



SPRINGFAIR  
AUTUMNFAIR

# PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABILITY

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Products of Change has partnered with Spring and Autumn Fair to create a set of whitepapers to assist your journey to operating a more sustainable, ethical, and regenerative business.

The first whitepaper, titled 'Pathway to Sustainability' showcases how to set your ambitions through the structure of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals. This is then followed by a further four whitepapers focusing on: The Green Claims Code, Legislative Policies, The Circular Economy, and Consumer Trends.

The aim of these whitepapers is to provide you with the tools to build action within your business, and together reduce our collective impact over the next seven years across industry



Products of Change is a global, educational hub aimed at driving sustainable change across consumer product markets and beyond by bringing together a strong community of brand owners, retailers, content creators, innovators, manufacturing partners, and marketing experts to learn and connect through the platform.

As a membership organisation, we are designed to support, encourage, and propel companies and brands towards meeting their goals by educating to inform change, facilitating peer-to-peer networking, hosting workshops, building new industry guidelines and frameworks, all of which culminates at our annual sustainability conference, SiLC.



Spring and Autumn Fair is owned by Hyve Group Plc, an international organiser of exhibitions and conferences that believes in the power of human connection through in-person events, online experiences, and new technology to drive business and business education forwards. Using its events as opportunities to make a positive impact on people and the planet.

Spring and Autumn Fair has recently demonstrated its commitment to sustainability in business through the launch of its Power of One campaign and its three powerful pledges to help retailers take small steps to change the world, their mental health, and their environment.



“Products of Change is proud to partner with Spring and Autumn Fair, who has been driving awareness around sustainability since 2018 with their Power of One campaign by highlighting that one small action can make a huge impact when adopted at scale across industry,”

Education is at the heart of Products of Change and to get the opportunity to deliver some practical guidelines to the industry through our collaboration with Hyve and help industry navigate the broad topic of sustainability to build action within business through these whitepapers, is a real privilege.

I can't wait to see how this work is transitioned into business to drive real action.

**Helena Mansell-Stopher,**  
Founder and CEO,  
Products of Change



Thanks to our partnership with Products of Change, we can deliver real education to our audience of retailers and suppliers, with which they can begin to build actionable steps as part of a wider strategy to transition towards sustainability and business practices that benefit people and the planet.

We are really excited to deliver this first series of whitepapers through the lens of the expertise at Products of Change and look forward to seeing the positive change we can all drive across business across the world together.

**Nikki Griffiths**  
Group Communications and ESG Director,  
Hyve Group PLC

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## INTRO

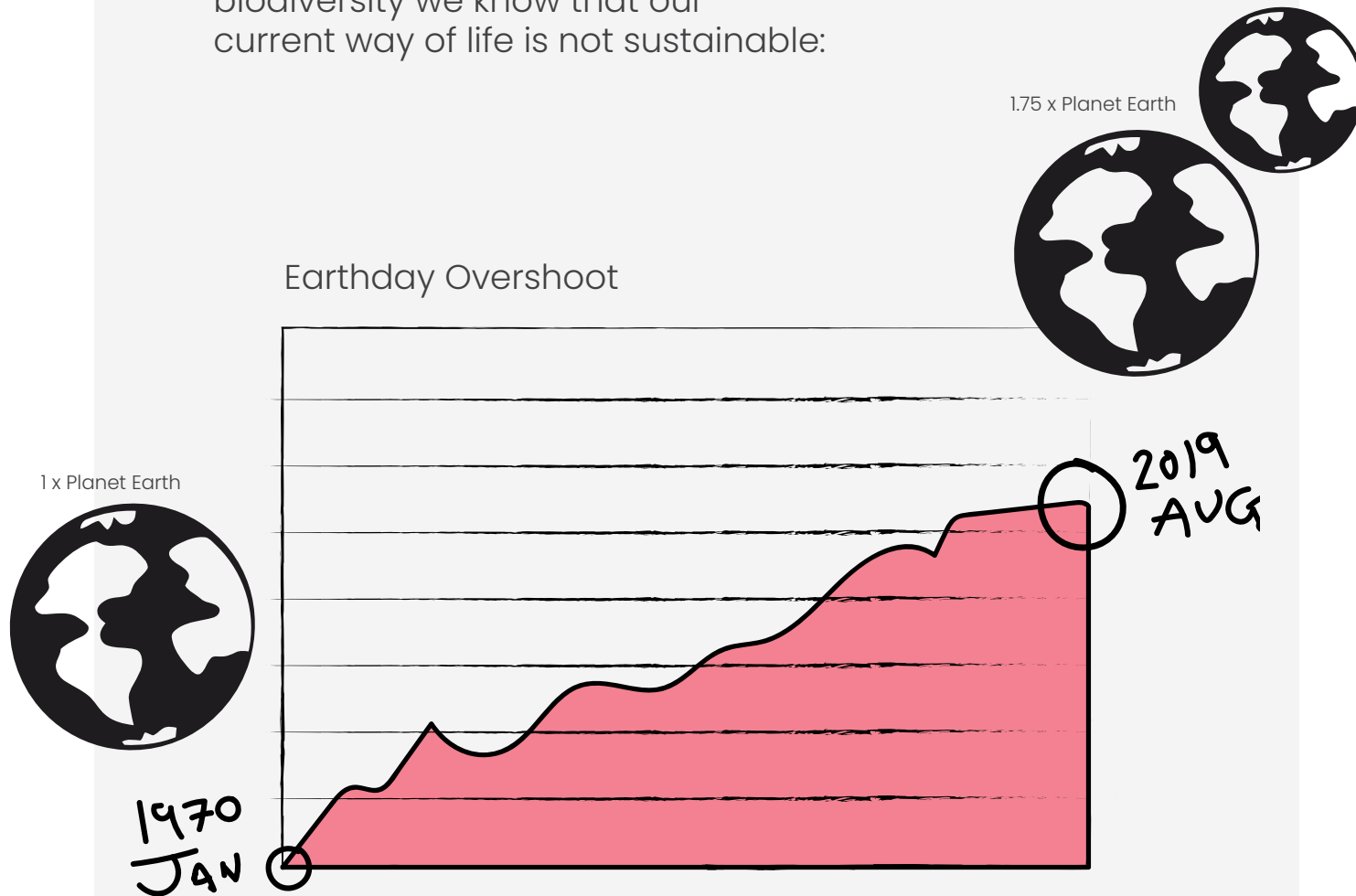
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Sustainability is a resource or an activity that is able to be maintained at a certain rate or level. A succinct sentence that opens up countless pathways.

