



# Trademark & Claims Policy

## - Climate Neutral Certification Program -

(DRAFT RELEASE - vs 0.1- March 2020)

### **Important notes and considerations:**

Climate Neutral Group is currently revising and updating its certification program, following the process and procedures outlined in the [Terms of Reference](#). The new Climate Neutral Certification Program consists of a revised **Standard** (in the past referred to as the KNG Standard vs 2.0), a new **Assurance Protocol** and a new **Trademark & Claims Policy**.

For questions related to the Climate Neutral Certification Program, please contact [certification@climatenutralgroup.com](mailto:certification@climatenutralgroup.com). All (draft) documents can be found on the CNG website: <https://www.climatenutralgroup.com/en/cnq-certification-program-development-process/>

This document is a draft version, which is used to generate feedback and input from stakeholders through several stakeholder consultation rounds. This document is publicly available for free (from the [CNG website](#)) in English (official and binding version) and Dutch.

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## 1 Introduction

This Trademark & Claims Policy complements the Assurance Protocol. It describes the different Climate Neutral Trademark options (further referred to as ‘trademarks’) as well as the rules regarding trademark use and claims-making in regard to the Climate Neutral Certification Program. All certified clients are expected to accurately follow the rules stipulated in this document, so that misuse or misleading use of the trademark is prevented, legitimate claims are made and the overall program’s integrity and credibility is protected.

## 2 Rulebook

### 1. General provisions

Certified clients, -whether certified for their organisation, product(s) and/or service(s)-, always commit to:

- A. Adhere to this policy document to their best knowledge and capabilities;
- B. Intend to display the trademark, off pack and/ or on-pack (if permitted), accompanied by a (short) claim or explanation, in order to be recognizable as a certified client;
- C. Publish the most recent verification report on the client's website (or alternatively, publish a summary report, i.e. those items listed in criterion **5.1 of the Standard**);
- D. Agree that CNG may publish the summary of the most recent verification report or the summary report (see above) on the CNG website;
- E. Not share the trademark with other organisations, except for organisations assigned by the certified client, such as manufacturers of the packaging material for the certified product and packaging design companies;
- F. Obtain approval from CNG prior to external communication about the Climate Neutral Certification Program and/ or prior to making claims or using the trademark, following the rules stipulated in **section 8**.

### 2. What Climate Neutral Trademarks options are available?

For the different certification scopes (i.e. organisation, product or service), two trademark options are offered (**new logo for trademark with label still to be added**). Clients may decide which trademark option to use, and whether to use the coloured (blue) and/or black-and-white version. The trademark is available in English and Dutch, but can be made available in different languages on request if text size allows (e.g. French, German), yet a longer lead time is expected. To obtain high resolution trademarks (in .eps or .png), kindly contact: [communication@climateneutralgroup.com](mailto:communication@climateneutralgroup.com).

Certification Scope	Option 1: General trademark	Option 2: Trademark with label
Organisation		
Product		
Service		



**3. How to use the trademark and claims?**

Certification Scope	'Off-pack'	'On-pack'	'On-service'
Organisation	x		
Product	x	x	
Service	x		x

- *For certification of the organisation:* Trademarks and (text) claims shall be made generally in relation to the organisation and clearly refer to the GHG emission sources covered under the agreed boundaries of the organisation itself (see [criterion 2.1 and 2.2 of the Standard](#)). Also, claims shall be made in such a way that they cannot be associated with a certain product or service delivered by the organisation or products and services in general (see also [section 4](#)).
- *For certification of a product:* Trademarks and (text) claims shall be made (i.e. printed) on the certified product(s) itself, following below rules in [section 5](#), and not on any other (non-certified) products. Claims and trademark use may also be off-pack, following the rules in [section 4](#). All claims shall clearly refer to the GHG emission sources covered under the agreed boundaries of the certified product e.g. from cradle-to-gate, cradle-to-shelf or from cradle-to-grave (see [criterion 2.1 and 2.2 of the Standard](#)).
- *For certification of a service:* Trademarks and (text) claims shall be made in such a way that they can be directly associated with the certified service, following the rules in [section 6](#) (and [section 4](#), if applicable). If the client requires tools or equipment in order to provide or execute the service, such as transport vehicles or machinery, trademarks and claims may be printed thereon. All claims shall clearly refer to the GHG emission sources covered under the agreed boundaries of the certified service (see [criterion 2.1 and 2.2 of the Standard](#)).

**4. How to use trademarks and claims 'off-pack'?**

Trademark and claims may be used 'off-pack', such as in general company brochures or on other press-work, on the company's website, in advertisements, in social media, in company reports (e.g. annual reports), on company vehicles or fleet (provided the client does not provide transport-related services<sup>1</sup>), etc. For certification of a product or service, 'off-pack' use is allowed, provided that the name or another unique identifier of the certified product(s) or service(s) is clearly mentioned.

