



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE DECEMBER 2024

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.

Why do we need to contribute to a sustainable environment?

Our reasons for taking climate action are two-fold:

1. **To meet the 2022–2028 NZVA Strategic Plan:** Environmental sustainability is a core part of our One Health/collaboration member priority.
2. **To be a good corporate citizen:** In 2008, the United Nations developed a suite of Sustainable Development Goals that all countries are encouraged to follow. The Climate Action Goal committed all countries to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees this century. To achieve this, we need to reduce carbon emissions by 42% when compared to 1990 levels.

How do we positively contribute to a sustainable environment?

The diagram below shows the steps NZVA needs to undertake to reduce carbon emissions.



1. **Measure, report and verify** our carbon emissions. We have used Ekos to help us achieve this target. In an ideal world, organisations would aim to stop emitting greenhouse gasses (GHG) altogether, however, this is impossible for most businesses.
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 have been working with Ekos to measure our carbon footprint for 2022, 2023 and 2024 (January–October). You can see how we are tracking in Table 1 below. The 2022 numbers have been audited by Ekos; the figures for 2023 and 2024 are estimates. We estimate the full-year carbon footprint for 2024 will be 86 tonnes).

GHG emissions sources	FY 2022		FY 2023		FY 2024 - Oct YTD	
	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%	36.00	49.95%
International Air Travel - Long Haul International Average	7.00	12.28%	23.75	25.08%	19.00	26.36%
International Air Travel - Short Haul International Average	1.89	3.32%	0.86	0.91%	0.00	0.00%
Business Accommodation - New Zealand	1.39	2.44%	2.17	2.29%	1.00	1.39%
Business Travel - Petrol	1.12	1.97%	2.34	2.47%	2.00	2.78%
Business Travel - Taxi	0.32	0.56%	0.46	0.49%	0.00	0.00%
Business Accommodation - Australia	0.19	0.33%	0.00	0.00%	1.00	1.39%
Well to tank emissions	5.13	9.00%	10.72	11.32%	9.00	12.49%
Subtotal Travel	52.93	92.86%	90.63	95.70%	68.00	94.35%
Electricity - New Zealand (Unit 1)	2.52	4.42%	2.52	2.66%	2.52	3.50%
Electricity T&D Losses	0.23	0.40%	0.23	0.24%	0.23	0.32%
Staff Working From Home	0.70	1.23%	0.70	0.74%	0.70	0.97%
Waste & Wastewater General Waste to Landfill II - Without Gas Recovery (Unit 1)	0.62	1.09%	0.62	0.66%	0.62	0.86%
Grand Total	57.00	100.00%	94.70	100.00%	72.07	100.00%
	(Audited by Ekos)		(Estimated)		(Estimated)	

Table 1

As you can see, travel is our biggest carbon emitter. In 2022, which was the last year of COVID-19 restrictions, there were varying degrees of anxiety about travelling and face-to-face meetings. It's not surprising that 2023 and 2024 show an increase in travel.

Table 2 (below) breaks down the carbon emissions from travel across the organisation.



Carbon Emitted	2023		2024 (YTD Oct)	
	GHG tCO	% of Total	GHG tCO	% of Total
Total Governance	17.29	19.08%	19.24	26.62%
SIBS	37.23	41.08%	29.76	41.17%
Total Staff	36.10	39.84%	23.29	32.22%
Estimated Total	90.62	100.00%	72.29	100.00%

Table 2

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

What are the next steps?

Everyone in the organisation needs to consider the carbon effect of their decisions. **We need to make our carbon footprint count.**

Since travel is our biggest carbon emitter, we're challenging all staff, contractors, volunteers, special interest branches (SIBs), and Board members to consider whether the carbon they're generating from transport is necessary. Here are some ways you could do this:

- If you're attending a seminar, conference or other event, consider how your travel could benefit NZVA members. Think about how you're going to communicate your learnings to members to make your carbon emissions really count.
- If you're attending a meeting, consider whether it could be carried out virtually. In 2024, the NZVA Board converted one of their meetings to a virtual meeting. In 2025, they are planning to increase this to two meetings. How many of your meetings could be done 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?

Make our carbon footprint count.