



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network



The right climate for business:

LEADING A JUST TRANSITION



In partnership with:

YouGov[®]

**And when will we understand
that what we have is enough,
that all we need is in front of us
and your decisions are surgical instruments
you could save us with the right ones.**

From Enough, written and performed for BITC at COP26, Ellen Renton

THE RIGHT CLIMATE FOR BUSINESS: LEADING A JUST TRANSITION

Severe weather events across the world in 2021 – from flash flooding in China, Western Europe, and New York to severe heatwaves across North America, Europe, and Africa and wildfires in the Mediterranean – were a clear indication that the impacts of climate change are already with us. COP26, the United Nations Climate Change Conference hosted in Glasgow in November, brought the urgent need for leadership on a rapid and just transition into sharp relief. Collaboration between governments, businesses and civil society is critical if we are to act in time to keep temperature rises to a safe level for humanity.

To inform the role that business must take to be part of the climate solution, Business in the Community (BITC) and YouGov conducted research with members of the public and businesses. This report shares the insights from this research and our recommendations to deliver a fair and inclusive transition to a net-zero, resilient future where people and nature thrive.

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INTRODUCTION



“We are the first generation to know in full scientific detail that we are breaking our planet’s life support systems... and the last that can do anything about it.”

BITC’s Founding Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales



THE CHALLENGE

Even with the pledges made at COP26, the world is on track for a temperature increase of more than 1.8°C above pre-industrial levels in the coming decades.¹ The science tells us 1.5°C is the upper limit for a relatively stable climate. The results of 2°C and above will be catastrophic.²

“Unequivocal and indisputable” evidence that human activity is warming the planet³ means the focus of all our efforts and attention as leaders of countries, businesses and organisations must be to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Alongside this, we must build resilience to the impact of climate change that is already happening and will continue to escalate until our climate action takes effect.


We are now facing this task alongside multiple societal challenges. We are still in the midst of a global pandemic. Our cost of living is rising. Energy and key commodities are suffering from supply chain disruption. Inequalities in health and wealth are growing and there is increasing concern that our children’s lives will not be as good as ours.

The need for personal and organisational leadership on climate and social justice has never been so stark. The changes required will transform all our lives but the cost of not acting will be far greater.⁴

Huge structural changes are required across industries. New regulation and legislation is needed and every business, regardless of size or sector, must make the transition.



The focus of all our efforts and attention as leaders of countries, businesses and organisations must be to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.



In the words of Mark Carney, UN Special Envoy on Climate and Finance, businesses that fail to do so “will go bankrupt, without question. But also there will be great fortunes made along this path aligned with what society wants.”⁵

We can no longer pass the responsibility onto the next generation. We must learn to live and work differently. We must reassess what we value, what we reward and how we define a life well lived. And we must do this now.

THE OPPORTUNITY

What if we could, collectively, turn the biggest challenge facing mankind into its greatest achievement?

Think good jobs that are better for us, more green spaces, cleaner air and water, and improved health and wellbeing. Picture communities that have previously been excluded being revived as they co-create solutions and opportunities in a thriving, regenerative economy.

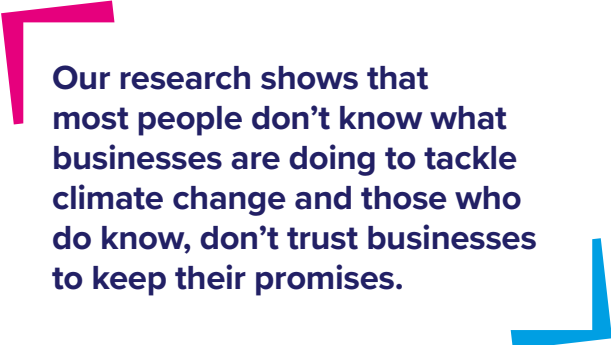
The business benefits are well-documented. People want to work for, and buy from, companies that are taking climate action⁶ and will remove their business or take action within companies that are not.⁷ Innovation, increasing brand value, engaging new customers and attracting new talent are among the rewards.⁸

Younger generations are demanding that those of us with power and influence take our responsibility – for employees, communities and the environment – seriously.

However, our research shows that most people don't know what businesses are doing to tackle climate change and those who do know, don't trust businesses to keep their promises. With trust in business to act on climate dangerously low, it is up to business leaders to show rather than tell how they are acting to address the climate crisis.

Both businesses and the public believe that within our current system, the risks and benefits of climate change will not be fairly distributed. The people and organisations that are already most vulnerable stand to lose even more.

However, this is not inevitable. In the words of young climate activist Vanessa Nakate, speaking at COP26, it is now up to business leaders to “prove us wrong”.




Our research shows that most people don't know what businesses are doing to tackle climate change and those who do know, don't trust businesses to keep their promises.

