembly in South Korea to set up a group and process to draft guidelines for ethical travel. Terms of Reference were subsequently agreed by the SI Executive. The structure of this report is to describe the remit and terms of reference; the major causes of climate change; issues of air travel; footprint measurements, offsets, implications for Servas (individually, nationally, and internationally); and a review of the purpose of Servas.

We are grateful for a number of reviewers who read and commented on a draft report, including Danielle Serres, Philip Olera, Prossy Nampijja, Zahrea Karimi, Tosi-Wansiri Rongrongmuang, Mersa Sattchi, L V Subramanian, and Alvany Santiago. There was general agreement on the part of the reviewers with the suggested recommendations. They wanted: a fuller review of all travel and perhaps another report for these wider impacts; more education of Servas members; and more youth participation. One comment asked for a summary of the report for wider

distribution. A further comment was to refer to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 17 which is to “strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development”.

### 3 Remits

At the 2015 Servas International General Assembly, it was decided to promote the idea of travelling peacefully and walking lightly on Earth.

At the 2018 SICOGA meeting in South Korea it was decided that:

*Servas International will raise the climate consciousness of its global community, by:*

- *Acknowledging this global issue on the Servas International website, and encouraging member countries to also acknowledge this issue through member-based communications.*
- *Offering Servas hosts and travellers suggestions of how to live and travel in a carbon-light way. For travel, this option could include travelling in a zero-carbon way (such as through walking or bicycling) or by purchasing carbon offsets for more distant travel, which can be purchased through credible websites like less.ca and carbonzero.ca.*
- *Finding ways to lessen Servas business travel, including SICOGA and member country meetings.*
- *Sharing among members, ways that Servas International may become a more climate-conscious organization such as promoting non-travel Servas services, including distance conversations among Servas members.*

At the Ethical Travel Discussion Group in Seoul, it was decided to set up a group to draft a set of guidelines for ethical travel for SI. Nominated members of the group were:

- Andréa Assis (Brazil)
- Pauline Franklin (New Zealand)
- Robert Howell (New Zealand) - Convenor
- Shohei Morita, initially, and then Tim Lynch (USA)
- Nancy Palardy (Canada)

Following the establishment of this group, a short background on climate change was prepared. (see Appendix 1).

After Korea and after discussion with Jonny Sågänger, it was agreed to proceed with the preparation of a report with the above members, and with the ability to refer any drafts or questions, during the preparation, to other members of Servas for further assistance as required. Jonny Sågänger agreed to facilitate any guidance or approvals that were required from SI Executive. While the focus was on travel, and in particular, air travel, it was agreed that other issues identified in the 2018 remit would be included where they were necessary to deal adequately with travel issues.

### 4 Major Causes of the Climate Crisis

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) <sup>1</sup> concluded that there are several greenhouse gases responsible for changing the global climate, and humans emit them in a variety of ways. Most come from the combustion of fossil fuels in cars,

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#### <sup>1</sup> References

a) Understanding the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C Retrieved from [https://library.wmo.int/doc\\_num.php?explnum\\_id=5188](https://library.wmo.int/doc_num.php?explnum_id=5188)

b) See also NASA. Global Climate Change. Retrieved from <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/>

buildings, factories, and power plants. The key change associated with the changing climate is the warming of the planet's average temperature. The gas responsible for the most warming is carbon dioxide, or CO<sub>2</sub>. Other contributors include: methane released from landfills, natural gas and petroleum industries, and agriculture (especially from the digestive systems of grazing animals); nitrous oxide from fertilizers; gases used for refrigeration and industrial processes. A further contributing factor is that a significant portion of global forests, that store carbon, have been lost.

A recent IPCC special report concluded that human activity has already caused about a 1.0°C increase in average global temperatures compared to pre-industrial levels. It also states that an increase to 1.5°C will be reached by 2030 if emissions continue to be released at the current rate. Pathways limiting global warming to 1.5°C with no or limited overshoot would require rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems<sup>2</sup>. Global emissions of carbon dioxide increased from 22.4 billion metric tons in 1990 to 35.8 billion in 2013, a rise of 60 percent<sup>3</sup>, so we are going in the wrong direction. Over the decade 2018 to 2028, given current trends, there will be 100 million people in extreme poverty due to carbon emissions<sup>4</sup>.

Transportation accounts for approximately 23% of total global energy related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and transport emissions are projected to double by 2050<sup>5</sup>.

In 2016, John Schellnhuber, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, stated that to achieve a 1.5°C by 2025 we will have to have close down all coal-fired power stations across the planet. And by 2030 we will have to get rid of the combustion engine entirely. That decarbonisation will not guarantee a rise of no more than 1.5°C, but it will give humanity a chance<sup>6</sup>.

