



CASE STUDY

How HED unlocked 80% more emissions insight — and a clear path to decarbonization with Greenplaces

Sustainability is no longer a buzzword; it is a business imperative. For architecture firms like HED, understanding their environmental impact is essential for protecting reputation and improving operations. Yet managing carbon accounting and reporting can be complex and time-consuming.



Greenplaces helped HED turn sustainability from a compliance challenge into a strategic advantage.

The challenge: visibility and expertise gap

HED, an integrated architecture and engineering firm, faced growing pressure from stakeholders — including the American Institute of Architects' Large Firms Round Table (LFRT) — to report and reduce its emissions.

Their primary roadblocks were:

- Limited insight into Scope 3 emissions, which are often the largest and most challenging to track.
- A need for credible, verifiable sustainability reporting.
- Minimal internal resources and specialized expertise for accurate carbon calculations.

Effective action was impossible without a complete greenhouse gas inventory.

Our approach: clarity, structure, and strategy

Greenplaces provided a comprehensive, structured approach that went beyond simple data collection.

1. Complete GHG inventory

Greenplaces guided HED in selecting accurate and defensible organizational boundaries, scopes, and category classifications. We then built a reliable baseline by completing a full Scope 1 and Scope 2 inventory and incorporating the material Scope 3 categories.

3. Actionable insights

Greenplaces mapped out emission reduction opportunities, data quality improvement suggestions, and delivered clear visuals.

2. Structured data & hotspot identification

Greenplaces implemented repeatable, structured data collection processes for HED and used the results to identify major carbon “hotspots” within HED’s operations.

4. Framework alignment

All outputs were aligned with the relevant reporting frameworks, including the GHG Protocol, and reviewed by senior technical staff to ensure accuracy and auditability.



The partnership with Greenplaces delivered powerful results that fundamentally changed how HED manages and communicates its environmental performance.

A major win was the expanded coverage of HED's greenhouse gas inventory. With Greenplaces' support, **HED achieved an 80% increase in emissions analyzed, adding seven Scope 3 categories into clear focus.** This baseline data now supports annual emissions tracking and long-term planning, shifting HED from reactive compliance to proactive, strategic management.

Beyond the data, Greenplaces equipped HED with the tools to streamline reporting, enhance transparency, and communicate sustainability progress effectively.

- **Enhanced reporting and communications:** Greenplaces provided communication assets, including a full presentation deck and inventory

report, which were immediately useful for HED's reporting inputs, which HED used immediately for reporting.

- **Operational clarity:** Data analysis identified specific measures for improvement across energy, waste, travel, and the supply chain, pointing the way to both environmental benefits and potential cost savings.
- **Internal alignment:** The clear, accessible data and dashboards enhanced internal alignment and employee understanding of sustainability initiatives, fostering a culture of ownership and action.
- **Sustainable systems:** Greenplaces' supplies a repository of data sources and reports provides repeatable, reliable systems for annual carbon reporting and progress tracking, ensuring HED's success is sustainable year after year.

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“Measuring the carbon footprint of our operations is key to delivering upon HED's commitment to Measured Positive Impact toward GHG reduction. **Having a partner like Greenplaces has made this process less stressful and more rigorous.** I hope to continue our work with them for years to come.”

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DANIEL JACONETTI,
Principal, National Sustainable Design Leader, HED

The Greenplaces advantage: complete carbon accounting made easy

The most significant outcome is the clarity and confidence HED now possesses. By using Greenplaces, HED wasn't just able to tick a compliance box; they were able to significantly deepen their Scope 3 insights and acquire the necessary communication assets to confidently share their progress with stakeholders, including key industry groups like American Institute of Architects.