Carbon Reporting for Freight Forwarders: A Beginner's Playbook

Your comprehensive guide to the importance of sustainability in transport and logistics
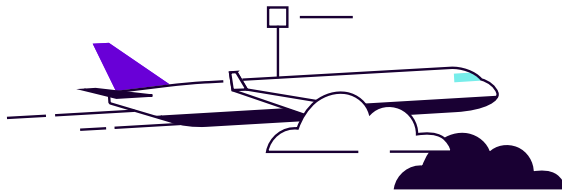
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Introduction to sustainability in freight forwarding

In recent years, sustainability has emerged as a central concern for businesses across industries, and the freight forwarding sector is no exception. As global supply chains expand, the environmental impact of logistics operations has come under increased scrutiny.

Freight forwarders play a crucial role in the transport of goods, and while their operations don't always directly contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, they deal directly with customers who need to measure and report their scope 3 emissions resulting from their supply chain activities. By implementing carbon reporting into their services, forwarders can offer their customers greater transparency, meet regulatory requirements and gain a competitive edge in a marketplace that's gradually increasing its focus on sustainability.

Importance of sustainability in transport and logistics

The logistics industry contributes roughly 11% of total global carbon emissions, with road, rail, sea and air freight accounting for a large portion of this figure. Transport emissions are projected to rise unless substantial action is taken. In fact, the International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that by 2050, emissions from freight transport will surpass those from passenger transport unless mitigated.

Businesses that rely on freight forwarders to transport their goods are incorporating sustainability into their operations, driven by regulations, consumer preferences and brand awareness. Many of these businesses are setting new ambitious sustainability goals, such as reaching net zero by 2050, and a key component of reaching these goals is working with logistics partners to align with these objectives. As a result, freight forwarders that can deliver transparent, accurate carbon reporting will be better positioned to win business from environmentally-conscious shippers.

What you will learn from this playbook

With this playbook, we intend to provide freight forwarders like you with the knowledge, tools and confidence you need to provide customers with carbon reporting services, making it easier for them to achieve their sustainability targets.

By following the guidance outlined, you'll become a knowledge leader in carbon reporting on customers' shipments, and learn how to integrate carbon emissions measurements into your services and sell these services as part of your business's overall offering.

The business case for carbon reporting in freight forwarding

Carbon reporting is not just about compliance and transparency; it offers tangible business benefits for freight forwarders. As the demand for sustainable logistics grows, the ability to provide emissions data on shipments has become a differentiating factor that can help freight forwarders win and retain customers.

Meeting customer demands for sustainability

Today's businesses are under increasing pressure from stakeholders, regulators and consumers to reduce their environmental impact. Customers are looking for logistics partners who can help them meet their sustainability goals, and this includes providing detailed emissions data on every shipment. Freight forwarders who offer carbon reporting services can better meet these demands, positioning themselves as trusted partners in their customers' sustainability journeys.

Providing transparent emissions data helps customers:

- **Monitor and reduce scope 3 emissions:** By receiving accurate logistics emissions data, customers can take action to minimise their carbon footprint.

- **Comply with regulations:** Freight forwarders that deliver detailed emissions reports enable customers to stay compliant with evolving sustainability regulations.

- **Enhance their environmental credentials:** By partnering with freight forwarders who offer carbon reporting, customers can improve their own sustainability profiles, which can enhance their reputation in the market.

Enhancing business reputation and loyalty

Freight forwarders that provide carbon reporting as part of their service offerings stand out in an increasingly crowded market. This value-added service helps build stronger relationships with customers, leading to increased loyalty and repeat business.

Key benefits:

- **Improved customer retention:** Customers are more likely to stay with freight forwarders who offer advanced services like emissions tracking and reporting. This transparency and partnership can foster long-term customer loyalty.

- **Attracting new customers:** As sustainability becomes a higher priority for businesses, freight forwarders that provide carbon reporting are more likely to attract new clients seeking environmentally responsible logistics partners.

- **Increased revenue:** By positioning carbon reporting as a premium service, freight forwarders can increase their revenue. This could be achieved through premium pricing for emissions reports or by winning contracts from environmentally conscious clients.

Conclusion

Incorporating carbon reporting into freight forwarding services is not only a regulatory necessity but also a strategic advantage. By understanding the regulatory landscape, leveraging carbon calculation tools, and aligning with global standards, freight forwarders can offer value-added services that meet customer demands, improve their environmental impact, and boost their business prospects.

We explore the core elements of carbon reporting in freight and logistics in the following section.

