

Climate Calculator FAQs

- What is the goal of the tool?
 - The goal is to have a Minnesota-specific climate pollution/emissions assessment tool that supports quantification and discussion of climate pollution/GHG emissions from a project undergoing environmental review. (In other words, to help answer EAW question #18)
 - The tool should support consistent, effective, and efficient climate assessment in environmental review.
- Who is it for?
 - The tool is for anyone filling out an environmental assessment worksheet – project proposers, consultants, and responsible government units. The tool will be available to anyone.
- How does it work?
 - The user inputs the details they know about the proposed project. Users can override calculator assumptions or leave questions blank. The calculator will then output an estimated amount of emissions for the project
- What if I already use an existing calculator tool? Do I have to use this tool?
 - No RGU is required to use this calculator, but it is our hope that it provides the most complete and accurate number for your needs. If you regularly use and are familiar with another calculator tool, you can continue to use it.
 - The EQB climate calculator will use portions of existing tools. Existing Minnesota calculator tools (like MICE and the MPCA's feedlots tool) will continue to be used and maintained by the agencies that developed them. EQB will point users to those tools or incorporate all or part of the assumptions and calculations of an existing tool in the new tool.
 - The benefit of this tool is in bringing relevant portions of multiple tools all in one place so that users can answer question 18 in one central location.
- What is the scope of the tool?
 - What mandatory categories does it cover?
 - Nearly all categories are covered. Currently GEOs are the only mandatory category that is not included. The list of included categories may change as the calculator is constructed.
 - For ones that aren't covered, or for life cycle phases that aren't covered in a category, EQB's climate guidance will continue to provide options for other tools or techniques to complete the analysis.
 - Does it provide a life cycle analysis?
 - It is built on a life cycle approach, but currently – due to data and resource limitations – the tool doesn't account for emissions from all lifecycle stages for all projects. It focuses on the emission sources that are large components of the total potential emissions of the project, are easy to define, and/or have readily available data for facilitating assumptions.
 - How does the tool include actions to reduce emissions?
 - For some project types there will be an opportunity for the person filling out the EAW form to highlight practices taken to reduce GHGs. These practices should showcase lower emissions.

- How accurate will the tool be?
 - EQB's tool is designed to provide a reasonable estimate that can be effectively and efficiently constructed by environmental review practitioners, and to ensure they can explain (at least at a high level) what emissions are included in the calculation.
 - The tool should allow comparison between projects of the same type and help project proposers/consultants/RGUs see how design decisions might impact GHG emission estimation.
 - The calculator will need to make project assumptions for the sake of estimating emissions, as do all calculators, and those will be documented for the user.