



BEYOND NET-ZERO:

WWF's Guide for Businesses to Help Drive Climate Action

September | 2025



© Narayanan Iyer (Naresh) / WWF-International

CONTENTS

THE NEED FOR MEANINGFUL IMPACT	3
WWF'S CORPORATE LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK	4
LOOKING AT THE BIGGER PICTURE: ANNUAL PROCESSES	5
LEADERSHIP ACTION 1 - ACCOUNT AND DISCLOSE	6
LEADERSHIP ACTION 2 - SET 1.5°C ALIGNED REDUCTION TARGETS	8
LEADERSHIP ACTION 3 - REDUCE EMISSIONS IN LINE WITH 1.5°C	9
LEADERSHIP ACTION 4 - FINANCE CLIMATE AND NATURE ACTION	12
LEADERSHIP ACTION 5 - ENGAGE RESPONSIBLY IN CLIMATE POLICY	14
LEADERSHIP ACTION 6 - COLLABORATE WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS	16
LEADERSHIP ACTION 7 - ENABLE AND INSPIRE CUSTOMERS	18
REFERENCES	19
ORGANISATIONS AND INITIATIVES AS HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS DOCUMENT	19
ENDNOTES	20

Written by

Milan Kooijman
Seán Mallon
Kate Vanderbraak
Carolina Brändholm
Johan Widheden

For enquiries:

Milan Kooijman: Milan.kooijman@wwf.se
Seán Mallon: SMallon@wwf.org.uk

Acknowledgements

This report was a collaboration with input from technical experts and subject specialists across the WWF global network. We also welcomed practical input from several of our corporate partners and other closely affiliated initiatives.

About WWF

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is an independent conservation organization, with over 30 million followers and a global network active in nearly 100 countries. Our mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

Find out more at panda.org/climatebusiness

Publication date: September 2025

Design: tightship.co.za

Copyright © 2025 World Wide Fund For Nature (formerly World Wildlife Fund), Gland, Switzerland. Any reproduction in full or in part must mention the title and credit the above-mentioned publisher as copyright owner.

WWF International,
Rue Mauverney 28,
1196 Gland, Switzerland
Tel. +41 22 364 9111

Cover photography: © Yaroslav Shuraev / Pexels.com

THE NEED FOR MEANINGFUL IMPACT

We are at a defining moment in the global response to climate change. The risks posed by a warming planet are escalating—driven by the increasing frequency and severity of climate-related disruptions. This creates unprecedented challenges for businesses, economies, and societies alike.

Corporate climate action is not just an environmental imperative, it's a priority for ensuring the longevity and prosperity of every sector and society. Climate action underpins business risk management by safeguarding assets and supply chains against escalating climate volatility that we are seeing all over the world. It unlocks innovation and drives competitive advantage in a rapidly evolving global economy. From enhancing brand value to restoring ecosystems and contributing to broader climate leadership, corporate climate action signals a company's readiness not just to adapt but to shape a sustainable and inclusive future and make meaningful impact.

The economic case is well documented, with a *Nature* study conservatively estimating that damages from climate change will cost six times as much as limiting global warming to 2°C within the next 26 years.¹ Meanwhile, a McKinsey & Company report² found that failure to decarbonise could put up to 20% of corporate economic profit at risk by 2030, due to factors such as stranded assets, increased cost of capital, and loss of market share. Climate action is now central to business resilience, competitiveness, and future-proofing in a rapidly changing world.

These insights underscore the urgency for businesses to prioritise comprehensive climate strategies specific to their risks and vulnerabilities as a way to enhance their resilience and secure their future. And while it's important to show what's at stake for business, we can't lose sight of the bigger picture: climate change is already reshaping the world around us, threatening nature and its ecosystems that our communities and livelihoods all depend on.

If we are serious about tackling climate change, businesses must take real, decisive action. That is why we have created this *Beyond Net-Zero* guide for businesses – to cut through the noise and give companies a clear and practical framework for action. The report is organised into seven leadership actions to help businesses create and implement climate strategies tailored to their specific risks and vulnerabilities while seizing the opportunities of a low-carbon transition.

We are getting closer to the end of the critical decade to 2030 – the milestone for cutting emissions to keep the 1.5°C goal within reach and prevent the worst consequences of climate change for people and nature. The clock is ticking, and the next few years are vital for slashing emissions. In this race, every fraction of a degree matters.

The best time for businesses to act was yesterday. The next best time is now.