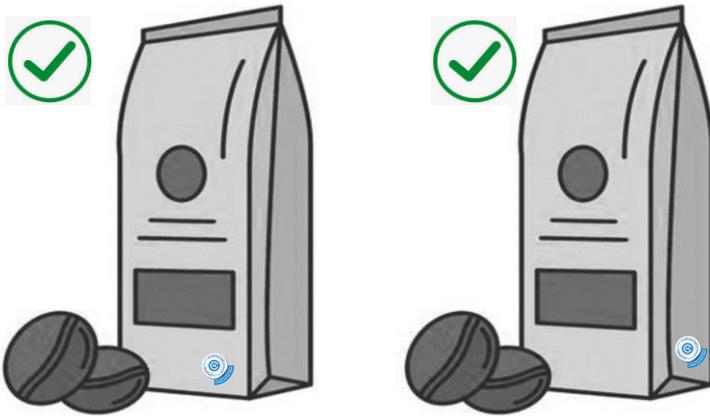
**5. How to use trademarks and claims 'on-pack'?**

Trademark and claims may be used 'on-pack', as illustrated through below pictures.

- In the case of only outer-packaging (e.g. if the product still needs to be repacked in units for onwards selling or consumption), trademarks and claims may be printed on the outer-packaging material.
- If no packaging is used at all, trademarks and claims may be printed on or attached to the product itself.
- If a product consists of many ingredients, and an exception is granted that only a significant part of these ingredients has been included in the boundaries (see [criterion 2.2 of the Standard](#)), this shall then be clearly communicated through an explanatory text accompanying the trademark.

NOTE: If the packaging material itself is certified (and not the content therein, i.e. the product itself), the trademark may be printed on the packaging material, but the claim shall clearly describe that it is the packaging that is certified (and not the content). Ideally, the trademark shall be printed on a less visible place, e.g. on the inside, back-of-pack or side-of-pack.

<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, trademark or claim may suggest that the service is certified.



*Correct use:*

- Trademark/ claim is placed front-of-pack, side-of-pack or back-of-pack;
- Trademark/ claim is made readable (min. diameter is 10 mm.) and its size is proportional to other texts, such as brand name, product (content) information, and other certification trademarks or seals.



*Incorrect use:*

- Trademark not proportional to other on-pack texts
- Incorrect colour
- Claim may be associated with product name

## 6. How to use trademarks and claims 'on-service'?

Trademark and claims may be used 'on-service', meaning that the claim or trademark may be printed on tools, equipment or another tangible item that is used in order to provide or execute the service, such as transport vehicles, machinery, equipment, etc.

## 7. What claims and trademark use is appropriate?

- Trademark use, whether on-pack or off-pack, is always accompanied by a (short) explanation (or claim) and with reference to the website [www.climateneutralgroup.com](http://www.climateneutralgroup.com)<sup>2</sup>. Ideally, claims or explanatory texts are as brief as possible. Considered as the shortest possible explanation (claim) is a URL to the CNG website or the client's website where more information is available.
- All explanations or claims shall be clear and transparent, and shall represent the agreed organisational and operational boundaries (i.e. overclaiming is not permitted). If certain emissions are excluded, or exceptions are made, this is clearly communicated in the claim. [Section 11](#) gives two examples of misleading claims.

<sup>2</sup> Or another URL owned by CNG.



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- Combining the trademark with other sustainability logos, seals or trademarks is permitted, as long as these do not make an explicit climate and/or CO<sub>2</sub> claim.
- The trademark may not be placed or used in such a way that the impression can be created that the trademark belongs to a brand or organization other than Climate Neutral Group.
- For claims containing the word “CO<sub>2</sub>”, the subscript functionality shall be used in on- and offline communications: CO<sub>2</sub> > 2 in subscript and in html <sub>2</sub>.

*Examples:*

### **Certification of a product:**

*The total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of this coffee have been calculated from plantation to shelf. We endeavor to reduce these emissions and we compensate for the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that we cannot reduce (yet) through certified climate smart coffee projects. For more information, see: [www.climateneutralgroup.com](http://www.climateneutralgroup.com).*

### **Certification of the organisation:**

*“Our organization is certified against the Climate Neutral Standard: the appreciation that our efforts are actually significant when dealing with climate issues. Our business operations have been tested against strict criteria. We reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as required by the Paris Agreement, and we compensate all CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that we cannot (yet) reduce with climate projects. This makes us 100% climate neutral. We are therefore proudly using the trademark for our climate-neutral organization. For more information, see: [www.climateneutralgroup.com](http://www.climateneutralgroup.com).”*

