



Book Industry  
Communication

# **BIC Task and Finish Working Group**

## **Project Name: Green Supply Chain Principles of Offsetting Project**

*(Document version 1.0.0)*

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# BIC Project Brief

## The Purpose of the BIC Project Brief

The BIC Project Brief is required to enable necessary projects, or pieces of work to progress from being a good BIC Committee idea to a formal request for work that is submitted to the appropriate Task and Finish Group and/or consultant. The BIC Project Brief must be agreed upon and signed off initially by all members of the relevant BIC Committee responsible for the project and then the dedicated Task & Finish Working Group (if applicable, depending on the nature of the project) once established.

The BIC Project Brief should generally be short and provide an overview of the proposed project or piece of work.

The finalised, signed off document will be made visible to all BIC members, who will be able to provide comment or feedback on the intended project or work.

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this project is to assess the global carbon offsetting programmes that are currently available in order to help book industry organisations make informed decisions regarding which programmes they would like to invest in. The project will do this with reference to the advice and guidelines found in impartial bodies like (for example) The Oxford Principles for Net Zero Aligned Carbon Offsetting, International Carbon Reduction and Offset Alliance (ICROA) or [VCM Claims Code of Practice](#). It would also provide organisations with a set of questions that they could use when approaching these programmes or new ones that come onto the market. The various schemes are run by organisations mainly based in the USA, UK, and Europe, which have offsetting projects all over the world. These projects are open to anyone and the choice of which one to use will be influenced by various factors, including personal/organisational preference, and the projects being managed. This project's assessment would look at the various schemes to see if they use a rigorous scientific approach, how transparent they are, how they are governed/audited, what countries they are operating in, and what positive impact the scheme claims to represent to the environment and local people where the scheme is being implemented. As a starting point the Principles of Offsetting Project will take the carbon offsetting schemes identified in the BIC Green Supply Chain Accreditation Badges Project, as well as looking for new schemes that have come onto the market since then. The project would look at providing Best Practice and Guideline documentation along with the various merits of the various schemes.

While reductions should be made before offsetting, organisations can continue to work to make reductions in all areas of their business whilst responsibly offsetting emissions from their business and supply chain activities. This project will keep in mind the fact that carbon offsetting is just one step of an organisation's carbon reduction journey and this will be reflected in the final project report. The challenge that some organisations across the book industry supply chain are facing is how best to effectively reduce their carbon footprint when it comes to Scopes 2 and 3 emissions. Scope 2 emissions are concerned with the energy sources that an organisation buys, but for those (for example) in a shared office space they have minimal or little control over these. Scope 3 emissions relate to those emitted by third party organisations in the supply chain that an organisation has limited or no control over – so they rely on influencing their suppliers to make changes. This is where carbon offsetting often comes in as it is used by an organisation to help reach net zero.

Some UK organisations are working to PAS 2060, a UK standard, to become carbon neutral. The ISO standard 14064 is currently in the review stage and should go live in the next few years. This new standard will supersede PAS 2060. It also covers Scopes 1, 2 and 3, but it will allow for offsetting as part of the standard. So, it is recognised that there is a need for offsetting for organisations to reach net zero. Organisations need help in deciding what are the best offsetting programmes for their business. This project is aimed at filling the current gap and providing help for organisations.

## 2. Background

This project has been requested by the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee and is referenced in the BIC Green Work Plan that the committee created, specifically Point 6 Communications, Reporting and Behaviours. The project has been identified as a high priority for the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee.

### **3. Project Definition**

#### **3.1 Project Objectives**

By the end of the project, the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee will be presented with a report, but if during the project research a more dynamic and visual way of displaying the data presents itself then we will use that option. Part of the output of this project will be an objective assessment of the various schemes currently available to see if they use a rigorous scientific approach, how transparent they are, and what countries around the world they are operating in. Other outputs would be a holistic view of the scheme's benefits be they environmental or social etc. criteria to be determined by the project group. It will also provide a set of questions that the user/customer can use when talking to offsetting programmes, or that can be used when looking at a new scheme. A number, but not all, of these programmes will come from the BIC Green Supply Chain Accreditation and Standards Project (Badges Project). This will allow readers of the report, who are looking to use an offsetting scheme, to be able to decide on which scheme will meet their requirements. The project will not touch on the commercials of an organisation or dictate policy.

