THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF YOUR VALUE CHAIN:

Companies across industries play a critical role in fighting back against the worst impacts of climate change. By now, most businesses recognize the urgent need to act, but it can be difficult to determine where to begin without understanding the full scope of your organization's carbon footprint.

In recent years, most companies have focused on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions directly under their ownership or operational control and from their purchased electricity. In actuality, upstream and downstream emissions are often the largest source of a company's emissions in most sectors, amounting to several times the impact of its onsite emissions. By paying special attention to the indirect emissions that occur from your business's value chain activities, there is significant opportunity to reduce your organization's environmental footprint. In addition, organizations that monitor their emissions over time can mitigate business risk, reduce their expenses, improve their brand reputation, and increase stakeholder trust.

UNDERSTANDING SCOPES

Companies that release environmental data categorize emissions in three scopes:

SCOPE 1 – Onsite emissions

SCOPE 2 – Purchased electricity

SCOPE 3 – Upstream and downstream emissions

KNOW YOUR CARBON

Did you know there are typically 7 main greenhouse gases that we use in emissions reporting? Each gas has a different impact on the environment, from how potent it is to how long it stays in the atmosphere. To streamline reporting, each gas is calculated to be the equivalent of Carbon Dioxide.

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Upstream Emissions

These are emissions resulting from all of your business's pre-production and processing operations.

SCOPE 3
INDIRECT

THINK

- Sourcing the materials necessary to create your product or service
- Transportation of sourced materials services
- Supplier meetings
- Material and e-waste generated in operations and preproduction
- Employee commutes

Purchased Electricity

These are the emissions that result from electricity purchased to run your facility.

SCOPE 2
DIRECT

THINK

- Keeping the lights on
- Electricity used to power equipment
- Offsite data centers

Onsite Emissions

These are all the emissions that result as an impact of running your facility or business.

SCOPE 1
DIRECT

THINK

- Heating and cooling costs
- Keeping your facility up and running
- Maintaining company vehicles
- Company vehicle emissions

Downstream Emissions

These are emissions resulting from your business's production, distribution, and consumer-facing operations.

SCOPE 3
INDIRECT

THINK

- Transportation and distribution of produced goods
- Use of sold products
- Product waste
- Document shredding
- Disposal of equipment and e-waste

HOW DO I TACKLE MY UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM EMISSIONS?

Since these emissions typically fall outside your operational control, you'll need to engage with your suppliers. Here are a few questions to get you started:

- Does your organization have a sustainability policy?
- Do you release a Corporate Social Responsibility report?
- Have you set any environmental goals?
- Do any third parties verify your data?
- What visibility do I have into my environmental impact from your services?
- Can you help me reach my environmental goals?

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Iron Mountain can help you make sustainability a core thread throughout the value chain of your business.

Learn more about how our services can help support your environmental goals at ironmountain.com/sustainability