### **Certification of a set of products:**

*We, Company X, have worked with our suppliers to bring emissions down in their production processes. We have invested in a new spraying technique which has reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with 5% per kg coffee produced. We continue to make serious efforts for further CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in our supply chains, and we compensate all remaining emissions that we cannot (yet) reduce with climate smart coffee projects in Vietnam. We can therefore legitimately say our coffee products are ‘climate neutral’. For more information, see: [www.climateneutralgroup.com](http://www.climateneutralgroup.com).*

### **Certification of a service:**

*“We have made serious investments in our fleet, and we are now excited to announce that since date X our transport service leaves a net zero carbon footprint. All our trucks are now electric and use green energy generated by windmills in the Flevopolders. Our efforts have been audited by an independent verifier against the Climate Neutral Standard, and we are now allowed to display the Climate Neutral logo for our transport service. For more information, see: [www.climateneutralgroup.com](http://www.climateneutralgroup.com).”*

## **8. Is there an approval process preceding trademark and claims use?**

Designs and texts with reference to the Climate Neutral Certification Program, or that can be associated to the term ‘climate neutrality’ or where the Climate Neutral Trademark is used, are subject to approval from Climate Neutral Group, as follows:

- For ‘on-pack’ use:** Always obtain approval for packaging designs, prior to printing of packaging material (or of the certified product, if the trademark or claim is printed thereon).
- For ‘off-pack’ use:** Always obtain approval for:
  1. publication on client’s website (e.g. sustainability page), prior to public launch;
  2. press release or news item, prior to public release.

NOTE: all other off-pack communication including the use of trademarks and claims should be in accordance with above off-pack approvals and do not require separate approvals. In case of doubt, kindly contact [communication@climateneutralgroup.com](mailto:communication@climateneutralgroup.com), prior to requesting formal approval.



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- C. **For 'on-service' use:** Always obtain approval, prior to public use, whether the trademark and/ or claim is made on-pack or off-pack. This, due to the great diversity **and** multi-interpretable definitions of services there is a risk for (un)intended overclaiming and misleading use. In case of doubt, kindly contact [communication@climateneutralgroup.com](mailto:communication@climateneutralgroup.com), prior to requesting formal approval.

Approval needs to be in place for all on-pack and off-pack claims made and/ or trademarks used prior to the audit takes place (for those that require approval, see NOTE above under B). Deviation from the below steps is only permitted after written approval from the Climate Neutral Group. Failure to submit the approval requests in due time, or to obtain the required approvals prior to the audit, may lead to, can lead to certification delays, suspension or decertification.

1. Latest 3 weeks prior to the deadlines mentioned under A, B and C, or latest 3 weeks prior to the audit date, the client submits an approval request for all trademarks and/ or claims to CNG by mail to: [communication@climateneutralgroup.com](mailto:communication@climateneutralgroup.com).
2. CNG responds to this request within one week by mail with either:
  - a. an approval confirmation, or
  - b. required adjustments to be made.
3. If adjustments are required, the client resubmits a revised approval request, and CNG responds again within one week.
4. During the audit, the client demonstrates the approval mail to CB.
5. After a positive certification decision (see below), the client may make claims and/or use trademarks as agreed with and approved by CNG.

### 9. When can the Climate Neutral Trademark (and claims) be used?

*For first year of certification:*

- Clients that have received a positive certification decision for their first audit may start using the Climate Neutral Trademark and may start making claims. The certification decision is communicated by the CB to the client in the form of an audit report or a certificate. Only when the certification decision is positive, the client may make claims and use trademark.
- As clients may sign a contract with CNG or CB at any moment during the calendar year, upon availability of the CB, the client may request an audit outside the annual verification and certification cycle (see [Assurance Protocol, section 2.2](#) and examples hereunder). Such exceptions should be requested to CNG, prior to making commitments to any other party (e.g. onwards buyers) or CB.

*Examples:*

1. Client wants to get certified and signs a contract with CNG in September 2020.  
→ Audit can still take place in September 2020 (if CB is available), using the footprint data of 2019.
2. Client wants to get certified and signs a contract with CNG in January 2020.  
→ Audit takes place following the regular annual verification and certification cycle (April – June 2020), OR  
→ Audit takes place immediately or ASAP (if CB is available), using the footprint data of an earlier year, namely 2018.



For subsequent years of certification:

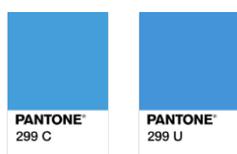
- Clients that are found compliant with the Standard after a consecutive audit resulting in a positive certification decision may continue using the Climate Neutral Trademark for another validity period (see [Assurance Protocol, section 2.5](#)).

