

# GHG Protocol and the path to credible climate action

A guide to consistent, confident and  
verifiable emissions reporting





# Contents

Why emissions transparency matters more than ever	03
What is the GHG Protocol?	04
Understanding Scopes 1, 2 and 3	05
Expert insights: Turning GHG data into business value	06
Getting started: A checklist for confident GHG reporting	07



# Why emissions transparency matters more than ever

Organisations today are under increasing pressure to disclose their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with accuracy, transparency and accountability. The demand is driven by evolving regulation, stakeholder expectations and the urgent need to demonstrate real progress toward Net Zero.

At the centre of this global shift is the GHG Protocol – the world’s most widely used framework for measuring and managing emissions. It provides the structure organisations need to track carbon performance, meet compliance obligations and build trust with stakeholders.

The regulatory momentum is clear. The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) in the EU alone will impact more than 50,000 companies, mandating audited sustainability disclosures including GHG emissions reporting. In this context, reliable emissions data is no longer a ‘nice to have’ – it’s a business imperative.

This guide introduces the key principles of the GHG Protocol and breaks down the three scopes of emissions. It also shares expert insight from LRQA’s ESG and GHG assurance specialists on how to build a credible emissions strategy with confidence.





# What is the GHG Protocol?

Developed by the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), the GHG Protocol sets the global standard for emissions accounting across business operations, supply chains and climate projects.

It underpins most climate disclosure frameworks including CDP, SBTi and regulatory regimes such as the CSRD and the proposed SEC climate disclosure rule in the US. It's also the foundation for ISO 14064-1 – the international standard for GHG verification.

## The GHG Protocol suite includes:

- **Corporate standard** – accounting for Scopes 1, 2 and 3
- **Scope 2 guidance** – for electricity, steam, heating and cooling
- **Corporate value chain (Scope 3) standard** – for upstream and downstream emissions
- **Mitigation goal standard** – to track reductions against targets
- **Project protocol** – for emissions reduction initiatives



# Understanding Scopes 1, 2 and 3

Scope 3 is often the most material – and the most complex. These emissions can represent **70–90%** of a company's total carbon footprint ([source](#)).

Yet, despite their significance, only **15% of companies currently report Scope 3** emissions or have set reduction targets ([source](#)). This leaves a critical blind spot in many organisations' sustainability strategies.

