

How are you using AI in sustainability?

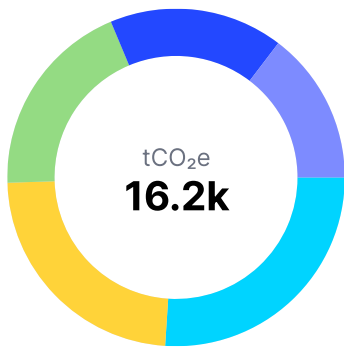


SWEEP

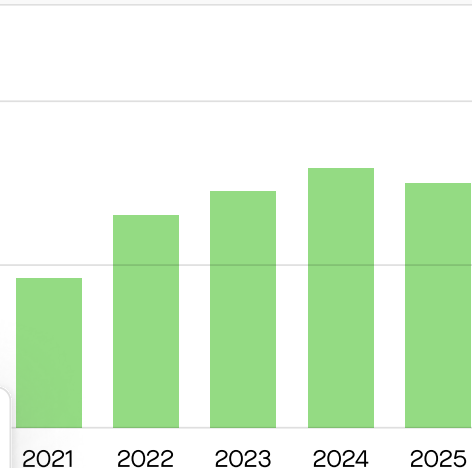
GUIDE

Supplier contribution in tCO₂e

Created



Emission trends 2021-2025



- ✓ Measurements created
- ✓ Rule created
- Measurements updated

Resources (4)

- Global Inc. — Investor RFI Response [Created](#)
- Scope contribution in ... [Created](#)
- Emission trends 2021- ... [Created](#)

Global Inc. — Investor RFI Response



We'll cover:

- 01 Common use cases for AI in sustainability
- 02 The crucial question: should you buy or build?
- 03 How can you use AI effectively and responsibly?
- 04 Using AI to improve sustainability data and decision-making



“AI doesn’t replace sustainability expertise – it amplifies it. Its real value is in managing volume, complexity, and change across massive datasets. That’s what allows teams to focus on analysis, risk, and action instead of data wrangling.”

Yannick Chaze
Cofounder & CTO



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Introduction



“Sustainability leaders are being constantly asked how they're using AI. The better question is what they're using it for. AI should take on the tedious data work, so your teams can focus on the decisions that actually cut emissions and create value.”

Rachel Delacour
CEO of Sweep



Picture the scene. You're in a board meeting and someone asks, **“How are we using AI in sustainability?”**

You could talk about the work your team faces every day: sorting supplier files, finding missing data, responding to questionnaires, checking calculations, and preparing reports.

