

# The Restoration Carbon Protocol FAQ: Every Question We've Heard

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Since publishing the Restoration Carbon Protocol framework, we've received questions from restoration contractors, commercial property managers, ESG consultants, and insurance professionals. This FAQ consolidates the most common questions and our current best answers.

## Questions from Restoration Contractors

### *Does RCP apply to residential restoration work?*

The RCP is designed for commercial restoration contexts — specifically for the Scope 3 reporting needs of commercial property managers. However, the calculation methodology applies to any restoration job regardless of property type. The reporting value is primarily realized in commercial relationships where property managers have ESG disclosure obligations.

### *How long does it take to produce an RCP per-job carbon report?*

For a project manager who has captured the 12 RCP data points during the job, producing the per-job carbon report at close-out typically takes 30–60 minutes. The calculation is straightforward — multiplication of activity data by emission factors, category by category. The time investment drops significantly as the process becomes routine.

### *What if I don't have all 12 data points for a completed job?*

Use RCP's proxy estimation methodology for missing data points. The RCP provides standard consumption rates by job type and damage class that substitute for actual measured data when records are unavailable. Document which data points were estimated and the basis. A documented estimate is far more useful to your client than no data.

### *Is there a fee to use the RCP?*

No. The Restoration Carbon Protocol is published open-access. The methodology, calculation worksheets, emission factor tables, and per-job carbon report template are all freely available. The goal is adoption, not revenue from the standard itself.

### *Do I need to disclose my company's own Scope 1 and 2 emissions to use RCP?*

No. RCP produces Scope 3 data for your clients — data about emissions generated by your work on their behalf. This is distinct from your own company's Scope 1 and 2 emissions. You don't need your own emissions disclosure program to provide per-job client data under RCP.

## Questions from Commercial Property Managers

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### *How do I request RCP-format data from my current restoration vendors?*

Start with a conversation. Contact your primary restoration vendors and ask if they're familiar with the Restoration Carbon Protocol and whether they can provide per-job carbon reports. Share the RCP framework documentation with vendors not yet familiar. For new contracts and renewals, add a sustainability data rider specifying RCP-format delivery within 30–60 days of job completion.

### *What do I do with RCP data once I receive it?*

Incorporate the tCO<sub>2</sub>e figures into your Scope 3 inventory by GHG Protocol category. Category 4 and 5 data goes into your Scope 3 Categories 4 and 5 respectively. Category 1 materials data goes into your Scope 3 Category 1. For GRESB, use the RCP reports as evidence of supply chain engagement in your Management section response. For CDP and SB 253, the data feeds directly into your Scope 3 category disclosures.

### *Is RCP data acceptable to third-party ESG auditors?*

RCP data is calculated using GHG Protocol Corporate Value Chain Standard methodology and EPA/DEFRA emission factors — both accepted by major third-party ESG assurance providers. The RCP does not itself provide assurance; it provides the underlying primary data that the auditor assesses. RCP-format data with clear methodology documentation and data quality notes generally satisfies auditor data quality requirements better than spend-based estimates.

## Questions from ESG Consultants

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*How does RCP handle the uncertainty inherent in emissions calculations?*

The RCP acknowledges uncertainty in two ways: data quality tiers (primary measured data, primary estimated data with documented methods, proxy-based estimation) and a mandatory data quality notation section in every report. This transparency is consistent with GHG Protocol guidance on Scope 3 data quality and is what auditors expect to see.

*Will the RCP be updated as emission factor databases update?*

Yes. The RCP will publish annual updates to emission factor tables aligned with EPA and DEFRA database release cycles. Version numbers are included in all reports, allowing auditors to identify which emission factor vintage was applied.

*Can RCP coexist with other contractor ESG frameworks?*

Yes. RCP is designed to be complementary to broader contractor ESG programs. A restoration contractor participating in EcoVadis, ISO 14001, or other environmental management frameworks can layer RCP per-job carbon reporting on top — RCP addresses the specific per-job Scope 3 data delivery need that broader frameworks don't typically address at the job level.

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## Carbon Avoidance Questions

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*What is the difference between actual emissions and avoided emissions under RCP?*

Actual emissions are what went into the Scope 3 inventory — the quantified carbon from transportation, materials, waste disposal, and demolished building

components on a specific job. Avoided emissions are supplementary disclosures documenting what didn't happen because of a deliberate operational choice: a wall assembly dried in place instead of demolished, debris sent to a recycler instead of a landfill, an electric monitoring van used instead of a diesel truck. Avoided emissions do not reduce the actual emissions total. They are reported alongside it as evidence of reduction activity. The GHG Protocol treats avoided emissions as supplementary information outside the inventory boundary, and RCP follows this treatment.

#### *Can my client subtract avoided emissions from their Scope 3 total?*

No. Avoided emissions are evidence of reduction progress — they belong in the sustainability narrative and supplier engagement documentation, not in the inventory calculation. A client who subtracts avoided emissions from their Scope 3 total would be misrepresenting their inventory under the GHG Protocol. The correct use is: report the actual Scope 3 figure, then separately document the avoided emissions as evidence that the contractor is actively reducing their supply chain impact.

#### *Are avoided emissions the same as carbon offsets?*

No. Offsets are purchased credits representing reductions achieved by a third party elsewhere. Avoided emissions are reductions achieved on the specific job being reported, by the contractor doing the work. They are not tradeable, not purchasable, and cannot be used by one party to compensate for another party's emissions. A contractor cannot sell their avoided emissions credits without going through a formal carbon credit verification process under a recognized standard like Verra or Gold Standard — which is a separate and complex undertaking outside the RCP framework.

### *What documentation is required for an avoided emissions claim?*

The same standard as actual emissions: a source document that a third-party verifier can examine. Dry-in-place avoidance requires a psychrometric log confirming the dry standard was achieved and documentation that no demolition was performed. Waste diversion avoidance requires a weight receipt from the recycling facility naming the material type and weight. Equipment substitution avoidance requires the GPS trip log or equipment runtime record showing the actual equipment used. An avoided emissions claim without source documentation is not auditable and should not be delivered to clients facing CSRD or SBTi verification requirements.

### *When will avoided emissions be formally part of the RCP schema?*

Avoided emissions are RCP guidance in v1.0 — the methodology and JSON structure are documented but not yet a formal required schema element. The `avoided_emissions` object is targeted for formalization in RCP v1.1, along with a standardized counterfactual table and a dry-in-place documentation protocol. Contractors generating avoided emissions data now can use the structure described in the [RCP Carbon Avoidance Framework article](#) — records generated under this guidance will be compatible with the v1.1 formal schema.

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#### **CONTINUE READING**

- [RCP v1.0 Full Framework Document](#)
- [Introducing the Restoration Carbon Protocol](#)
- [The 12 Data Points Every Job Ticket Needs](#)

## SEE ALSO

- [RCP Hub — Complete Knowledge Base](#)
- [RCP Carbon Avoidance Framework](#)

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