## 5 Air Travel

In 2018, domestic and international flights emitted around 895 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (MtCO<sub>2</sub>), which is 2.4% of global energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions<sup>7</sup>. However, planes also produce nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide and black carbon, all of which affect the global climate. The emission of aerosols and water vapour also form contrails (the long white streaks that mark a plane's passing), which also have an effect on the climate. As a report on airplane emissions by the Center for Biological Diversity states:

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<sup>2</sup> IPCC. Global Warming of 1.5°C. Retrieved from [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2018/07/SR15\\_SPM\\_version\\_stand\\_alone\\_LR.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2018/07/SR15_SPM_version_stand_alone_LR.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Atlas of Sustainable Development Goals 2017. Retrieved from <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/chart-global-co2-emissions-rose-60-between-1990-and-2013>

<sup>4</sup> World Bank Group's Climate Change and Development Series. 2016. Shock waves: Managing the impacts of climate change on poverty. Washington DC. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/22787/9781464806735.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Creutzig, F., Jochem, P., Edelenbosch, O.Y., Mattauch, L., van Vuuren, D.P., McCollum, D. & Minx, J. (2015). Transport: A roadblock to climate change mitigation? *Science* 350, 911. DOI: 10.1126/science.aac8033

<sup>6</sup> McKie, R. 6 August 2016. Scientists warn world will miss key climate target. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2016/aug/06/global-warming-target-miss-scientists-war>

<sup>7</sup> Timperley, J. 2019 Corsia: The UN's plan to 'offset growth in aviation emissions after 2020' Retrieved from <https://www.carbonbrief.org/corsia-un-plan-to-offset-growth-in-aviation-emissions-after-2020>

*The persistent formation of contrails is associated with increased cirrus cloud cover, which also warms the Earth's surface. Aircrafts' high-altitude emissions have a greater global warming impact than they would if the emissions were released at ground level*<sup>8</sup>.

It is estimated that these additional effects will increase the global warming impact of aviation by about 1.9 times that of carbon dioxide alone<sup>9</sup>. So air travel accounts for around 4% to 5% of greenhouse gas emissions without adding the contribution of emissions associated with support services such as food preparation, and airports. The United States is responsible for nearly half of worldwide CO<sub>2</sub> from aircraft.

Emissions associated with international air travel are not captured within national greenhouse gas inventories and, therefore, are not covered by national reduction targets. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has attempted to set targets for its members. In its Annual Review 2018 it states that its targets are 1) improving fuel efficiency an average of 1.5% annually to 2020; 2) capping net emissions through carbon neutral growth from 2020; and 3) cutting net carbon emissions in half by 2050, compared with 2005<sup>10</sup>. There has been much criticism of IATA's ability to significantly contribute to reducing air travel's contribution to global warming. There is a very good summary of these weaknesses by Carbon Brief<sup>11</sup>. Among other issues, critics are concerned about the limited impact the targets will have, that they are too low, and that there is little transparency in the process. We encourage you to read Carbon Brief's report. To date, alternative fuels such as biofuels, have had limited impact and this is not likely to change in the future<sup>12</sup>.

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has invited airtravelers to make responsible decisions about flying and encouraged customers to invest in the airline's carbon offsetting scheme<sup>13</sup>. Despite these efforts we can conclude that IATA's efforts to date, and in the foreseeable future, will not significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from air travel.

It is important also to note that none of these initiatives include private air travel, which receives tax breaks. A leader in the Economist concludes

*"All air travel is bad for the environment. Business class is worse than economy class, because it burns more jet fuel per passenger. Private jets are more damaging by an order of magnitude. The tax breaks for cooking the planet this way cannot be justified. They should all be scrapped. Carbon*

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<sup>8</sup> Airplane Emissions - Center for Biological Diversity,

[https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/.../climate\\_law...global\\_warming/airplane\\_emissions/](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/.../climate_law...global_warming/airplane_emissions/)

<sup>9</sup> a) Climate Change Connection. Retrieved from

<https://climatechangeconnection.org/solutions/transportation/air-travel/>

b) See also Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC), 1999, Special Report – Aviation and the Global Atmosphere – Summary for Policymakers. Retrieved from <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/av-en-1.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> IATA Annual Review. Retrieved from <https://www.iata.org/publications/Documents/iata-annual-review-2018.pdf> p42.

<sup>11</sup> Timperley, J 2019 Corsia: The UN's plan to 'offset growth in aviation emissions after 2020 Retrieved from <https://www.carbonbrief.org/corsia-un-plan-to-offset-growth-in-aviation-emissions-after-2020>

<sup>12</sup> Biofuel.org.uk Disadvantages of Biofuels. Retrieved from <http://biofuel.org.uk/disadvantages-of-biofuels.html>

<sup>13</sup> Frost, N July 4 2019. The Netherlands' national airline is encouraging people not to fly. Retrieved from <https://qz.com/1658880/klm-airline-is-encouraging-people-not-to-fly/amp/>

*emissions should be taxed, not subsidised by the sleepless masses in steerage and even the less fortunate souls who never fly.<sup>14</sup>*

The effect of an increase in climate warming will lead to problems with aircraft takeoffs, dangerous flights, and a reduction in airports due to sea level rise<sup>15</sup>. Climate warming will reduce the lift ability of planes. Lift is the upward force created by diverting air around wings as an aircraft moves down the runway. It is harder to achieve when the air is scorching hot, because hot air is thinner than cold air. Climate warming will lead to more dangerous flights. High-altitude ice is a feature of thunderstorms, and it is dangerous. The infiltration of tiny particles of ice into turbofan engines has been blamed for more than 100 engine failures in recent years. In the most notorious high-altitude icing accident, an Air France flight from Rio de Janeiro to Paris in 2009 crashed, killing all aboard, when it stalled after the autopilot disconnected when ice crystals disabled its speed sensors. Many airports are built on flat, low-lying land, by the ocean or in drained swamps. Such places can be hard to drain and vulnerable to rising sea levels and more intense storms.