Building knowledge of carbon reporting in logistics

This section provides an in-depth look at the fundamentals of carbon reporting in logistics, including understanding emissions, navigating regulations, calculating emissions and adopting tools to streamline the process.

Understanding the logistics carbon footprint

A carbon footprint represents the total amount of GHG emissions — primarily carbon dioxide (CO2) but also other gases like methane (CH4) and nitrous oxide (N2O) — produced directly or indirectly by a company's total activities.

GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS

CO_2 CH_4 N_2O HFCs SF_6 NF_3 PFCs
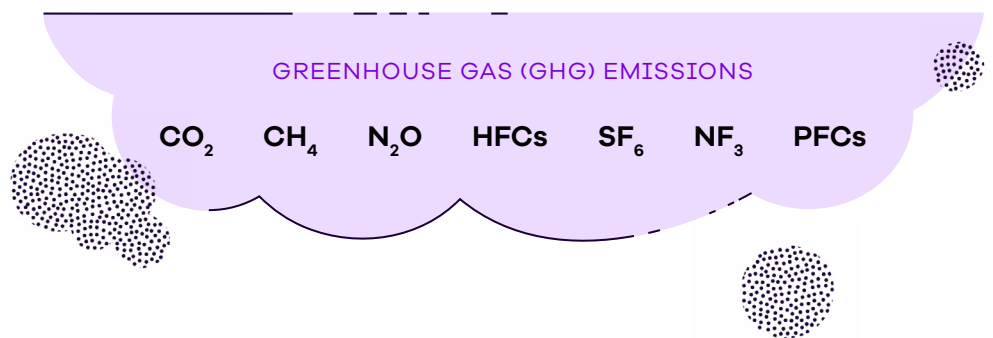
In logistics, the carbon footprint is predominantly influenced by fuel consumption across various transportation modes, such as road, rail, sea and air. You can read more about carbon emissions and their impact on the environment here.

Freight forwarders are especially important because transport emissions will account for a large share of their customers' overall carbon output.

These emissions fall under scope 3 in sustainability frameworks. Logistics services are a major contributor to scope 3 emissions, so they're of significant interest to shippers.

Understanding the regulatory landscape

Beyond wanting to be more environmentally friendly, many shippers are being mandated to start reporting and reducing their scope 3 emissions. Governments worldwide are tightening the regulatory framework around carbon emissions, pushing industries to become more transparent about their environmental impact. For freight forwarders, this means shippers will expect you to be up to date with regulations that impact them and understand their requirements. This means you should be prepared to track, measure and report customers' carbon emissions as part of your service.

Two key regulations currently impacting shippers in Europe and the UK are:

The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)

This EU regulation requires large companies to disclose their sustainability metrics, including carbon emissions across their supply chains. For freight forwarders, this creates a need to provide accurate emissions data for their customers.

Learn more →

The Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) Framework

In the UK, SECR mandates energy and carbon reporting for large companies. Freight forwarders must be able to deliver shipment-specific emissions data to help customers comply with SECR and avoid potential penalties.

Learn more →

In addition to these major regulations, other regional or industry-specific frameworks are emerging, and many companies now voluntarily report emissions in response to shareholder pressure, consumer demand or participation in environmental programs like the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP).

Key reporting standards for freight forwarders

GHG Protocol

This is the most commonly used international standard for emissions reporting. Freight forwarders use this framework to classify emissions by scope and type and to ensure consistency in reporting to customers.

GLEC Framework

Designed specifically for the logistics sector, GLEC provides industry-specific guidance for calculating emissions across different transport modes. It is endorsed by major logistics companies and used in conjunction with tools like EcoTransIT World to generate standardized emissions reports.

ISO 14083

This is another widely recognised international standard, used for quantifying and reporting of GHG emissions arising from transport chain operations. Freight forwarders that comply with ISO 14083 demonstrate their commitment to best practices in emissions management.

By building your knowledge of these frameworks and standards and providing carbon reporting services via tools aligned and in conformance with them, you can ensure your carbon reporting services meet global benchmarks and customer expectations.

Introduction to carbon reporting tools

Incorporating carbon reporting into logistics operations can seem complex due to the number of variables involved. However, specialised carbon reporting tools are available to help streamline this process. These tools use robust algorithms, data integrations and industry-standard emissions factors (from methodologies such as the GLEC framework) to provide accurate, reliable emissions calculations.

Carbon reporting tools work across 4 key areas:

1 Data input and integration

- These tools require essential shipment data, including origin, destination, distance travelled, fuel type and transport mode (e.g., road, sea, rail, or air).

