

Sustainability Matters

Compiled and published by Ray Skinner, FCA

Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

19th Oct 2022



Designed by
www.vecteezy.com

Benchmark Shows Progress Not Matched by Actions

"Climate Action 100+, the world's largest investor engagement initiative on climate change, has released an interim set of Net Zero Company Benchmark assessments of its focus companies.

"This is the second round of Benchmark assessment to be published in 2022. The timing of this release marks a change of the analysis and reporting cycle for the Net Zero Company Benchmark assessments from March to October, to improve alignment with corporate reporting and better support investor engagement with focus companies.


"159 companies on the initiative's focus list were measured on their progress against the initiative's three engagement goals and a set of key indicators related to business alignment with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

"The encouraging uptake of net zero commitments is not matched by the development and implementation of credible decarbonisation strategies. As a priority, investors need to see corporates outlining the practical actions on how they will begin to meet their net zero commitments.

"Specifically, the assessments reveal:

- An absence of short and medium-term emissions reductions targets aligned with limiting warming to 1.5°C.
- Net zero targets are often not supported by strategies to deliver them
- Scope 3 emissions remain absent.
- Alignment of capex strategies with net zero transition goals largely remain missing.

More: https://igcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/October-2022-Benchmark-launch_press-release_111022_AU.pdf plus www.climateaction100.org/news/climate-action-100-net-zero-company-benchmark-shows-an-increase-in-company-net-zero-commitments-but-much-more-urgent-action-is-needed-to-align-with-a-1-5c-future/

Source: Investor Group on Climate Change, 13th Oct. 

New Reports Launched by edie On Achieving the SDGs


"As our Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Week comes to a close, we've published two new reports dedicated to helping you bridge the gap between ambition and action on the 17 Global Goals.

"The first of these two reports is entitled 'Achieving the SDGs: A Blueprint for Business Leadership'.

"This edie Insight report, sponsored by Reconomy, seeks to provide combines expert insight with real-life case studies, offering an end-to-end overview of exactly how businesses can advance global progress towards achieving all 17 SDGs by 2030.

"Our second new report this week is entitled 'Achieving the SDGs: Innovations for People and Planet'.

More: www.edie.net/edie-launches-two-new-free-reports-on-achieving-the-sdgs/

Source: edie, 29th September 2022. 

EU's Pioneering Anti-deforestation Law Hailed

"The European Parliament voted Tuesday (13 September) in favour of a regulation requiring companies to ensure products sold in the EU do not come from deforested or degraded land, a move hailed as a 'ray of hope' by green campaigners.

"The Parliament's text broadens the list of products and commodities covered in the European Commission's original proposal, presented in November last year.

"The initial list, which included cattle, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, soya and wood was extended to cover pigmeat, sheep and goats, poultry, maize and rubber, as well as charcoal and printed paper products.


"The new law would make it obligatory for companies selling those goods in the EU to verify they were not produced on deforested or degraded land while respecting human rights provisions and indigenous peoples.

"Lawmakers in the Parliament's Environment Committee had already strengthened the proposed regulation in July, enlarging the scope of the law to include more products, increasing the number of checks on companies and including other natural ecosystems to the list of protected areas – such as grasslands, peatlands and wetlands.

"Financial institutions will also be subject to additional requirements to ensure their activities do not contribute to deforestation.

"The law will now be sent forward for final approval in three-way talks involving the European Commission, the European Parliament and the EU's 27 national governments.

More: www.euractiv.com/section/climate-environment/news/ray-of-hope-activists-hail-eus-pioneering-anti-deforestation-law/ plus www.mightyearth.org/2022/09/13/european-parliament-votes-for-new-deforestation-law "However, the Parliament's proposals stopped short of addressing the impacts of EU consumption on other fragile ecosystems, such as wetlands, grasslands, and peatlands, and worryingly would allow large operators and traders to carry out their own due diligence checks rather than requiring independent third-party audits."

Source: Greenpeace, 19th September 2022. 

Making The Transition Happen: Investment Policy for a Net Zero Emissions Economy

"The policies investors need to fund the transition to net zero.

"The Investor Group on Climate Change, whose members have more than \$3 trillion in Australian funds under management, have announced the high priority policies which can unlock capital for Australia's transition to net zero. Now, trustees are focusing on how to invest in emissions-reducing assets, and how to protect beneficiaries' long-term returns from the physical impacts of climate change.

