BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY IRELAND

DCU

FROM AMBITION TO DELIVERY

WHAT BUSINESS NEEDS TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS



FEATURING THE 2026 CLIMATE TRANSITION PLAN SCORECARD

For 25+ years, Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) have been leaders in sustainability and social inclusion. Our purpose is to inspire, challenge and facilitate business to bring about a sustainable, low carbon economy and an inclusive society where everyone thrives. We leverage our expertise and depth of knowledge to guide on embedding all aspects of sustainability strategy and operations. Our programmes and partnerships are designed to bring about measurable improvements in environmental sustainability, social equity and governance.

BITCI work with over 250 organisations across multiple sectors and have a team of almost 100 people with deep expertise across all aspects of sustainability.

We are an active and leading member and National Partner Office of CSR Europe and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). We are also a member of the International Transition Plan Network Community of Practice (ITPN).

Member of:

ITPN International Transition Plan Network

WBCSD World Business Council for Sustainable Development

CSR EUROPE

WE MEAN BUSINESS COALITION



Acknowledgments

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Thanks additionally to the BITCI member companies that have been involved in our environmental work throughout 2026 and that participated in an interview or focus group for data collection purposes. We greatly appreciate your time, expertise and your commitment to sustainability and social inclusion.

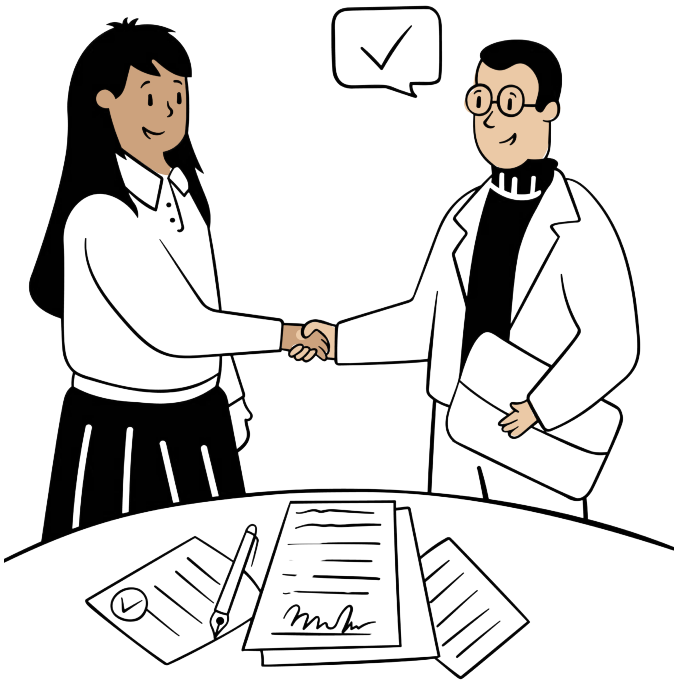
This report was written by Meaghan Carmody, Senior Sustainability Adviser in BITCI, who also manages the partnership with DCU. DCU carried out the analysis that informs Part Two: The Climate Transition Plan Scorecard.

DCU authorship statement: The analysis was performed by Aideen O'Dochartaigh, Dr Jimmy O'Keeffe, Dr Anh Vu, Dr David Robbins and Dr Trish Morgan, supported by Emma Comerford.

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Ministerial Foreword



Darragh O'Brien TD
Minister for Climate, Environment and Energy

As Minister for Climate, Environment and Energy, I welcome this timely and important publication from Business in the Community Ireland, launched during Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our time. We know that reducing emissions rapidly and building a more sustainable, resilient economy is critical, not only for our environment, but for our energy security, competitiveness and quality of life. Recent years have also underlined the risks associated with dependence on fossil fuels and the importance of accelerating the transition to clean, secure and affordable energy.

The challenge before us is no longer whether to act, but how we deliver progress consistently and at scale. As the global economy continues to evolve, countries that successfully combine innovation, sustainability and competitiveness will be best placed to prosper. Ireland has a significant opportunity to lead in this transition, attract investment, create jobs and strengthen our long-term economic resilience.

We are making progress. Ireland has recorded its lowest emissions levels in more than three decades, with emissions falling for four consecutive years. Across the country, businesses, communities, households and public bodies are taking action and helping to drive the transition to a low-carbon future.

However, the scale of the challenge remains clear. While current measures are projected to deliver substantial emissions reductions by 2030, we are not yet on a pathway to achieve our national target of a 51% reduction and the EPA has been clear that emissions must fall four-and-a-half times

> We are firmly in the decade of implementation, and that requires a clear understanding of both the opportunities and the barriers that organisations encounter as they work to decarbonise.

faster than they did in 2025 if Ireland is to meet its legally binding climate targets for 2030. We are firmly in the decade of implementation, and that requires a clear understanding of both the opportunities and the barriers that organisations encounter as they work to decarbonise.

