



**FORWARD
FASTER**

**MOVING
CLIMATE ACTION
FORWARD FASTER
ACTION GUIDE**

INTRODUCTION

The action guides for the Forward Faster initiative provide companies that have committed – or are considering committing – with additional, target-specific details that companies can utilize as they define a strategy to meet their target(s) by 2030, including definitions of key terms, actions companies can take, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), interim targets, resources, programmes to engage in and policies companies can advocate for Governments to implement to facilitate an enabling environment.

CONTEXT

Global emissions are at their highest level in human history and continue to rise. Today, climate change is impacting economies, supply chains and communities around the globe, with the most vulnerable populations at the frontlines of the crisis. However, we still have time to act.

The United Nations Global Compact is calling on companies to play their part in closing the ambition gap. Companies need to focus their efforts on deep decarbonization, reaching net-zero by 2050 at the latest. To show the pathway to reach those targets, all companies need to publish comprehensive transition plans. At the same time, companies must anchor their sustainability practices in a rights- and principles-based approach and ensure that their mitigation and adaptation measures do not deepen inequalities but contribute to climate justice through a just transition.

The private sector has never been better equipped to tackle the climate emergency. The time to accelerate action is now.

TARGET TO ACHIEVE NET-ZERO GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Set corporate science-based net-zero emissions reductions targets through the Science Based Targets initiative, aligning action with a 1.5°C pathway with the goal of reaching net zero by 2050 at the latest.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS AND ELEMENTS OF THE TARGET

To keep a 1.5°C future within reach, companies must publicly set targets that are verifiable, up to date with the latest climate science and being reported on and monitored transparently. For this reason, **all corporate net-zero targets under this call to action must be submitted and validated through the Science Based Target initiative (SBTi)**. Those companies that have the capacity to move faster than a 50 per cent reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2050 should do so.

The SBTi's NET-ZERO STANDARD defines **corporate net zero** as:

- All targets must cover scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions and reduce emissions to zero or to a residual level that is consistent with reaching net-zero emissions at the global or sector level in eligible 1.5°C-aligned pathways. The SBTi Standard requires companies to prioritize rapid, deep emissions reductions through near-term targets and to set long-term targets for net zero by no later than 2050.
- Permanently neutralize any residual emissions at the net-zero target year and any greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions released into the atmosphere thereafter. Voluntary carbon credits cannot be counted towards reaching abatement targets.

Companies are asked to carefully consider for their target setting all of the [UN-BACKED 1.5C-ALIGNED NET ZERO CREDIBILITY CRITERIA \(REPORT "INTEGRITY MATTERS"\)](#), created by the UN Secretary-General's former [HIGH LEVEL EXPERT GROUP ON NET-ZERO EMISSIONS COMMITMENTS OF NON-STATE ENTITIES \(HLEG\)](#). Companies must seek to have targets consistent with the

latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) net-zero greenhouse gas emissions modeled pathways that limit warming to 1.5°C with no or limited overshoot, and where global emissions decline at least 50 per cent below 2020 levels by 2030, reaching net zero by 2050 or sooner.

The SBTi is in the process of reviewing its target-setting framework to seek full alignment with the [UN-BACKED CREDIBILITY CRITERIA](#).

SYNCHRONIZING SBTi COMMITMENTS/TARGETS WITH FORWARD FASTER

Forward Faster's Climate Action Target 1 is strictly connected to action through the SBTi. This means that all UN Global Compact participants who have committed to setting net-zero targets through SBTi or already have validated net-zero targets through SBTi will be automatically recognized on the Forward Faster website. **For companies making a new commitment or getting targets validated for the first time by SBTi, no further action needs to be taken.** SBTi's database is synchronized with the Forward Faster database on a periodic basis. If your company's SBTi commitment/target is not reflected on the Forward Faster website, please reach out via email to forwardfaster@unglobalcompact.org.

EXAMPLES OF COMPANY KPIS AND INTERIM TARGETS

In line with the SBTi's Net-Zero Standard, companies must set near-term interim science-based targets. Once companies reach their near-term target date, they must calculate new near-term targets to serve as milestones until they achieve their long-term net-zero target.

The short- and long-term net-zero science-based targets need to be complemented by a transition plan, showing immediate emissions reductions and capital expenditures aligned with these targets and their net-zero pathway.

REPORTING

Companies committing to the target will report annually to the UN Global Compact by responding to the following question:

COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS (CoP) Question:

- E4.1. For each environmental topic for which the company sets time bound goals/targets, what kind of targets has the company set?

In addition, SBTi commitments and validations are [TRACKED AND PUBLISHED ON THE SBTI WEBSITE](#).