More: <https://igcc.org.au/investors-need-these-policies-to-fund-the-net-zero-transition/> plus <https://igcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/IGCC-Policy-2025-PrioritiesWeb.pdf> Report is 37 pages, 4.37Mb

Source: Investor Group on Climate Change, 28th Sept 

New Rules for AC and Heat Pump Gas Will Cut NZ's Carbon Footprint

"New rules affecting fridges, heat pumps, ACs and cars next year should prevent more than 160,000 tonnes of carbon pollution – the equivalent of 22,500 return flights to London.

"Heating and cooling appliances often contain refrigerating gases known as hydrofluorocarbons or HFCs, which produce an extremely potent greenhouse effect. One type of HFC causes 14,800 times more planetary warming than the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide.

"All up, these refrigerating gases contribute nearly 2% of the country's annual greenhouse footprint. But as part of a global agreement, New Zealand has pledged to phase these gases out.

"Next year, the EPA will approve permits for just 87% of the gases imported in bulk this year. Every two years after that, the import limit will ratchet down again. By 2036, the country will import just one-fifth of the HFCs which arrived in 2020, the EPA said.

"Already, the demand for contestable permits exceeds the new limit. ...

More: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/130085694/new-rules-for-ac-and-heat-pump-gas-will-cut-our-carbon-footprint

Source: *Forever Project*, 7th October 2022. 

What You Need to Know About Green Finance

"Green finance refers to loans and other financial products and services that encourage industries and organisations in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to adopt sustainable practices, both environmental and social. Green finance benefits businesses, people, communities and the environment.

"Green finance can also be seen as the 'greening' of the banking industry. The United Nations-convened Net Zero Banking Alliance represents around 40% of global banking assets. It aims to tie its lending and investment portfolios with net-zero emissions by 2050.

"An example of green finance is a bank loan that is connected to sustainable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Interest rates on the loan can change based on the loanholder's sustainability performance. If the loan recipient – perhaps a farm or a manufacturer – switches to renewable energy, or makes their supply chain more sustainable, they could receive lower interest rates. If a loanholder makes no changes, or moves backwards in some areas, there may be financial penalties.

More: www.thinkstep-anz.com/resrc/need-to-know/green-finance-what-you-need-to-know


Source: David Klein, thinkstep, 4th October 2022.

Editor: A straight-forward explanation. 

To Grow Coral Reefs, Get Them Buzzed

"Zapped with solar electrical currents, struggling reefs can self-repair with incredible speed — and even grow where none have existed before.

More: <https://reasonstobecheerful.world/coral-reefs-solar-powered-electrical-growth/>

Source: reasons to be cheerful 12th October 2022, 

Making a Desk with 10,000 Recycled Chopsticks

"A German engineer asked restaurants for their used chopsticks — and a sustainable furnishings business was born.

More: <https://reasonstobecheerful.world/recycled-chopsticks-sustainable-furniture>

Source: *reasons to be cheerful*, 28th September 2022. 

For a Fraction of Australia's Fighter Jet Budget, I'd Leave East Timor's Fuel in the Ground

"In our Opinion pages last week, East Timor's President José Ramos-Horta asserted he would be willing to leave his nation's oil and gas in the ground, to the great benefit of life on Earth, if the world were to help pay for the lost revenue.

"I, for one, would be happy if my country never had to expand its fossil-fuel industry', he wrote. 'But at this time, we remain almost completely dependent on oil and gas revenue, stuck in a system imposed by wealthy nations.

"We are forced to negotiate the development of the Greater Sunrise oil and gas project with Australia, at an estimated value to Timor-Leste of at least \$50 billion, because they say this is our path to prosperity. I would be happy to leave it in the ground, but if we did, we would forego our sovereign development benefits.'

"So what would it cost the world to have East Timor leave its carbon in the ground? Well, according to Ramos-Horta, about \$US100 billion (\$153.6 billion). Doubtless, that is a lot of money, but as Ramos-Horta points out it is also less than one-sixteenth of the lifetime cost of the F-35 fighter jet program. ...