## 10. How to use Climate Neutral Group logos?

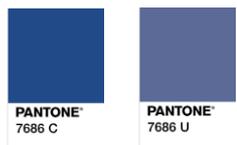
Climate Neutral Group logos are available in blue and white for color applications, or black and white for grayscale applications. In special cases only, where marks and text are printed in white onto a color background, they may be approved in a reverse white format. For CNG logos or other marketing material, kindly contact [communication@climateneutralgroup.com](mailto:communication@climateneutralgroup.com), and kindly adhere to below color schemes:

### PMS colours

CNG Blue = **PMS 299**



Dark Blue = **PMS 7686**



### For Print (CMYK)

**CNG Blue**

**CNG Dark Blue**

### For Screen and Web (RGB)

**CNG Blue** 0/135/204

**CNG Dark Blue** 19/58/104

Climate Neutral Group®  
For better business

### CMYK



### RGB



### HEX



## 11. What are the costs for trademark and claims use?

The program fee (excl VAT) entitles certified clients to use of the Climate Neutral Trademark and to make claims about the client's compliance with the Standard. The program fee structure is defined as follows:

Certification of the organisation		Certification of a product or service	
Revenue (€)	In €	Tonnage (CO2)	€/ton CO2
< 1 mln	250	0-1000	1,00
1-5 mln	500	1000-5000	0,75
5-10 mln	750	5000-25000	0,50
10-50 mln	1000	25000-50000	0,25
50-100 mln	1250	50000-100000	0,20
100-250 mln	1500	>100000	0,15
250-500 mln	2000		
500 mln-1 mld	3000		
> 1 mld	On request		



### 12. When is trademark use and claims-making considered to be misleading?

The use of claims and trademarks should correspond with the certification scope and its operational and organisational boundaries (see [section 3](#)), and may not give room to multiple interpretations.

*Example 1 of misleading claims:*

Company X provides a range of online services for customers to store their data in the cloud. This data is stored on servers that consume a lot of electricity. These servers are owned by sister-company Y. Company X is certified for the organisation, and the servers' electricity use is excluded from the scope. Company X has placed the Climate Neutral Trademark on the webpage where customers can actually upload their data, and proudly announces to be *"the first data storage centre that is climate neutral"*.

*Why is this misleading?*

The trademark may not be placed in such a way that it could be interpreted differently. In this example, and because the Trademark is directly placed on the service itself, the claim may suggest that the data uploading service is climate neutral, which is not the case.

*What is then possible?*

Company X may report about their climate-neutral organisation in its annual report or on a more general webpage, e.g. the company profile page. The claim should then clearly describe that the organisation is climate-neutral and not the service.

*Example 2 of misleading claims:*

Company Y produces plastic products from recycled material. Company Y is certified for the organisation and has placed the Climate Neutral Trademark on its webpage with the following claim: *"we produce our entire range of plastic products CO2 neutrally"*.

*Why is this misleading?*

The claim is ambiguous in the sense that it could potentially be interpreted as if these products are climate neutral.

*What is then possible?*

To make sure the claim cannot be misinterpreted, better wording would be: *"our organisation and our production facility are climate neutral"*.

### 13. When is the trademark and/ or claims approval withdrawn?

The right to use the trademark and/ or to make claims can be withdrawn by CNG and/ or CB if:

- A. the client ends the program contract (with CNG) or the audit contract (with CB), e.g. if its onwards buyers do not require climate-neutral certification anymore;
- B. CNG or CB ends the program contract or audit contract, e.g. if client does not pay respective fees;
- C. the client is not compliant (anymore) with the Standard, or a negative certification decision has been issued, see [Assurance Protocol, section 2.4](#);
- D. the client has deliberately committed fraud or misused the claims or trademarks.

In the case of B, C and D: CNG and the CB decide together on potential consequences, such as non-certification, claims removal, product recalls, use of remaining packaging material, penalty fees, next opportunity for re-certification, etc. Failure to receive approval by CNG, or any other forms of misuse and/ or misleading use may lead to legal intervention and in the worst-case scenario result in removal of all trademarks and/ or claims (including public recalls).



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In all cases, clients shall sign a *'No Use of Trademark and Claims Declaration'*, which states the actions required to remove trademarks and claims and a final removal date.

### **14. How to report misuse or misleading use of trademarks and claims?**

In case of misuse or misleading use noted within your own organisation, by other clients, or by other (non-certified) parties, please contact CNG immediately at [communication@climateneutralgroup.com](mailto:communication@climateneutralgroup.com) or submit a grievance following the procedure here **(still to develop)**.

### **15. Disclaimer**

Climate Neutral Group reserves the right to amend this Trademark and Claims Policy at any time. If changes occur, a grace period will apply so that clients will receive sufficient time to implement these changes.