## **6 Footprint Measurements and Offsets**

A carbon footprint is the total output of greenhouse gas emissions caused by an organisation, event, product or person. 'Carbon' is used as shorthand for all greenhouse gases as it is the most dominant, although there may be other gases in addition to carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that contribute to a carbon footprint. There are a number of organisations that provide a means of measuring ecological footprints at an individual, national and international level. A number are specific to a particular country. Some require considerable details of consumption that involve a lot of information about accommodation, travel, and personal expenditure. They require one to have a personal budget and knowledge of one's annual income and expenditure, and are time consuming to fill in. When there is more detail of one's consumption it is possible to be more accurate when calculating one's footprint.

Buying an offset means buying a credit that has been verified as having reduced, or prevented the release of emissions elsewhere. There are a number of agencies that provide this service. Some have been shown to unreliable. Hence it is important that offset procedures be certified or validated.

It needs to be recognised that offsetting is appropriate in a number of situations, but cannot replace stopping or minimising the cause of emissions that lead to the need for offsetting in the first place. There is a limit to the amount of offsetting that can be carried out.

Because Servas International is an international organisation, our first consideration was to recommend choosing an agency that is international in scope, and is as simple as possible, recognising that some accuracy will be compromised. Hence we considered recommending that Servas International use the UN GoClimateNeutralNow<sup>16</sup>. To ensure that the offsets are genuine and certified, it is recommended that a certification procedure be used (e.g., Gold Standard). On

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<sup>14</sup> Plane Stupid. Private Jets receive ludicrous breaks that hurt the environment. Economist March 9 2019. p12.

<sup>15</sup> Pearce, F. 19 Feb 2018. Climate change spells turbulent times ahead for air travel. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/19/climate-change-spells-turbulent-times-ahead-for-air-travel>

<sup>16</sup> Climate Neutral Now. UN Climate Change. Retrieved from <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/climate-neutral-now>

enquiry, we learnt that Climate Neutral Now is an initiative of the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat but is not Gold Standard certified. The secretariat supports Certified Emissions Reductions projects (which generate Certified Emissions Reductions offsets), and these offsets are a sufficiently high quality offset that it should cause us no reason for concern. A list of some credible offsets certifiers is available at Introduction to Offset Standards by the Stockholm Environment Institute <sup>17</sup>.

However, Andréa Assis stated that in Brazil there is no footprint offset project/programs for individuals. Only for companies. So, an option is to invite members to donate to well-known environmental NGOs, like SOS Mata Atlantica (Brazilian environmental NGO for restoring subtropical rainforest) or a global NGO like WWF, Conservancy International, or Greenpeace, in order to fund reforestation projects. Many Brazilian members frequently do this. Payment is in local currency and has a deduction in income tax.

Furthermore, if Brazilian members want to purchase offsets through the UN CDM offset program, they have to do that abroad, at a cost plus 6.38% on the value purchased because the payment method is made by credit card or bank transfer in USD or other foreign money. This will not be affordable for members who earn lower wages and use Servas net worldwide. Thus only privileged Brazilian members could take advantage of it.

We have therefore decided to recommend an initiative at the national level to allow for variations, rather than a single rule for all.

## **7 Implications for Servas, individually, nationally, and internationally**

The above information, including that contained in the Appendix, indicates that the risk of climate warming and its consequences is very great, and that the time for avoiding widespread devastation is very short. As David Wallace-Wells in *The Uninhabitable Earth* states at the very beginning of his book “*It is worse, much worse, than you think*” <sup>18</sup>.

The IPCC 1.5°C Report states that to avoid a 1.5°C scenario would require rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems. The chances of fulfilling these changes are very low. Schellnhuber’s assessment, that to achieve a 1.5°C target by 2025 we will have to have closed down all coal-fired power stations around the planet and by 2030 we will have to get rid of the combustion engine entirely, also have low chances of being realised. The difference between achieving a 1.5°C and 2°C target is the death of 150 million people. That is the equivalent of 25 holocausts, 3 times the size of the death toll of the Great Leap Forward, and twice the number of deaths occurring in the Second World War <sup>19</sup>.

Air travel causes a small part of the increase in emissions. It is important for an organisation such as Servas - an international network of hosts and travellers established to help build world peace, goodwill and understanding by mainly (but not exclusively) providing travel and hosting opportunities through sharing life in their

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<sup>17</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.co2offsetresearch.org/consumer/Standards.html>

<sup>18</sup> Wallace-Wells, D. 2019. *The Uninhabitable Earth*. Allen Lane.

<sup>19</sup> Wallace-Wells op cit p28.

home during brief visits. However, most forms of travel contribute to global warming. Although this report focuses on air travel, it needs to be recognised that other aspects of how we live need to be assessed also and actions taken to reduce or eliminate carbon emissions from those actions. These are not elaborated in this report.