More: www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/for-a-fraction-of-australia-s-fighter-jet-budget-i-d-leave-east-timor-s-fuel-in-the-ground-20221004-p5bn6l.html

Source: SMH – Environment, 12th October 2022. 

1373km Undersea Cable Connection Egypt to Europe

"Greece is in embarking on one of Europe's most ambitious energy projects by linking up its electricity grid with Egypt's.

"An underwater cable will carry 3,000 MW of electricity - enough to power up to 450,000 households - and will run from northern Egypt directly to Attica in Greece.

"The 'GREGY interconnection' is set to cost €3.5 billion – it has been deemed a Project of Common Interest (PCI) by the European Union. This means it is identified as a key priority for interconnecting the European Union's energy system infrastructure.


"It will carry clean electricity produced in Egypt and other African countries through underwater cables via wind and solar parks. The total length of the project is an incredible 1373km. ...

"Approximately one third will be consumed in Greece, and mainly in Greek industries, another third will be exported to neighbouring European countries and the remaining will be used for the production of green hydrogen', says Karydas.

"The majority of this hydrogen will also be exported to neighbouring European countries.'

"Egypt has already completed interconnection projects with Libya, Sudan and Saudi Arabia and aspires to become a major energy hub for South Eastern Europe. The project is expected to be completed in 7 to 8 years. ...


More: www.euronews.com/2022/09/17/this-1373km-long-undersea-cable-will-bring-green-energy-from-egypt-to-europes-electricity

Source: *OD Action News*, 9th October 2022. 

Five of the World's Most Innovative Green Buildings

".... To mark the occasion, we have highlighted three exemplary green buildings and two further sustainable building innovations which demonstrate what can be achieved by adopting the principles of sustainable construction. ...

More: www.edie.net/five-of-the-worlds-most-innovative-green-buildings/

Source: edie, 14th September 2022. 

More NZ Single-use Plastics Banned

"Single-use plastic cotton buds, drink stirrers and most plastic meat trays are among single use plastics banned from sale or manufacture from 1st October.

"This is the first group of the most problematic plastic products to be banned in a progressive phase out over the next three years', Environment Minister David Parker said.

"Stopping the sale of these plastic products will reduce waste to landfill, improve our recycling systems and encourage reusable or environmentally responsible alternatives.'

"Plastics banned from sale from 1st October 2022 are:

- Single-use plastic drink stirrers
- Single-use plastic cotton buds
- Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pre-formed food trays and containers*
- Polystyrene takeaway packaging for food and beverages
- Expanded polystyrene food and beverage retail packaging (such as foam takeaway containers or some instant noodle cups)
- Plastics with additives that make them fragment into micro-plastics.

"In mid-2023, the next group of single-use plastics to be phased out will include single use plastic plates, bowls, cutlery, single-use plastic produce bags and non-compostable produce labels. Other PVC and polystyrene food and beverage packaging will be banned from mid-2025.

More: www.beehive.govt.nz/release/more-single-use-plastics-banned-tomorrow

Source: SBN, 5th October 2022.

How to Reduce the Environmental Impact of Data Storage

"The Cloud now has a greater carbon footprint than the airline industry and a single data centre can consume the equivalent electricity of 50,000 homes.

"Yes, you read that correctly. This staggering fact was one of many presented in an article by Anthropologist Steven Gonzalez Monserrate, which drew on five-years of research and ethnographic fieldwork in server farms to illustrate the environmental impacts of data storage. According to Monserrate, the electricity utilised by data centres accounts for 0.3% of overall carbon emissions, and this number jumps to 2% if you include networked devices such as laptops, smartphones, and tablets.

"Within the next two years, Amazon, Microsoft and Google will both have opened several large-scale data centres in New Zealand. While this is good news for the country and will mean immense technological, economic, and social benefits, there is no doubt that the impact to our carbon footprint will also be significant.

More: www.datainsight.co.nz/blog-and-news/data-storage-and-the-environment

Source: SBC Weekly Pānui, 29th September 2022

Editor: Hardly surprising! And use of the 'cloud' has been pushed for years by vested interests.

Campaign to Nudge PR Firms to Dump Fossil Fuel Clients Launches in Asia

"Led by American non-profit Clean Creatives, it aims to reach 1,000 public relations professionals in Asia Pacific by the end of 2022. Will the campaign gain traction in the fossil fuel-dependent region?