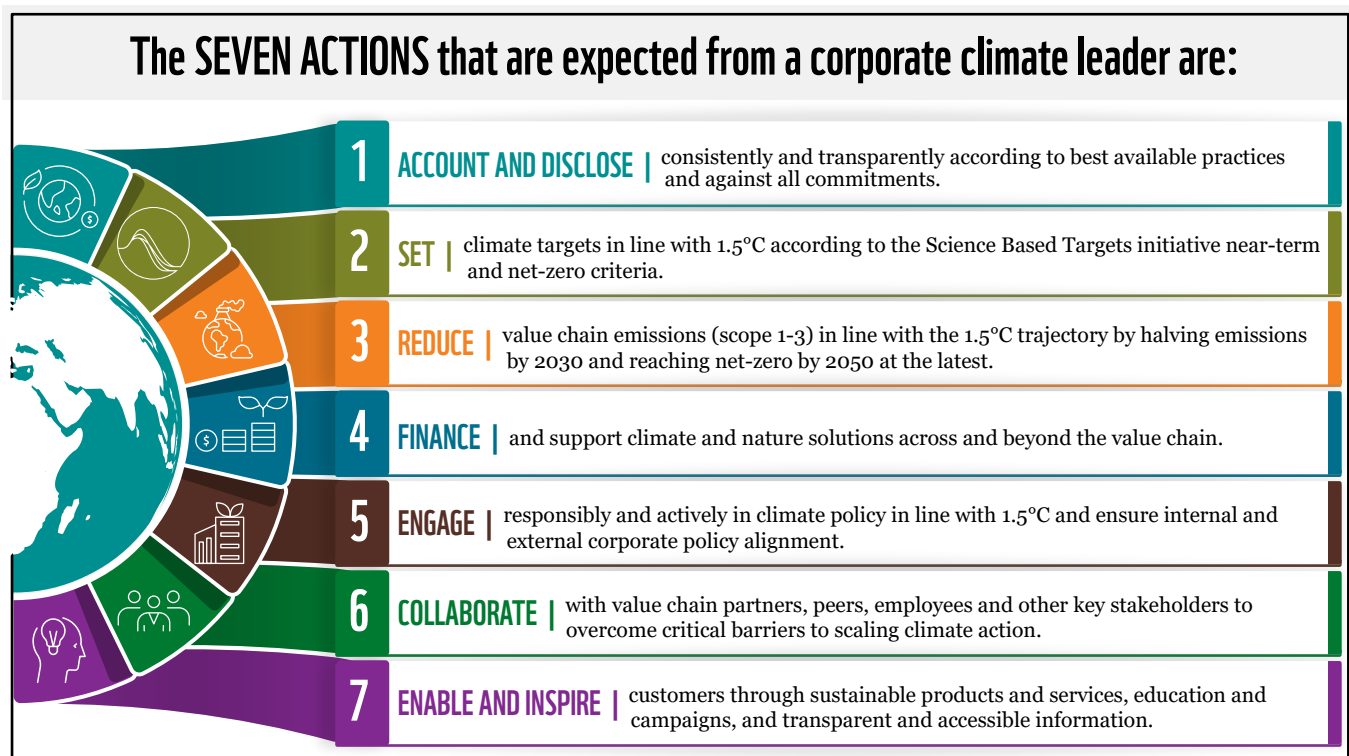
Manuel Pulgar-Vidal,
Global Climate and Energy Lead for WWF-International

WWF'S CORPORATE LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

The goal of this Beyond Net-Zero Guide is to support companies to implement ambitious climate strategies and speed up climate action and meaningful impact.

We've outlined seven leadership actions into a framework to guide your efforts. If you are already working on your goals to get to net-zero, this framework will help you complete your list of actions. If you haven't started yet and need to know what to do next, this checklist is also for you. Each action includes metrics, practical guidance and proven best practices.

The actions presented align with WWF's Climate and Business work, as well as the standards set by many other NGOs and standards bodies. At the core of these leadership actions lies the crucial practice of risk and vulnerability assessments – essential for companies to navigate the economic and environmental upheavals ahead, forming the foundation of a credible, science-aligned climate transition plan.



Depending on where your business is based, there may be differing laws on reporting, climate action planning and risk assessments to follow.

In this checklist, we will show you how this leadership framework can help streamline and enhance other areas of your business towards its net-zero obligations.

LOOKING AT THE BIGGER PICTURE: ANNUAL PROCESSES

Necessitating Vulnerability and Risk Assessments

To safeguard business operations and long-term viability, it is best practice to commission a climate risk and vulnerability assessment to guide your core strategies. These assessments should be based on the latest scientific data, regulatory requirements, and industry best practices. Identifying climate risks early and systematically allows businesses to anticipate threats, minimise financial and operational disruptions, and build long-term resilience. This assessment is also an opportunity to innovate, future-proof, and lead in a rapidly changing world.

Climate risk assessments are not one-off exercises or a box-ticking compliance measure. Every assessment can be used to update targets, strategies, and climate action plans – the roadmap detailing how a company will mitigate risks, reduce emissions, and enhance resilience.

Leveraging In-House Expertise

Harnessing the expertise of in-house specialists – whether in operations, finance, legal, or supply chain management – helps ensure that risk assessments are comprehensively tailored to the business's specific needs. When internal expertise follows external scientific and policy insights, companies are better equipped to make informed, strategic decisions that find the balance between risk management and growth.

By making risk and vulnerability assessments a core business practice, companies can identify the most effective strategies to protect long-term stability, stakeholders, and contribute meaningfully to the global effort to address climate change. The time to act is now.



© Joel Filipe / Unsplash



LEADERSHIP ACTION 1

ACCOUNT AND DISCLOSE

Mapping your company's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across your own operations and supply chain will create your company's GHG inventory. Once a company has calculated its GHG emissions, it will be able to make informed decisions on strategy, set targets, draw up action plans and initiate updates on the business model.

The process of establishing a GHG emissions baseline is a foundational step to gain valuable insights into material usage and energy sources, production processes and transport, lifetime emissions of products and more. It also helps your company identify both risks and opportunities in the supply chain, so that these can be explored and mitigated. Developing the GHG inventory with the support of senior staff and management ensures the much-needed buy-in while also distributing ownership across management.

Baseline and annual emission results should be transparently disclosed and included in annual financial reporting to build trust with investors and stakeholders. Companies should follow the [GHG Protocol Corporate Standards](#) when calculating their emissions and are strongly encouraged to disclose these emissions via [CDP](#) or other open platforms.

ACTION:

Account and disclose consistently and transparently according to best available practices and against all commitments.

BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ Map the value chain of your company and calculate the full Scope 1, 2 and 3 GHG emissions inventory in line with the GHG Protocol Corporate and Scope 3 Standards.
- ✓ Conduct an inventory of agriculture, forestry, and other land-use emissions, when relevant.
- ✓ Prioritise efforts on improving data quality and analysis on the most emission-intensive activities, and areas where the company has more influence.
- ✓ Report annual GHG emissions in line with GHG Protocol Corporate and Scope 3 Standards, in the annual financial report.
- ✓ Verify data and information through a third party annually, to drive enhancement of data quality.
- ✓ Disclose in the annual report all other aspects of your company's transition plan (see Leadership Actions 2-7):
 - ✓ Science-based climate targets set and progress against these, and all published commitments via CDP or other open platforms.
 - ✓ Disclose your company's target for ending the use of and investment in fossil fuels.
 - ✓ Emission reduction plan, and actions taken and planned to reach the targets.
 - ✓ Actions taken to build capacity in countries and with suppliers to enable emission cuts.
 - ✓ Climate and nature solutions that have been financed.
 - ✓ Engagement in climate policy activities and initiatives to show consistency with the transition plan.
 - ✓ Collaborations with key stakeholders to reduce emissions within the supply chain/sector/country.
 - ✓ Activities and campaigns aimed at inspiring and engaging customers.
- ✓ Disclose strategy for enhancing resilience and responding to risks and opportunities that arise from a changing climate and a low-GHG economy, in line with [IFRS S2 Climate-related Disclosures](#)