Possible actions by Servas exist at an individual, national and international level. They include educating, implementing, and incentivizing change through personal example (*If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change – Gandhi*<sup>20</sup>). All involve carrying out a footprint analysis. And because the time for mitigation alone has passed, steps should also be taken to prepare for the changes to the environment (floods, droughts, extreme weather events).

## **8a General Guidelines for Air Travel**

Air travel has become such an accepted part of modern life that it is often not easy to think of ways where alternatives exist. Air travel should be avoided, but if it cannot be avoided, then the travel should be limited as much as possible and the emissions should be offset. Airlines that offer carbon offsetting programmes (or have partnered with organizations that provide offsets) include Emirates; Qantas; Virgin Australia; Delta Airlines; British Airways; Jetstar; Air New Zealand; United Airlines; Air Canada; Jetblue Airways; Gulf Air; Ryan Air. However, before choosing an emission offset scheme, it is important to check that it meets the criteria adequate for certification (see footnote 16).

## **8b Individual**

Because there will be considerable differences in the size of individual footprints, their causes, and means of reducing them, it is important for each individual to identify their own footprint and possible actions. These include changing existing patterns of behaviour (such as committing to no or minimal air travel; using public transport; buying only sustainable food; investigating ways of improving energy efficiency, water use, recycling waste), as well as buying offsets to neutralise the impact.

Steps should be taken to identify the major risks from extreme weather events in one's community, and help to prepare to cope.

When air travel is considered essential, offsets should be purchased through a certified offset provider, or through a method recommended by the relevant Servas National body.

## **8c National Servas groups**

At a national level, there are two types of action: changing or neutralising the footprint of national activity; encouraging individuals to change their behaviour or neutralise their impact. For the former it could be a requirement that there is an annual report of the national level footprint and subsequent efforts to minimise it. Also it could be a requirement that board members of the national body publicly report on their footprint and ways that they are taking to minimise the impact. This report should at the minimum relate to Servas activities, but could also include their

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<sup>20</sup> Retrieved from <https://www.quora.com/Did-Gandhi-really-say-Be-the-change-you-want-to-see-in-the-world>

total personal footprint. The national body could also link with other groups that are actively dealing with climate warming, and take an active role in promoting their values through media releases and other public demonstrations. Steps should be taken to identify the major risks from extreme weather events in the nation, and help to prepare to cope.

An example of the issues facing national boards is with Canada. The national meeting of the Servas Canada board is a face-to-face meeting and occurs once every three years. Given the distances in Canada, air travel is often the only option. One of the discussions the Servas Canada board had was whether Servas Canada should purchase offsets for the air travel associated with these meetings. The board has yet to resolve this question. One option is to calculate, in advance, the overall emissions associated with each board member travelling to a particular location. The board could then select a location that would result in the least amount of emissions possible.

At a national level, the encouragement of individuals to change or neutralise, could be done on a voluntary or compulsory basis. One opportunity is when someone applies for Servas membership, steps can be taken to inform them of the threat of climate warming. At the same time, when someone applies for membership, it could be a requirement that they commit to carrying out a footprint assessment. Another opportunity is when a member applies for a letter of introduction, it could be a requirement that a footprint assessment is carried out, and questions asked about whether air travel is essential and if so, what offsets are to be purchased.

At a National Level there are two process options. The first option is where the National Office acts as an advisor in helping the Servas member carry out the footprint assessment, and then guides or assists them to purchase offsets. The second option is one identified by Shohei Morita for Servas USA, where the National Office carries out a number of the tasks for members, including the purchase of offsets (see Appendix 2)

## **8d Servas International**

Possible options include:

1. annual reporting of the footprint of the Servas Executive and its activities, and efforts to neutralise it;
2. publicly reporting by each member of the Executive on their personal footprint and efforts they are taking to minimise the impact;
3. carrying out meetings with electronic communication;
4. for international conferences, consider regional meetings (for example, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Africa, Australasian) but linked electronically;
5. reforming the way in which SI operates to minimise membership of committees and meetings and stream-line decision making, to reduce travel requirements;
6. publish stories of Servas members who are the best examples of walking lightly (Servas Eco Builders ?);
7. publish stories of the Servas countries that are in the lead for becoming the most eco friendly
8. identifying what extreme weather events are likely to be most disruptive to Servas International and what preparations should be made to cope.

## **9 Review of the purpose of Servas**

Servas began after the Second World War as a way of putting people together so that they could increase their knowledge of others with different cultures and traditions and build friendships across boundaries. It was primarily a way of building peace through travel and hosting. Over the years it became more of a middle class organisation, with a number of members who saw it as a way of reducing travel costs.

The greatest threat to a peaceful world today is climate warming and related threats to a safe and flourishing environment. Every half degree of warming, it is estimated, will see an increase of 10-20% of the likelihood of armed conflict<sup>21</sup>. Servas began with the aim of reducing conflict.