The fact that you are reading this suggests you are already on your sustainable journey and we are here to help you.

With the increase in population, exponential growth in consumer goods, an increase in carbon emissions, and a huge loss in biodiversity we know that our current way of life is not sustainable:

Earthday Overshoot



**Over the course of one year alone, we are currently using 1.75 entire Earth's worth of resources.**



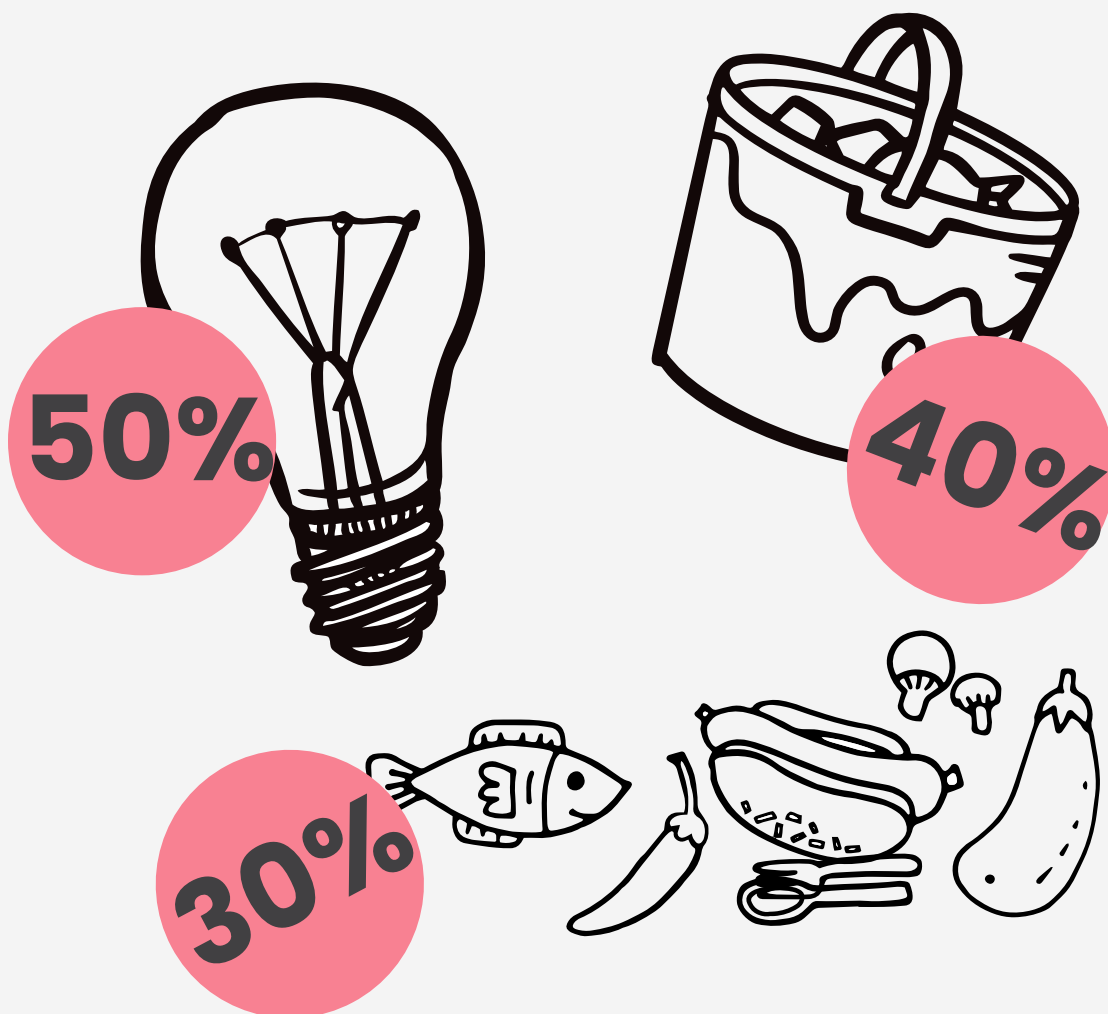
The National Footprint and Biocapacity Accounts 2019 Public Data Package is freely available.

