



# **GRET'S CLIMATE STRATEGY**



**GRET**

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*“The recent IPCC reports have reminded us of the urgent need to take action. Because every ton counts. Because each half-degree will have significant impacts. Faced with the global climate emergency, GRET is convinced that it has a strong role to play. As an NGO, we must adapt our practices to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible, not only through the management of our sites but also through our methods of intervention. We must also systematically integrate the challenges of ecological transition into our projects, to strengthen the resilience and low-carbon trajectories of the territories and communities we work with.*

*Taking an active part in a just climate transition is more than ever a collective challenge for GRET, which can be summarised as follows: think global, act local!”*  
Luc ARNAUD, Executive Director of GRET

## OUR VISION

Aware of the climate emergency, GRET wishes to strengthen its participation in the collective effort to implement the [Paris Climate Agreement](#) (2015) by 2030.

*“By 2030, GRET will have renewed its **modes of intervention to become more temperate** and participate on its own scale in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. On average, in 2030, a member of GRET will emit half as much as a member of GRET in 2020. This effort will be consistent with the principle of common responsibilities (shared by all) but differentiated*

*(depending on the context) between each GRET member.*

*GRET's projects will **actively contribute to a just climate transition**, supporting new models of development. Climate issues will be taken into account in all of our areas of expertise, in line with locally expressed priorities, both in terms of adaptation and mitigation of emissions.*

*GRET will participate in stakeholder **coalitions** to collectively learn from our respective approaches and develop innovative, co-constructed and more effective responses.”*



The teams in Haiti travelling by carpool



The agroecological block in Karoke, Madagascar



Facilitation of a collective sequence in Togo

# OUR PRINCIPLES

Consisting of a headquarters and multiple representations, with different histories and characteristics, GRET is a plural collective, like the members of the UNFCCC<sup>1</sup>. Our climate strategy is therefore inspired by the founding principles of the UNFCCC, particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the principle of the right to development. It is also inspired by the Paris Agreement (see box below) on climate, which proposes a collective objective, specific contributions, a facilitation component and an Action Agenda.

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→ **Addressing adaptation and mitigation.** Our climate strategy takes into account [both adaptation and mitigation issues](#). In terms of our practices, the objective will be to reduce our emissions (mitigation). At project level, the objective is to support climate change resilience (adaptation) and low-carbon development trajectories (mitigation) in the territories we support through our interventions.

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→ **Act effectively and collectively.** Our strategy must be able to be rapidly translated into concrete actions at headquarters, in our country representations and during the project management cycle. It must allow us to move forward collectively, around common objectives, enabling us to create a collaborative dynamic.

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→ **Take into account GRET's different contexts of intervention.** GRET's country representations and areas of intervention have realities that vary greatly from one territory to another. Our climate strategy therefore aims to take this diversity of contexts into account. Climate action plans to reduce our emissions will therefore be developed at each site (headquarters and representations). The enhanced integration of climate change into our projects will be examined on a case-by-case basis by the project teams, in order to take into account the trajectories defined by the territories concerned.

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→ **Ensuring the quality of our mission to contribute to the SDGs.** The climate quality assurance of our interventions in favour of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs)

requires two levers: i) (adaptation) systematically questioning our interventions to identify the potential impacts of climate change on our actions and the risks of maladaptation<sup>2</sup> and ii) (mitigation) setting up innovative and adapted approaches, carried out by the people directly in charge of running the projects, to reconcile the quality of our interventions with the limitation of greenhouse gas emissions.

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→ **Contribute to collective dynamics.** GRET's transition is part of collective dynamics, initiated by other international solidarity actors. GRET wishes to take part in these initiatives by participating in exchange sessions. GRET will rely in particular on the [Climate and Development Commission](#) of Coordination Sud and the [Humanitarian Environment Network](#) as a space for sharing approaches.

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→ **Monitoring, evaluating and regularly reviewing our strategy.** The implementation of GRET's climate actions must be evaluated within a harmonised and transparent monitoring framework. This monitoring and the resulting capitalisation will allow GRET's climate strategy to be reviewed regularly. It is therefore intended to evolve gradually.

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→ **Facilitating and encouraging.** Support for the climate strategy will be based on the principle of facilitation, to encourage the various stakeholders to commit to and implement this transition, doing everything possible. While a global assessment will be carried out at overall GRET level, each site will be free to review its efforts according to its capacities and the dynamics put in place, following the example of the Paris Climate Agreement.