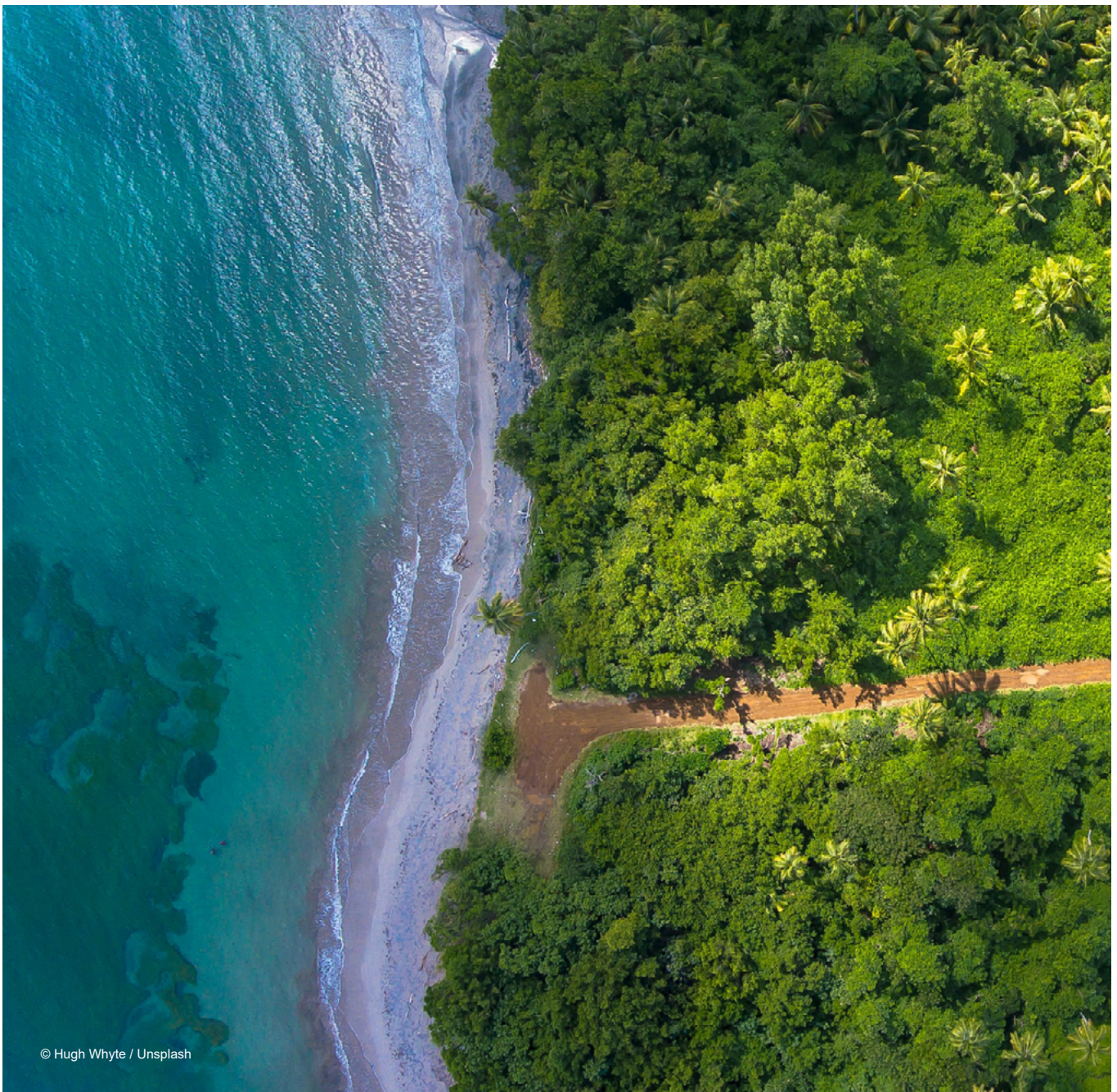
- ☑ Disclose your internal carbon price and/or fee applied (see Leadership Action 5).
- ☑ Specifically disclose fossil investments (divestments) directly managed.
- ☑ Comply with all relevant country, regional and global directives on emission cuts and sustainability reporting.
- ☑ Transparently share learnings, supply chain insights, primary data, and solutions that can help the sector or other businesses reduce their emissions.

SUGGESTED METRIC FOR TRACKING PROGRESS AND IMPACT:

Annual disclosure in sustainability report and/or via reporting initiatives (e.g., CDP) according to best practices of:

- Emissions in unit tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) of Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions, including distribution of emissions across the Scope 3 categories.
- Metrics and qualitative information of Leadership Actions 2-7 in terms of targets, ambitions, actions, progress, financing, collaborations, policy and advocacy work, and more.

For more guidance on this action, refer to GHG Protocol's [website](#) for GHG calculation tools and guidance.



© Hugh Whyte / Unsplash



LEADERSHIP ACTION 2

SET 1.5°C ALIGNED REDUCTION TARGETS

The Science Based Targets initiative ([SBTi](#)) was established in 2015 to help companies set emission reduction targets in line with climate science and the Paris Agreement. Since then, more than 10,000 companies across geographies and sectors have signed up or set their targets. These targets and commitments now cover more than a third of the global economy.³

The SBTi methodology helps your company determine how much and how quickly you need to cut emissions, to be in line with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C target to avoid the most severe climate impacts. Your company needs to set both near-term and long-term net-zero targets by 2050 and focus on accelerating cuts before 2030 to align with the 1.5°C above preindustrial levels.

