

Environmental impact of Airbus Operations

Airbus is engaged in an industrial transformation to anticipate and prepare itself for mid-term evolutions of its industrial systems as well as the longer term solutions to build its “factories of the future”. This Company-wide initiative will support the reduction of Airbus’ environmental footprint on air, soil and water quality, climate change, biodiversity and resource availability. An evaluation of hotspots is ongoing to help focus on appropriate topics.

Analysis of the current trends shows that the regulatory pressure on the international scene to reduce the environmental footprint of the aerospace industry is steadily growing (circular economy and resources efficiency, energy transition and climate change engagement, air and water quality improvement). In addition, the expectations of stakeholders (including citizens, investors) are also elements that increase pressure towards low carbon and sustainable production patterns. Since 2015, Airbus has been developing its plan for the next decade to prepare for upcoming regulatory developments, maintaining employee engagement and proposing solutions to stakeholders’ expectations.

Airbus has committed and continues to commit to setting up ambitious short-, mid- and long-term environmental targets. In 2006, Airbus set up the environmental vision for 2020 with goals for reduction of energy consumption, CO₂ emissions, water consumption, VOC emissions and waste production. To fulfil its commitments, Airbus developed innovative projects, continuous improvement mind-set and practices sharing and participates in projects with other stakeholders.

Airbus has also set an extended 2030 Vision, with operational objectives on Airbus manufacturing activities but also encompassing suppliers. Airbus wants to engage in ambitious environmental objectives in its aim to:

- enhance the use of environmental risk evaluation for consideration as a quantitative input during supplier selection, contracting and auditing phases;
- divert waste from landfilling and incineration;
- comply with air emissions regulations and absorb ramp up production impacts;
- comply with GHG emissions regulations (and compatible with the global 2°C trajectory) and absorb ramp up production energy impacts;
- develop strong maintenance and rehabilitation programs to improve reliability and lower water costs.

To highlight the importance of CO₂ impact in design and operation of plants, an initiative is being developed to set an internal “Carbon Price” to be used in the trade-off between different solutions. This may be used for industrial projects and 2030 Vision would integrate a progressive increase in the Carbon Price as a further carbon-reduction incentive and to bring greater appreciation of the CO₂ impact in the near future.

Airbus monitors and makes available data verified by external auditors, and publishes transparently its industrial performance. The performance linked to 2020 Vision results shows good progress (by reference to a baseline of 2006 at constant revenue and production) in different areas: energy consumption (stationary sources) has decreased by 37%, CO₂ emissions by 42% (scope 1 stationary sources + scope 2 total), while water consumption has been cut by 48% and waste by 41%.