The second fundamental ethical principle, adopted at South Korea, is to respect and care for Earth and to live within its capacity to support life<sup>22</sup>. How can we respect and care for Earth, and promote ways of peace, while walking our talk? Are there other ways of doing this that do not involve fossil-fuel intensive travel and hosting? As a way of promoting a rethink of our basic purpose, the Executive might like to set up a group that identifies first, existing organisations who have the same or similar fundamental principles and purpose, and second, explore options and ways of realigning our methodologies and modus operandi to minimise our footprint. Can we reinvent ourselves to work towards a safe and flourishing world using methodologies and strategies that have minimal negative impact? What would Bob Luitweiler advise if he was alive today? If we are not able to do this, one further option is to close the organisation down.

## 10 Comment on voluntary and mandatory actions

When people commit voluntarily to a course of action, there is usually more determination to follow through on those actions, than when compared to a mandatory requirement. However, voluntary actions are not necessarily picked up by many people. Sir Jonathon Porritt, Chair, Sustainability Advisory Panel, Air New Zealand states

*Air New Zealand already has one of the most successful voluntary offset schemes in the aviation industry, but I hope my fellow travellers on Air New Zealand flights will not mind me pointing out that at under five percent of customer journeys, that's disappointing<sup>23</sup>.*

Brazil Servas believes that the National role should only be advisory. Part of this answer lies in education, and this should be a priority for Servas.

The IPCC 1.5°C Report states that to avoid a 1.5°C scenario would require rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems. It is very unlikely that this will be achieved in the necessary time. As the impact of the environmental deterioration becomes more serious and obvious, and if the voluntary actions are small, that may be the time to consider mandatory requirements.

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<sup>21</sup> Hsiang S M et al. 2013. Quantifying the influence of climate on human conflict. Science 341 No 6151. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1235367>

<sup>22</sup> The first is the belief in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of all human beings as a foundation for a more peaceful world.

<sup>23</sup> Porritt, J. 2018. Air New Zealand Sustainability Report. Retrieved from <https://p-airnz.com/cms/assets/PDFs/2018-Sustainability-Report.pdf>

## 11 Suggestions / Recommendations

- 1 Use a certified calculator and offset provider to calculate one's footprint.
- 2 Where air travel cannot be avoided, purchase offsets through a certified offset provider, or through a method recommended by the National Servas body.

### Individual Level

- 3 Possible Individual Actions: measure your own footprint and work to reduce it
- 4 Possible Individual Actions; take steps to identify the major risks from extreme weather events in one's community, and help to prepare to cope.

### National Level

- 5 Possible National Servas actions: after conducting a footprint assessment of its activities, produce an annual report of the national level footprint and subsequent efforts to minimise it.
- 6 Members of the national body publicly report on their footprint and efforts they are taking to minimise the impact.
- 7 For the National body to link with other groups who are actively dealing with climate warming, and take an active role in promoting their values through media releases and other public demonstrations.
- 8 Take steps to identify the major risks from extreme weather events in one's region/country, and help to prepare to cope.
- 9 At the National body level consider when someone applies for membership, steps are taken to inform them of the threat of climate warming.
- 10 At the National body level consider when someone applies for membership, it could be a requirement that they commit to carrying out a footprint assessment.
- 11 At the National body level consider when a member applies for a letter of introduction, it could be a requirement that a footprint assessment is carried out, and questions asked about if the air travel is essential and if so, what/whether offsets are to be purchased.
- 12 At an organisational level choose between options where the National body's actions are advisory only; or where the National body carries out a number of the tasks for members, including the purchase of offsets (as per Appendix 2).
- 13 Involve National Peace Secretaries in the promotion and awareness and education among their National membership, related to environmental issues.

### International Level

- 14 Report annually of the footprint of international events and activities and efforts to neutralise it.
- 15 Publicly report by each member of the Executive on his or her personal footprint and ways that are taking to minimise the impact.

- 16 Carry out meetings with electronic communication for international conferences, consider regional meetings (for example, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Africa, Australasian) but linked electronically.
- 17 Reform the way in which SI operates to minimise membership of committees and meetings and stream-line decision making, to reduce travel requirements.
- 18 Publish stories of Servas members who are the best examples of walking lightly (Servas Eco Builders ?).
- 19 Publish stories of the Servas countries that are in the lead for becoming the most eco friendly.
- 20 Identify what extreme weather events are likely to be most disruptive to Servas International and what preparations are necessary to cope.
- 21 Carry out a rethink of the basic purpose of Servas to reinvent itself to work towards a safe and flourishing world using methodologies and strategies that have minimal negative ecological and social impact, or close the organisation down.
- 22 Make any guidelines initially voluntary, but embark on an extensive educational programme. If this is not successful, consider mandatory guidelines.

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## Appendix 1

Seoul 2018-10-18

### **A SHORT BACKGROUND ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

*By Nancy Palardy (Canada) and Robert Howell (New Zealand)*

Questions for reflection:

1. As an individual SERVAS member, how am I living (in my house, the way I travel, the food I eat, and the bank I use) to achieve a low-impact/carbon lifestyle?
2. What would I recommend to my national SERVAS board that it should do to promote and advocate travelling peacefully and walking lightly on Earth?
  3. What would I recommend SERVAS International do to highlight and promote its commitment to these principles of living within Earth's capacity to support human (and other) life?

