ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE
Q1 2025

In 2022, the New Zealand Veterinary Association Te Pae Kīrehe (NZVA) began exploring ways to support climate action. Below is an update on our climate change work, and the steps we are taking to reduce our carbon emissions as an organisation.

How do we positively contribute to a sustainable environment?

In an ideal world, organisations would aim to stop emitting greenhouse gasses (GHG) altogether, however this is impossible for most businesses. The key steps NZVA needs to undertake to reduce carbon emissions are:

1. **Measure, report and verify** our carbon emissions.
2. Identify which GHG we can **reduce**.
3. **Offset** any GHG emissions we cannot avoid.
4. **Commit** to a reduction of carbon emissions, with a short-term goal (two years), a medium-term goal (five years), and a long-term goal (10 years).

What has the NZVA done so far?

We began working with Ekos to measure our carbon footprint in 2022. You can see how we are tracking in Table 1 below.

GHG emissions sources	FY 2022		FY 2023		FY 2024	
	GHG tCO	% of Total	GHG tCO	% of Total	GHG tCO	% of Total
Domestic Air Travel - New Zealand Domestic Economy Class	35.89	62.97%	50.33	53.15%	42.54	48.66%
International Air Travel - Long Haul International Average	7.00	12.28%	23.75	25.08%	19.08	21.82%
International Air Travel - Short Haul International Average	1.89	3.32%	0.86	0.91%	1.14	1.30%
Business Accommodation - New Zealand	1.39	2.44%	2.17	2.29%	1.70	1.94%
Business Travel - Petrol	1.12	1.97%	2.34	2.47%	3.09	3.53%
Business Travel - Taxi	0.32	0.56%	0.46	0.49%	0.52	0.60%
Business Accommodation - Australia	0.19	0.33%	0.00	0.00%	1.14	1.30%
Well to tank emissions	5.13	9.00%	10.72	11.32%	14.15	16.18%
Subtotal Travel	52.93	92.86%	90.63	95.70%	83.36	95.35%
Electricity - New Zealand (Unit 1)	2.52	4.42%	2.52	2.66%	2.52	2.88%
Electricity T&D Losses	0.23	0.40%	0.23	0.24%	0.23	0.26%
Staff Working From Home	0.70	1.23%	0.70	0.74%	0.70	0.80%
Waste & Wastewater General Waste to Landfill - Without Gas Recovery (Unit 1)	0.62	1.09%	0.62	0.66%	0.62	0.71%
Grand Total	57.00	100.00%	94.70	100.00%	87.43	100.00%
	(Audited by Ekos)		(Estimated)		(Estimated)	

The 2022 numbers have been audited by Ekos; the figures for 2023 and 2024 are estimates.

For context, 2022 was the last year of COVID-19 restrictions. 2023 and 2024 showed travel returning to more 'normal' levels.

Travel remains our biggest carbon emitter. The table below breaks down the carbon emissions across the organisation.

Carbon Emitted	2023		2024	
	GHG tCO	% of Total	GHG tCO	% of Total
Total Governance	17.29	19.08%	23.39	26.73%
SIBS	37.23	41.08%	34.31	39.21%
Total Staff	36.10	39.84%	29.80	34.06%
Estimated Total	90.62	100.00%	87.50	100.00%

Carbon is being generated across the whole organisation, and everyone has a role to play in reducing GHG emissions.

What have we done?

This year, we updated our [Travel Policy for Staff, Board and NZVA Members](#) to include the following clause:

> *"Those travelling on NZVA business are encouraged to consider climate impacts of all travel. Where possible individuals should utilise the most efficient modes of transportation and determine how they can lessen the environmental impact of their travel.*
>
> *Travel is the NZVA's biggest carbon emitter, therefore, before travel is booked, we encourage you to consider the following:*
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> - *If you are attending a seminar, conference, or other event, **consider how your travel could benefit other NZVA members to make your** carbon emissions really count.*
> - *If you are attending a meeting, **consider whether it could be carried out virtually**.*
> - ***Consider combining your trip** with another reason for travelling to reduce your carbon footprint. Are there other meetings or events you could attend at the same time?*

We also updated the Procurement section of our Operational Finance Policy to include a sustainability statement:

> *"When selecting a supplier of goods and/or services the procurement process must be free from preference, judgement, self-interest, and favouritism. <u>When comparing options of alternative supply, the decision maker needs to consider</u>*

the long-term outcomes for both the people and the planet (kaitiakitanga).
Outcomes that benefit the collective rather than the individual are a priority."

What are the next steps?

Travel

Travel remains our biggest carbon emitter. We are challenging all staff, contractors, volunteers, special interest branches (SIBs), and Board members to consider whether the carbon they're generating from transport is necessary. Consider shorter, more frequent virtual meetings instead of longer face-to-face meetings.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The environmental repercussions of AI models are a cause for concern and need to be considered when making AI decisions. The carbon impact is twofold:

1. The energy needed to train and run AI models increases enormously as datasets and models become more complex. Training an AI model can produce about 285,000 kgs of carbon dioxide. This equates to travelling 2.4 million kms, or five times the lifetime emissions of the average car.
2. The e-waste produced by AI technology contains hazardous chemicals, including lead, mercury and cadmium, which can contaminate the environment.

We all need to factor in carbon emissions when deciding whether to AI solutions.

Make our carbon footprint count.