WHAT IS A JUST TRANSITION?

Originating in the international labour movement, the term 'just transition' is increasingly being used by environmental and social justice movements and across governments. Just transition principles have been adopted in the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the landmark Paris Agreement.⁹

At COP26, the UK Government, alongside 15 others, built on these commitments to recognise its role in ensuring "no one is left behind in the transition to a net-zero and climate resilient future."¹⁰

However, there is no single, accepted definition of a just transition. At BITC, we have developed this working definition for responsible businesses:



A just transition ensures a fair and inclusive journey to a net-zero, resilient future where people and nature thrive. Businesses must design this future with diverse stakeholders; create economic opportunities and equip people to access them and actively regenerate communities and nature.

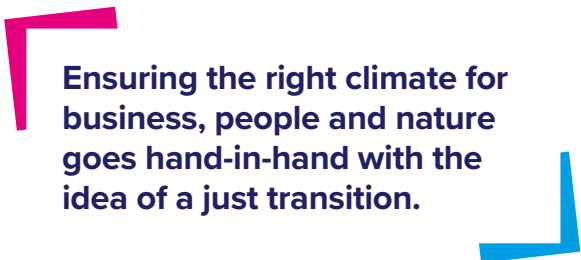
BITC AND A JUST TRANSITION

BITC has been at the forefront of shaping responsible business for 40 years. Established by a group of business leaders who recognised that you can't have healthy high streets without healthy communities, we have worked with hundreds of companies to innovate in response to society's biggest challenges.

As we look to the next decade, responsible business must help to lift people out of poverty and improve community wellbeing through a fundamental rethink of how we do business.

Be regenerative, rather than exploitative. Deliver value from creativity and innovation rather than consumption. Think and act for the long term and across systems, and do this in collaboration with diverse stakeholders so everybody benefits.

Ensuring the right climate for business, people and nature goes hand-in-hand with the idea of a just transition. With this report, BITC uses its research findings to set out both the challenge and the approach businesses must take. It's an approach where the benefits for employees, communities and nature feed back into business success.



Ensuring the right climate for business, people and nature goes hand-in-hand with the idea of a just transition.

In practical terms, our [Seven Steps for Climate Action](#), responsible business map, wider campaign resources and advisory services all support individual businesses to take climate action.

But to redesign man-made systems and regenerate natural ones, businesses must work together with Government and civil society. That's why, in 2022, we are convening a series of collaborative projects.

We urge business, Government and diverse stakeholders to investigate, co-create and activate solutions with us, making fundamental changes to how the UK does business to secure a future for us all.

This is BITC's 40th year, and the second year of the UK's COP26 presidency. We don't have a moment to lose. Working together, we must make a fair and inclusive transition to a net-zero, resilient future where people and nature thrive.

KEY FINDINGS FOR BUSINESSES

1 85% of the public placed ‘extreme weather’ among their top climate worries and 79% listed ‘damage to nature’ and ‘biodiversity loss.’

Climate change is now a major concern for the public, with ‘extreme weather’ and ‘damage to nature’ the top two concerns. Most people, and especially younger people, don’t think businesses are doing enough to tackle these issues. Businesses need to recognise these concerns and work with nature to accelerate climate action, investing in nature-based solutions and building climate resilience.

2 72% of people say it is important that the businesses they buy from take climate action.

While people see Government as primarily responsible for driving action on climate, they do see business as having responsibility. Crucially, customers want the businesses they buy from to be taking climate action. Businesses need to develop plans and communicate with customers about them.

3 Only 12% of the public think their job will be adversely affected by action to tackle climate change and a further 26% did not know. Only 11% think their job will require them to develop at least a fair amount of new skills.

Most people are in the dark about the size and scale of the changes needed across industries. Businesses need to step up and engage their workforces on the challenges and opportunities ahead, equipping employees with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in a changing economy.

4 Only 24% of customers are aware of what businesses are doing on climate action, and of them, 62% don’t trust businesses to do what they promise.

Despite 72% of people wanting the businesses they buy from to take climate action, less than a quarter of customers know what businesses are doing. Even within businesses, most employees are unaware of what their organisation is doing, or don’t think employers are doing enough. Businesses not only need to commit to climate action, but they also need to build trust through involving diverse communities and show how promises translate into action and results.

5 Just 25% of people and 40% of businesses think the social benefits of the transition will be shared equally.

People do not think that the benefits or negative impacts of climate change, or action to address it, will be shared equally across society. While businesses are more positive than the public, there is much work to be done to demonstrate that a fair and inclusive transition is possible.