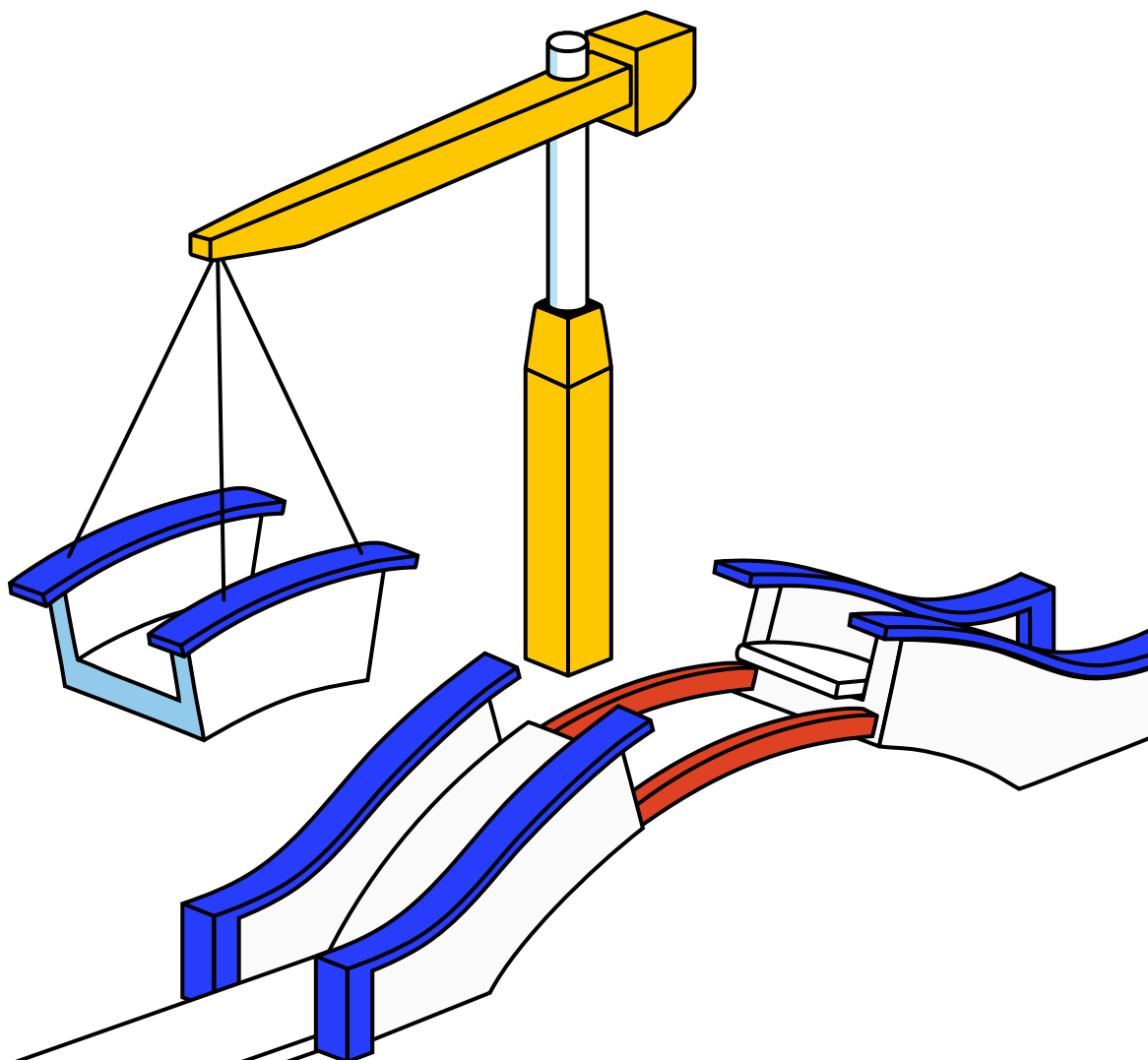
That leads to the next question almost immediately: **“If this is mostly data work, can't we just put our information into ChatGPT, Claude, or Copilot and get the answer?”**

Now the conversation has moved from possibility to proof. Can an existing large language model handle your data efficiently and consistently enough for reporting? Or do you need to build, buy, or combine something more specialized?

And just as you start to weigh speed, cost, control, and quality, there is one more question you cannot ignore: **“What is the carbon footprint of the AI we are using?”**

These questions are connected. The use case determines the tool. The tool determines the controls you need. And the value of the result needs to justify the resources it consumes.

This guide follows that path. It starts with the practical work AI can improve, then examines the buy-versus-build decision, before looking at how you can use AI responsibly, with people in control and the technology’s own footprint in view.



01 What are the common use cases for AI in sustainability?

The strongest applications involve high volumes of information, repeated manual work, and outputs that you can review. That makes them practical places to start, whether you are exploring tools for one team or building an organization-wide capability.

Collecting, cleaning, and mapping data

Sustainability data rarely arrives in one consistent format. Suppliers may send spreadsheets, facilities PDF invoices, procurement teams ERP exports, and business units email figures.

Before analysis, teams must identify fields, check units, match entities, remove duplicates, and map activities to categories or emissions factors. This manual work is necessary but time-consuming.

AI can accelerate the first pass by:

- Classifying fields and activities.
- Normalizing units, names, and periods.
- Matching suppliers and facilities.
- Flagging gaps and inconsistencies.
- Suggesting categories and emissions factors.
- Reusing mapping rules.

Because the work is structured and repeatable, you can define checks, add approvals, and maintain an audit trail. AI prepares the data and explains its recommendations, while people make final decisions.

But AI cannot fix a data foundation that does not exist. Before you automate, identify the systems, owners, and source data that your workflow depends on.

“Emission factor mapping is detailed, tedious work. Sweepy helped me find the right factor for my data in a fraction of the time.”

Romane Féron
CSR Data Analyst

ARaymond®

Factors

The GHG Protocol category for your measurements

Configuration

Sweepy recommendations

Settings

5 Factors

Factor	Database	Measurements	Confidence
Business travel- land, Rail, National rail			High
Fuels, Gaseous fuels, Natural gas			High
Business travel- land, Rail, International...			High
Fuels, Gaseous fuels, Natural gas			Medium
Fuels, Gaseous fuels, Natural gas			Medium

Finding gaps, anomalies, and data quality issues

A dataset can look complete while containing problems. A supplier may use an unexpected unit. A facility may show a sharp change caused by a spreadsheet error rather than a real operational shift. A reporting period may be missing, duplicated, or inconsistent with the previous year.