ACTIONS COMPANIES CAN TAKE TO ADVANCE PROGRESS

- **Review existing** [SECTOR-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE AND PROJECTS](#) to gather information that is best tailored to your organization and industry.
- **Perform a complete greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) inventory/screening**, which includes company-wide scope 1 and 2 emissions and gross scope 3 emissions for all emissions sources, following the minimum boundary for each scope 3 category set out in the [GHG PROTOCOL'S SCOPE 3 STANDARD](#).
- **Utilize the SBTi's** [RESOURCES AND TOOLS](#) to follow its [FIVE-STEP PROCESS](#) to set your science-based target.
- **Engage** with your networks and supply chains and encourage them to set net-zero targets as well, using the [SBTi'S SUPPLIER ENGAGEMENT GUIDANCE](#).
- **Create a transition plan** showing how you will successfully deliver on your commitments in an equitable and just way.
- **Align external policy and engagement efforts** with corporate emission reduction goals and lobby for positive climate action.

RESOURCES TO INFORM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The basics of science-based target setting

▪ To commit:

- SBTI COMMITMENT LETTER
- COMMITMENT COMPLIANCE POLICY

▪ To set targets:

- HOW-TO GUIDE and CORPORATE MANUAL for step-by-step instructions on how to set a target
- SBTi NET-ZERO GETTING STARTED GUIDE and CORPORATE NET-ZERO STANDARD
- SBTi TARGET SETTING TOOL and NET-ZERO TOOL to help calculate long-term SBTs in line with the Net-Zero Standard

▪ SME specific resources:

- TARGET SETTING SYSTEM
- FAQs

▪ Financial institution-specific resources:

- FRAMEWORK TO SET SBTS
- NEAR-TERM TARGET SUBMISSION FORM
- TRAINING MODULES TO HELP SET SBTS

Greenhouse Gas Inventories

- Greenhouse Gas Protocol's CORPORATE STANDARD with information on how to report corporate GHG emissions
- Greenhouse Gas Protocol's SCOPE 3 STANDARD and SCOPE 3 EVALUATOR TOOL

Guidance for Creating Credible and Robust Transition Plans

- Align with the UN-BACKED CREDIBILITY CRITERIA.
- Refer to THIS CHECKLIST to build a comprehensive transition plan.

UN GLOBAL COMPACT PROGRAMMING TO GUIDE IMPLEMENTATION

- UN GLOBAL COMPACT ACADEMY: The Academy is the main learning platform of the UN Global Compact that provides business leaders and practitioners with the skills and knowledge to fast track their sustainability strategy. The self-paced learnings help companies get acquainted with the topic of just transition and get ready to take action at their own pace and time.
 - Academy courses on SETTING SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS and the NET-ZERO STANDARD
 - Academy series on TAKING ACTION ON GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: SCOPES 1, 2 AND 3, which leverages content from the Climate Ambition Accelerator to cover the foundations of GHG accounting, techniques to calculate emissions and managing emissions through different reduction activities.

- **CLIMATE AMBITION ACCELERATOR:** The UN Global Compact offers six- to nine-month Accelerator programmes aimed at generating behaviour change across a large number of companies at the local level. The Climate Ambition Accelerator supports companies to set science-based emissions reductions targets aligned with the 1.5°C pathway, setting them on a path towards net-zero emissions by 2050. You can find out if your Country Network is running the Accelerator [HERE](#).
- **PEER LEARNING GROUP: CLIMATE ACTION:** The UN Global Compact offers Peer Learning Groups to create a safe space for companies to share their best practices and challenges on critical sustainability issues with like-minded professionals. Run in collaboration with Global Compact Country Networks, the groups provide participants with the means to learn about the latest best practices through facilitated sessions, curated resources and group discussions. You can find out if your Country Network is running a Peer Learning Group [HERE](#).

TARGET ON JUST TRANSITION

Contribute to a just transition by taking concrete actions that address social impacts of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in partnership with actors such as workers, unions, communities and suppliers.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS AND ELEMENTS OF THE TARGET

Confronting the climate crisis requires decisive, coherent action that will significantly impact workers, communities, industries and regions. This transition to net-zero emissions and climate resilience needs to be a just transition that promotes social justice and addresses poverty, inequality and gender gaps.

According to the [INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION \(ILO\)](#), "a just transition means greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind." This depends on a fair process built on social dialogue, stakeholder engagement and a universal respect for fundamental labour rights and other human rights. Just transition is not an independent practice; it is a principles-based approach for climate change mitigation and adaptation activities, relevant for all countries at all levels of development and all sectors.