- Many tools integrate directly with Transportation Management Systems (TMS) and other digital freight solutions through APIs, allowing for real-time data updates and seamless data flow.

- Freight forwarders can often upload data in bulk or connect directly to their data sources, making it easier to handle large volumes of shipment data.

2 Application of emissions factors

- Emissions factors are an essential component to calculating accurate emissions. These factors are derived from industry standards, such as those provided by the GLEC framework or GHG Protocol.

- A tool might use a specific emissions factor for a diesel-powered truck in Europe and a different factor for a cargo ship or aeroplane. These factors account for variations in emissions across transportation methods, energy sources and geographical regions.

3 Calculating total emissions

- Using emissions factors, shipment details and distance travelled, the carbon reporting tools calculate the carbon footprint for each leg of a shipment and aggregate these to provide a total emissions report.

- Advanced tools offer more detailed breakdowns, such as emissions per kilogram of goods shipped, per mile travelled or per shipment leg. Some tools allow for adjusting variables like payload weight or partial shipments to refine results.

4 Reporting and data visualisation

- Most carbon reporting tools provide detailed emissions reports that are exportable in formats compatible with regulatory standards and customer reporting requirements.

- Many tools also offer dashboards, data visualisation options and graphs to present emissions data in easily digestible formats. This feature allows freight forwarders and their customers to track trends over time, identify high-emission hotspots and pinpoint opportunities for emissions reductions.

By adopting carbon reporting tools, freight forwarders can efficiently provide emissions data as part of their logistics services, helping customers achieve their sustainability goals and strengthening their own market position. As sustainability continues to shape the future of logistics, these tools offer forwarders a competitive advantage that combines operational efficiency with environmental responsibility.
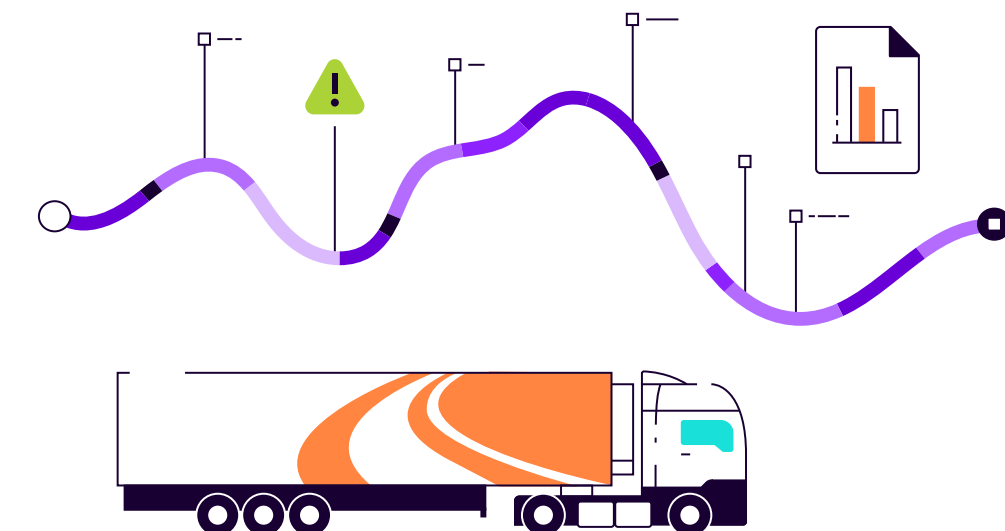
How to build a business case to your internal stakeholders

To successfully integrate carbon reporting into your services, building a compelling business case for internal stakeholders is essential. This case should address key benefits, align with organizational goals, and highlight the value that carbon reporting can bring to the company.

Here's a step-by-step guide to crafting a strong business case:
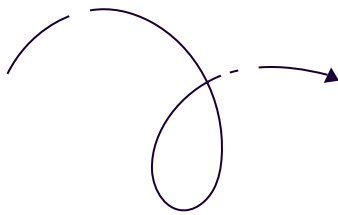
STEP 1

Identify strategic alignment with company goals

Start by aligning carbon reporting with your company's overarching strategic goals. If your organisation prioritises customer satisfaction, competitive positioning, or compliance with environmental regulations, emphasise how carbon reporting supports these aims. For instance, offering carbon reporting can improve customer loyalty by addressing the increasing demand for transparency and sustainability, setting your company apart in the market. Additionally, as more clients require carbon data to meet their own sustainability commitments, providing this service helps meet customer needs proactively.