BUSINESS CREDIBILITY ON CLIMATE IN QUESTION

The trust and credibility gap revealed in our research was also highlighted in the Edelman Trust Barometer research carried out prior to COP26.¹¹ It showed that 62% of people believe that businesses will not make the necessary changes to avoid the worst consequences of climate change unless forced to comply with new government regulation. CEOs were rated as the least trusted source on climate change.

With trust in business to act on climate dangerously low, it is up to business leaders to show rather than tell how they are acting to address the climate crisis. Not only do they need to do more with and for communities, they need to communicate openly and transparently about what they are doing.

VIEWPOINT: YOUNG PEOPLE AND A JUST TRANSITION

Our research showed that young people are better informed on climate issues and have stronger views on business action than other age groups. Northern Ireland's COP26 youth ambassador, Emer Rafferty, highlights what young people bring to the table.

Youth involvement is vitally important in tackling this crisis. Young people can bring the urgent attention about the planet and changes in attitude that are so desperately needed in the business world. We need intergenerational co-operation and involvement to bring the strengths of each generation together; the experience and knowledge from the older, and the passion, urgency and drive from the younger.

Many young people understand the seriousness of this crisis and when it comes to climate action, we are able to say it as it is. A young person working in a large business may feel powerless and alienated. However, there is nothing wrong with a young member of staff making suggestions and collaborating with those who actually make the decisions.

Let's change the meaning of 'business as usual'. We must bring the awareness that an environmental agenda in a business does not have to come at the cost of profit. Businesses have a lot at stake if action is not taken, and a lot to gain if it is.

THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

In September 2021, BITC, in partnership with its members, commissioned YouGov to carry out two nationally representative surveys with 8,026 UK adults and 2,007 businesses to help us understand:

- public attitudes and awareness to the climate crisis and business action to address it
- actions the public has taken and the barriers they face
- perceptions of fairness, change, and preparedness
- where businesses are on their climate action journeys
- priorities the public have for a fair and inclusive transition to a resilient, net-zero UK.

The results of our public survey have been weighted to be nationally representative of the UK population by age, gender, social grade, ethnicity, and UK region. The results of our business survey have been weighted to be representative of senior decision makers.

PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE CLIMATE – BUSINESSES SHOULD BE TOO

- Just over half of people worry about how climate change will impact them, increasing to 2/3 who are worried about their families and their children's future
- 3/5 are worried about what climate change will mean for their community and more than 2/3 about impacts on the UK
- 85% of the public placed 'extreme weather' among their top climate worries

Our research shows people are worried about what climate change will mean for them, their families, their communities, and the UK more widely. This is consistent across all social and demographic categories, as well as nations and regions.

People are more concerned for their children's futures and their communities more broadly than they are for themselves, and only a very small proportion of people (5%) think businesses are doing enough to support communities. The majority of people (51%) think businesses are not doing enough and a large proportion of people (44%) do not know what businesses are doing.



“National Grid is committed to enabling the green recovery and delivering a fair transition to cleaner energy for all – net zero and levelling up are not only complimentary but mutually reliant.”

Chief Sustainability Officer, National Grid, Duncan Burt



GOVERNMENT, BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS MUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

- Almost three-quarters of people think national governments are primarily responsible for action
- 31% of people place responsibility with the general public and 30% place it with businesses

The public wants Government, businesses and individuals to act. While most people see governments as holding responsibility for tackling climate change, almost a third of people also recognise the responsibility of the general public and businesses.

Three quarters of people either don't think national governments have engaged well with the public about how to tackle climate change or don't know how well they've engaged, while just 15% of people think businesses have engaged well. Environmental charities were seen as the most effective at engaging people on climate.

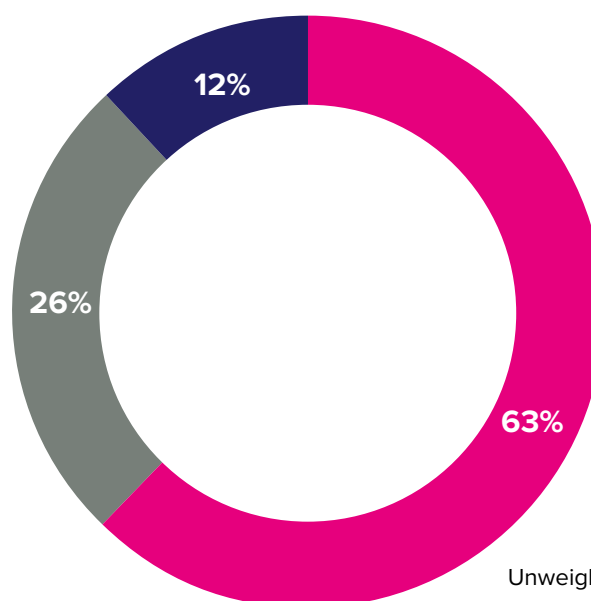
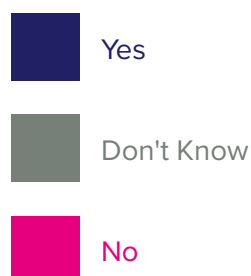
PEOPLE DON'T SEE THEIR WORKING LIVES CHANGING