[CLICK HERE](#)

To put this into context, as the human population welcomed its eight billionth new member in 2022, our demand for resources puts the planet under more and more pressure. In 2022, we had used a whole year's worth of the planet's biological resources (those that regenerate over the course of the year), by August.

**The planet can't keep up with this rate of consumption.**

It is estimated that we are going to require 50% more energy, 40% more water and 35% more food by 2030 to accommodate our growing population and this in itself is a huge task.



We would have to grow more food in the next four decades than has been produced in the last 8,000 years if we are to meet this demand.

## So, how do we move forward as a planet?

We need a plan and fortunately the United Nations (in 2015) created a blueprint - the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - to build a framework for change.

This list of 17 SDGs is reviewed on a yearly basis to track global progress, with the aim of achieving these ambitions by 2030.

Economist and social progress expert, Michael Green, is among the many to be championing these Sustainable Development Goals recognising their adoption as a real route to ending hunger, poverty, and halt climate change. You can hear what he has to say on this TEDTalk: How We Can Make The World A Better Place By 2030.

[CLICK HERE](#)

By heating the atmosphere, polluting our oceans, and damaging our biodiversity, humanity has fundamentally changed Earth's systems. We now find ourselves on the brink of waving goodbye to the Holocene – the stable state that has enabled humanity to thrive these last 10,000 years – and wave hello to a new age, The Anthropocene. **We have changed the ecological balance on our planet.**

### Got three minutes?

Then listen to Paul Gilding's TEDTalk, The Earth is Full as he puts it all into perspective wonderfully.

[CLICK HERE](#)