These issues are difficult to find manually across thousands of data points, especially near reporting deadlines.

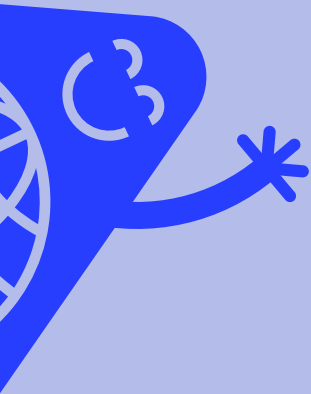
AI can scan for:

- Missing or duplicated information.
- Inconsistent naming and reporting periods.
- Unusual values, sudden changes, and outliers.
- Trends requiring operational or supplier follow-up.
- Data points needing a source, explanation, or review.

It can rank issues by likely importance, helping teams focus on gaps that could affect reporting quality, business decisions, or supplier priorities.

AI cannot explain every anomaly. A spike in energy use could reflect an error, new production, an acquisition, weather, or a measurement change. Its value is surfacing questions quickly, not replacing investigation.

With the right workflow, you can use AI as an early-warning system. It helps you find what deserves attention before it becomes an audit question, a reporting correction, or a difficult conversation with a supplier.



! 7 measurements have been flagged

Activity data		
0		kg
2	Missing data	
0		kg
2	Missing data	
0		kg
0		kg



“We’d been chasing a submission error in a 200,000-line file for over a month. I asked Sweepy to troubleshoot, and it told me exactly what was missing.”

Charles Ogbu

Ph.D. Senior Consultant, CSR & Sustainability

SITA

96%

of respondents say they have some level of sustainability data traceability

47%

say traceability is fully implemented across all processes

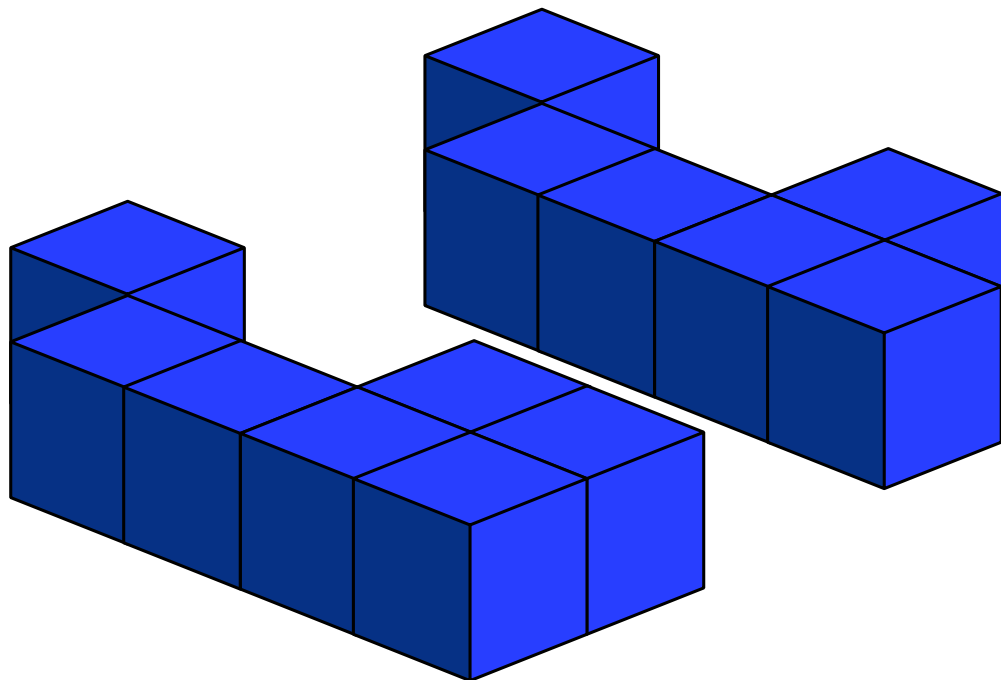
The scale of the gap is significant. In a recent survey by Sweep and Capgemini, **96% of respondents say they have some level of sustainability data traceability**, but only **47% say traceability is fully implemented across all processes**. AI can help you investigate the difference, but it cannot compensate for missing ownership or disconnected systems on its own.