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1. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - [Explanations](#).

2. Actions that are likely to increase the risk of adverse climate-associated consequences (including through increased greenhouse gas emissions), increase vulnerability to climate change, or degrade current or future living conditions. This outcome is rarely intentional (IPCC, 2014).

# AN APPROACH INSPIRED BY THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT



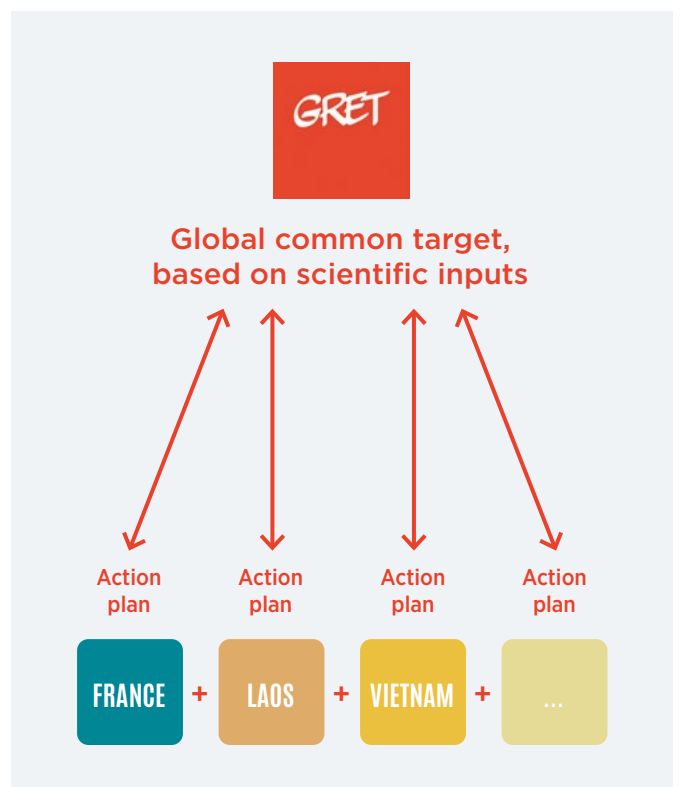
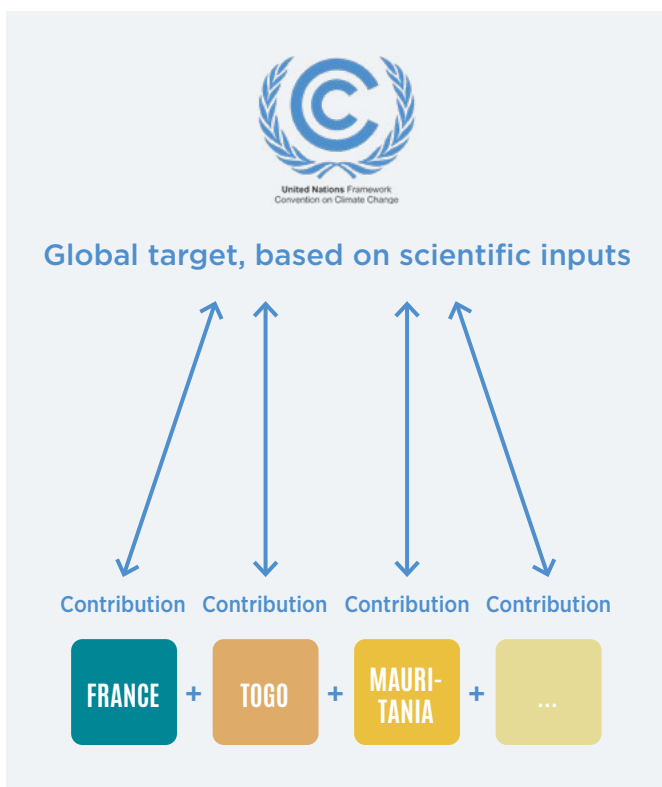
The Kyoto Protocol imposed binding and ambitious targets only on developed country signatories, which limited its universality: it took many years to reach the required number of signatories and some high emitting countries never signed. The [Paris Accords on Climate](#) on the other hand, established a universal approach by adopting a long-term global objective, common to all States: “to limit global warming to 2°C, or even 1.5°C”, defined on the basis of the recommendations of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Then, each State freely defined a contribution determined at the national level, specifying the adaptation and mitigation issues of the country and the objectives that the country set for itself over 5 years. This approach allows for a collective but differentiated dynamic: each party does its utmost to contribute to the overall collective objective. However, it is not very binding. To date, the sum of the objectives set by each State [would lead to a warming of about 3°C](#). States are therefore encouraged to regularly review their contributions.