**Professor Steffen**  
 Researcher,  
 Australian National University and  
 the Stockholm Resilience Centre

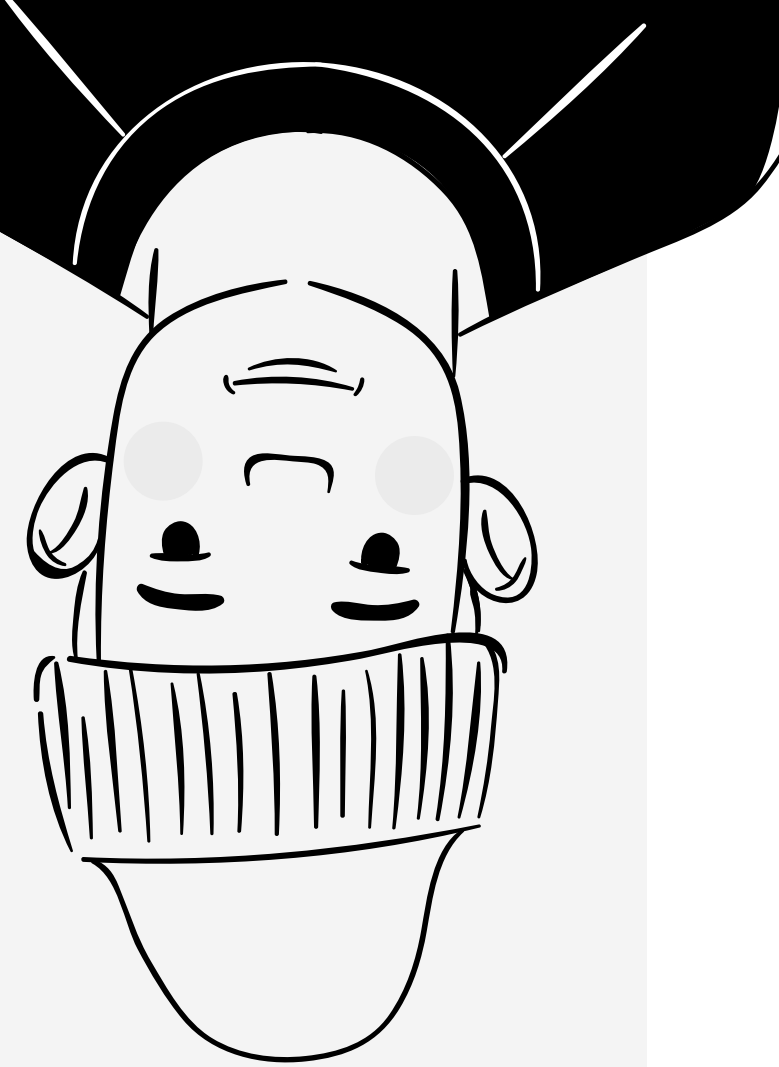
“After 1950 you can see that major Earth System changes became directly linked to changes largely related to the global economic system. This is a new phenomenon and indicates that humanity has a new responsibility at a global level for the planet.”

In 2014, the Stockholm Resilience Centre concluded a piece of research spanning three decades. Called the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP for short), this study captured global data across 12 indicators to see how our climate was changing. From this it was determined that the increase in climate change was kickstarted in the 1950s. Scientists call this The Great Acceleration; a time of increase in human economic growth (GDP), population, foreign direct investment, energy consumption, water usage, transportation, and telecommunication.

Understanding where we currently sit is extremely important in order to build a roadmap for the future, and reverse these trends.

Quick Watch: Welcome to the Anthropocene, by the IGBP

[CLICK HERE](#)



# What are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how can they help me?





# SDGS

The SDGs are a framework drawn up by the United Nations in 2015 – following the Paris Agreement – to limit global warming to 1.5°C by 2030.

This framework not only identifies a clear map to achieve the 2030 climate goals but sets out to create a fair and prosperous world for all.

It offers a unique opportunity for all sectors of the economy to rally around a common global agenda:

**To end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure a shared and durable prosperity for all.**



**The 17 SDGs are underpinned by 169 targets which themselves have a number of underlying indicators.**

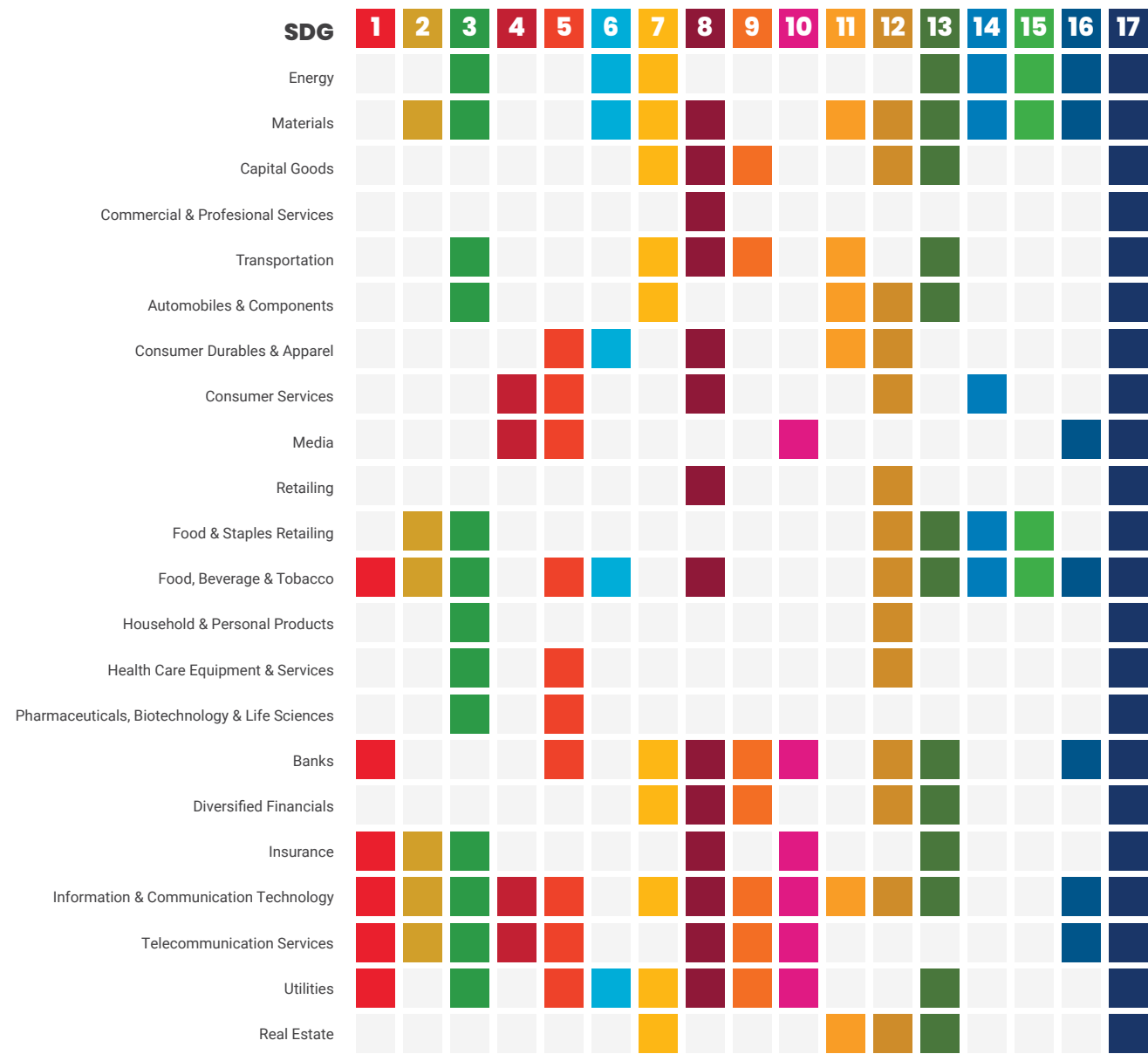
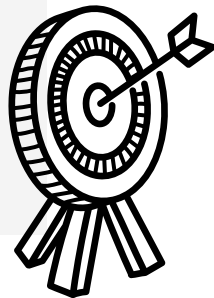
Today, we are not on track to achieve these goals by the 2030 deadline. We already know we are using nearly two times the resources Earth can regenerate in a year. We simply have to reduce our impact. And with 2,600 days until that 2030 deadline, we must accelerate our progress.

[VIEW SDG](#)

[TRACK GLOBAL SDG PROGRESS](#)

# But where do I start?

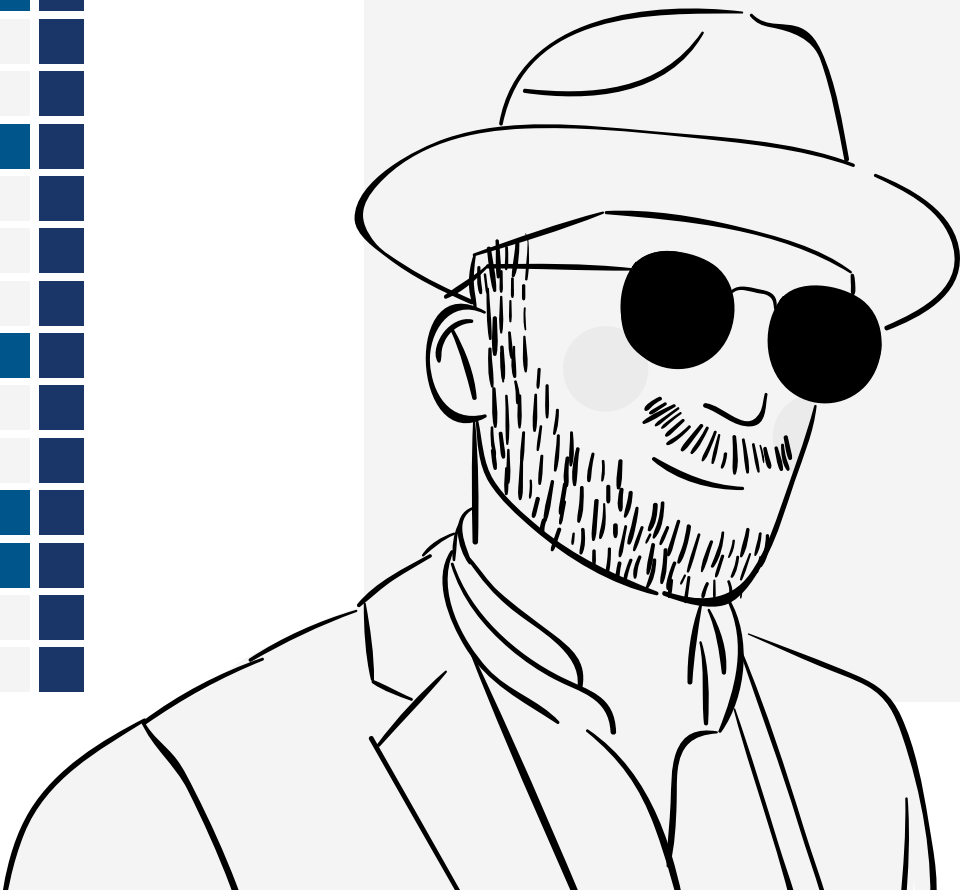
The World Benchmarking Alliance has worked with over 2,000 companies globally across multiple sectors to understand what SDGs these business sectors are focusing on. What sector are you?