Sustainability in Action 2026

The new rules of business resilience



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Prioritizing supplier data collection

Value chain data is often difficult to collect because it depends on many external organizations. Teams must identify significant suppliers, review incomplete responses, distinguish estimates from primary data, and determine where better information would have the greatest impact.

AI can help by:

- Segmenting suppliers by role, maturity, and impact.
- Identifying gaps, inconsistencies, and estimates.
- Combining supplier, spend, activity, and response data.
- Drafting targeted outreach.
- Prioritizing follow-up campaigns.

Because the process is structured and repeatable, teams can define criteria, add approvals, and maintain a clear record of how priorities were determined. AI helps focus effort where it can most improve data quality.

Instead of sending the same request to everyone, you can tailor engagement to each supplier's role, data maturity, previous response, and likely impact.

Answering questionnaires, RFPs, and information requests

Investor questionnaires, customer requests, procurement forms, and internal reviews often ask for similar information in different formats. Preparing each response manually creates duplicated work and increases the risk of inconsistent figures or unsupported claims.

AI can help by:

- Finding relevant data and supporting evidence.
- Reusing approved answers from previous requests.
- Identifying missing information and potential gaps.
- Distinguishing confirmed figures from estimates.
- Drafting responses in the required format.
- Flagging claims that need human review.

Because each draft is linked to its underlying information, teams can review the evidence, validate the answer, and maintain a clearer record of what was submitted. AI reduces repetitive work while people remain responsible for final checks and approval.

Drafting reporting and disclosure content

Reporting involves more than collecting numbers. Teams also need to explain methodologies, progress, risks, policies, targets, and changes over time. This narrative work can take weeks when information is spread across systems and subject-matter experts.

AI can help by:

- Organizing supporting evidence.
- Comparing current and prior responses.
- Drafting narrative sections and summaries.
- Linking statements to the underlying data.
- Translating technical information for different audiences.
- Highlighting changes, gaps, and areas for review.

The goal is not for AI to write the final report. It is to help your team assemble a defensible first draft more efficiently. People who understand the underlying operations and reporting requirements should still review every material statement before publication.

Analyzing data, building dashboards, and exploring scenarios

Once your data is organized, AI can make it easier for more people to use. A finance leader might ask which facilities or suppliers drive the largest share of emissions. A procurement team might compare supplier performance. An operations leader might want to understand where energy use has changed most sharply.

A conversational interface can turn those questions into queries, charts, summaries, or dashboards. AI can also support early scenario analysis by showing how different assumptions could affect costs, exposure, or operational priorities.

This does not replace analytical judgment. It gives more people access to sustainability insight, so your expertise can reach finance, operations, procurement, and leadership teams faster.

Across all six use cases, the principle is the same: **use AI to automate the plumbing, not the accountability.**

Let it manage volume and repetition so you can focus on interpretation, prioritization, risk, and action.

02 The crucial question: Should you buy or build?

Once you understand what AI can do, the important question is not simply, “**Can a model produce an answer?**” It is:

Can you use that answer reliably, repeatedly, and with enough evidence to support a business or reporting decision?

The right choice depends on the task, the quality and sensitivity of your data, the level of risk, and the capabilities you already have internally.

Approach	Best suited to	What it offers	What you still need to manage
General-purpose LLM	Low-risk, bounded tasks and early experimentation	Fast summaries, document comparisons, first drafts, and workflow prototypes	Accuracy checks, data protection, methodology, version control, and evidence
Build internally	Distinctive use cases where you have strong technical and sustainability resources	Maximum control, deeper integration, and tailored workflows	Data models, permissions, mappings, lineage, monitoring, maintenance, and governance
Buy a specialized platform	Recurring, cross-functional sustainability workflows at scale	Domain-specific structures, controls, workflows, and reporting support	Vendor selection, configuration, integrations, and internal ownership

When a general-purpose LLM may be enough

A general-purpose AI tool can work well for low-risk, bounded tasks such as summarizing policies, comparing documents, preparing supplier-meeting questions, or drafting content from verified information. It can also be useful for exploring data, testing ideas, or prototyping a workflow before deciding whether it should become part of a formal process.