ACTION:

Set climate targets in line with 1.5°C according to the SBTi's near-term and net-zero criteria.

BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ Set near-term and net-zero targets (2040/2050) to spur short-term action and long-term innovative processes in line with the SBTi and the 1.5°C pathway, i.e., halving emissions by 2030 and reaching net-zero by 2050 at the latest.
- ✓ Go above and beyond by setting a shorter timeframe for reaching a net-zero target, e.g., by 2040.
- ✓ Publicly communicate both your company's commitment and the targets that have been set, to drive and inspire further climate action among peers, competitors, customers and suppliers.

SUGGESTED METRIC FOR TRACKING PROGRESS AND IMPACT:

- Near-term targets (commitment to reduce Scope 1, 2, and Scope 3 emissions within a 5–10 year timeframe, consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5°C with little to no overshoot) validated and published by the Science Based Targets initiative.
- Net-zero targets (*achieved when a company reaches its long-term science-based target—typically a 90–95% reduction in Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions—and neutralises any residual emissions through permanent carbon removal*) validated and published by the Science Based Targets initiative.

Companies should set absolute emission reduction targets in line with the 1.5°C pathway for their Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. To be in line with a 1.5°C pathway according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), companies should halve GHG emissions by 2030, halve them again by 2040 and reach a net-zero state by 2050 (with few residual emissions or even absolute zero for some sectors).

Your company should set near-term and long-term (2040/2050) targets in-line with the criteria of the SBTi. Immediate action is needed to reduce the need for more expensive mitigation and adaptation measures in the future. To achieve global net-zero by 2050, long-term strategic vision, innovation and a road map is needed to ensure that changes happen at the pace and scale required.

For more guidance, SBTi has a host of guidance and tools on their [website](#) for companies across all sectors and at all stages of target setting. For those just getting started, refer to SBTi's *Getting Started Guide for Science-Based Target Setting* (2024) and WWF's report on *Corporate Climate Targets* (2024).

For European companies looking to set targets and develop transition plans in line with EU policy requirements, refer to WWF's report on *Corporate Sustainability Targets and Transition Plans* (2023).

Clear long-term targets and strategies empower bold forward-thinking decisions and fuels innovation across every aspect of a business's operation and emissions. True industry leaders go all in - aiming to cover 100% of Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions in both near- and long-term targets. The most ambitious companies take it further, accelerating their net-zero goals to 2040 or earlier, aligning with the SBTi's highest standards.



LEADERSHIP ACTION 3 REDUCE EMISSIONS IN LINE WITH 1.5°C

While we are seeing some companies heading in the right direction, climate change is moving faster than we are. Global emissions need to be halved by 2030 to be on the path of achieving net-zero by 2050 at the latest.⁴

Prioritising emissions reductions through value chains is an area where companies can make the greatest contribution to solving the climate crisis. This requires reviewing every aspect of the business, from raw material sourcing, production processes and transportation to customer impact. Your company's GHG inventory will inform your work by showing where emission-intensive activities lie, and insights from work in Leadership Actions 1 and 2 will help you begin building a prioritised emission reduction action plan.

Reducing your emissions will also require new business practices that are more sustainable and circular. Companies with significant Scope 3 emissions face a tough challenge: cutting emissions they do not directly control but are a result of their production processes. For many, Scope 3 makes up a bulk of their footprint, making it critical to identify where these emissions occur and develop strategies to address them. To help with this, the Science Based Targets Initiative, Navigator, and the Gold Standard developed [a guide](#) to help businesses take decisive action on Scope 3 emissions.

To ensure success in implementation, your company's emission reduction action plan should include a timeline of when each respective action is planned to be implemented, which departments will need to be involved and when preparations should begin, which possible partners within the sector and supporting work with suppliers are needed, any policy changes within the business needed to remove roadblocks, and evaluate whether any goal conflicts may arise and how these can be resolved.

Once you report on your emissions, the data will show where your hotspots are. Based on our experience from working with partners, the list below shows examples of widely applicable actions most companies can take.

Developing a climate strategy begins with a tailored checklist of foundational actions, see below. These should reflect the specific reporting requirements and standards applicable to your business, which can vary significantly across jurisdictions. Once established, this strategic framework can be expanded to include targeted interventions aimed at reducing Scope 1 (direct), Scope 2 (indirect energy-related), and Scope 3 (value chain) greenhouse gas emissions.



© Jason Blackeye / Unsplash

ACTION:

Reduce value chain emissions (Scope 1, 2 and 3) in line with the 1.5°C trajectory by at least halving emissions by 2030 and reaching net-zero by 2050 at the latest.

BEST PRACTICES:

Energy Efficiency

- ☑ Switch to LED lighting and motion sensors to help reduce energy consumption.
- ☑ Upgrade HVAC systems for efficiency. It doesn't need to be running when staff are not present.
- ☑ Use smart meters and AI-driven analytics to optimise energy use. Pair this with energy-efficient appliances and office equipment to lower energy wastage.
- ☑ Implement energy management systems or environment management systems and conduct regular energy audits.

Renewable Energy

- ☑ Invest in energy storage solutions like batteries to store energy generated from your renewable sources.
- ☑ Purchase green energy Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) from utility providers.
- ☑ If you can, install solar panels or wind turbines to generate your own energy and completely cut utility costs.

Waste Reduction

- ☑ Implement a company-wide recycling programme.
- ☑ Reduce paper usage with digital documentation.
- ☑ Minimise food waste in cafeterias and catering.
- ☑ Encourage reusable office supplies and equipment.
- ☑ Compost organic waste.

Water Conservation

- ☑ Install water-efficient fixtures to reduce water waste.
- ☑ Reuse and recycle wastewater where possible.
- ☑ Reduce water usage in landscaping.
- ☑ Monitor and fix leaks proactively.