STEP 2

Highlight customer demand and market trends

Market data and customer feedback are powerful in demonstrating the value of carbon reporting. Draw on industry statistics (such as the 60% of freight forwarders reporting rising customer demand for emissions tracking) to illustrate this need. If possible, gather feedback from your customer base or sales team to show that sustainability reporting is not just a "nice-to-have" but a competitive necessity. Present data on how integrating carbon reporting could help retain current customers and attract new ones, especially from businesses committed to reducing their environmental footprint.

STEP 3

Outline revenue opportunities and competitive advantage

Position carbon reporting as a service with revenue-generating potential. Consider options like premium pricing for emissions reports or bundling carbon reporting as a value-added service that justifies higher contract rates. You can also emphasise how carbon reporting differentiates your company from competitors, potentially positioning you as a leader in sustainable logistics. For stakeholders, particularly those focused on profitability, demonstrate how this service could drive both revenue growth and customer loyalty.

STEP 4

Detail cost considerations and ROI

Internal stakeholders often focus on costs, so it's important to outline potential expenses and the anticipated return on investment (ROI). Include the cost of tools, training, and any additional personnel required, while highlighting efficiencies these tools bring, such as streamlined emissions tracking and improved data accuracy. To strengthen your case, provide a projection of potential returns through customer retention, acquisition of new clients, and possible upsell opportunities linked to sustainability services.

STEP 5

Emphasize regulatory compliance and risk management

Increasing regulations like the EU's CSRD and the UK's SECR mandate carbon reporting for larger companies, creating ripple effects throughout supply chains. By establishing a carbon reporting system, your company can help clients stay compliant, reducing their risk of penalties and enhancing their reputation. For internal stakeholders focused on risk management and compliance, explain how offering emissions tracking aligns with regulatory trends and positions the company as a proactive, responsible partner.

STEP 6

Propose a pilot program to demonstrate value

To help stakeholders see the benefits firsthand, suggest a pilot program targeting a select group of clients who have expressed interest in sustainability metrics. Outline the pilot's scope, costs, and evaluation metrics, such as customer satisfaction, report accuracy, and operational efficiencies. Presenting a lower-risk trial phase can make it easier for stakeholders to approve and invest in carbon reporting services.

By presenting a business case that demonstrates alignment with company goals, market demand, revenue potential, regulatory advantages, and manageable risk, you'll build a compelling argument for why carbon reporting is a strategic move for your company.

A step-by-step guide to integrating carbon emissions measurements into your forwarding services

This section provides a practical, step-by-step guide for freight forwarders to offer carbon emissions reporting to their customers. Implementing carbon reporting can differentiate your services and show your commitment to sustainability.

Here's how you can get started:

Define your objectives

Before implementing carbon emissions measurements in your forwarding services, you need to clarify your objectives. Here's how you should approach this:

Identify the task – Understand what you're aiming to achieve:

- Are you being asked to report emissions data directly to customers?

- Is the goal to gain insights into market demand for sustainability?

Define the purpose – Consider the primary goal of this initiative and its alignment with your business strategy:

- If the focus is on meeting customer demand, prioritise finding a reporting tool that delivers accurate and scalable data.

- If the aim is to become a sustainability leader, think about additional services, like emissions consulting or strategies for carbon reduction.

Assess how it fits with your current offerings – Decide if carbon reporting will be a complementary feature to your services or a key differentiator in the market.

Clearly defined objectives will help you focus on selecting the right tools and ensure carbon reporting integrates smoothly with your current operations.

> *Involve stakeholders from departments like sales, marketing and operations. A cross-functional perspective will help you set realistic goals that align with both customer needs and broader business priorities.*

Assign a dedicated sustainability champion

Assigning a dedicated sustainability champion is essential for guiding your carbon reporting initiative. This individual should understand sustainability principles, emissions measurement and reporting, and act as the main point of contact for all sustainability-related queries from both internal teams and customers.

Steps to get started:

- Appoint an individual within your organisation, or recruit someone with sustainability expertise if you lack in-house resources.

- Ensure they begin by reviewing foundational resources such as the **GLEC Framework and GHG Protocol Reporting Guidelines.**

- Have them engage with reports from industry bodies like **BIFA** (British International Freight Association) and **Smart Freight Centre** to stay informed on best practices and industry trends.