Use it when the data is not highly sensitive, the task does not change source records, and someone can review the output quickly. In these situations, the LLM can be a useful starting point, but it remains separate from the systems, controls, and sustainability knowledge your team relies on.

Uploading data is not the same as managing it

Asking an AI assistant to analyze a spreadsheet may reveal useful trends, but it does not create a repeatable, reporting-ready process.

You still need to track:

- The source and version of each figure.
- The methodology, boundaries, and assumptions applied.
- The entities, units, categories, and emissions factors used.
- Who approved changes or corrected outputs.
- Whether the same logic will be applied consistently.
- How final figures connect to source evidence.
- Which information can be accessed by different users.

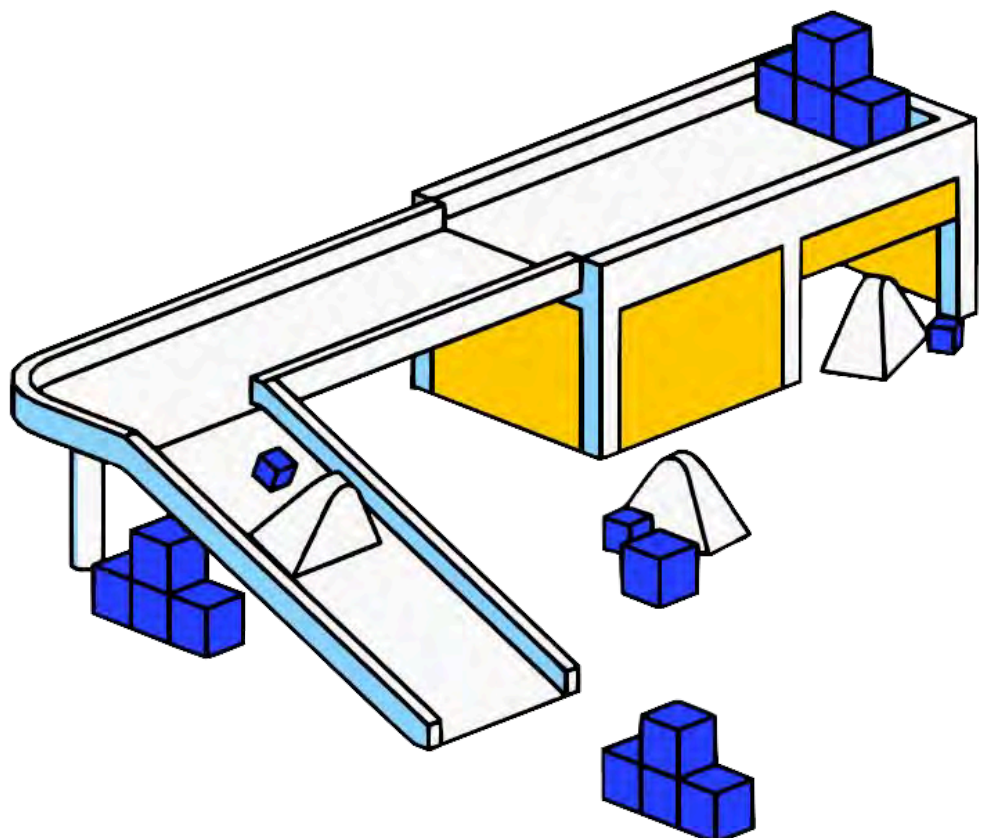
Without these controls, an AI system may produce a fluent answer without creating a defensible record of how it was reached. It may also rely on incomplete context, misunderstand sustainability terminology, or produce different answers to similar questions.

What building internally involves

An internal solution can make sense for a distinctive use case supported by strong technical and sustainability expertise. But you are building more than a chatbot. You also need secure integrations, data models, permissions, taxonomies, emissions-factor mappings, source lineage, review workflows, quality checks, version control, monitoring, and an audit trail.

You may also need to build the interfaces and workflows that make the system useful in practice: supplier data collection, anomaly review, approval steps, reporting preparation, questionnaire responses, and access to supporting evidence. The system must be designed so that sustainability specialists can correct mappings, explain assumptions, and retain institutional knowledge as people and processes change.

These components require ongoing maintenance as models, data sources, regulations, methodologies, and business requirements evolve. The investment may be worthwhile for a highly strategic or highly distinctive use case, but it can become a significant operating commitment. In many cases, the challenge is not proving that the technology works. It is maintaining the surrounding data and governance infrastructure over time.