Transportation & Logistics

- ✓ Limit business flights to only what is necessary and replace them with virtual meetings instead.
- ✓ Optimise delivery routes and logistics, and source low-carbon/electric transportation.
- ✓ Encourage remote work and hybrid schedules for staff to reduce car usage.
- ✓ Offer incentives for public transport, biking, or carpooling.
- ✓ Electrify company vehicle fleets.
- ✓ If EVs are not an option, use fuel-efficient or alternative fuel vehicles.

Sustainable Supply Chain

- ✓ Source materials locally to reduce transportation emissions.
- ✓ Include procurement requirements for all suppliers that include your priority actions, such as target setting, GHG reduction, and renewable energy procurement.
- ✓ Source low-carbon or recycled materials to reduce the impact of product manufacturing.
- ✓ Implement new strategies that include sustainable packaging usage to reduce resource use.
- ✓ Conduct supplier sustainability assessments as part of your due diligence checks. This will highlight the most sustainable suppliers to use.

Procurement & Product transition

- ✓ Choose lower carbon-intensive products and services when available. Initiate dialogues with suppliers for possibilities to enable a switch to products/services with smaller carbon footprints.
- ✓ Supplier Code of Conduct – Require emissions reductions from supply chain partners.
- ✓ Include CO₂e emissions as a key parameter when developing new products/services, and when tweaking the current product portfolio of your company. Pay special attention to life-time emissions of your products, ensure energy efficiency and lower emissions when using your products. Ensure also low emissions from end-of-life treatment of the products. See more in Leadership Action 7.
- ✓ Explore ideas on new business models, and start a company-internal mindset on moving towards circularity and a sustainable offer to customers.

Leadership, Management & Employees

- ✓ Implement an internal carbon price to drive investment decisions (see Leadership Action 4).
- ✓ Include GHG emissions reduction as a key performance indicator in scorecards and ensure that it is overseen by the respective business control functions.
- ✓ Ensure executive management involvement and endorsement in all stages of the process, to spur urgent action and continue to identify opportunities and risks related to your business.
- ✓ Make climate impact reduction part of the performance evaluation for all management layers.
- ✓ Mandate sustainability training and educate employees on carbon reduction strategies.
- ✓ Divest from carbon-intensive activities directly (e.g., green your stock portfolio) and indirectly (e.g., switch to a greener pension fund).

SUGGESTED METRIC FOR TRACKING PROGRESS AND IMPACT:

- GHG emissions reduced in line with a 1.5°C trajectory, disclosed yearly against a base year from 2015 or later.



LEADERSHIP ACTION 4

FINANCE CLIMATE AND NATURE ACTION

While focus should be on reducing the company's own GHG emissions to reach near-term and net-zero targets, companies also need to address the ongoing emissions being released into the atmosphere. To ensure a net-zero and nature-positive society by 2050, companies must go beyond their value chains to finance additional climate and nature action. To speed up the net-zero transition, corporate finance is needed to invest in new technologies and scale existing ones. The current flow of finance channeled to climate and nature-based solutions is insufficient and needs to triple in the coming years to be in line with a net-zero future.⁵

A company needs to set a financial commitment and dedicate funds with the intent of having real-world impacts on the transformation to net-zero and protecting and restoring nature. There are various ways to set a financial commitment. Ideally, it takes the shape of an internal carbon price that reflects the environmental and social costs of the GHG emissions, or through a percentage of economic/financial KPIs such as profit or revenue or a specified amount that is invested into climate and nature action.⁶ To avoid contradicting policies and practices, companies should also phase out the financing of any activities that are incompatible with a sustainable future, such as investments in fossil fuels (e.g., through pension funds).

To identify the best opportunities in terms of reducing climate risks and impacts with benefits for nature and people, companies should develop an assessment framework to identify and weigh potential financing opportunities.⁷ Careful consideration is needed to ensure your company prioritises high-impact and long-term solutions that have no or minimal adverse impacts.

ACTION:

Finance and support additional climate and nature solutions across and beyond the value chain.

BEST PRACTICES:

- ☑ Define a budget for additional climate action beyond the value chain, ideally by implementing a carbon fee that reflects the true environmental and social cost of GHG emissions, which can then be used to support additional climate and nature action (mitigation and/or adaptation).
- ☑ Develop a robust assessment framework based on the latest scientific evidence to inform and guide responsible investment decisions, as is done in [this WWF report](#).
- ☑ Invest in high-impact and high-quality solutions that work for people, nature and climate while sharing knowledge and lessons learned. For example, by investing in additional emission reductions, carbon removals, advocacy, innovation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction.
- ☑ Identify, scale and/or develop initiatives that spur collaboration on the implementation and funding of nature-based solutions.

SUGGESTED METRICS FOR TRACKING PROGRESS AND IMPACT:

- Size/value (€) of internal carbon price, disclosed publicly.
- Amount (€) invested in additional climate and nature action.
- Percentage (%) of ongoing GHG emissions addressed by high-quality carbon removals each year.

A company can choose to have both a shadow price on carbon (an estimated or notional cost of carbon emissions used to guide decision-making) and a carbon fee (a monetary value assigned to carbon emissions to redirect finances) as they serve different purposes. A carbon fee should be applied on the ongoing GHG emissions each year to fund additional climate and nature action.

The true environmental and social cost of GHG emissions is currently estimated at around an average price €170 per tonne of CO₂e.⁸ However, very few companies have implemented a carbon price in line with this average. WWF recommends that companies implement a carbon price of between €100-€300 per tonne of CO₂e for their ongoing GHG emissions and gradually increase this price in the coming years to reflect the cost of GHG emissions more accurately.⁹ Gradually, Scope 3 would be included in this as well.