> *Create a knowledge-sharing forum where your sustainability champion can share updates, tips and resources with the rest of the team. This will help build company-wide awareness and support for your sustainability efforts.*

Choose the right carbon reporting technology and tools

To deliver reliable and accurate carbon reporting, selecting the right tools and technology is essential. An effective carbon reporting solution will streamline emissions tracking, simplify compliance with industry standards, and integrate smoothly with your existing systems. When choosing the best-fit tool for your business, consider the following key factors:

Costs

- **Licensing and subscription fees:** Review the pricing structure for each tool—whether it involves a one-time license fee, monthly or annual subscription, or fees per shipment or report generated. Consider how costs scale with increased usage.

- **Custom development costs:** If you require customization, such as specific reporting formats or integrations with existing software, additional costs may be incurred. Some tools allow customization as part of premium packages or through consulting services.

- **Support and maintenance fees:** Understand whether the tool includes ongoing support or if maintenance and troubleshooting will involve additional fees. This is particularly important if you're working with complex integrations.

Time to market

- **Speed of implementation:** Evaluate the onboarding timeline. If the tool promises a rapid setup with minimal configuration, it could enable a quicker launch of your carbon reporting services. Tools with templated integration options and simplified data input may help you get started sooner.

- **Trial and testing periods:** Some providers offer trial periods or demos. Use these to evaluate tool functionality, ease of use, and effectiveness, which can also accelerate the time to go live if the tool proves suitable.

Implementation timing and resource requirements

- **Internal resources:** Identify who will manage the implementation—whether you need in-house technical teams or if the provider offers setup assistance. Some providers include technical support for integration or even provide a dedicated implementation team.

- **Data migration and preparation:** Some tools may require significant data input preparation or adaptation, such as cleaning and formatting shipment records. Prepare for potential delays if your data needs reformatting or updating to meet tool requirements.

Integration capabilities

- **API compatibility:** If you use a Transportation Management System (TMS) or Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software, API-enabled tools can automate data flow, reducing manual input and improving real-time accuracy. Look for solutions that integrate easily with common logistics systems or offer a robust API.

- **Data interchange and export options:** Ensure the tool supports easy data import/export, so you can seamlessly transfer data between systems. This could include standard formats like CSV, JSON, or even direct cloud-based integrations.

- **Flexibility for manual input:** If some shipments don't align with automated systems or require non-standard data inputs, verify that the tool allows for manual data entry. This flexibility is essential for small, one-off shipments or unique cases.

Functionality and scalability

- **Emissions calculations for different modes:** Freight forwarders typically work across multiple transport modes, each requiring specific emissions factors. The tool should support various modes (road, rail, sea, and air) and their distinct emissions factors, potentially including factors specific to regions or fuel types.

- **Regulatory compliance:** Confirm that the tool aligns with standards like the GLEC framework and GHG Protocol, as these standards are widely used in logistics and will meet most customers' regulatory requirements.

- **Scalability and flexibility:** Consider the scalability of the tool, particularly if your reporting needs are expected to grow. This includes the ability to handle increasing shipment volumes, as well as potential expansion to track emissions across new logistics services or additional regions.

User-friendliness and training support

- **Intuitive interface:** A user-friendly interface will reduce the time needed for training and minimise errors. Test for ease of use to ensure that your team can readily adopt the tool and use it efficiently.

- **Training resources and support:** Many providers offer tutorials, training sessions, or knowledge bases. Access to these resources can make a difference during onboarding and when training customer-facing teams.

Reporting and visualisation options

- **Detailed reports and dashboards:** Look for tools that offer advanced reporting capabilities, such as customised dashboards, data breakdowns, and trend analysis. This will enable you to generate insights and identify emissions reduction opportunities.

- **Customer-friendly data exports:** Some tools provide templates or visual formats that are easy for customers to understand. Ensure the tool allows you to export data in a customer-ready format to improve service quality.

Checklist summary for choosing a tool

✓ Assess cost-effectiveness considering licensing, customisation, and support fees

✓ Verify integration capabilities with existing systems like TMS or ERP

✓ Confirm it provides emissions calculations for all transport modes used

✓ Ensure it meets regulatory standards and allows for scalability

✓ Review user-friendliness, available training, and customer support

✓ Evaluate reporting options, especially for customer-facing reports

Many providers offer trial periods, so consider testing multiple tools before making a decision. Additionally, prioritize solutions that provide a high level of customer support during the initial setup phase.

By weighing these factors, you can select a carbon reporting tool that not only meets your operational needs but also enhances your ability to support customers' sustainability goals, giving your freight forwarding services a competitive edge.

Involve your IT team early

For tools that require system integration, collaborating with your IT team from the start is critical. API integration will likely require technical support to align the new tool with your existing systems, such as your TMS or customer portal, for a seamless emissions reporting process.