GRET’s climate strategy was inspired by this approach to reducing our emissions because it allows for :

- ➔ **A collective approach:** a common global course guides our long-term transition.
- ➔ **An approach guided by a coherent ambition:** the global target includes the IPCC recommendations and the objectives set by our peers. The collective global course is therefore a necessary and achievable objective. It will require concrete actions, particularly in the area of transportation.
- ➔ **A differentiated approach:** each representation and headquarters will be able to define its own short-term objective, according to its capacities. Concrete actions will not be imposed but proposed and co-constructed by each site (representations and headquarters).
- ➔ **An iterative and facilitating approach:** the action plans are intended to evolve over time, based on reviews led by each site. Achieving consistency between the sum of each site’s actions and the overall collective goal will not require competition between sites: each site will be free to review its actions.

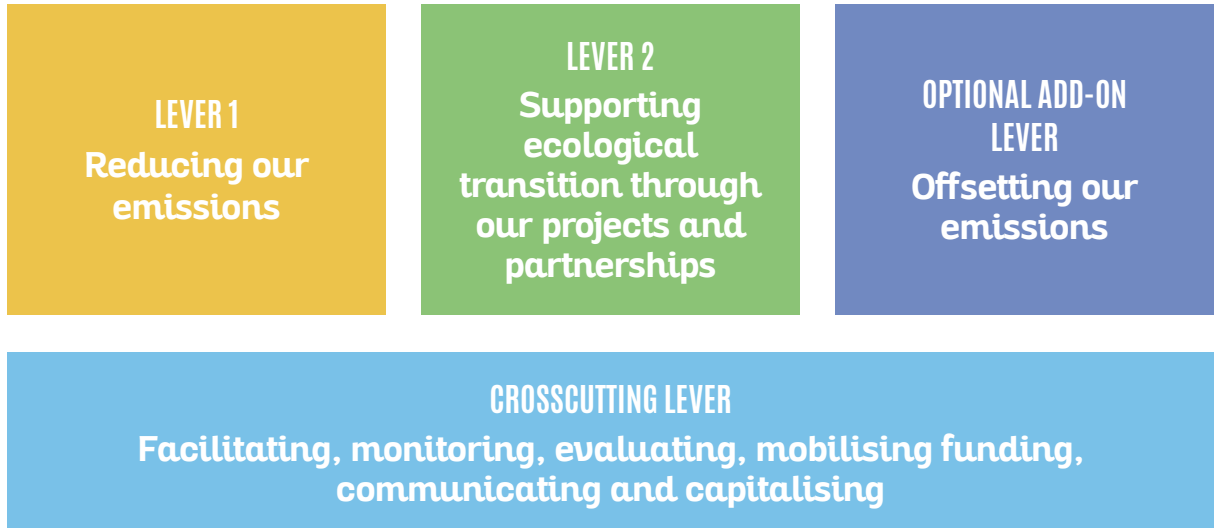
GRET’s carbon strategy does, however, establish additional safeguards by proposing a minimum commitment to be respected.



# OUR STRATEGY IN 4 LEVERS

Our strategy is based on two priority levers (level 1 – reducing our emissions, level 2 – supporting ecological transition through our projects and partnerships), an optional complementary lever (level 3 – offsetting our emissions) and a cross-cutting lever (cross-cutting

lever – facilitating, monitoring, evaluating, mobilising financing, communicating and capitalising). GRET’s climate strategy will be based on a dedicated governance, allowing us to monitor and capitalise on this approach, with the objective of facilitation.