With any type of climate fund, the big question is what to invest in. This depends on many factors. Several organisations, such as the Science Based Targets initiative, are aiming to develop guidance related to this topic. Some high-level suggestions include:

- Ecosystem restoration and protection projects with climate benefits and or high-impact and high-quality nature-based solutions
- Scaling up of new emerging technologies and solutions
- Collaborative activities and initiatives
- Policy engagement activities and initiatives
- Supply chain investments to support partners in reducing emissions beyond their own value chain emissions (e.g., energy efficiency programmes)
- Additional investments in renewable energy capacity beyond Scope 2 impacts

For more guidance, refer to SBTi's report *Above and Beyond: An SBTi Report on the Design and Implementation of Beyond Value Chain Mitigation (BVCM)* (2024) and WWF's report *A Blueprint for High-Quality Interventions That Work For People, Nature, and Climate* (2021).

To understand WWF's position and the technical nuances of carbon finance, refer to WWF's Position Paper on *Carbon Finance* (2024), and for a more in-depth look at voluntary carbon markets, refer to WWF's paper on *Archetypes in Voluntary Carbon Markets* (2025).



© Magnus Lundgren / Wild Wonders of China / WWF



LEADERSHIP ACTION 5

ENGAGE RESPONSIBLY IN CLIMATE POLICY

While businesses play a pivotal role in advancing climate solutions, systemic transformation cannot be delivered through corporate action alone. Achieving the 1.5°C target and closing the emissions gap requires an integrated approach—where governments establish robust policy architectures and incentive frameworks that enable corporations to translate ambition into tangible outcomes.

In parallel, the private sector plays a catalytic role—mobilizing support for progressive policy reform, offering technical input into regulatory design. When policy and corporate ambition converge, climate commitments can translate into systemic impact.

Companies also have a large role to play in their respective trade and industry organisations as advocates for positive change. These organisations are often not ambitious enough when it comes to addressing environmental impacts and, in some cases, actively lobby against governments on climate topics. That's why we are asking companies to engage in progressive policy engagement.

ACTION:

Engage responsibly and actively in climate policy in line with 1.5°C and ensure internal and external corporate policy alignment.

BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ Develop an advocacy plan in line with the company's climate ambition and implementation roadmap.
- ✓ Review and align internal policies to ensure effective lobbying engagement and that no part of the business is directly or indirectly lobbying against any climate or other sustainability solutions.
- ✓ Identify and act on advancing ambitious climate policies in relevant markets and collaborate with peers and local organisations to provide overall support to achieving net-zero by no later than 2050.
- ✓ Lend the brand and company's support to important campaigns and pledges organised by credible third-party organisations, where these are aimed at achieving 1.5°C and raising the bar on climate action.
- ✓ Where relevant, actively identify and meet key policy stakeholders bilaterally to contribute to an understanding of businesses challenges and policy opportunities and the need for urgent action.
- ✓ Support and promote advocacy initiatives (e.g., [InfluenceMap](#)).
- ✓ Showcase the company's leadership vision and ambition, as well as achievements in key markets to inspire policymakers and regulators.
- ✓ Work within trade and industry associations to align them with the Paris Agreement, by speaking up against positions that do not align with a 1.5°C pathway. Work towards solutions within the organization, but consider leaving the association altogether if opposing views remain prevalent.
- ✓ Work within relevant networks to mobilise additional groups in advancing climate policy and spread the message of action.
- ✓ Allocate the necessary funds and resources to policy engagement activities.
- ✓ Make sustainability central to the business strategy to ensure that all the business segments are accountable and support an integrated and holistic approach towards climate action.

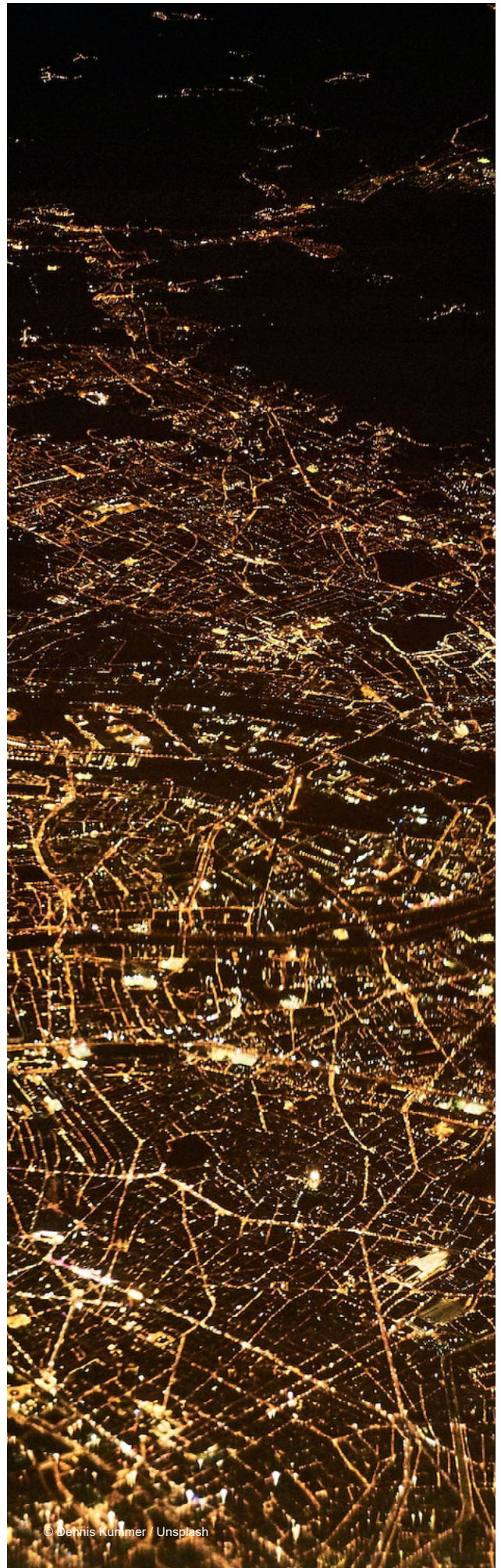
SUGGESTED METRICS FOR TRACKING PROGRESS AND IMPACT:

- Number of relevant and impactful statements/position papers (publicly available)
- Disclosure of any active engagements with policymakers
- Disclosure of support for policy-focused initiatives
- Disclosure of membership of trade and industry organisations

Once your company has agreed goals, commitments, and roadmaps are in place, consider how you would like to communicate these to your audiences. Below are some suggestions of statements that a company could consider in its corporate sustainability strategies, which are relevant to its plans, and specific actions for business. Some examples include:

- Statement in support of the Paris Agreement, including the need to halve GHG emissions by 2030 and reach net-zero at the latest 2050 (backed up with aligned corporate targets)
- Statement on the need for an external price on carbon aligned with the IPCC 1.5°C report
- Statement on the abolition of fossil fuel subsidies
- Statement on the phase-out of coal at the corporate and global level
- Statement/overview on policy alignment and engagement activities
- Statement on scaling of renewables (mainly solar and wind) and electrification in countries where the company operates
- Statement of support on specific climate-related policies in relevant geographies
- Statement on supporting specific (policy-focused) initiatives
- Statement on ambition levels in national climate plans (NDCs) in specific countries
- Specific sectoral statements on policy barriers and solutions needed

To understand the standard of climate policy that WWF aligns with and how to get aligned, refer to WWF's Climate Policy Manifesto ([2024](#)).



© Dennis Kunlmer / Unsplash



LEADERSHIP ACTION 6 COLLABORATE WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Collaboration is key. A single company cannot achieve its climate targets, or the wider sectoral transformation needed to stay within 1.5°C, on its own. Whether it's reducing supply chain emissions, filling the financing gap, shifting consumer norms, or influencing policy, change happens faster and more effectively when stakeholders collaborate.

Collaboration doesn't have to be complex or expensive. It could be as simple and easy as starting a conversation at a conference or emailing a peer in another organization. What matters is the mindset: being open, proactive, willing to share and to step outside of silos, because often the biggest opportunities are the ones we can't see from the inside.

We're calling on companies to step up as collaborators, not just market competitors. This means working across the value chain - with suppliers, customers, industry peers, investors, policymakers, and civil society - to drive bold, market-wide change.

ACTION:

Collaborate with value chain partners, peers, colleagues and other key stakeholders to progress on individual and collective climate goals and overcome critical barriers to scaling climate action.

BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ Engage with sectoral peers on the most material topics to share and promote effective and wide adoption of solutions and best practices for decarbonisation within the sector.
- ✓ Support partners/suppliers across the value chain, especially those that may struggle to reduce their climate footprint, such as SMEs, and implement effective impact reduction programmes across the value chain.

- ✓ Engage in product-level collaborations to reduce the environmental impact of products across sectors.
- ✓ Encourage and support suppliers in carbon accounting, setting 1.5°C aligned science-based targets and finding GHG reduction activities, e.g., through running education programmes for your suppliers.
- ✓ Work within the industry to increase traceability and information exchange from raw materials to end-of-life treatment.
- ✓ Actively work with(in) trade and industry organisations for ambitious climate action. Active participation and lobbying are necessary to achieve ambitious goals and timely implementation.
- ✓ Develop and engage in relevant and ambitious coalitions.
- ✓ Educate and empower employees to integrate climate and nature into processes, decisions and their daily work as a driver for innovation and revenue growth.
- ✓ Encourage and help all employees, board and owners to halve their personal emissions and adopt sustainable lifestyles (e.g., through supportive company policies and by sharing educational materials and personal climate calculators).
- ✓ Engage in frequent conversations with investors to share information about climate impacts and find opportunities to improve the sustainability work and strengthen their confidence in the long-term viability of the company.
- ✓ Partner with universities or think tanks to share learnings from industry, gain insights from the latest research, and identify new products and services and new business models. Support scaling up of new emerging technologies and solutions.

SUGGESTED METRICS FOR TRACKING PROGRESS AND IMPACT:

- Disclose your activities and initiatives, any participation in projects and other collaborations you have with stakeholders.
- Disclosure of impact of project/initiative (e.g., potential for emission reductions or changes within a sector).

For inspiration on inter- and intra-value chain collaboration, please refer to WWF's report *Ensemble: Mobilizing the Apparel and Textile Sector Towards Sustainability and Collective Action (2024)* and SBTi's guide on *Engaging Supply Chain on the Decarbonization Journey (2023)*.



© Matthieu Paley



LEADERSHIP ACTION 7

ENABLE AND INSPIRE CUSTOMERS

For many companies, significant climate and environmental impact comes from customers using their products and services in daily life. Companies have a responsibility to address these impacts and support customers in increasing their awareness and reducing their footprint. This includes offering more sustainable products and services, as well as actively engaging customers on sustainability topics. Again, collaboration is key. Companies need to work within and across sectors while engaging with customers to ensure that the information provided to them is clear and credible.

By engaging and collaborating with customers and being transparent with them about what you are doing and about product emissions, companies can unlock new opportunities and accelerate the transition toward more sustainable solutions.

All the work you have done so far will become relevant to your audience. We know people look at the performance of companies they buy from or work with and being open and transparent is a huge benefit in today's marketplace.

ACTION:

Enable and inspire customers through more sustainable products and services, education and collaborations, and transparent and accessible information.

BEST PRACTICES:

- Disclose the carbon footprint of your products and services, and the steps being taken to reduce it.
- Offer a wide range of products and services which enable and/or support customers to lower their environmental impact.
- Develop a list of actions that customers can take to reduce climate and environmental impacts relevant to the sector, products and services.
- Collaborate with peers and other stakeholders in engaging with customers.
- Be transparent with customers about the company's challenges and areas for improvement.
- Highlight your sustainability targets and the progression you have made towards them on your website and in your annual reports. This will make it easier for customers to engage with your brand.

SUGGESTED METRICS FOR TRACKING PROGRESS AND IMPACT:

- Many of the metrics highlighted in previous sections of this guide will feed into this leadership action.
- An increased amount of messaging on your site/products around your sustainability efforts, in line with best practices and regulations.