When a specialized platform makes sense

A specialized platform can provide a faster route to controlled, repeatable sustainability workflows. Rather than adding a general-purpose AI tool on top of existing processes, it combines AI with sustainability-specific data structures, terminology, mappings, permissions, workflows, and review steps.

This is particularly valuable when you need to:

- Collect and reconcile data from many suppliers, facilities, and business systems.
- Normalize entities, units, periods, categories, and activity data.
- Apply and maintain emissions-factor mappings.
- Identify gaps, anomalies, estimates, and data-quality issues.
- Preserve source evidence, assumptions, and methodological choices.
- Coordinate reviews, approvals, corrections, and follow-up actions.
- Give non-specialists access to useful answers without removing expert oversight.
- Reuse mappings, rules, and institutional knowledge across reporting cycles.
- Maintain consistent outputs as teams, data sources, and requirements change.

A specialized platform can also help address the AI knowledge gap. New team members are more likely to get useful answers when the system understands the organization’s sustainability data, methodologies, terminology, policies, and reporting context. This can support onboarding and knowledge sharing without suggesting that AI replaces the people who hold the underlying expertise. The platform should make that expertise easier to apply, review, and reuse.

Recent research from Sweep and Capgemini shows that the market is already moving in this direction. **48% of respondents say they are piloting AI tools**, compared with **18% in 2024**. At the same time, only **40% report having a formal corporate AI governance framework**, and **39% report clear policies on AI use and accountability**.



The right question is therefore not only whether a platform uses AI. It is whether it can support the full sustainability workflow around AI: trusted data, domain context, human review, traceability, governance, and continuous improvement.

03 How can you use AI effectively and responsibly?



“AI isn't magic. It amplifies the data and strategy you already have. Use it deliberately, keep people in charge of the decisions, and be open about its impact.”

Rachel Delacour
CEO of Sweep



The buy-versus-build decision is only part of the job. You also need to decide where AI belongs, what controls you need, and how to account for the technology's own environmental impact.

Use AI where it strengthens the workflow

Start with tasks where the output can be checked and success is measurable. Data classification, gap detection, document retrieval, first-draft creation, and dashboard generation are strong starting points.

If a workflow does not improve accuracy, speed, decision-making, or access to information, it may not justify the added complexity and resource use. Define your success measure before you automate.

Keep people in control of important actions

AI can recommend, prepare, and explain. People should approve, decide, and remain accountable.

Set explicit approval points for changes to data, external submissions, public reporting, and decisions that affect budgets or business priorities. Make it easy for users to edit or reject AI-generated content.

Large language models can produce statements that sound authoritative but are unsupported, out of date, or factually wrong. In a sustainability workflow, that could mean an incorrect methodology description, an invented source, a figure associated with the wrong facility, or a response that confuses an estimate with measured data.

Reduce the risk by requiring:

- Source citations and links to the underlying data.
- Clear labels for estimates, assumptions, and gaps.
- Confidence indicators or review prompts.
- A record of AI-assisted steps.
- Human approval before important data is changed or submitted.