## Scope 1

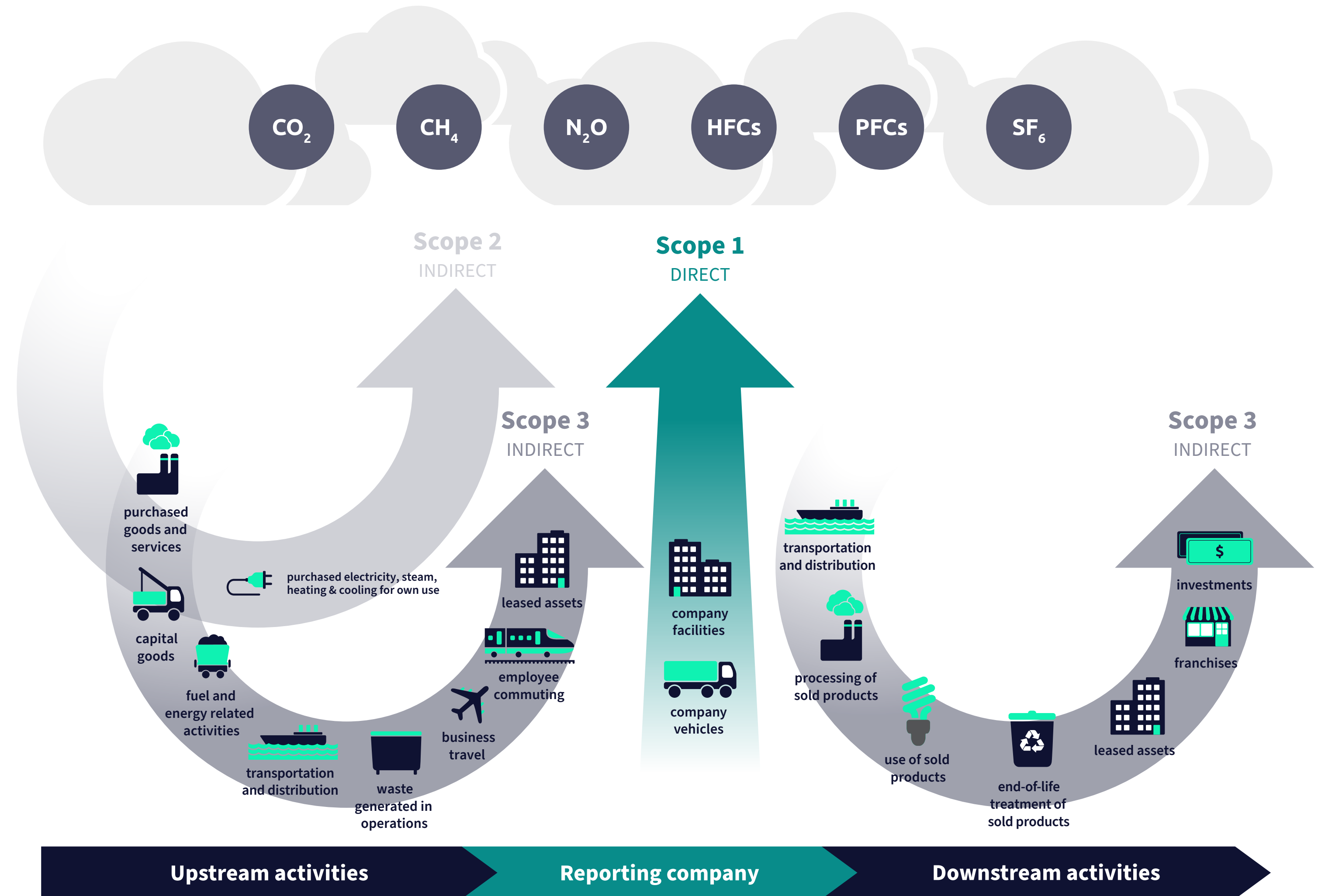
Scope 1 emissions represent the direct greenhouse gas emissions that originate from sources owned or controlled by an organisation, such as onsite combustion of fossil fuels in company-owned vehicles, manufacturing processes and heating systems.

## Scope 2

Scope 2 emissions encompass the indirect greenhouse gas emissions associated with the generation of purchased or acquired electricity, heat, or steam consumed by an organisation. While these emissions occur off-site at third-party utilities, they are linked to the organisation's activities through energy consumption.

## Scope 3

Scope 3 emissions refer to indirect emissions that occur in the supply chain but are not directly owned or controlled by the reporting organisation. These emissions are challenging to identify, measure, and manage due to their diffuse nature and varied sources. Examples include emissions from employees commuting, purchased goods and other indirect activities.





# Expert insights: Turning GHG data into business value

We speak with ESG experts Olga Rivas, Technical Cluster Manager and Silvia Matabuena, Senior Assessor about overcoming the challenges of GHG reporting and building a resilient emissions strategy.



**Olga Rivas**  
Climate Change Expert | EMEA



**Silvia Matabuena**  
Climate Change Expert | EMEA

## Why is now the time for organisations to align with the GHG Protocol?

**Olga Rivas:** “We’re at a turning point. Regulatory expectations are accelerating and the market is demanding consistency and comparability. The GHG Protocol provides that. Whether you’re reporting under CSRD, CDP or working toward net zero, the Protocol gives you a globally recognised framework that ensures your data stands up to scrutiny.

It also helps you take a strategic view. By understanding where your emissions are coming from, you can prioritise reductions in the areas that matter most – which is essential if you want to drive long-term value, not just compliance.”

## Scope 3 remains a major challenge – how should organisations approach it?

**Silvia Matabuena:** “The scale and complexity of Scope 3 can feel overwhelming. But inaction is the biggest risk. Start with a materiality-led approach – focus on the categories that are likely to be the most significant and where you have the most influence.