ORGANISATIONS AND INITIATIVES AS HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS DOCUMENT

[Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#)
[Climate Action Tracker](#)
[WWF's Climate Business Network](#)
[Science Based Targets initiative](#)
[Exponential Roadmap Initiative](#)
[UN Race to Zero Campaign](#)
[SME Climate Hub](#)
[Greenhouse Gas Protocol](#)
[CDP](#)
[Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures \(TCFD\)](#)
[The Gold Standard](#)
[InfluenceMap](#)
[We Mean Business Coalition](#)

To understand the scale of the challenge and the urgency for transformative change, companies should consult WWF's flagship *Living Planet Report (2024)*. The report provides powerful context, insights into behaviour change levers, and evidence on why restoring nature must be central to any long-term business strategy.

For a practical framework for applying behaviour change strategies to shift urban consumer choices towards lower-carbon outcomes, refer to WWF's report, *Harnessing Behaviour Change for Urban Climate Action (2022)*.

REFERENCES

Climate Action Tracker. 2021. [Glasgow's 2030 Credibility Gap: net zero's lip service to climate action](#).

CDP Worldwide. 2021. [Putting a price on carbon: The state of internal carbon pricing by corporations globally](#). London, UK.

CDP. 2021. [Accelerating the rate of change: CDP Strategy 2021-2025](#). London, UK.

Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition. 2017. [Report on the high-level commission on carbon prices](#). Washington D.C., USA.

IPCC, 2022. [IPCC Sixth Assessment Report. Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change. Summary for Policymakers](#). Website.

Rockström, J., Gaffney, O., Rogelj, J., Meinshausen, M., Nakicenovic, N., and Schellnhuber, H. J. 2017. A roadmap for rapid decarbonization. *Science* 355(6331): 1269-1271. doi: 10.1126/science.aah3443

Rogelj, J., Shindell, D., Jiang, K., Fifita, S., Forster, P., Ginzburg, V., Handa, C., Kheshgi, H., Kobayashi, S., Kriegler, E., Mundaca, L., Séférian, R. and Vilarino, M.V. 2018. [Mitigation pathways compatible with 1.5°C in the context of sustainable development](#). In: *Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty*.

Science-Based Targets Initiative. 2024. [Above and Beyond: An SBTi Report on the Design and Implementation of Beyond Value Chain Mitigation](#).

Science-Based Targets Initiative. 2025. [Set a Target: Target Services](#). Website

Science-Based Targets Initiative. 2025. [The Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#). Website

Science Based Targets Initiative, Navigant, and the Gold Standard. 2018. [Value Change in the Value Chain: Best practices in scope 3 greenhouse gas management](#).

We Mean Business Coalition. 2021. [All in for 2030: Accelerating action. Halving emissions](#).

WWF. 2019. [Climate, nature and our 1.5°C future. A synthesis of IPCC and IPBES reports](#). Gland, Switzerland.

WWF and Boston Consulting Group. 2020. [Beyond Science-Based Targets: A blueprint for corporate action on climate and nature](#). Gland, Switzerland.

WWF. 2021. [A blueprint for high-quality interventions that work for people, nature, and climate](#). Gland, Switzerland.

WWF. 2021. [Emission Possible: A beginner's guide to emission reporting that helps you reach your climate goals](#). Woking, UK.

WWF. 2021. [Powering nature: Creating the conditions to enable nature-based solutions](#). Gland, Switzerland.

WWF, SWITCH. 2022. [Harnessing Behaviour Change for Urban Climate Action](#).

WWF. 2022. [WWF Network Position on Carbon Finance](#). Woking, UK.

WWF. 2024. [Living Planet Report: A System in Peril](#). Gland, Switzerland.

WWF. 2024. [Climate Policy Manifesto. Turning the Tide on Tipping Points: Aiming higher, doing more and exploring synergetic solutions](#). Gland, Switzerland.

WWF. 2025. [Archetypes in Voluntary Carbon Markets](#). Gland, Switzerland.

WWF. 2025. [Beyond Offsetting: The Case for Businesses to Adopt the Contribution Approach](#). Gland, Switzerland.

WWF. 2025. [Climate Contributions for People & Nature. A Discussion Around Meaningful Corporate Action Beyond Value Chains](#). Zurich, Switzerland.

WWF. 2025. [Sustainable Office Guide](#). Woking, UK.

ENDNOTES

- 1 <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07219-0>
- 2 Crispeels, P., Inia, D., Legge, H., Nauc ler, T., & Radtke, P. 2022. [Decarbonize and create value: How incumbents can tackle the steep challenge](#). McKinsey & Company.
- 3 Science Based Targets Initiative. 2024. [SBTi Monitoring Report 2023: Looking back at 2023 and moving forward to 2024 and beyond](#).
- 4 Rockstr m, J., Gaffney, O., Rogelj, J., Meinshausen, M., Nakicenovic, N., and Schellnhuber, H. J. 2017. A roadmap for rapid decarbonization. *Science*. Vol 355, Issue 6331, pp. 1269-1271 DOI: 10.1126
- 5 UNEP. 2021. State of Finance for Nature. Tripling investment in Nature-Based Solutions by 2030. Nairobi, Kenya.
- 6 SBTi. 2024. Raising the Bar: An SBTi Report on Accelerating Corporate Adoption of Beyond Value Chain Mitigation (BVCM).
- 7 Gold Standard. 2024. [Funding Beyond Value Chain Mitigation. Step by Step Guidance for Organisations Taking Responsibility for Their Emissions](#). Geneva, Switzerland.
- 8 Rennert, K., Errickson, F., Prest, B.C. 2022. Comprehensive evidence implies a higher social cost of CO2. *Nature* 610, 687–692. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-022-05224-9>
- 9 Fit F r Paris. 2021. [Ein Leitfaden, wie sich unternehmerische Klimastrategien mit dem Pariser Abkommen vereinbaren lassen](#). Berlin, Germany.



Working to sustain the natural world for the benefit of people and wildlife.

together possible™

panda.org