The vision, key opportunities, challenges and guiding principles of just transition are established in the ILO's Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all ([ILO JUST TRANSITION GUIDELINES](#)). Business support for just transition begins from a foundation of responsible business conduct and respect for human and labour rights, as set out in the [TEN PRINCIPLES OF THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT](#), the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy ([MNE DECLARATION](#)), the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights ([UNGPS](#)) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD](#)) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises ([OECD GUIDELINES](#)).

Companies are also asked to carefully consider all of the recommendations in the [UN-BACKED 1.5C-ALIGNED NET ZERO CREDIBILITY CRITERIA \(REPORT "INTEGRITY MATTERS"\)](#), created by the UN Secretary-General's former HLEG, as they relate to a just transition.

REPORTING

Companies committing to the target will report annually to the UN Global Compact by responding to the following questions:

- What type of action has the company taken in the reporting period with the aim of contributing to a just transition and addressing the social impacts of climate change mitigation and adaptation? (multiple answer options, open text field for additional information)
 - a) As part of the due diligence process, the company has considered relevant aspects related to a just transition [Yes/No] [please provide more information in question G7]
 - b) In the course of the reporting period, the company has engaged with affected stakeholders or their legitimate representatives (e.g., workers, unions, communities and suppliers etc., including those stakeholders where the risk of adverse impacts may be particularly severe) to develop a just transition plan [Yes/No] [please provide additional information]
 - c) The company integrates the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and specifically the principle of free, prior and informed consent in its plans [Yes/No] [please provide additional information]
 - d) The company is investing in a just transition, including in skills and human resource development, mitigating employment impacts through worker retention, retraining, redeployment, creating additional economic opportunities and contributing to social protection [Yes/No] [please provide additional information]
 - e) The company has set targets and is tracking progress in relation to its just transition plan [Yes/No] [please provide more information in E4, E4.1 and E4.2]

ACTIONS COMPANIES CAN TAKE TO ADVANCE PROGRESS

Climate change and the climate transition affect geographies, industries and individual companies in different ways. The principles of just transition are universal, but companies and business functions apply them differently. The [INTRODUCTION TO JUST TRANSITION: A BUSINESS BRIEF](#) provides information on the central role of the private sector in ensuring a just transition for all, covering just transition's foundation and meaning, seven priority actions for companies, relevant areas of work and the business case as well as a glossary of key terms and a resource guide.

Refer to **Figure 4** (pages 10-11) and **Figure 6** (pages 13-15) in the [INTRODUCTION TO JUST TRANSITION: A BUSINESS BRIEF](#) for guidance on how to approach each of the seven priority actions as well as examples of how to apply just transition principles across different business areas, respectively.

RESOURCES TO INFORM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

▪ Getting started:

- For overall guidance, refer to the [INTRODUCTION TO JUST TRANSITION: A BUSINESS BRIEF](#).
- Align with the [UN-BACKED CREDIBILITY CRITERIA](#).

▪ Diving deeper — Thematic Business Briefs

- Address social impacts of climate change adaptation measures by accessing the [JUST TRANSITION FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION: A BUSINESS BRIEF](#).

- Invest in a just transition by drawing on recommendations for finance functions of companies and financial institutions in [FINANCING A JUST TRANSITION: A BUSINESS BRIEF](#).
- Review [JUST TRANSITION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY: A BUSINESS BRIEF](#).
- Review [JUST TRANSITION IN SUPPLY CHAINS: A BUSINESS BRIEF](#).

▪ **Guidance and resources**

- For the internationally agreed guidance on how to approach a just transition, read the ILO's [GUIDELINES FOR A JUST TRANSITION TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES AND SOCIETIES FOR ALL](#).
- For a sectoral approach, review the Maritime Just Transition Task Force's [MAPPING A MARITIME JUST TRANSITION FOR SEAFARERS](#) that outlines key recommendations for the shipping industry on how to achieve a just transition for the maritime workforce.
- For a foundational resource outlining business action in a just transition, refer to The Just Transition Centre and The B Team's [JUST TRANSITION: A BUSINESS GUIDE](#).
- For an overview of just transition-related indicators for companies, see the [WORLD BENCHMARKING ALLIANCE'S JUST TRANSITION INDICATORS](#).