- Only one in eight people think their job will be adversely affected by action to tackle climate change
- Just 11% think they will need to develop new skills at a significant level. 4/5 of them do not think their employer is doing enough to help them prepare, or don't know what their employers are doing
- Reskilling workers who might be at risk in a transition was the top-rated business action towards a just transition

Our research revealed that most people are in the dark about the changes they will experience at work as a result of the transition. The majority do not think their jobs will be affected, which is in contrast to the size and scale of change we know is needed across industries. Those who do think their jobs will be impacted are mainly in highly energy intensive sectors.

Do you think your job will be adversely affected by action taken by governments and businesses to tackle climate change?

People don't see their working lives changing



Unweighted base 4740
Base: All in work 4583

Professionals in legal and financial services sectors were least likely to think their job would be affected (4% and 8% respectively) and most likely to think they would not need new skills. However, mandatory Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) reporting, coming into force in April 2022,¹² means that there will be much more scrutiny on non-financial risks, and new skills will be needed to analyse and report effectively. COP26 saw even more investors, banks and insurers aligning behind TCFD. As this extends, finance professionals across all sectors will need to manage and report on climate-related risk to secure new money.¹³ We have also seen the cumulative number of climate change-related legal cases more than double since 2015, with ‘just transition’ cases, value chain litigation and government support to the fossil fuel industry seen as three areas to watch.¹⁴

Expectations of change by demographic

Younger people are more likely than older people to recognise that their jobs will be affected and to think that they will need new skills, with a third of 18-29 year-olds believing their job will require new skills. Overall, the numbers are worryingly low, particularly in light of current skills shortages and gaps already identified in skills to deliver the transition.

People from mixed or multiple ethnicities were more likely than average to say that their job would change, as were people in semi-skilled and unskilled roles. 20% of Black, African and Caribbean respondents thought their job would require ‘a lot’ or ‘a fair amount’ of new skills, compared with an 11% average.

Asian and Asian British groups are substantially more likely to not know whether their job will change (38% vs 26%) and are also much more likely to believe they will need ‘a lot’ or ‘a fair amount’ of new skills (17% vs 11%).

Those who class themselves as having a serious disability are twice as likely as everyone else to think their job will require ‘a lot’ or ‘a fair amount’ of new skills (22% vs 10%).

This highlights the need for employers to build skills among the more vulnerable and disadvantaged members of their workforce as part of a fair and inclusive transition.

Skills support varies geographically

In terms of places, people living in ‘Town and fringe’ areas are much less likely than those in ‘Urban’ or ‘Rural’ areas to think that employers are supporting them with skills (13% vs. 23% / 20%). Regionally, the North East (32%) London (27%) and the East Midlands (27%) are doing best in terms of employers preparing people with new skills (compared to 22% national average). People in Scotland and Yorkshire/Humber are the least likely to report that their employers are preparing people with new skills (14% and 16% respectively).

And doesn’t go where it’s most needed

Our survey showed that people whose employers are supporting them with new skills were more likely to be in managerial, administrative, and professional roles (25% were in the AB NRS social grade) while those with the least support are semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, pensioners and unemployed (DE NRS social grade). However, it should be noted that the differences were not significant so this relationship could be incidental and further research would be required to understand this trend in full.

This is concerning because research has shown that individuals with relatively high skill levels will find it easier to transition to new roles in other sectors.¹⁵

Employers urgently need to ensure they are equipping the lower paid and more vulnerable members of their workforce with the skills they need to adapt to changes in roles and contribute to climate action.

“Siemens is committed to being net-zero by 2030. Our employees are critical to this transition so it’s crucial that we support them with skills for a net-zero future.”

**Director of Communications
& Business Development, Justin Kelly**

VIEWPOINT: EQUIPPING EMPLOYEES NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE

Peter Cheese, CEO at CIPD, the professional body for HR and people development, highlights the scale and scope of the skills challenge.

The impact of climate change is already visible, from rising sea levels to extreme weather events, and this will only become more severe and widespread as global temperatures rise. How great the impact will be depending upon our success in transitioning our economy to a resilient, net-zero future.

This transition requires a workforce with the right skills. This goes far beyond those traditionally thought to be required for a low carbon future, such as those needed for the green energy sector and the built environment. Instead, it encompasses a much broader range of essential skills and climate awareness that all businesses will require to make the transition to a fair and inclusive net-zero future.