If you produce you will be fully aware that production is an interlinked and complicated system owned by multiple stakeholders, which means we have to think differently and work together to advance any change. You have to be responsible for your full supply chain, from the raw materials you use and how they are grown.

Asking these questions prods a need to review elements such as fertilisers, water usage, and labour standards which you abide by (not just the market standards, but your standards too).

- But what about the transportation, warehousing, and handling?
- Who is the end user?
- How do they use your product?
- And what happens at the end of the product's life?



You are responsible for the full system, not just the moment in time in which the product is under your stewardship.



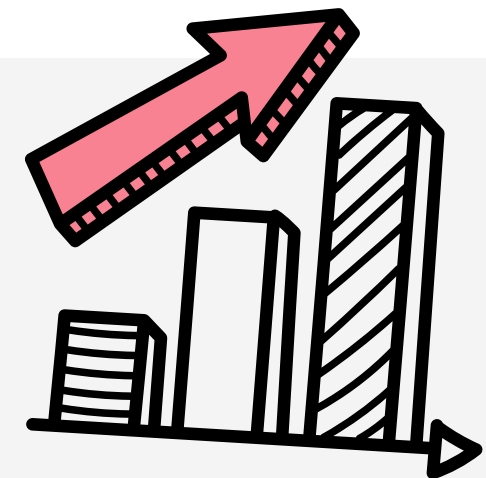
# An engine of economic growth and employment

The private sector is well positioned to improve lives in the poorest areas of society worldwide. In developing countries, businesses are responsible for 84% of GDP and 90% of employment opportunities.

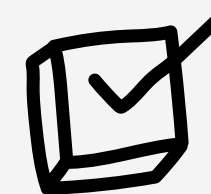
This gives them the scope to deliver on the promise of sustainable and socially inclusive economic development globally.

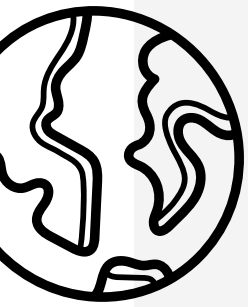


## How to change



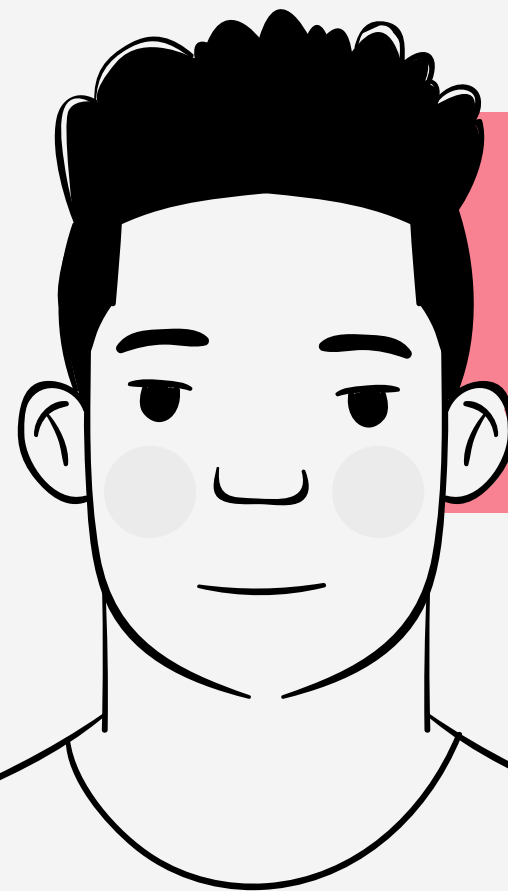
1. What energy are you using? Can you use green energy? Can you save energy by reviewing how you are producing?
2. Can you reduce waste in the manufacturing process? What do you do with that waste? Can it go back into production? Can you reduce what goes to landfill?
3. If you use water in the process, can you reduce this? Can you filter the water you use and bring it back in to use rather than waste?
4. What happens to your product after use? Can you collect it and bring it back into re-use within the manufacturing process saving money on virgin raw material?
5. Can your factories or office buildings be more energy efficient? How are you approaching air-conditioning or lighting? There are many new energy saving options out there with Government grants available towards the costs.
6. Can you 'design waste out' of your product? Can you reduce the material input into your products for ease of recycling or disassembling for future production?
7. Can you be more efficient with your product SKU count to reduce the number of different options, gaining parity across size and shape of your products? This could save on material wastage and over production.
8. How are you transporting your goods? Can you reduce your carbon footprint by looking at how you package your goods? Are you 'shipping air'? What protects the goods during transportation? Can the materials you use be more sustainable? Polystyrene is not commonly recycled - there are plenty of good alternatives.