Key steps for IT integration:

- Provide your IT team with the **API documentation** from the tool provider to ensure they have all necessary details.

- Discuss **data security and privacy considerations,** especially if sensitive customer data will be managed through the new system.

- **Conduct an initial test phase** to confirm that data flows smoothly and accurately between systems before going live. Good carbon reporting tool providers should explain this process once you have signed up.

Ensure regular communication between the IT and sustainability teams to address any integration challenges promptly. Setting up a project timeline with specific milestones can help keep the process on track.

Train your customer-facing teams

Once your emissions reporting tool is set up, it's essential to train account managers, sales and customer support teams to ensure you're getting the most out of your new carbon reporting capabilities. They should understand how the tool works, know where to access emissions data and be able to explain this data effectively to customers — including how it will be transferred to them for storage and reporting purposes.

Training areas to focus on:

- **Viewing emissions data** in your TMS (if API-integrated) and through manual uploads.

- **Uploading shipment data manually** for shipments that may not be captured automatically.

- **Explaining emissions reports to customers,** including how emissions are calculated and how customers can use this data to make more sustainable choices.

Create a set of FAQs and quick reference materials for your team to refer to during conversations with customers. You may also want to schedule periodic training updates as your team becomes more comfortable with the new tool and new capabilities become available.

Launch your carbon reporting service

Once your systems and teams are ready, it's time to promote your new carbon reporting capability. Engaging your marketing team to create a communication plan will help raise awareness among existing customers and attract new ones.

Steps for a successful launch:

- **Email campaigns:** Send a targeted email campaign to current customers, highlighting the benefits of carbon reporting and how it aligns with their sustainability goals. Emphasise how emissions tracking can directly support their objectives, and offer an introductory meeting to discuss the specific value carbon reporting brings to their business.

- **Website updates:** Dedicate a section of your website to your new sustainability offerings. You might include case studies, infographics or FAQs to illustrate the advantages of carbon reporting.

- **Social media announcements:** Share the news on social media channels with posts that showcase how this new service supports greener logistics and aligns with industry trends.

Longer-term promotion:

- **Develop case studies:** As you gain experience, create case studies showing how customers are benefiting from emissions tracking. Case studies can serve as powerful testimonials to attract other companies seeking sustainable solutions.

- **Industry publications and events:** Consider submitting articles to logistics magazines or speaking at industry events to demonstrate your commitment to sustainability. This positions you as a thought leader and a responsible, forward-thinking freight forwarder.

Track the performance of your launch campaign using metrics such as click-through rates, social media engagement and customer inquiries about carbon reporting. Adjust your strategy based on what works best to attract customers to your new service.

By following these steps, you'll be equipped to implement a robust carbon reporting service that adds value to your offering, supports sustainability goals, and meets the increasing demands of a greener supply chain.

Troubleshooting possible problems in carbon reporting

Understanding the potential challenges and knowing how to overcome them can simplify the journey toward accurate and effective carbon reporting. Here, we'll walk through some common obstacles and offer practical solutions to help ease this transition.

CHALLENGE 1

Limited data availability

Challenge

One of the most significant hurdles for freight forwarders can be the lack of access to comprehensive shipment data. Without sufficient data, calculating emissions accurately may seem daunting. Fortunately, the GLEC Framework provides a solution. By using predetermined scientifically-backed emissions factors, the GLEC Framework can fill in data gaps, enabling freight forwarders to provide reliable carbon metrics without needing every detail.

Solution

Get started using basic data you likely already have, like shipment weight, origin, destination and transport mode, to provide customers with their carbon reports. Over time, you can work on further enhancing your reporting accuracy with additional information such as specific route and vehicle data.

CHALLENGE 2

Cost constraints

Challenge

Investing in new tools, training or third-party services for carbon reporting may feel costly, especially if your business operates on tight margins like many freight forwarders do. Yet, the growing demand from customers for transparent emissions data highlights that this is a worthwhile investment for your business's future competitiveness.

Solution

Look for carbon reporting tools that offer scalable pricing or focus on affordable options designed for smaller operations. Start by tracking and reporting on a few key metrics, then expand as your resources allow.

CHALLENGE 3

Complexity of emissions calculations

Challenge

Carbon accounting can seem overly complex, especially when juggling diverse data points and transport modes. For freight forwarders who lack specialised sustainability staff, this can mean carbon reporting gets put on the back burner — not an ideal solution when customers require this as part of their RFQs.