*“Having attended GRET’s Extraordinary General Assembly on Climate, on April 7, 2022, I observed GRET’s determination to integrate climate, both at its headquarters and in each of its country representations. It is an inspiring approach that mirrors the main advances of the Paris Accords on climate. This is a necessary first step, which will have to be implemented and followed up afterwards, at every level: individual, project, site and GRET as a whole.”*

*Rolande AZIAKA, journalist, co-facilitator of the UNEP NGO group*



The Mauritanian representation’s solar panels



Studies on floods risks in Senegal © UrbaSen



The composting centre in Lomé, Togo

## LEVER 1

### Reducing our emissions

#### CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES



***“[In this new IPCC report], we show the potential for action at all levels (international, national or territorial institutions, individual choices) and for all actors in society.***

***For me, this report highlights how much our choices matter, by clearly showing that we are at the crossroads of three major risks.”***

*Valérie MASSON DELMOTTE<sup>3</sup>*

As Valérie Masson Delmotte reminds us, we also have a role to play in contributing to the global effort to reduce emissions by implementing concrete actions that are consistent with the contexts in which we operate. GRET’s activities generate emissions related to our travel, purchasing, energy consumption, and waste production. As a reminder, GRET’s first carbon assessment, conducted in 2014, highlighted the importance of air travel, which accounted for approximately 80% of the emissions estimated during this first measurement.

In order to take concrete action, the reduction of our emissions is primarily based on planned actions, developed at each of our sites. This allows each GRET member to take ownership of the transition process and to adapt the actions to the different contexts in which GRET operates.

However, it is also important to initiate a collective approach, common to all GRET members. This is why, following the example of the Paris Agreement, we are also setting a collective global goal, which will serve as a guide in the development and implementation of action plans: each site will aim to do everything it can to achieve the collective goal.

In order to take into account the purpose of GRET’s activities, which is to support the achievement of sustainable development objectives, we have decided to set a collective global target relative to the evolution of GRET members (not an absolute target).

3. Climate researcher, co-chair of IPCC Panel #1 since 2015. [CNRS](https://www.cnrs.fr/).

The relative target allows us to take account of the purpose of GRET’s activities, which are aimed at achieving the SDGs. For example: 10 GRET member emit 100 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2022, that is 10 tons/GRET members.

- ➔ If we have an absolute objective, the reduction will have to be 50 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, whatever the number of GRET members in 2030. If the number of employees doubles (20 people), they will have to emit an average of 2.5 tons per person per year and thus reduce their emissions by an average of 75% individually.
- ➔ If the reduction target is relative to the number of GRET members, a level of 5 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per GRET member will have to be reached, regardless of the number of GRET members. If the number of employees doubles, the total emissions could reach 100 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, as in the reference year.

We are therefore committed to increasing the sobriety of our activities while leaving ourselves the possibility of developing them.

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**GRET is therefore collectively committed to “reducing greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 50% per GRET member by 2030 compared to 2019. Each site will plan its own reduction actions and define its own reduction target, while respecting the minimum threshold of an average reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 25% per GRET member by 2030.”**

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The quantified objective of a 50% reduction by 2030 is consistent with the IPCC recommendations and other commitments made by NGOs such as the Humanitarian Environment Network.

The establishment of a minimum target makes it easier to ensure consistency between the sum of the actions of each site and the collective global goal set by GRET.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

By the August 2022 General Assembly, each GRET site (country representations and headquarters) will therefore define, a first harmonised action plan for a period of 4 years, which will respond to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, i.e., to do everything possible to achieve the global collective framework and to strengthen its efforts in the years to come.

These action plans will be co-constructed by the members of the sites themselves, with support from the Ecological Transition Working Group.

The Ecological Transition resource persons and representatives, supported by the Ecological Transition Working Group if necessary, will play a pivotal role in the development, implementation and monitoring of these plans.

These action plans will have to include a variety of action levers:

- Awareness raising/training
- Collective projects
- Charters/regulations/good practices
- Structural changes

As these levers require different means and implementation times, the initial action plan will cover a period of 4 years, in order to leave time for more structural actions.

The action plans should cover all of the following emission sectors:

- Energy consumption
- Digital
- Purchasing
- Food
- Commuting to and from work
- Work-related travel
- Waste

They will have to take into account the main levers for reducing our emissions, first and foremost our air travel, purchases and digital technology.

## LEVER 2

### Supporting ecological transition through our projects and partnerships

#### CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The fight against climate change calls our interventions into question: how can we take account of the evolution of the climate in our projects, to reinforce their sustainability and avoid maladaptations? How can we contribute to the low-carbon trajectories defined by the territories through our projects? How can we support these territories in building coherent and effective territorial climate strategies?

In order to answer these questions, GRET has already implemented various actions:

- recruitment in 2021 of a Project Manager dedicated to climate issues;
- implementation in 2021 of a training course on “introduction to climate issues”, open to all GRET members;
- participation in specific studies within the framework of the Adapt’Action Facility supported by the French Development Agency or support for local climate planning projects, within the framework of the Covenant of Mayors for Sub-Saharan Africa, etc.;
- launch of an internal call for projects in 2022 by GRET’s fund, dedicated to integrating ecological transition issues into projects.