By measuring the outputs of your business first (the CO2 emitted by factories, energy use, waste streams, and labour conditions) you can then start to build a plan to reduce their impact. To begin, you'll need a baseline for your sustainable journey.

**Map out what SDG is more relevant to you as a company. Can you clearly see some easy reduction wins?**



## Step 1: Build Your Case

Gather as a multi-department group and identify the business opportunities that will arise by aligning with the SDG framework - i.e. Could you save cost? Build positive associations with your business or brand? Reduce your impact across multiple departments?

António Guterres  
United Nations Secretary  
General

“We need business leaders to use their enormous influence to push for inclusive growth and opportunities. No one business can afford to ignore this effort, and there is no global goal that cannot benefit from private sector investment.”

Businesses are responsible for 84% of GDP and 90% of employment opportunities. This gives you the scope to deliver on the promise of sustainable and socially inclusive economic development globally.

The United Nations has estimated that between USD \$5 trillion and USD \$7 trillion of annual investments are needed to realize the SDGs by 2030. You can be sure that business has - and will continue to have - a crucial role to play in meeting these investment needs.

It's important not to understate the impact that business can have on the SDGs by mitigating its most salient negative impacts on people and planet. In particular, efforts to ensure corporate respect for human rights throughout the supply chain have the potential to positively impact the lives of some of the most vulnerable individuals in society.



# Unlocking USD \$12 trillion of market opportunities

A report published by the Business and Sustainable Development Commission in 2017 shows how pursuing the SDGs could unlock USD \$12 trillion in new market opportunities per year by 2030, generating more than 380 million jobs in the process.

[VIEW REPORT](#)



## Step 2: Impact Assessment

Now that you have an understanding of the focus areas for your business, the next step is to build a base-line and measure where your business currently sits, you need to assess your impact and identify the top risks and opportunities.

There are some fantastic resources out there to help you map this and they are free to use. The SDG Action Manager by B Lab's B Impact Assessment requires you to add data to build a roadmap for your business.

You can start your journey today by visiting the B-Impact site at this link.

[CLICK HERE](#)

## Step 3: Action

Now that you understand your impact areas and focus, it's time to let your employees know about your mission.

Employee engagement is the key to building a successful business. But driving employee engagement doesn't come easy: worldwide, only 20% of employees are engaged with their work.

Employees are no longer just looking at work benefits but are taking into account the company's values and the development opportunities you offer.

Businesses that cannot provide these are finding it increasingly challenging to retain top talent.

Today, more than a third of workers are searching actively or casually for a job. As a result, US employers spend \$2.9M per day looking for replacement workers. That's \$1.1B per year. Ouch!

This employee guide to the global goals is a great example of how to start bringing your employees into the fold with your sustainability journey.

[CLICK HERE](#)



# Action

## Step 4: Tell your community

Did you know, you can showcase the Global Goals icons and branding on your website, social media, and across your community materials? You can then link your announcements to the corresponding goals. And you don't have to pay a penny! All resources can be downloaded here.

[DOWNLOAD](#)

Please do remember, however, as you communicate your journey be sure you're not misleading your consumer in any way. More people than ever are concerned about the environmental impact of the products and services they buy. We know businesses want to be honest with their customers about their green credentials, but it may not always be clear how to do this.

That's why the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has developed the Green Claims Code – which sets out 6 key points to check your environmental claims are genuinely green.