Solution

Choose a reporting tool or platform designed for non-experts, which can automate the calculation and reporting process, reducing ongoing manual effort for your team. Some solutions also provide guided processes for data entry and calculations, allowing you to ease into more complex reporting gradually.

CHALLENGE 4

Resource constraints

Challenge

Many freight forwarding businesses operate with limited staff and time, making the addition of carbon reporting challenging. Implementing new processes may strain already stretched teams.

Solution

If your team lacks dedicated resources for carbon reporting, assign a single team member to oversee the process and gradually introduce it as part of routine operations. Consider using digital tools that integrate seamlessly with existing shipment and operational data systems, like CargoWise, to streamline the process. Additionally, start small, focusing on a few high-impact areas before scaling up
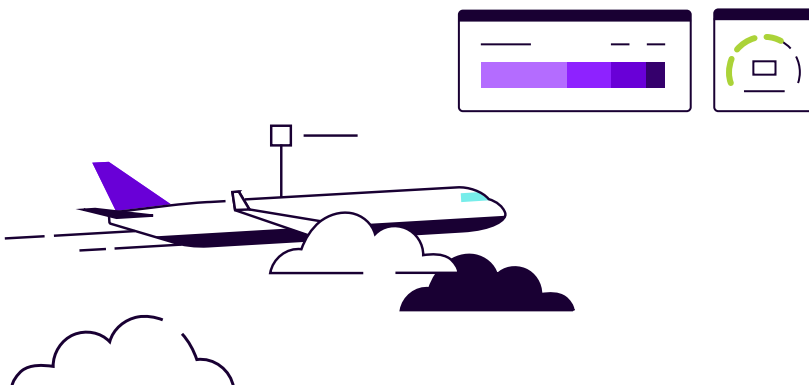
Carbon reporting in practice: Case studies and future trends

Early adopters of carbon reporting in freight forwarding have already seen tangible improvements in customer satisfaction, business retention and market differentiation.

Here's how three leaders in freight forwarding have successfully integrated Pledge to meet these demands and drive real results.

⑪unsworth

Challenge

Unsworth needed to offer accredited emissions data in its Pathway app while maintaining an intuitive user experience without excessive internal development.
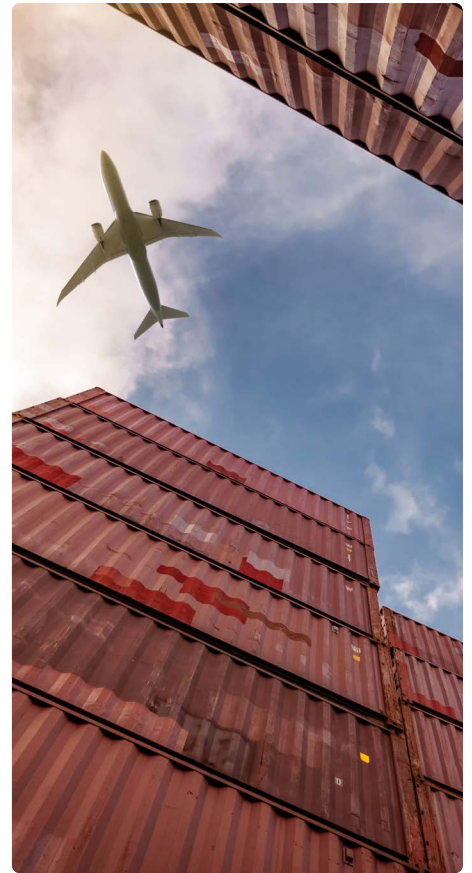
Solution

Pledge integrated directly with the Pathway app, using AWS for seamless data exchange, and provided accredited emissions calculations.

Results

Since integrating Pledge, Unsworth has empowered over 500 clients to measure CO2 emissions, reinforcing their sustainability commitment and strengthening customer loyalty.