Yet, as this research shows, too many people think that their employer is not doing enough to prepare them for this fast-changing future, with those from disadvantaged or more vulnerable groups less likely to receive the support they need to upskill or reskill.

Tackling the climate crisis is a collective responsibility. That's why we're calling on businesses to step up and do more to engage their workforces and support them to face the coming challenges and opportunities.

PEOPLE ARE TAKING ACTION TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE


- 85% of people have taken at least one action to tackle climate change
- 1/3 of people have received support from a business to make changes
- Only 4% of people have received help and advice from an employer

In their personal lives, 85% of people have taken some action to tackle climate change, with two-thirds (68%) taking action in their home. Over a third (36%) have received help to make changes to their home, lifestyle or finances in order to tackle climate change.

Most help and advice has come from energy suppliers, with water suppliers, supermarkets, the media and social media also a source of information for around 10% of people. Only 4% of people said they had received help and advice from an employer. Just one tenth of people and 14% of young people report that a business has helped them to understand the impact of climate change.

People would like more help, particularly from utility companies (67%) and from supermarkets (61%) with discounts and incentives the most sought after. Those who don't want more help from businesses primarily feel able to act on their own.

There's a clear opportunity for businesses to provide more help and advice to employees and this should go hand-in-hand with equipping employees with the skills they need to contribute to climate action within the business, as well as in their personal lives.



“We all have a chance to work collectively towards visible climate action. Ensuring that all communities are a part of this journey is extremely important to achieve environmental change and a sustainable future.”

**Chairperson at UK law firm
Shoosmiths LLP, Peter Duff**



CALLING ON BUSINESSES TO DO MORE

As a customer

- Almost three-quarters of people say it is important that the businesses they buy from take climate action
- Only a quarter of customers are aware of what the businesses they buy from are doing
- Two-thirds of people don't trust businesses will do what they promise

As an employee

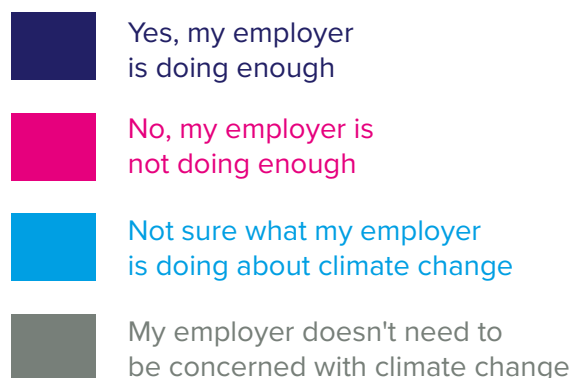
- Just one in five think their employer is doing enough
- More than a quarter think their employer is not doing enough
- Almost half don't know what their employer is doing

As members of the public

- Just over half think that businesses are not doing enough to prepare for the impacts of climate change, with a further 2/5 not aware of what is being done
- 94% of people thought businesses were either not doing enough to tackle damage to nature and biodiversity loss or did not know what businesses were doing

Together, these findings send a clear message to businesses that their employees, customers and the general public want them to do more. They also suggest that even where businesses are taking climate action, they are not communicating clearly or transparently with stakeholders about this. While many responsible businesses report into frameworks such as CDP, TCFD and BITC's Responsible Business Tracker, they are still not communicating in ways that make it easy for non-experts to understand their actions.

Do you think that your employer is doing enough to tackle climate change?



Unweighted base 4117
Base: All in work 4001

BUSINESSES LARGE AND SMALL MUST STEP UP

- 45% of all businesses and 66% of small to medium-sized businesses (SMEs) don't have a target and action plan to cut greenhouse gas emissions in line with UK Government targets and aren't planning to create one
- 40% of all businesses say they have committed to achieving net zero, but only a third have a target and action plan, with 13% amongst SMEs
- 25% of all businesses and 16% of SMEs have assessed the risks and opportunities of climate change. Only 13% of businesses and 7% of SMEs have created a plan to address them

Among the 45% of businesses and 66% of SMEs that do not have a plan, and are not planning to make one, the chief reason given (22%) is that "we are not responsible or are not able to make these types of commitments in the business". 17% did not know that a plan was needed and 15% stated that their business could not afford it. Cost was also cited as a barrier to reducing carbon emissions by 35% of SMEs in a recent British Business Bank survey.¹⁶

With only 13% of businesses and 7% of SMEs having created a plan to address the risks and opportunities of climate change, it's clear there's a huge gap between the climate action needed across UK businesses and the climate action being taken. The knowledge gap, planning gap and finance gap both large and small businesses are experiencing must be addressed if the UK is to meet its target of cutting emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels, bringing the UK more than three-quarters of the way to net zero by 2050.¹⁷

Recent research shows smaller businesses account for almost a third (30%) of all current UK greenhouse gas emissions (including emissions from households, industry and government) and around half (50%) of total emissions from UK businesses.¹⁸ The public is clear that large businesses need to act, but without SMEs the UK will not meet critical net zero targets.

