

### **“Carbon neutral”: a definition to be standardized**

**The excitement of initiatives and communication on carbon neutrality raises questions. To concretely support public policies and limit the *green washing*, ISO takes the initiative to bring together professionals from around the world and France is called upon to participate, via AFNOR.**

If the expression “to misname things is to bring misfortune to the world” should find a new illustration, it is of course on the question of carbon neutrality. The climate emergency today requires sharing the same language for this type of environmental declaration and this is the challenge of a current standard project at the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), at the initiative from the United Kingdom. The future voluntary standard ISO 14068 has one ambition: to promote a common understanding of carbon neutrality and methods to contribute to it, at the level of public and private organizations.

#### **Participate in French influence**

AFNOR already hosts a group of experts on “mitigation and adaptation to climate change” led by ADEME. Any expert on the subject is called upon to [join this group](#), including environmental defense NGOs, currently absent in France. “*The more our proposals are substantiated and supported during the plenary sessions, the more likely the French vision of the issue will be to gain support from other countries.*”, summarizes Xuan-Hoa Nguyen, standardization project manager.

Can an organization be carbon neutral? Under what conditions can she indicate it? Should we talk about net, avoided or offset emissions? So many examples of questions on the table today and on which consensus must be found. The AFNOR commission is currently in the process of discovering the positions of each of the 60 countries involved, in order to identify possible allies. The ISO 14068 standard will be published in 2023.

On January 26, AFNOR will present the project during an online conference ([open registrations](#)). Three experts will speak:

- Fanny Fleuriot, carbon accounting facilitator - Low Carbon Trajectories Pole, ADEME
- Catherine Chevauché, climate and circular economy manager, Suez
- César Dugast, senior consultant, Carbone 4

#### **Reminder of the regulatory context**

Climate emergency, low-carbon strategy, carbon neutrality... These three concepts are increasingly appearing in the French and European legislative and regulatory corpus. The National Low-Carbon Strategy (SNBC) is France's roadmap to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and thus fight climate change. This involves implementing the transition towards a low-carbon, circular and sustainable economy by 2050. It takes over from Factor 4, a strategy which has long influenced public policies with the aim of dividing carbon emissions. national greenhouse gas emissions by 4 in 2050 compared to 1990. The Paris Climate Agreement, at the end of 2015, requires us to move up a gear.

### **Normalize: an action of influence**

AFNOR supports the strategies of French organizations on an international level by helping them combine innovation and standardization. This was, for example, the case in 2019 on the question of [circular economy](#) and in 2020 regarding the preservation of [biodiversity](#) .

The 2020 edition of the international standardization barometer shows France in 2nd place on the European scene (CEN-CENELEC) and 3rd place on the international scene (ISO-IEC). At the ISO, France returned to 5th place in the ranking, tied with Japan, with 76 secretariats, a figure it had not reached since 2008.

### About AFNOR

AFNOR is the French reference organization for voluntary standards. It manages the collection of existing documents and leads the work of interested parties for the creation and revision of standards and to identify subjects that could provide material for developing new ones. Launched at the initiative of market players, the voluntary standard is a reference framework which aims to provide guidelines, technical or qualitative requirements for products, services or practices serving the general interest. Anyone can participate in its creation and any organization may or may not use and refer to it. This is why the standard is called voluntary. As coordinator of standardization in France, AFNOR has one ambition: to contribute to the dissemination of good practices and effective solutions, for the benefit of all. [www.normalisation.afnor.org](http://www.normalisation.afnor.org)

**Press contact:** Olivier Gibert - 01 41 62 85 55 - [presse@afnor.org](mailto:presse@afnor.org)