In addition, GRET’s areas of expertise are strongly linked to the levers of action to act against climate change: agroecology, waste management, urban development, energy transition, etc.

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**“GRET is committed to strengthening its contribution to the fight against climate change by developing specific expertise on ecological transition and by systematising the consideration of ecological transition issues (climate and biodiversity) in all of these projects.”**

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#### IMPLEMENTATION

Strengthening the integration of these issues in GRET’s projects will require an approach based on dialogue and co-construction with GRET’s



In order to prioritise emission sectors, three analyses of GRET’s carbon impact in France, Congo and Senegal are underway. These carbon impact measurements will be generalised at all GRET sites by August 2023. On this basis, all GRET sites will define a local objective that is compatible with the collective global goal, taking into account the specificities of each site, while respecting the minimum threshold of a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions per GRET member by 2030.

These carbon impact measurements will make it possible to prioritise action levers at each site and to monitor the impact of the actions undertaken over time. This will serve as a basis for discussion during the annual “local cop” meetings and during the revision of the action plans.

At GRET level, a regular assessment will be conducted to evaluate GRET’s trajectory in relation to the collective target set for 2030, as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> lever – monitoring, evaluating, facilitating, mobilising funding and capitalising.



International Thematic Teams (GITTs), with a view to strengthening capacities in terms of:

- team skills (training, testing of pilot components, etc.);
- available documentation (thematic fact-sheets, etc.);
- project management frameworks (exclusion list, marker, etc.).

Following on from the measures already established, GRET will therefore:

- **Set up an ecological transition marker**, which will be extended to all GRET projects. Based on the analysis of the potential sources of impacts generated by projects focusing on climate (adaptation and mitigation) and biodiversity, it is currently being tested. The aim of this first version is to raise awareness during project development and to obtain an initial inventory.
- **Extending the internal training offer to develop specific courses** on tools or prac-

tices that facilitate the integration of climate into projects or thematic approaches.

- **Support innovation and strengthen the impact** by offering dedicated technical support via the Ecological Transition Working Group (best practice guides, thematic fact-sheets, exchanges, etc.) or financial support, via GRET's fund for example.
- **Deepen analysis of cross-cutting issues** - "GRET's subject areas X ecological transition", with GRET's International Thematic Teams (GITTs). This could take the form of training, inclusion of ecological transition issues in their project portfolios, development of good practices, training of subject area resource persons, or development of exclusion lists...
- **Strengthen the capacities of communities and territories** it supports to co-construct their own ecological transition commitments and to implement them, through projects and partnerships that more strongly integrate these issues, through dedicated components.



GRET's "ecological transition" approach integrates and combines climate and biodiversity issues. We need to act against biodiversity erosion as urgently as we act against climate change.

- Climate change is the third cause of biodiversity erosion, after changes in land and sea use and the overexploitation of biological resources. Ecosystem degradation in turn exacerbates climate change and its impacts.
- On the other hand, actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore ecosystems can produce positive impacts for biodiversity while contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

GRET's strategy will also take account of social issues. Joint work with GRET's cross-cutting project on gender could be envisaged.

- Indeed, biodiversity erosion and climate change have an impact on the most vulnerable populations. The IPCC emphasises that social inequalities increase the consequences of climate change for the most disadvantaged populations.
- The reduction of inequalities is therefore an avenue for action to reduce the impact of climate change.

## OPTIONAL ADD-ON LEVER

### Offsetting our emissions

Carbon offsetting is a possible lever for action, but it must serve as a complement to a commitment to reduce GHG emissions, and come into effect after this commitment is made, according to ADEME's recommendations, which were followed by the "climate" working group. It is a possible complementary perspective.