Those businesses that are further ahead on their journey must support their supply chains and small businesses to play their part. This is more than just the right thing to do. A large portion of UK greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) fall into Scope 3 – emissions in a business's value chain that are outside its direct control. This means that to get to net zero, large businesses are going to have to help smaller businesses in their supply chains get there too.

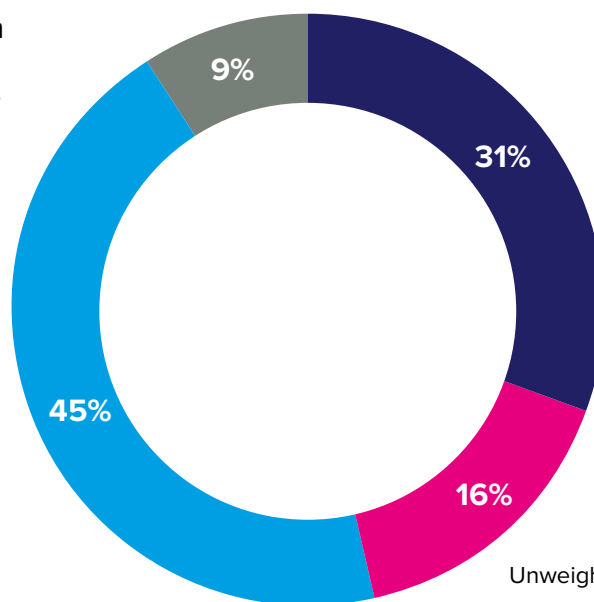


“We’re delighted to partner with BITC on this important report which enhances understanding of the Just Transition and reinforces our own practical guide for SMEs - From Now to Net Zero.”

Managing Director, SME & Mid Corporates, Lloyds Banking Group, Paul Gordon

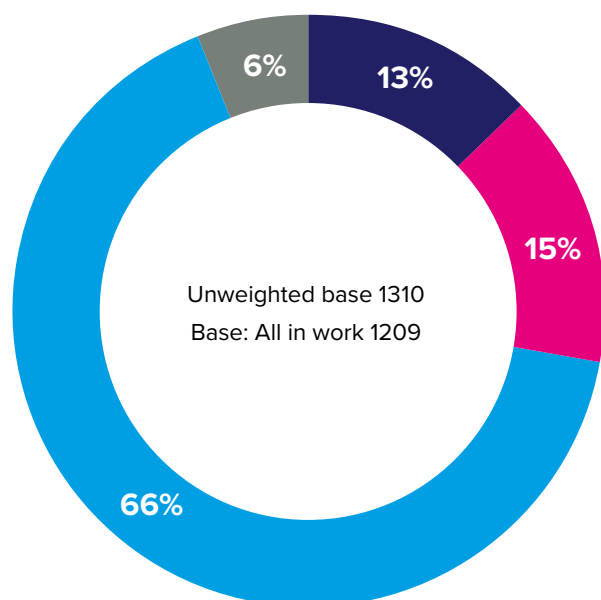


Does your business currently have an emission reduction target and action plan to cut your greenhouse gas emissions in line with the UK Government's targets? (all businesses)

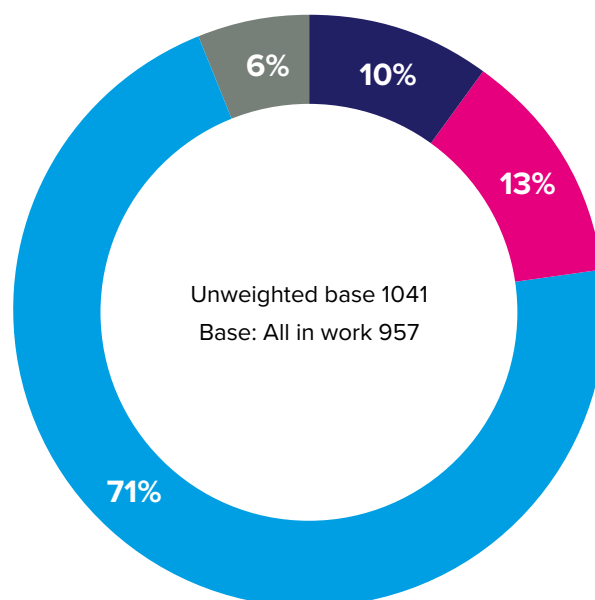


Unweighted base 2007
Base: All in work 2007

Net: SME (1 to 249 employees)



Net: Micro / Small (Less than 50 employees)



TO ENSURE A JUST TRANSITION FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE

- Just 1 in 4 people, and 2 in 5 businesses, think the social benefits of the transition will be shared equally
- Only 14% of people, and 28% of businesses, think the negative impacts will be shared equally
- 79% of people listed 'damage to nature' and 'biodiversity loss' as a top climate concern

When it comes to fairness, the results show that people do not believe that either the benefits of the transition to net zero, or the negative impacts, will be shared equally. This echoes the very high levels of public scepticism, especially among young people and vulnerable communities, expressed at COP26.

