



## Template for non-Party stakeholders' inputs for the Talanoa Dialogue

### Question 3 - How do we get there?

**How do we get there? – Employing a mechanism capable of footprinting all consumer goods will curb the 60% of global emissions that come from the consumer products and services sector.**

Imperial College London, the project's expert institutional partner, has devised a groundbreaking method for calculating the carbon footprints of *all* consumer goods, such that we will be able to calculate and rank the carbon emissions of the millions of products that we all purchase. When incorporated within applications such as e-commerce search engines or procurement platforms, it will, to an unparalleled extent, enable anyone whose goal is sustainable purchasing to mitigate carbon emissions from consumer products and services – a sector responsible for over 60% of worldwide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Using state-of-the-art Life Cycle Assessment and Big Data/Machine Learning, Imperial College's solution will surpass anything currently available, and it will be able instantly to compare and grade, within product ranges and price ranges, goods that would have been almost impossible to tell apart previously. Moreover, it will allow manufacturers to benchmark themselves against one another in a way which is immediately visible to consumers, and which allows companies to gain a marketplace advantage when they improve the sustainability of their products and the way they do business.

Our aim is to let consumers, businesses and organisations use our mechanism for free. In order to achieve this end and ensure maximum impact globally, we need the support of governments, climate change organisations, expert institutions, NGOs and key stakeholders.

With such support, we will be able to answer the question that sparked off this project, namely: "How do we expect consumers and businesses to move towards a less carbon-intensive economy when they have no way of properly judging the impact of the purchasing decisions they are making in the first place?"

### Supporting Parties' NDC goals, and inspiring engagement from other non-state actors.

The project's feasibility study (available upon request), has not only shown that there are ways to develop the system described above using in-depth data from world-leading product and environmental specialists, our mechanism will, moreover, make it possible for governments, key stakeholders and the public to use the mechanism to make significant cuts to emissions by:

- **Giving consumers a way to combat climate change**

There are few opportunities for the public to be genuinely involved in changing things for the better. 'Calls to action' are often seen as too hard, costly or time-consuming and go unanswered. Our project can give people the opportunity to help make significant cuts to global emissions by using their combined purchasing power to transform our materials economy, at no cost to themselves.



- **Giving sustainable manufacturers a marketplace advantage**  
While many companies want to be more sustainable in their consumption and production, there are currently few financial incentives to encourage them to do so. By ranking goods according to their CO<sub>2</sub> impact, and by making the results available for use on ‘consumer-facing’ applications such as the search facilities of online marketplaces, we can give companies real incentives to improve the sustainability of their products. They will have a new means of increasing their sales other than price: namely by improving their products' and services' carbon emissions, and consequently their rankings.
- **Cutting emissions in public procurement**  
Public sector procurement is an area where this initiative can help lead to huge carbon reductions. It is an enormous market segment and its remit is to respond to the ever-growing demands of resource and energy efficiency. By integrating our mechanism into procurement platforms and instruments, we can give governments and public authorities an easy and transparent solution for judging the comparative emissions of the goods they purchase.

## Collaboration with key stakeholders to achieve our goals.

The project's journey so far has seen it collaborate with a number of leading individuals and organisations in the areas of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and supply chain. As we move forward to deliver a working prototype system, we will need to work with many more experts in these fields, combining their knowledge with the expertise that Imperial College has to offer in Machine Learning, software engineering, industrial emissions, manufacturing engineering and LCA. While the task ahead of us will not be easy given the complexity and size of the consumer goods sector, Imperial College has outlined a clear route for the project. It will require some initial investment and concerted effort to set up a working system. However, we believe that, if society is to move towards a more sustainable and resilient future, then it is vital that consumers, procurement professionals and manufacturers are provided with a means of properly calculating what impact their purchasing decisions are having on the environment.

In order to fulfil the goal of delivering this system for everyone to use free of charge, we will need to collaborate with many Party, non-Party and climate organisation stakeholders. We are confident that our system can deliver significant cuts to global emissions and engage the world's consumers, but we believe that, crucially, placing our initiative under the umbrella of influential and high-profile climate change organisations will ensure that the initiative has a swift and far-reaching impact.