We have been asked to write a short backgrounder on climate change for all SERVAS members. To do so, we need to put it in the context of how humans live. The ecological footprint is a measure of the resources used by humans compared to the global resources available. Currently and collectively, humans use 1.5% of available resources, which means that 1.5 Earths would be required to sustain humanity's current levels of consumption.

The Stockholm Resilience Centre has developed a concept of planetary boundaries which describe nine environmental boundaries. The idea is that humanity must live within the safe zone in each of these categories. Currently, humans have crossed the safe limits for biochemical flows (phosphorus and nitrogen), and genetic diversity (the diversity of life on Earth), and are rapidly approaching the safe limits for climate change and land system change.

The major causes of human-induced climate change are the burning of fossil fuels (such as coal, oil, natural gas). These activities result in the release of carbon dioxide (the main gas responsible for changing the global climate). Animal emissions (primarily from cattle) are also significant, and contribute methane, a particularly potent greenhouse gas. The removal of forests has also contributed as tree growth helps to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

The international economic system is based on continued growth, and consumption and waste is huge. Prices for products and services often do not incorporate the cost of the damage associated with pollution and environmental degradation. Because this damage is not usually incorporated in the cost of goods and services, the economic system results in consumption that exceeds the planet's ability to cope and provide.

In the 1960s, international oil companies were told by their scientists of the impact of burning fossil fuels in contributing to a changing global climate. This information was generally hidden from the public, and the fossil fuel industry began to actively deny and challenge the science. In the 1980s, scientists such as James Hansen from the United States began to speak out more publicly about the risks associated with burning fossil fuels. In 1992, over 1,700 of the world's leading scientists, including the majority of Nobel Laureates, issued the World Scientists' Warning to Humanity. Al Gore, former vice-president of the United States, began to campaign against the denial of climate change.

In 1992 the United Nations held a conference in Rio de Janeiro, to try to reach a global agreement to address the issue of climate change. One result was the United

Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Since then, however, there has been no progress in actually driving down global emissions. It was not until 2016 at a meeting of the United Nations in Paris that the majority of countries agreed to actively reduce their national emissions and each country made an individual pledge to take action. (It is noteworthy to recognize that, in calculating the emissions for which each country is responsible for, emissions for air and sea travel are not included). Despite the commitments made by each country, it is projected that global average temperatures will still increase to more than 3°C over pre-industrial levels.

A recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change special report concluded that human activity has already caused about a 1.0°C increase in global temperatures compared to pre-industrial levels. It also states that an increase to 1.5°C will be reached by 2030 if emissions continue to be released at the current rate. The report also described the serious global impacts if the increase in temperature reaches 2.0°C and beyond. More severe and unprecedented weather events are projected, including floods, droughts, intense storms and hurricanes. Among other consequences, sea levels are projected to rise due to the loss of ice at both polar regions, the melting of glaciers, and the expansion of ocean waters because of warmer water temperatures. At present, with a 1.0°C warming the global community is already experiencing major challenges; if 2.0°C and beyond becomes a reality, life as we know it on Earth will not be possible. Parts of the world will become uninhabitable, and food and water supplies, transport systems, and economic activity will be severely challenged. A further consequence will be an increase in global conflict and migration as people try to flee untenable living conditions.

So what does all this mean for SERVAS – a global peace community that is committed to bringing about peace and understanding through travel and hosting? At the 2015 SERVAS International General Assembly, it was decided to promote the idea of travelling peacefully and walking lightly on Earth.

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## Appendix 2

Project Proposal by Shohei Morita

Project Title: Carbon Offset Program Implementation Project

Project Summary: Human impact has taken a toll on our planet, and it has become increasingly important to ensure our operation at US Servas has minimal impact on the environment as we move towards a more sustainable future. As an organization that promotes and involves a significant amount of traveling, it is vital that we provide a means to offset or reduce the environmental impact induced by our members, volunteers, and staff. The carbon offset program will provide an opportunity for our hosts and travelers to measure and calculate their carbon footprint and purchase carbon credits on the US Servas website to go towards verified carbon projects around the world. Project Lead: Shohei Morita, US Servas Staff; Member Services Lead Collaborators: US Servas Staff, US Servas Board of Directors, Jeane Divine, MorseMedia

### I. Need Statement

A recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projects a 1.5°C increase in temperature compared to pre-industrial levels by 2030. Furthermore, a 2°C increase can potentially lead to catastrophic and irreversible changes to our planet.

Mitigating climate change and limiting global warming to 1.5°C has a greater implication than simply protecting the environment. Besides the obvious impact of

climate change such as sea level rise and loss of ecosystems, it ultimately affects human health and well-being. Therefore, it is vital that we prioritize climate change mitigation in order to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and ensure a sustainable and equitable future for the people and the planet.

In 2017, President Donald Trump announced that the U.S. would cease all participation in, and intends to eventually withdraw from, the 2015 Paris Agreement. As a part of an international organization, this carbon offset program will serve as a clear and important message to other Servas countries that US Servas does not condone nor support the action taken by President Trump, and that we should and will be a part of a collaborative process with other countries to combat climate change and achieve world peace.

## II. Methods

This project will be implemented in five separate phases; research, planning, pilot and implementation, advertising and outreach, and evaluation. While staff will act as the lead in implementing this project, different levels of participation and involvement will be required by all collaborators in each phase.