The effort involved is envisaged to be:

- 1) 0.5 day per week of consultancy between October 2023 and end March 2024 (approx. 91 hours) The project can run in parallel with the BIC Green Supply Chain Designed for Recycling Project and the BIC Sustainability and Environmental Data Reporting, Part 1 Current Practices in the Industry and Part 2 Priority Reporting Areas Projects.
- 2) Establishing which, if any, organizations outside of the committee and board listed above should be approached to contribute information to this project.
- 3) If deemed relevant to have a T&FWG; at least one initial conference/video call meeting of the eventual T&FWG at the start of the project in the form of a workshop led by the Project Consultant. Subsequent meetings will be conference/video calls, at the discretion of the project consultant. These meetings are to be held every two weeks at the discretion of the Project consultant.
- 4) Regular catch-up sessions between BIC's Executive Director and the Project Consultant
- 5) Monthly, written, update reports from the Project Consultant to the BIC Board, the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee and the following:

The final report will be published to the BIC website and will be only available to BIC member organisations initially. After an agreed time period (e.g., 2 – 3 months or so) it may be agreed that the report will be made freely available on request.

#### **3.2 Project Scope**

Items/areas in scope for this project are as follows:

The project will examine all the carbon offsetting programmes that were found during the BIC Green Supply Chain Accreditation Badges Project, it will also research any new programmes that have come to the market since then. The project will research how the various programmes work to see what scientific approach they use, how are they verified,

what countries they are operating in, and what positive impact the scheme represents. The project will also look at the code of practice each programme follows. The project team will create a “BIC criteria” checklist against which all the programmes will be assessed. An example of this would be how is a programme verified to check that it is doing what it says it is and is this done by an independent verification body or self-regulating.

Types of organisations that should be involved and to be considered in the scope include:

- Carbon offsetting programmes/organisations already found as part of the ‘badges’ project
- Other offsetting programmes/organisations that are found during research for the project
- Publishers
- Booksellers
- Printers
- Book industry trade organisations such as:
  - The Publishers Association
  - The British Printing Industries Federation
  - The Booksellers Association
  - CILIP
  - The Independent Publishers Guild, etc

Given the global nature of the book industry supply chain, the project, needs to maintain a global perspective and as such BIC will reach out to the likes of BISG, BookNet Canada, etc., to ensure an international approach. These organisations to be identified in the first meeting of the Task and Finish Working Group. BIC will also work closely with the International Publishers Association during this project.

### **3.3 Outline project deliverables and desired outcomes**

Key deliverables in summary are:

1. A report, but if during the project research a more dynamic and visual way of displaying the data presents itself then we will use that option. Part of the deliverables will detail the programmes that cover offsetting, and the criteria that we have agreed to assess them against. This report will detail the rigorous scientific approach, how transparent they are, what countries around the world they are operating in, and what positive impact the scheme claims to represent to the environment and local people were the scheme is being implemented. This will help enable organisations to decide, if they want to use offsetting, which programmes they are willing to invest in. This report will initially be made available exclusively to BIC members for free. While the report will always be free for BIC members, BIC may decide to make the report available to non-BIC members at a later (i.e., months later) date - though this is to be confirmed. This report should include an Executive Summary.
2. An illustration/check list to show where carbon offsetting sits in relation to an organisations overall carbon journey.
3. A hierarchy tree illustrating the relationship between standards, schemes, and programmes.
4. Checklist of items for consideration when selecting a carbon offsetting programme
5. Recommendations for when offsetting should be used

6. Glossary – to also include definitions of carbon offsetting ‘scheme’ and ‘programme’
7. Project Plan – showing the project timeline, detailing deadlines for each deliverable with actions/owners clearly assigned. This to be drawn up and kept up to date by the project consultant.
8. Regular progress reports from the Project Consultant to the BIC Executive Director, BIC’s Green Supply Chain Committee - website version and summary document. These reports to show tracking against agreed project KPI’s.
9. Project closure will be the delivery of the final report.