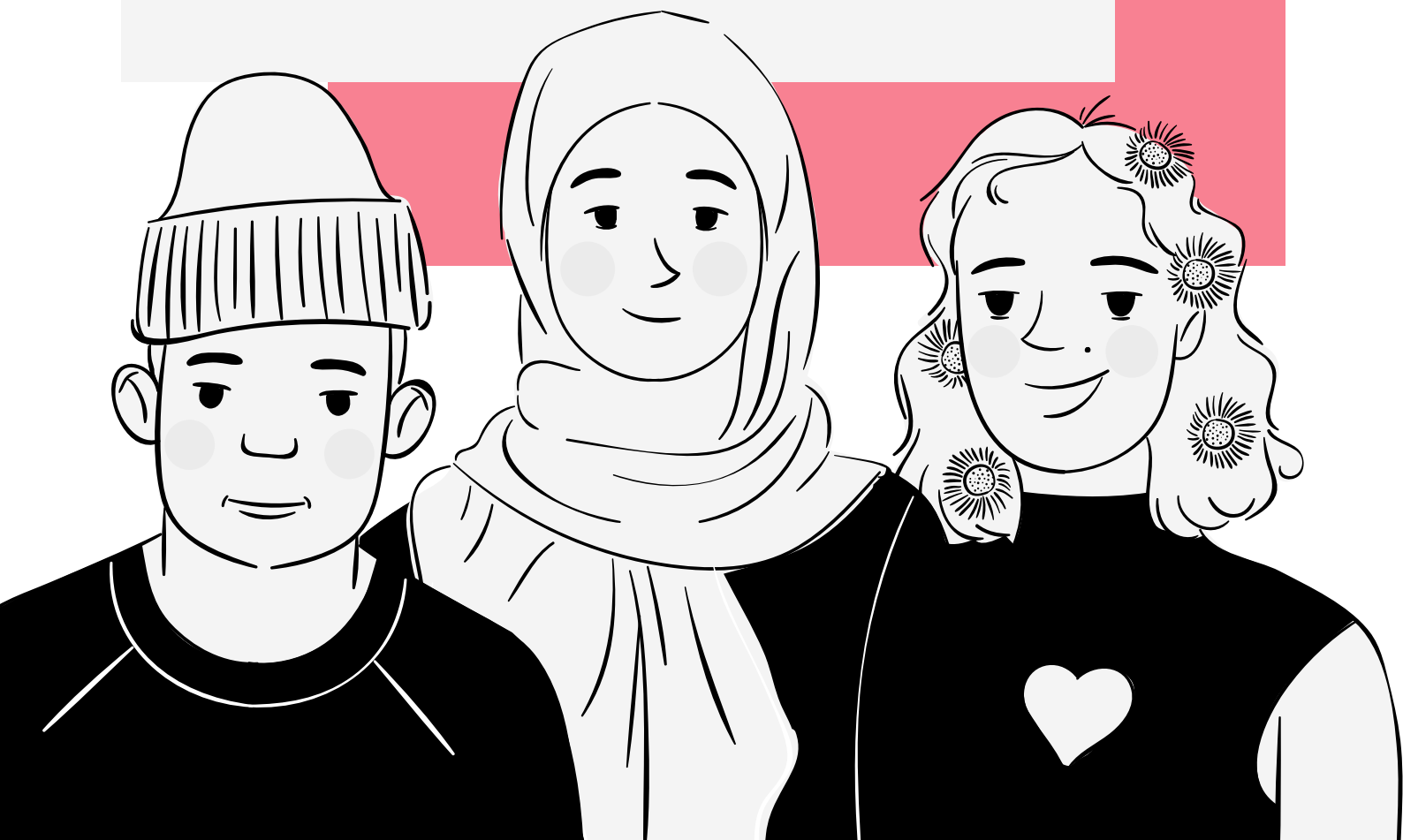
Products of Change and Hyve have created a white paper on the Green Claims Code, which can be read at this link.

[CLICK HERE](#)

## Step 5: Partner Up

Legislation, marketing, and innovations in materials are all changing at a rapid pace. It's vitally important that you open up your community and share your advancements within sustainability. Is there a competitor you can partner with to build new guidelines? Are there any material innovations that will enable you, as a company, to advance further?

There are so many organisations and initiatives you can partner with to advance your knowledge and journey. All you have to do is have a look.



**For further reading, check out some - or all - of the below:**

B-CORP

IMPACT 2030

PRODUCTS OF CHANGE

ICCWBO

MEANINGFUL

SDG HUB

SDG COMPASS

UN GLOBAL COMPACT

WORLD BENCHMARKING ALLIANCE







Products of Change is here  
to help support you on your  
sustainable journey, please do  
come join our community...

JOIN US