Phase 1: Research Anticipated Participants: Staff, Board Online research will be conducted to gain more information on existing carbon offset programs. This will provide fundamental information needed to start and maintain a successful program. To date, US Servas staff has been in contact with Sustainable Travel International (STI), an organization that works to minimize negative impacts of tourism through various projects including carbon offsets. STI works and partners with various carbon projects worldwide, and will purchase and retire carbon credits on our behalf. STI essentially acts as the “middleman”, connecting interested organizations with carbon projects of their interest.

Revenue from the sale of carbon credits from our website will go directly to US Servas, where the money will be held until we reach an agreed amount with STI (eg. \$1000). Once this target has been reached, STI will send an invoice, and US Servas will send a check for that amount. STI will then purchase and retire the carbon credits from the appropriate project, and will send US Servas an acknowledgement.

US Servas office will generate a certificate to email to members who purchase carbon credits as an acknowledgement to their contribution. Their contribution will also be acknowledged by adding a “green traveler” logo to their LOI.

In addition to working with STI, we have also explored the carbon offset platform offered by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC). There are many benefits to as well as some disadvantages this carbon platform which are outlined in the table below. After careful consideration, the benefits of FCCC’s carbon platform do not outweigh the disadvantages, mainly due to the fact that, contrary to STI’s carbon offset program, this platform is set up for individuals to purchase carbon credits for themselves, but not for organizations to implement as their own carbon offset program.

### Benefits and disadvantages of working with STI

#### (+) Advantages

- Offers established carbon offset program used by various large companies worldwide including United Airlines
- Experience staff offers various communications support and guidance throughout the entire process. Offers staff training to engage customers/members

- Program management by STI means they will purchase carbon credits on our behalf
- Will help track our carbon footprint and program impact overtime. Some projects are VCS or REDD+<sup>2</sup>

(-) Disadvantages

- Not 100% of the proceeds go toward the carbon credits. STI will take a small portion as a “processing fee”.
- Because we/they are purchasing carbon offsets in bulk from the carbon projects, we can not retire carbon offset in the name of the individual for whom the offsets were purchased.
- Unclear if/how some of their projects are verified.

Benefits and disadvantages of working with FCCC

(+) Advantages

- 100% of proceeds go toward the selected carbon project
- All listed projects are UN approved
- Ability to retire verified emission-reduction offset in the name of the individual for whom the carbon offsets were purchased, and receive an official certificate with a unique serial ID number.

(-) Disadvantages

- Its set up for individual people to go purchase credits by themselves, but is not set up for organizations to offer to members. Will be extremely difficult to implement.
- No additional support in implementing nor maintaining this program.
- Difficult to keep track of program impact over time

Phase 2: Planning

Anticipated Participants: Staff, Board, Morsemedia Key decisions will be made during this phase in preparation for the implementation of the program.

Determining the best platform for our program

Staff and the Board will collaborate to select the best platform for our program. Options include STI, FCCC, as well as other various platforms available online.

Selection of carbon projects

Once a carbon platform has been determined, specific projects offered by the platform must be selected. STI’s projects and descriptions are listed in Appendix 1. FCCC’s projects and descriptions are available on their website at <https://offset.climateneutralnow.org/>

Anticipated website changes

There are various website changes needed to implement this project. In collaboration with MorseMedia, staff (with input from the Board) will determine the necessary changes to our website. We will request for a quote (if necessary) from MorseMedia for any website change needed.

Members will be able to purchase carbon credits in three places on the website;

1. Travel/host activation or renewal cart checkout page
2. General donation page
3. Carbon offset information page

On each of those locations, there will be an option for members wanting to purchase carbon credits to pick the project they want to contribute to. See Appendix 2 for a sample page of carbon offset purchase page.

Travelers who purchase carbon credits will be recognized as a Certified Green Traveler. A small Certified Green Traveler badge will be printed on their LOI to reflect their effort and commitment. See Appendix 3 for a sample Certified Green Traveler LOI. US Servas will work with Morsemedia and Carson Park Design to determine the feasibility of this.

#### Calculator

Staff will need to research and determine the best online carbon footprint calculator to link to from our website. Once it is selected, we will need to contact the owner/provider of the calculator to obtain permission. Potential existing calculators include; STI, carbonfootprint.com, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

#### Anticipated office operation changes

Members who purchase carbon credits will receive an electronic or a printed certificate acknowledging their contribution. See Appendix 4 for a sample certificate. Blank fillable PDF certificate will be stored on the office computers. Whenever a carbon credit is purchased, staff will manually generate a certificate and email it to the credit owner.

Servas office will keep track of all the members who have purchased carbon credits, and staff will send them periodical emails with project updates. This will allow members to keep track of progress being made in the projects they chose to support.

### **Phase 3: Pilot and Implementation**

Anticipated Participants: Staff, Board, Morsemedia Necessary changes to the website will be made and tested before going live. It is important at this point to make sure that the changes made to the website are simple and user-friendly. Staff and MorseMedia will work together to ensure that this change does not obstruct the traveler and host renewal or activation process for members. Once these changes go live, staff will monitor closely to ensure there is no technical issues.