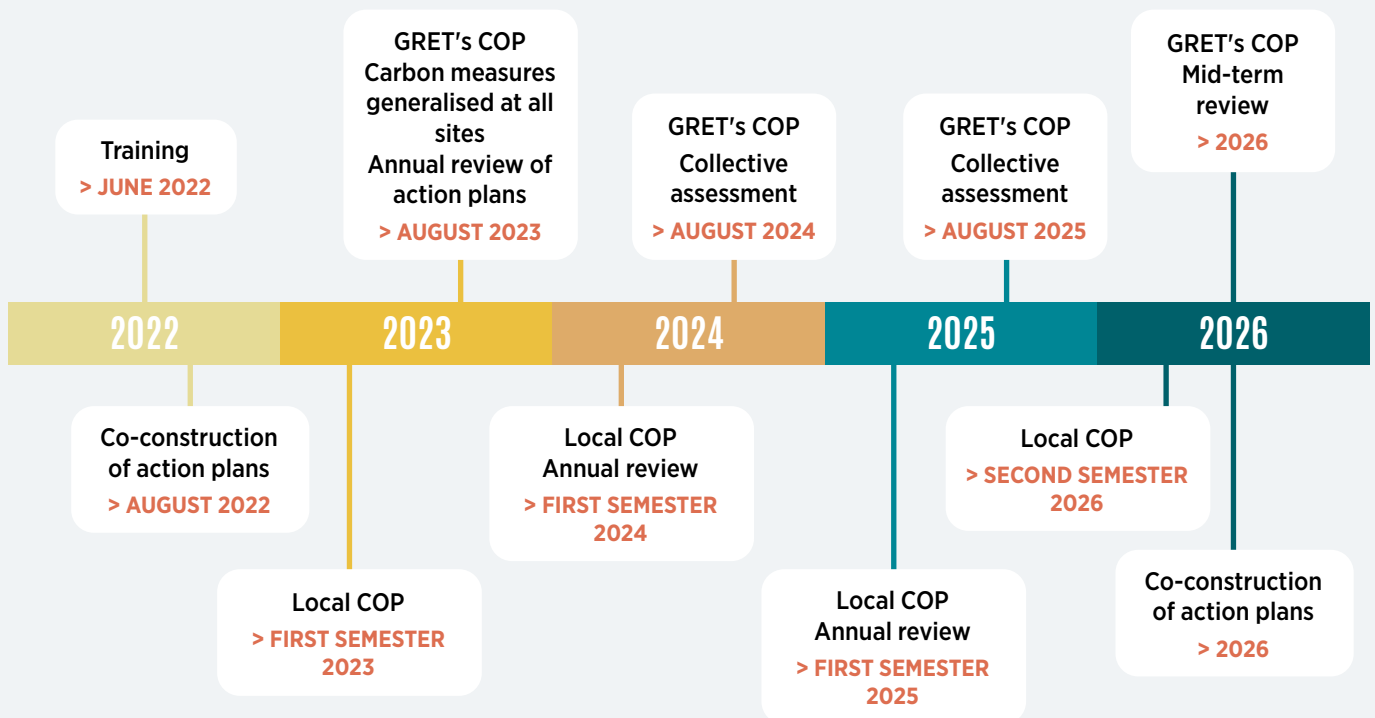
At this stage, the climate strategy does not include commitments related to offsetting, but prioritises areas of work:

- ➔ What value to give to carbon: the market price (about 5 euros), the [tutelary value](#)

(about 250 euros) of carbon proposed by the French government, a freely set internal price...?

- ➔ How much carbon should be offset: only flights, only overruns?
- ➔ What mechanism should be put in place: buying credits equivalent to the quantity of carbon that one wishes to offset, contributing to a fund without necessarily seeking to offset on the principle of 1t emitted = 1 t to be bought...?
- ➔ How to integrate the cost of compensation within the organisation?

The objective will be to make a proposal to GRET's 2023 General Assembly.



## CROSS-CUTTING LEVER

### Facilitating, monitoring, evaluating, mobilising financing, communicating and capitalising

GRET has set up an “Ecological Transition Working Group” mobilising all of GRET’s departments and all of its representations through a network of resource persons. The members of the Working Group will be mobilised to lead GRET’s climate strategy.

The integration of climate into GRET’s practices (lever 1) will be monitored at site level (representations, headquarters) and the integration of climate into GRET’s projects (lever 2) will be monitored at GITT level.