We also recommend engaging your suppliers early. Many companies don’t realise the value of collaboration in improving data quality. At LRQA, we combine audit experience with data insight tools like our EiQ platform to help clients build supplier engagement programmes that improve traceability and transparency across the value chain.”

## What role does verification play in building trust and credibility?

**Olga Rivas:** “Third-party verification is now expected by investors, rating agencies and regulators. It’s not just about validating the numbers – it’s about showing that you have the systems, controls and governance in place to manage your emissions effectively.

Recent data shows that companies with verified emissions are 43% more likely to be trusted by investors (source). That trust opens doors to capital, partnerships and market access. Our role at LRQA is to deliver that credibility – with rigour and insight.”

## What does good look like in GHG reporting today?

**Silvia Matabuena:** “Good GHG reporting isn’t just about data – it’s about integration. The leading companies embed emissions metrics into their business decisions, use real-time insights to monitor performance and link targets to financial outcomes.

They also go beyond the annual reporting cycle. Continuous assurance, using tools like EiQ, gives them visibility over emerging risks and helps them stay agile. That’s where we’re seeing the shift – from static compliance to dynamic sustainability leadership.”





# Getting started: A checklist for confident GHG reporting

Use this checklist to assess your current state and take practical steps forward:

- ☐ Map your Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions sources
- ☐ Choose your organisational boundary (financial or operational control)
- ☐ Identify data owners and internal reporting workflows
- ☐ Assess materiality across Scope 3 categories
- ☐ Begin supplier engagement and data collection
- ☐ Apply relevant emissions factors and methodologies
- ☐ Review your GHG inventory
- ☐ Align with key disclosure frameworks (CSRD, CDP, SBTi)
- ☐ Set science-based reduction targets and track progress
- ☐ Communicate performance in sustainability and ESG reports

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# Why partner with LRQA?

As a global assurance provider with deep expertise in sustainability, LRQA supports clients in:

- ✔ **GHG data verification** to ISO 14064-1 and related standards
- ✔ **Independent assurance** for CSRD, CDP, SBTi and ESG disclosures
- ✔ **Advisory services** to design, implement or improve your GHG reporting framework
- ✔ **Scope 3 readiness** through supplier engagement and risk profiling
- ✔ **Training and capacity building** for internal teams

Talk to our ESG experts to explore how LRQA can help you with your GHG Protocol journey.

Get started today →

## What makes LRQA unique?

- **Global reach** - Local expertise in countries all over the world, with consistent delivery across your sites and supply chain.
- **Flexible delivery** - On-site or remote, we tailor our services to suit your operations and timelines.
- **Proven credibility** - A trusted verification partner, helping shape international standards and frameworks.
- **Sustainability-first** - One of the world's leading ESG assurance providers, with deep experience in GHG and supply chain data.



Wherever you are in your journey – from first steps to advanced emissions strategy – LRQA provides the credibility, insight and partnership to help you move forward with confidence.”

**61,000+**  
clients globally

**5,000+**  
colleagues globally

**900+**  
ESG specialists

Operating in  
**150+**  
countries

**Enhance transparency, meet ESG corporate objectives and build stakeholder trust through independent verification and report assurance with LRQA.**  
**ESG and verification services**





## About LRQA

LRQA is the leading global assurance partner, bringing together decades of unrivalled expertise in assessment, advisory, inspection and cybersecurity services.

Our solutions-based partnerships are supported by data-driven insights that help our clients solve their biggest business challenges. Operating in more than 150 countries with a team of more than 5,000 people, LRQA's award-winning compliance, supply chain, cybersecurity and ESG specialists help more than 61,000 clients across almost every sector to anticipate, mitigate and manage risk wherever they operate.

In everything we do, we are committed to shaping a better future for our people, our clients, our communities and our planet.

## Get in touch

Visit **lrqa.com** for more information or email **enquiries@lrqa.com**



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