"A study released earlier this month found while 60% of the communications of supermajors Chevron, ExxonMobil, Shell, TotalEnergies and BP are green claims, only 12 % of their investments are going on renewables. ...

More: www.eco-business.com/news/campaign-to-nudge-pr-firms-to-dump-fossil-fuel-clients-launches-in-asia/

Source: eco-Business.com, 21st September 2022.

2022 Sustainable Business Awards!

"... We have a compelling group of category finalists vying for ten green gongs! The 71 finalists span sectors from food and beverage to transport, construction, biotechnology and retirement. Read on to discover the finalists for each of the nine award categories.

When/Where: 6.00-8.00pm, 23rd November Auckland Town Hall and will also be broadcast online.

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/learn/events/sustainable-business-awards-2022/> plus <https://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-awards/award-finalists-2022/>

Source: SBN 29th September 2022.

Supply Chain Engagement to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

"More New Zealand businesses are setting public net zero carbon targets and pledges with promised actions to tackle climate change. Until recently, most entities have focused their attention on carbon reduction within their own operations. However, we need to account for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions across the supply chain and product lifecycle to speed up decarbonisation.

"The increased demand for supply chain decarbonisation is providing organisations the opportunity to influence these indirect emission sources. Better accuracy across the supply chain is being driven largely by companies stepping up for positive change, others by a change in business strategy, investor scrutiny, or mandatory reporting on climate risks.

"As seen in Figure 1 [See article], in most cases your supply chain will be a significant portion of your total emissions. A recent report found the average of Scope 3 is 11 times more than Scope 1 and 2. This highlights the opportunity to influence many suppliers, and ultimately reduce these indirect emission sources. And that's good news.

"What is supply chain engagement?

"What is the benefit and impact of supply chain engagement?

"What does effective supply chain engagement look like? ...

"Challenges and opportunities ...

"How you can get started ...

More: www.toitu.co.nz/news-and-events/news/measure/supply-chain-engagement-for-greenhouse-gas-emission-reductions

Source: Toitū Envirocare, 15th September 2022.

Complex Conversations on Complex Questions

"Climate Declaration's next webinar explains how the techniques of deliberative, as opposed to participatory democracy can be used to close the gap between public perceptions of major issues and their potential solutions. The discussion will be particularly relevant to the climate emergency.

"The speakers are from Koi Tū: the University of Auckland's Centre for Informed Futures;

"Associate Director Dr Tatjana Buklijas's background is in the history and social studies of science.

"Associate Director Kristiann Allen's background is in anthropology and political science.

When/Where: 2nd Nov, 7:00pm – 8:30pm. Online

More:

www.ourclimatedeclaration.org.nz/complex_conversations_on_complex_questions plus www.greatauckland.org.nz/2021/10/06/using-deliberative-democracy-to-explore-the-future-of-aucklands-water-supply/

Source: Our Climate Declaration, 12th October 2022.

Middle Eastern Countries Sitting on Ocean of Natural Gas

"But they cannot ship much to Europe, where demand is ravenous.

"It is rare for the Israeli government to agree with Hizbullah, the Lebanese Shia militia and political party. But in effect it did on 11th October, after months of American-led talks. As *The Economist* was published, a deal with Lebanon was awaiting review in Israel's parliament.

"This is not peace in our time: although the deal demarcates Israel's maritime border with Lebanon it will not end the long state of war between them. But it is striking, and timely for the West, because it may unlock new gas resources which Europe desperately needs to replace supplies from Russia which have been disrupted since its invasion of Ukraine.

"Nine of the 20 countries with the largest proven gas reserves are in the wider region. Qatar, the world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG), plans to increase its production by 43% by 2026. Israel and Lebanon hope their maritime deal will mean new discoveries in the once-disputed waters. Hours after it was clinched, bigwigs from TotalEnergies, a French giant, met Lebanese officials. Earlier this month Energean, a British firm, started running tests at Israel's Karish field near the border.

"Yet a mix of geopolitics and poor governance makes it hard to exploit those resources. Simply getting the stuff to market can be tricky. There is little capacity to transport it from the eastern Mediterranean to Europe. A pipeline has been mooted for years. It could take a short route north to Turkey and link up with existing conduits to the European Union. But to do so it would have to cross Cypriot territory, which is politically fraught. Or it could stretch all the way to Greece, and perhaps onwards to Italy. But that would require the world's longest undersea pipeline and take the better part of a decade to finish.