Protect data and access

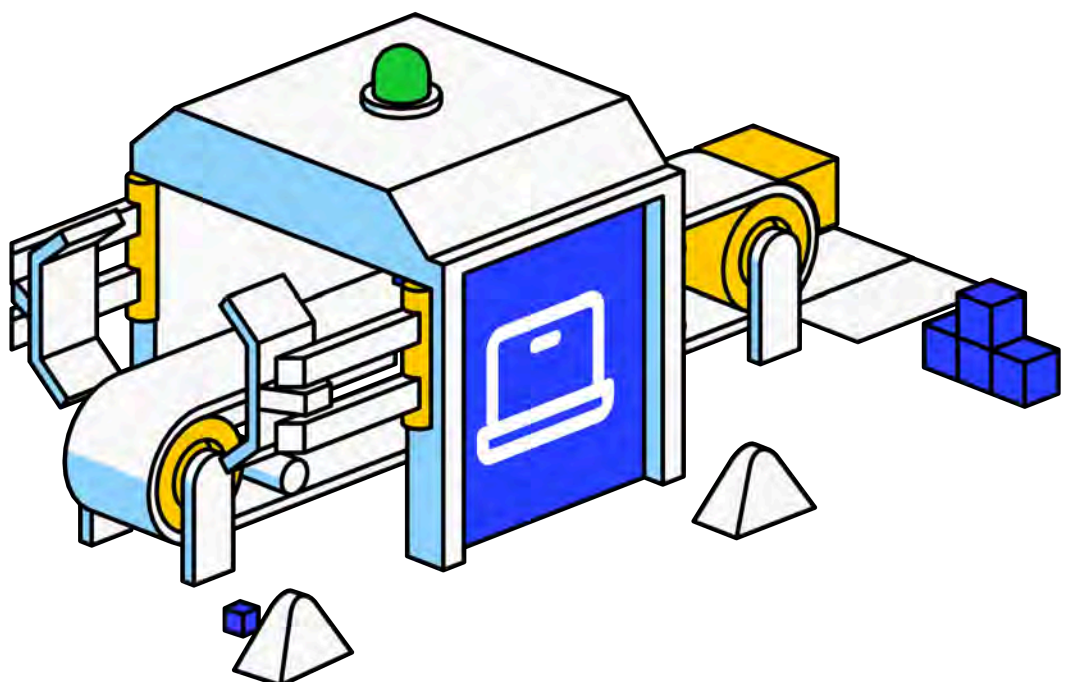
Sustainability information can include supplier pricing, operational data, customer details, strategic plans, and financial information. Understand where data is processed, how it is stored, who can access it, and whether it is used to train models.

Match your controls to the sensitivity of the information. Define retention periods, permitted use cases, and escalation routes for suspected misuse.

Make outputs traceable

A responsible system should show the source data, assumptions, transformations, and model-assisted steps behind an output. It should preserve an audit trail so you can explain an answer later.

This matters when outputs support external reporting. Reviewers need confidence that figures and claims can be traced back to evidence.



Consider the carbon footprint of AI

AI can help you improve data quality and make decisions faster, but it also consumes resources. Models require electricity to train and run. Data centers need cooling, which can require water. Hardware production requires raw materials, and rapid replacement cycles can increase manufacturing impacts and electronic waste.

The impact varies by model, task, prompt length, data center, electricity mix, cooling system, and infrastructure. A single query does not have one universal footprint.

The responsible question is not whether AI has an impact. It does. The question is whether the value it creates justifies that impact, and whether you are measuring and reducing the footprint of the systems you use.

Responsible AI in Sustainability Management

Explore the environmental footprint of AI, targeted use cases, human oversight, auditability, and Sweep's approach to measuring its own AI impact.

[Download here →](#)



Monitor performance and resource use

Track accuracy, correction rates, response times, adoption, and environmental cost. Models, data sources, and user behavior may change over time.

Use what you learn to refine workflows and model choices. A smaller, targeted model may be enough for a focused task.

Define exceptions

Not every decision should be automated. Require specialist review for major methodology changes, material reporting judgments, unusual data patterns, sensitive supplier issues, or public environmental claims.



A practical policy reduces both risk and hesitation during a busy reporting cycle.

Start with one workflow

You do not need to automate every sustainability process on day one. Start with one recurring workflow, such as supplier data collection, questionnaire responses, or monthly data-quality checks.

Measure time saved, corrections made, gaps identified, and output quality. Expand only when the controls and business value are clear.

The strongest sustainability AI strategy is not the one with the most automation. It is the one that gives you better data, faster decisions, and greater confidence in the numbers while keeping people accountable.

Sweepy, your AI assistant for carbon accounting and reporting

Carbon accounting and reporting means chasing data, cleaning files, answering questionnaires, drafting disclosures, and building dashboards. Sweepy helps you move through every step faster, using your own data and keeping you in control.

With Sweepy, you can:



Get carbon data ready

Ask Sweepy to map supplier files, clean inputs, flag gaps, and match emissions factors.



Draft reporting faster

Generate responses to questionnaires, RFPs, and disclosure datapoints using your data and reporting library.



Keep work moving

Prioritize supplier engagement, start data collection campaigns, and review every AI-assisted action before it is applied.



Turn data into decisions

Ask questions in plain English, identify top-emitting suppliers, spot hotspots, and build dashboards.



Spend less time wrangling carbon data

And more time reducing emissions, strengthening resilience, and driving action.

[Book a demo →](#)



“What saved me the most time in the first year was Sweepy, the AI assistant.”

Sébastien Bernard

Corporate Sustainability & Risks Manager





SWEEP

Sustainability Intelligence Platform
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