Our research also revealed different views about the costs and benefits of climate action. Around 2/5 of people believe their communities would feel benefits of reaching net zero. However, 2/5 also felt that the negative impacts of reaching net zero would be more harmful than the impact of climate change. Younger respondents were much more likely to 'strongly disagree' with this statement (30% vs 21%). Government, businesses and civil society all have a role in communicating the catastrophic cost of inaction and demonstrating that a just transition is possible.

The survey responses revealed clear priorities for business actions. The top three actions people want businesses to take are:

- using less energy and resources in products and services
- restoring and protecting nature
- cutting greenhouse gas emissions

Protecting nature and preventing biodiversity loss was one of the top two actions people want businesses to take (60%), alongside using less energy and materials to create and deliver products and services. Among women (64%) and young people (62%), protecting nature and preventing biodiversity loss was the top climate action for businesses.

There is wide consensus that businesses are not doing enough to tackle damage to nature and biodiversity loss, with just 6% stating that businesses were doing enough, 57% stating that not enough was being done, and 34% stating that they weren't sure what businesses were doing.

Perceptions of business action to protect nature vary by ethnicity. Mixed (11%) Asian and Black (9%) respondents were much more likely to think that businesses were doing enough compared with the average responses (6%). While people from 'Other ethnicities' were even less positive than other groups, with just 3% thinking that businesses are doing enough.

With the concept of a 'just transition' explained, people prioritise the following business actions:

- Reskilling workers whose jobs might be at risk (53%)
- Guaranteeing fair and good work for any jobs they might create (39%)
- Helping communities globally who will suffer most to take action to minimise harm from climate change (37%)
- Listen to the concerns of their local communities and work out how the business can help tackle them (29%)

Action to support communities to minimise the risks of climate impacts had more support among Black (36%) and mixed ethnicities (34%) than the average (26%). Helping communities globally who will suffer most to tackle climate change was a popular action for around half of Black people and 41% of young people and women.

“Fair and inclusive transitions that work for people also work for responsible business. As we decarbonise, bp is listening to community leaders, our employees and other stakeholders to create opportunities.”

Head of Country UK, senior vice president,
Europe, bp plc, Louise Kingham

VIEWPOINT: PARTNERING WITH NATURE FOR A JUST TRANSITION

Nature was a strong theme across our research. Peter Stewart MVO, Executive Director of Outreach and Development at the Eden Project, highlights the importance of nature and working with communities for a just transition.

E.O. Wilson, the great American biologist, naturalist, writer and good friend to many, including us at the Eden Project, sadly passed away on 26 December 2021. A phrase that he frequently called upon was, “You teach me, I forget. You show me, I remember. You involve me, I understand”.

It will not be enough for us within the BITC family to develop and then broadcast the issues of nature-based solutions. It will only be when we fully engage the people within the communities we all live in and serve that we will see the real impacts. This research commissioned by BITC shows that people are up for this, they demand it from businesses, and now it is the business community that needs to lead the charge.

2022 will be the Eden Project’s 21st birthday. The building of Eden itself, transforming a derelict mine, is a symbol of what people can do by coming together. Since the beginning, all our work is underpinned by the understanding that we need to live with the grain of nature, and everything is interconnected.

We are committed to be carbon net positive by 2030 and have a challenging plan in place to achieve this, including geothermal energy and other measures. It’s no surprise that nature-based solutions are a central part of this plan, and how they are embedded within communities locally, nationally and internationally are key to its success.

2030 will soon be upon us. There is no time to waste. As businesses, we need to share and deliver nature-based solutions that are embedded within every community, and for it to be understood that we are all a part of nature, not apart from nature.

WHAT NOW FOR BUSINESS?


The most important action businesses can take is to incorporate climate action into their strategic business objectives, through a climate action plan that builds resilience and rapidly cuts greenhouse gas emissions. But making the transition in your business is not enough. Today's businesses are part of a complex web of social and economic relationships that mean responsibility goes beyond company boundaries.

The ultimate goal must be to deliver a just transition – a fair and inclusive journey to a net-zero, resilient future where people and nature thrive.

In partnership with our Climate Action Leadership Team, Taskforces and Regional/Devolved Nation Boards, Business in the Community is harnessing our network for collective action. We're connecting business and Government with diverse stakeholders to shape collective action and share learning and resources for a fair and inclusive transition.

PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESS ACTION

With the insights from this report, conversations with business leaders and wider stakeholders, and 40 years of expertise BITC has identified Seven Steps for Climate Action to develop climate action plans for a just transition. These will help move the dial in tackling the climate crisis, restore trust in business and build resilience for companies and society. The steps are not linear and all are important. Many businesses will be implementing one or more of them, but no company is excelling across the full suite.



“This is a critical decade for action on climate, and one in which we must move from words to delivery. It’s really important that as we transition to a sustainable future we do so in a way which is fair for all and inclusive of communities facing disadvantage. It’s important that this is grounded in evidence, and this comprehensive research will help many gain a better understanding of a ‘just transition’ and start to identify the role that they can play towards achieving it.”

UK Head of Corporate Sustainability, JLL, Gemma Piggott



Use our Seven [Steps for Climate Action toolkit](#) to develop your plans, drawing on business examples and links to further resources.



TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE THE CLIMATE CRISIS HISTORY
bitc.org.uk/climate-action

BITC will focus our energy and attention to support members to action three of the steps, where we believe we can add the most value as The Prince's Responsible Business Network:

1 Target net zero (the sooner the better)

Create and implement climate action plans with robust net-zero targets, rooted in the science, for as close to 2030 as possible.

2 Build skills to thrive in the transition (we need everyone on this)

Ensure employees at all levels have the skills and clear lines of accountability they need to deliver and are rewarded for their contributions.

3 Involve diverse stakeholders (to co-create real solutions)

Co-create solutions to protect the most vulnerable and ensure the benefits of the transition are felt across communities.

And we want to work with you to accelerate the journey:

Join BITC and take climate action

Become a member of BITC to share learning, be at the forefront of best practice and get support from your peers to accelerate your own plans for a just transition through our networks, events and resources.

Accelerate your own journey

- 1 Get involved in our collaborative projects to investigate, co-create and activate solutions to challenges across our priorities.
- 2 Accelerate and track progress with BITC's advisory support and Responsible Business Tracker.

Take the lead

Showcase your business as a leader on this agenda:

- 1 Join our Climate Action Leadership Team, our Net Zero or Circular Economy Taskforces or a Regional or Devolved Nation Leadership Board to shape and implement our strategy.
- 2 Become a Just Transition partner to fund and lead our programmes.

Get involved today. There's no time to lose.
Visit [our website](#) to get started.

A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE FUTURE IS POSSIBLE

The majority of people in the UK see multiple benefits when imagining a resilient, net-zero future. The Office of National Statistics found that 76% of participants believe there will be better health, 74% of participants believe there will be better wellbeing and 50% believe the economy will be better.¹⁹

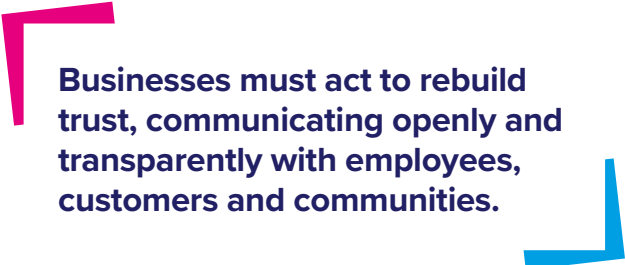
Following COP26 in Glasgow, there is a clear need and opportunity for the UK to lead by example to ensure a fair and inclusive transition in the UK and internationally.

Our research shows that people want businesses to act to make sure the transition is fair and inclusive, by building skills, involving diverse stakeholders and doing more to support communities and restore nature.

It shows that businesses must act to rebuild trust, communicating openly and transparently with employees, customers and communities about what they're doing, and the risks and opportunities involved. Essentially businesses must demonstrate, through their actions, that a fair and inclusive transition is possible.

Government must create the right conditions for business and society to reach net zero, build resilience and restore nature. It must engage the public and businesses on climate issues and create legislative frameworks to support climate action.

Business and Government must work with, invest in and reward the valuable expertise of those with lived experience, as well as a range of experts, to build capacity across society.



Businesses must act to rebuild trust, communicating openly and transparently with employees, customers and communities.

The time for adversarial approaches is over. Now we must come together to design and deliver action to secure all our futures. Together, we can make the climate crisis history.



“Achieving net zero by 2050 means big changes for everyone and there is a risk that people and communities could be left behind. With targeted policies, investment, training, and collaboration between government, business and education providers, a green future can be a future of employment for everyone. By acting now, we have a massive opportunity to rebalance the economy and ensure a fair transition.”

Head of Regions and ESG at PwC, Carl Sizer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following BITC members for making this research possible:



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