UN GLOBAL COMPACT PROGRAMMING TO GUIDE IMPLEMENTATION

- [UN GLOBAL COMPACT ACADEMY](#): The Academy is the main learning platform of the UN Global Compact that provides business leaders and practitioners with the skills and knowledge to fast track their sustainability strategy. The self-paced learning helps companies get acquainted with the topic of just transition and get ready to take action at their own pace.
 - **Introduction to a Just Transition:**
 - Changemaker sessions with [SHARAN BURROW](#) and [SOLANGE RIBEIRO](#)
 - E-learning course on Just Transition [HERE](#)
 - [DEEPDIVE ACADEMY SESSION: CORPORATE ACTION TO ADVANCE A JUST TRANSITION](#)
 - **Human Rights Due Diligence**
 - UN Global Compact [ACADEMY SESSION](#) "Deepening Human Rights Due Diligence"
- [PEER LEARNING GROUPS](#): The UN Global Compact offers Peer Learning Groups to create a safe space for companies to share their best practices and challenges on critical sustainability issues with like-minded professionals. Run in collaboration with Global Compact Country Networks, the groups provide participants the opportunity to learn about the latest best practices through facilitated sessions, curated resources and group discussions. You can find out if your Country Network is running a Peer Learning Group [HERE](#). You can also find more information on a Global Industry Peer Learning Group on Shipping and Just Transition [HERE](#).

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

To scale action towards the SDGs, companies can send strong signals to Governments to implement enabling policies that support them in meeting the ambitious targets under the Forward Faster initiative and provide the clarity and confidence they need to catalyse further investments.

The private sector must show leadership in partnership with all their stakeholders, especially with Governments. In particular, companies with a mid- to large-size market value must be at the forefront of climate action and advocacy. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) also have a role to play as they are critical local actors with close links to their communities.

The connection between Governments and business is crucial to advancing on the climate agenda as ambitious corporate climate action and Government action have the potential to reinforce one another in a way that helps mainstream climate policy and increase climate investments toward a net-zero future — creating a positive ambition loop.

Voluntary commitments to net-zero and just transition are important to drive progress. In addition to those actions, companies need to ensure that their full influence is working as part of the solution, not undermining it. As outlined in "Integrity Matters", actively pushing for ambitious and forward-thinking net-zero policies in all countries and industry groups in which companies operate helps enable positive Government action on climate. Moreover, by working with Governments to create strong standards, non-state actors leading on climate action can ensure a level playing field for ambitious net-zero pledges to further de-risk a speedy transition and maximize the economic benefits of rigorous net-zero alignment.

The private sector must align its external policy and engagement efforts, including membership in trade associations, to the goal of reducing global emissions by at least 50 per cent by 2030 and reaching net-zero by 2050. This means:

- Lobbying for the specific policies and regulations that companies would need to cut emissions in line with a 1.5°C scenario and having those reflected in the next cycle of national climate plans or nationally determined contributions (NDCs). Messaging should specify the emissions reductions possible if the listed policies and regulations by authorities and jurisdictions were in place.
- Encouraging (trade) associations to advocate for positive climate action and have an escalation strategy if they do not, including the option of leaving the association if the necessary changes are not made.
- Advocating for no new coal and the phasing out of coal by 2030 in OECD countries and 2040 in all other countries and for ending all international public and private funding of coal.
- Advocating for net-zero electricity generation by 2035 for all developed countries and 2040 for the rest of the world.
- Enabling companies to engage in an unprecedented scale-up of renewable energy, advocating for shifting subsidies from fossil fuels to a just energy transition and advocating for policies that favour investments in research, development and deployment of clean energy.
- Advocating for a global phase down of existing oil and gas production and stopping any expansion of existing oil and gas reserves.
- Calling on Governments to adopt the ILO's Just Transition Guidelines as a minimum standard to ensure progress on decent work for all.
- Ensuring that Governments leave no one behind and deliver on climate justice by safeguarding vulnerable communities, scaling up adaptation finance and capacities and promoting the reform of the international finance system.

THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT



HUMAN RIGHTS

- 1 Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- 2 make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.



LABOUR

- 3 Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- 4 the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- 5 the effective abolition of child labour; and
- 6 the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



ENVIRONMENT

- 7 Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- 8 undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- 9 encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.



ANTI-CORRUPTION

- 10 Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

The Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact are derived from: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

As a special initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General, the **UN Global Compact** is a call to companies worldwide to align their operations and strategies with Ten Principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Our ambition is to accelerate and scale the global collective impact of business by upholding the Ten Principles and delivering the Sustainable Development Goals through accountable companies and ecosystems that enable change. With more than 20,000 companies based in over 160 countries, and more than 60 Global Compact Country Networks, it is the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world.

For more information, follow [@globalcompact](https://twitter.com/globalcompact) on social media and visit our website at [UNGLOBALCOMPACT.ORG](https://unglobalcompact.org).



United Nations
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