The principles for the facilitation of the process and the monitoring are the following:

- ➔ **Facilitate and set up collective emulation:** the objective of the monitoring will not be to compare, site by site, the efforts of each one taking a competitive approach. The generalisation of carbon measurements will make it possible to monitor the difference between the overall target and the sum of the contributions of each site. This will give a joint dynamic to strengthen the implementation of action plans at each site, as is done within the Paris Climate Agreement. Carbon measurements will be updated every two years.
- ➔ **Supporting the transition and ambition:** individualised support will be set up at each site. The ecological transition resource persons will have a pivotal role in leading the process. The objective will be to support each site so that it can take full ownership of the process of implementing and monitoring the climate strategy.
- ➔ **Capitalise and share:** GRET’s climate strategy will evolve based on the lessons learned from feedback. The implementation of a capitalisation strategy, backed by publications, will allow us to i) improve our approach and our impact internally and ii) share our lessons learned externally.
- ➔ **Building skills:** the implementation of the climate strategy at GRET’s sites and in its projects will be an unprecedented learning exercise, allowing all GRET members to gradually build their skills. Facilitation will therefore have to accompany this rise in competence through monitoring and dedicated tools.

At each site, the organisation of monitoring and capitalisation will take place as follows:

- ➔ **Local COP (Conference of the Parties):** each year, a local meeting will be organised at each site. The objective of this meeting will be to follow up on the actions in progress, to refine the action plan, to share local initiatives and to contribute to the capitalisation of the process.
- ➔ **Review of the action plan:** on the fringe of the local cop, the action plan will be updated and shared within the Working Group and the site.
- ➔ **Publications:** the sites will be free to communicate on their approach and to share their progress externally.

At GRET level, the organisation of monitoring and capitalisation will be organised as follows:

- ➔ **GRET’s COP:** once a year, a “GRET COP” will be organised on the fringe of the tropics in order to assess the implementation of GRET’s climate strategy and to exchange best practices.
- ➔ **Deviations from objectives:**
  - **For lever 1:** deviations from objectives can be reduced through several mechanisms: i) periodic review of action plans by the sites, taking into account GRET’s overall results, ii) establishment of a minimum commitment per site, iii) study of a possible compensation for deviations from objectives (option of Lever 3 – compensation).
  - **For lever 2:** strengthening the integration of climate in projects will primarily involve a proposal for specific support for the GITTs: training, study, capitalisation, etc.
- ➔ **Joint capitalisation process:** the capitalisation process of GRET’s climate strategy will aim to involve other organisations in order to actively participate in the pooling spaces between international solidarity actors.

A dedicated fund of the Scientific Department, “Structural Resources for Research” will contribute to funding the capitalisation of the approach for 2 years, with an amount of 30,000€.

The volunteer sites will be able to define innovative funding mechanisms, such as the use of green budgeting tools, funding mechanisms for ecological transition, etc. The consolidation of possible funding sources for ecological transition will be a priority area of work for the Ecological Transition Working Group and will be the subject of collective advocacy.



In order to affirm this commitment to actively participate in inter-organisational work spaces, GRET has decided to take on the role of leader of Coordination Sud's Climate and Development Commission for a period of three years. This commission will make it possible to work on issues of training, capitalisation and advocacy, in terms of Organisational Social Responsibility and the integration of climate in development projects.



## THE RESULT OF A CO-CONSTRUCTED APPROACH

The proposed approach takes into account the methodological approaches of recognised standards for the implementation of carbon strategies (notably the [Net Zero Initiative](#) and the [Sciences Target Based Initiative](#)). It also takes into account [the opinions of ADEME](#), particularly on issues related to carbon neutrality and compensation. This made it possible to define the four levers of GRET's climate strategy.

However, adaptation work was necessary to take account of GRET's specificities as an NGO, but also according to its internal operating principles and the realities of the field.

GRET's climate strategy is therefore the result of an internal co-construction process, which took place in four stages:

- ➔ **1 A phase of appropriation and awareness of the issues**, in the form of 3 "bistro lectures" organised between November 2020 and February 2021.
- ➔ Following these "bistro lectures", **2 a scoping phase** allowed us to identify all the pos-

sible choices for the carbon strategy, through a decision tree. The Carbon Country Council decided to set up an ad hoc working group, the "Climate Working Group", to analyse the possible choices and propose a strategy.

- ➔ The ad hoc working group met 5 times between June and December 2021 to analyse the possible choices and build a **3 first version of the strategy**.
- ➔ The first version of the strategy was then presented during a bistro lecture in January 2022 and gave rise to a survey to refine the directions taken. 3 discussion sessions with the country representations were organised, in order to produce an **4 iteration of the proposed strategy**.

It was approved by an **5 extraordinary general assembly** on April 7, 2022.

The co-construction will continue, with the elaboration of action plans per site, and subsequently during the annual follow-up and capitalisation periods.