### **Phase 4:**

Education and Outreach Anticipated Participants: Staff, Board Effective education and outreach is vital in ensuring a long term success of this project. Examples of different educational outreach methods are outlined below.

#### Brochures

Brochure with more information regarding the project including specific carbon projects will be designed. This will be shared with members and volunteers when promoting Servas.

#### Website

A new page for this project will be created to provide more details on the importance of offsetting our carbon footprint, as well as how members can get involved in traveling and hosting sustainably. There will also be a link where members can purchase carbon credits directly from this page.

#### Social media (green traveler highlights etc),

Through various creative posts on social media, we can highlight and post updates of this project. Mailchimp to all members

#### Mailchimp emails to all members

The office will send out periodical Mailchip encouraging members to participate. For example, people's consumption of natural resources and carbon footprint becomes

especially high during the holiday season. With this in mind, the office can send out a Mailchimp with ideas on how to spend their holidays more sustainably (ie: shopping for presents at thrift stores, purchasing carbon credits on Black Friday, staying home to spend time with family instead of shopping on Black Friday etc).

#### Project update emails

Emails will be sent out to members who have purchased carbon credits with updates on the specific project(s) they chose to support. This will help maintain transparency and allow them to see exactly how their money is being used.

Phase 5: Evaluation

Anticipated Participants: Staff, Board

Specific goals will be set, and staff will work with STI to monitor closely and ensure that these goals are being met. Staff and Board will continue to brainstorm for creative ways to continue engaging members in this project. Based on the evaluation, any necessary changes will be made to improve the program

### **III. Budget**

Items listed below are predicted to have a cost associated with implementation. While the exact cost is unknown, it will get updated as we work to get quotes for each item and more information becomes available.

- Automatic feature to place “green traveler” logo on LOI of members who purchase carbon credit (predicted cost: \$\$\$)
- Implement payment feature on our website (during membership renewal shopping cart, and general donation). (predicted cost: \$)
- Printing brochures (predicted cost: \$\$)
- Boosting posts on facebook to reach wider audience (predicted cost: \$)
- Staff time; this includes generating certificates and emailing it to members who purchase carbon credits, time it takes to do outreach and other things to maintain the program. (predicted cost: \$\$)

### **IV. Outcomes**

This project directly supports the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

- Goal 6 - Clean water and sanitation: According to the United Nations, water scarcity affects more than 40% of the global population, and is projected to rise. Projects through STI such as the hydrologic ceramic water purifiers in Cambodia directly supports this goal by providing ceramic water purifiers to up to 1.7 million people across 1680,000 to 315,000 households to ultimately provide access to clean drinking water in rural households in Cambodia.
- Goal 7 - Affordable and clean energy: Energy is the dominant contributor to climate change, accounting for around 60% of total global greenhouse gas emissions (un.org). Many carbon offset projects aim to offset carbon by promoting clean energy. Capricorn Ridge wind farm project is an example of a carbon project through STI that directly works to promote alternative clean energy.
- Goal 8 - Decent work and economic growth: Many of the carbon offset projects lead to the creation of direct and indirect employments. By supporting projects that are either VCS or the Gold Standard, the jobs created through the projects provide fair treatment and wages.
- Goal 9 - Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure: By supporting projects such as the Jari Ampa REDD+, we are able to contribute to improving infrastructure and support innovative ideas and projects.
- Goal 11 - Sustainable cities and communities: Projects such as the Rio Preto Jacunda REDD promotes the creation of sustainable communities that create jobs and prosperity while preserving land, people, and natural resources.

- Goal 13 - Climate action: Climate change is affecting every country in the world, with the poorest and the most vulnerable being affected the most. By working to limit global warming to 1.5°C instead of 2°C, we are able to ensure a more sustainable and equitable society.
- Goal 15 - Life on land: Around 1.6 billion people, including 70 million indigenous people, depend on forests for their livelihood. Carbon projects such as the Peru Madre de Dios fights to reduce deforestation to protect endangered species habitat as well as communities who rely on the forest for survival.

## **V. Partners**

We will collaborate with Servas International's ethical travel committee/working group to share ideas and information to improve our program. Furthermore, this program can serve as a basis for creating their own carbon offset program.

## **VI. Appendix**

Appendix 1: Sustainable Travel International (STI) carbon projects list  
[www.sustainabletravel.org](http://www.sustainabletravel.org)

Alto Mayo Conservation Initiative - \$12.00/mton  
 Asorpar Colombian Reforestation - \$12.00/mton  
 Capricorn Ridge Wind Farm - \$10.00/mton  
 Hydrologic Ceramic Water Purifiers In Cambodia - \$14.00/mton  
 Rio Preto-Jacundá REDD+ - \$11.00/mton  
 Yaeda Valley REDD - \$12.00/mton  
 Jari Amapá REDD+ - \$8.50/mton  
 Green Trees - \$15.00/mton  
 Vietnam Biogas - \$5.70/mton  
 Isangi REDD+ - \$8.00/mton  
 Big Smile Wind Farm - \$5.50/mton  
 Peru Madre de Dios - \$10.00/mton  
 Santa Maria LFG - \$25.00/mton  
 Utsil Naj Technologies - \$12.00/mton