Read the full case study   →

europa
worldwide group

Challenge

Customers demanded precise, accredited emissions data, but Europa's in-house calculation method lacked accuracy, transparency, and accreditation.
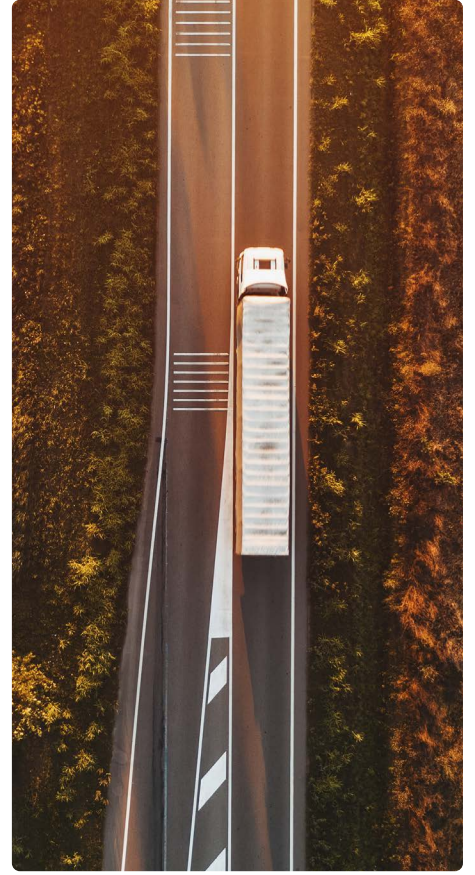
Solution

Europa turned to Pledge for accurate, GLEC-accredited emissions reporting, integrated directly into their TMS, enabling a seamless experience.

Results

By offering verifiable and detailed emissions data, Europa Worldwide significantly improved customer satisfaction, retention, and market positioning.

Read the full case study →

XPAND
LOGISTICS

Challenge

Growing customer and employee demands for carbon reporting risked XPand's ability to win and retain clients without a robust solution.
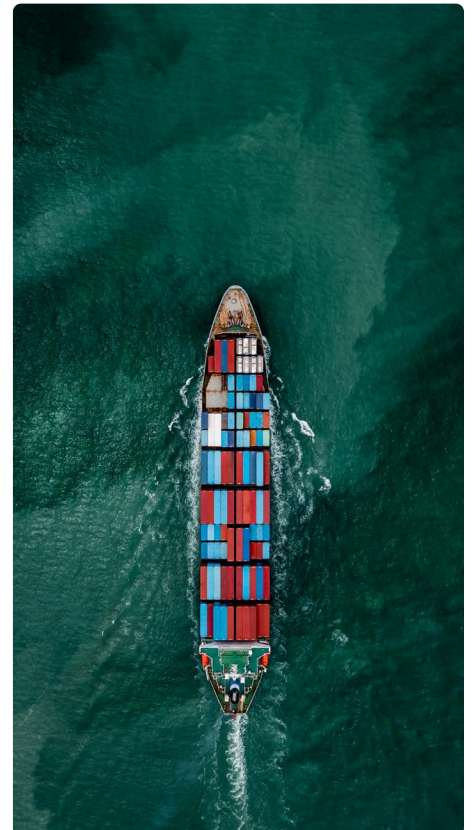
Solution

Pledge's platform offered seamless integration, accredited data, and an offsetting marketplace, helping XPand Logistics align with client and stakeholder expectations.

Results

XPand Logistics gained new clients and increased business retention through Pledge's reliable carbon reporting and sustainability support.

Read the full case study →

Future trends in carbon reporting for freight forwarders

As the logistics industry pivots toward sustainability, several emerging trends will shape the future of carbon reporting in freight forwarding.

One of the most significant developments is the increasing automation and precision of carbon measurement tools. Advanced technologies, such as AI and machine learning, are being integrated into emissions calculation systems, offering more accurate, real-time data. These AI-driven tools can optimise routes, reduce fuel consumption and provide dynamic emissions measurements based on variables like vehicle type, payload and route conditions, helping freight forwarders minimise their environmental impact with greater accuracy and efficiency.

We're likely to see carbon reporting evolve beyond data provision to include strategic consulting. Freight forwarders equipped with sustainability expertise will position themselves as trusted advisors, helping customers not only track emissions but also develop reduction strategies. This additional layer of service provides a new avenue for customer loyalty and positions forwarders as integral partners in achieving sustainability goals.

Position your business for the future of sustainable logistics

Carbon reporting in freight forwarding is quickly moving from a "nice-to-have" to a business essential. As regulations grow stricter, customer expectations heighten, and the need for transparency becomes critical, implementing carbon reporting will distinguish forwarders who are prepared for the future from those who risk falling behind. Offering comprehensive, accurate emissions data enables you not only to meet compliance standards but to add value for customers increasingly focused on sustainability.

Incorporating these capabilities into your services can enhance your brand reputation, expand your customer base, and solidify long-term relationships with shippers who prioritise environmental responsibility. Embracing sustainability positions your business as a forward-thinking partner, helping customers align with both their regulatory obligations and broader sustainability goals.

Start your journey into sustainable logistics today with Pledge and demonstrate your commitment to a cleaner, greener logistics industry — your customers and the environment will thank you.

Start for free →