"For now, that leaves liquefaction.

More: www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2022/10/13/middle-eastern-countries-are-sitting-on-an-ocean-of-natural-gas

Source: *The Economist*, 18th October 2022. 

Auckland Council's Trial Recycling Scheme Targets Large Plastic Items

"A new Auckland Council trial aims to give large plastic items like laundry baskets, buckets, chairs, rubbish bins and storage boxes a new life.

"The plastics can be dropped off at community recycling centres (CRCs) in Devonport, Helensville and Waiuku until the end of October.


"The trial, which was launched today, is in co-ordination with IP Plastics, a Papakura-based company which manufactures a wide range of large plastic items, ranging from horticultural supplies to furniture.....

"They will be collected and sent to IP Plastics, which will then process them into new containers or scallop-shaped swimming pools.'

"Sood also hinted the council was working on changes to its inorganic rubbish collections.

"The aim is to actually have more community recycling centres and eventually we should not need inorganic collections in the city.

More: www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/474604/auckland-council-s-trial-recycling-scheme-targets-large-plastic-items

Source: Nadine Wakin, reshare of LinkedIn post, 15th September 2022. 

Who Should Pay for the Costs of a Warming Planet?

"Lawsuits aimed at green-house gas emissions are a growing trend, and better science is making them more precise. As ESG comes under attack, could these suits represent a different front in pressuring companies to act on climate change?

"On this week's episode, hosts Alice Fulwood and Mike Bird speak with our environment editor Catherine Brahic about the rise in climate litigation aimed at holding companies responsible for climate change. Then, we head to Peru, to meet the farmer at the centre of a potentially seismic court case against Germany's largest electricity firm. Finally, Sophie Marjanac of the environmental organisation ClientEarth explains why the law can be a useful way to outline the responsibilities of corporations when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions and who pays the costs of a warming planet.

More: www.economist.com/podcasts/2022/09/21/who-should-pay-for-the-costs-of-a-warming-planet 38:00

Source: *The Economist Today*, 22nd September 2022. 

Wao Summit 2022

"Infinite growth on a planet with finite resources was always geared up to hit the wall at some point. But where to next? The crux of the discussion centres around what are our planetary limits and how do we, as a species, create a system which can live within those boundaries.


"Featuring guest speakers Jonathan Boston, Kate Meyer and Tim Crownshaw, this discussion looks at two schools of thought. On the one hand, the proponents of Green Growth advocate for continued GDP Growth within clearly defined biophysical and social limits which minimise harm to the environment and society. On the other, Degrowth advocates rejecting the use of GDP as an indicator, instead favouring the slowing down and reversal of global resource consumption, production and energy use until we reach genuinely sustainable levels.

"What is a Rethink Kōrero? Rethink Kōrero are our big conversations of the week. We invite you to stay after the event to network and connect with your fellow Wao community. Check out other Rethink Kōrero happening during the week.

"This event is also available to view online as part of our online ticket.

When/Where: Queenstown: Fri 28th Oct 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Wānaka: Wed 26th Oct 5.30pm - 7.30pm

More: <https://events.humanitix.com/living-within-our-limits-green-growth-vs-degrowth> plus www.wao.co.nz/summit-2022

Source: SBN, 18th October 2022. 

Why the Rush to Mine Lithium Could Dry Up the High Andes

"Fred Pearce explores how a lithium-mining boom in the high Andes threatens to turn the region's delicate wetlands and meadows to desert. Growing demand for lithium for electric vehicle batteries has led to a surge in mining projects in the Lithium Triangle region of Chile, Bolivia, and Argentina, where companies gather the metal by pumping lithium-rich brine from underground and evaporating it in the sun. For every ton of lithium carbonate produced, miners use up about a half a million gallons of water. And as mining lowers the water table, hydrologists warn, it could drain vital ecosystems and deprive Indigenous communities of precious water.

More: <https://e360.yale.edu/features/lithium-mining-water-andes-argentina>

Source: *Yale Environment 360*, 23rd Sept 2022. 