### **3.4 Constraints**

The workload and time pressures of those individuals that the consultant will need access to may be a potential constraint, that would impact on the time element of the project.

### **3.5 Interfaces**

BIC member groups outside the T&FWG will be interested in this project, however it is the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee that is ultimately responsible for the success of this project. This project forms part of the BIC Green Supply Chain Work Plan. The BIC Board, and Green Book Alliance will also have a keen interest in execution and success of this project.

## **4. Outline Business/ Industry case**

Please refer to sections 1 (Purpose) and 2 (Background) above. The purpose of this project is to provide guidance and recommendations so that organisations are able to make informed decisions about which offsetting scheme they might like to invest in. At the moment there is no guidance for an organisation to use or help them when they are looking at offsetting schemes and this project aims to fill that gap. Additionally, this project comes from the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee revised Work Plan 2022, specifically Point 6 Communications, Reporting and Behaviours. The project has been identified as a high priority for the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee.

## **5. Quality Expectations**

It is important that the deliverables of this project address all areas detailed in the scope above (as per section 3.2 of this document).

The importance of this project work will be in the following order of priority:

1. Quality of the project deliverables
2. Cost of running the project
3. Time taken to deliver the project

Quality is most important because BIC’s work must always be to the highest standards and misinformation or poor recommendations in such a key area as product availability would be detrimental to BIC’s future and ultimately its reputation across the industry. Cost is the second priority because BIC’s budget is important and BIC’s resources must be managed. Timeline is the least important because if overrunning slightly was still within budget and delivered optimum quality then this would be acceptable. The timeline is (at the time of writing), only estimated. The crucial point is that any delay does not lead to increased costs.

## 6. Acceptance Criteria

The Green Supply Chain Committee will have the final sign off on the final deliverables which will be presented by the project consultant. The final documentation that the project consultant submits should address all areas in scope and should first be signed off by all T&FWG participants. It should also include an Executive Summary. Acceptance of this documentation and the project closure and recommendations report will close the project.

The BIC Board is responsible for the budget for this project.

### Risks

Doing nothing to guide the book industry on carbon offsetting in the supply chain green space could leave book industry organisations without the information, tools, and guidance they need to make positive decisions for the book industry supply chain in a world that is demanding and growing more reliant on guidance in the sustainability field. BIC may appear in a bad light if it does not address this area as it is clearly something it should be tackling.

## 7. Outline Project Plan

The BIC Green Supply Chain Committee listed at the top of this document will be asked to sign off on this project brief. It is anticipated that final sign off and agreement on budget will be reached by mid-January 2023 at the latest. The steps following this will be:

- **By mid-September 2023:** Call for volunteers for the project issued to the BIC membership
- **By October 2023:** Project has begun

The project should hold its first meeting/workshop by the beginning of October 2023 the latest.

The anticipated end date for project is end March 2024. This would be the date by which all the deliverables outlined in Section 3.3 above have been achieved.

A more detailed project plan will be put together by the Project Consultant and should be one of their first actions.

## 8. Budget/ Costs

At the time of writing, the costs to BIC are limited to the agreed Project Consultant's fees, meeting room (if needed) costs, staff time, staff travel expense (should there be any).

## 9. Authority Responsible

BIC's Executive Director.



## **10. Project Consultant**

The project will be run by Simon Crump, the already appointed BIC Environmental Consultant working for the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee

## **11. Customers and Users**

All BIC member organisations (including BISG and BookNet Canada).

## **12. Reporting**

This project reports into the BIC Green Supply Chain Committee (GSCC) for the duration of the project. This committee meets face-to-face 4 times a year as a minimum. The frequency of project update reports to the BIC GSCC will be agreed between the Executive Director and the Project Consultant at the start of the project but is likely to be monthly. This reporting should include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- i) Progress of deliverables against agreed timeline/project plan
- ii) Engagement of stakeholders
- iii) Potential or actual obstacles to delivering the project on time and in full
- iv) Key Project KPIs

The Project Consultant will take responsibility for this reporting.

End of Project Brief