That is why this research is so valuable. By examining the experiences of Business in the Community Ireland's Accelerate, The Business Pact for Climate and Nature signatories, many of Ireland's most ambitious and forward-looking companies, this report provides important insights into the conditions needed to accelerate climate action and support the delivery of climate transition plans. The findings highlight where business is succeeding, where challenges persist, and where government, industry and wider stakeholders can work together to enable faster progress.

I welcome the contribution this report makes to that conversation. The insights it contains will help inform our understanding of the practical measures required to support climate action across the economy. I look forward to continuing to work closely with Business in the Community Ireland and its member companies as we accelerate the transition to a climate-neutral, competitive and resilient Ireland.

Darragh O'Brien TD

Minister for Climate, Environment and Energy

An Introduction from Business in the Community Ireland

Ahead of the 31st Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) taking place from 9-20 November 2026, the UN Environment Programme 2026 Emissions Gap Report indicates the world can no longer avoid global warming exceeding 1.5°C, with best case scenarios seeing temperature rises likely to exceed 1.7 to 1.8°C by 2050.[1] Accelerated action by all of society to halt further warming and bring the planet below 1.5°C is critical.

Business in the Community Ireland's (BITCI's) **Accelerate: The Business Pact for Climate and Nature** is an ambitious and forward-thinking initiative to foster collective business action to address climate change and nature loss.

The companies that have signed Accelerate are some of the most committed and ambitious companies operating in Ireland today. They have all voluntarily committed to developing a Climate Transition Plan – a challenging task requiring Board buy-in and an integrated approach from multiple departments. They have also committed to set a Net Zero target with the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) or an equivalent third party, an extremely challenging task requiring a fundamental shift in the business model, and to take part in a Community of Practice to navigate challenges and opportunities.

A Climate Transition Plan is a practical and robust roadmap for how an organisation will achieve its climate ambitions. It sets out how the business will adapt its operations, governance, investment decisions and business model to manage climate risks, capture opportunities and deliver measurable emissions reductions.

Accelerate signatories participate in the annual Climate Transition Plan Scorecard, an independent assessment conducted by the DCU Institute for Climate and Society. The Scorecard evaluates the quality and maturity of publicly available climate transition planning documentation across nine Accelerator Areas: Climate Targets & Progress, Nature, Just Transition, Scope 3, Decarbonisation Levers, Risk, Finance, Governance and Advocacy. The model was developed by BITCI based on international best practice from, primarily, the Transition Plan Taskforce (TPT), the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), the We Mean Business Coalition (WMBC), the Assessing Transition Plans Collective (ATP-COL), and the CSRD (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive) framework.

This report presents the second year of analysis. Building on the inaugural assessment of ten companies in 2025, the 2026 Scorecard assesses sixteen Accelerate signatories.

While the sample remains relatively small, it includes some of Ireland's most ambitious and advanced companies in climate transition planning. As such, it provides valuable insight into both emerging best practice and the barriers businesses face in delivering climate action at pace and scale.



There are encouraging signs of progress. Scores improved in eight of the nine Accelerator Areas, with Climate Targets & Progress remaining stable. Companies are strengthening their approach to nature, improving the measurement of nature-related outcomes, expanding the scope and quality of Scope 3 emissions accounting, and developing more detailed decarbonisation pathways. Advocacy was the most improved Accelerator Area and the only area in which every company assessed in 2025 showed improvement.

However, challenges remain. Several companies report they are behind trajectory on key transition measures such as renewable energy procurement, EV adoption and alternative fuels. Approaches to linking sustainability performance with executive remuneration remain inconsistent and there is some evidence of backtracking. Greater ambition and transparency on climate-related investment, particularly regarding non-aligned investments, would improve understanding of Ireland's overall transition trajectory, and climate and nature risks are not always reflected consistently in projected company finances. This leaves businesses increasingly exposed as climate and nature impacts intensify.

Importantly, the purpose of the Climate Transition Plan Scorecard is to evaluate corporate CTPs, but only half of companies analysed published a stand-alone CTP or equivalent. This variability presents a significant challenge to finding and analysing publicly available climate and sustainability data.

The findings also carry important implications for policymakers. If some of Ireland's most committed and capable organisations are encountering significant implementation barriers, it is reasonable to ask what challenges may exist across the wider business community.

To explore this question, BITCI engaged throughout 2026 with leaders and sustainability practitioners from across the network. These discussions highlighted both sector-specific and

economy-wide barriers to implementing CTPs and identified areas where government action could help unlock progress.

A consistent message emerged: the availability of enabling conditions is becoming a key determinant of national competitiveness. By accelerating the transition in an orderly and predictable way, Ireland can strengthen its resilience, enhance its attractiveness for investment and position itself to capture the economic opportunities of the net-zero economy.

Achieving this requires a partnership between business and government. Business cannot wait for policy certainty before acting, nor can government deliver the transition alone. Instead, both must reinforce each other's ambition. Business leadership can provide policymakers with the confidence to pursue bold action, while clear and consistent policy can unlock greater private-sector investment. Together, they can create the "ambition loop" in which public policy and private-sector leadership mutually reinforce one another, accelerating the pace and scale of climate action.



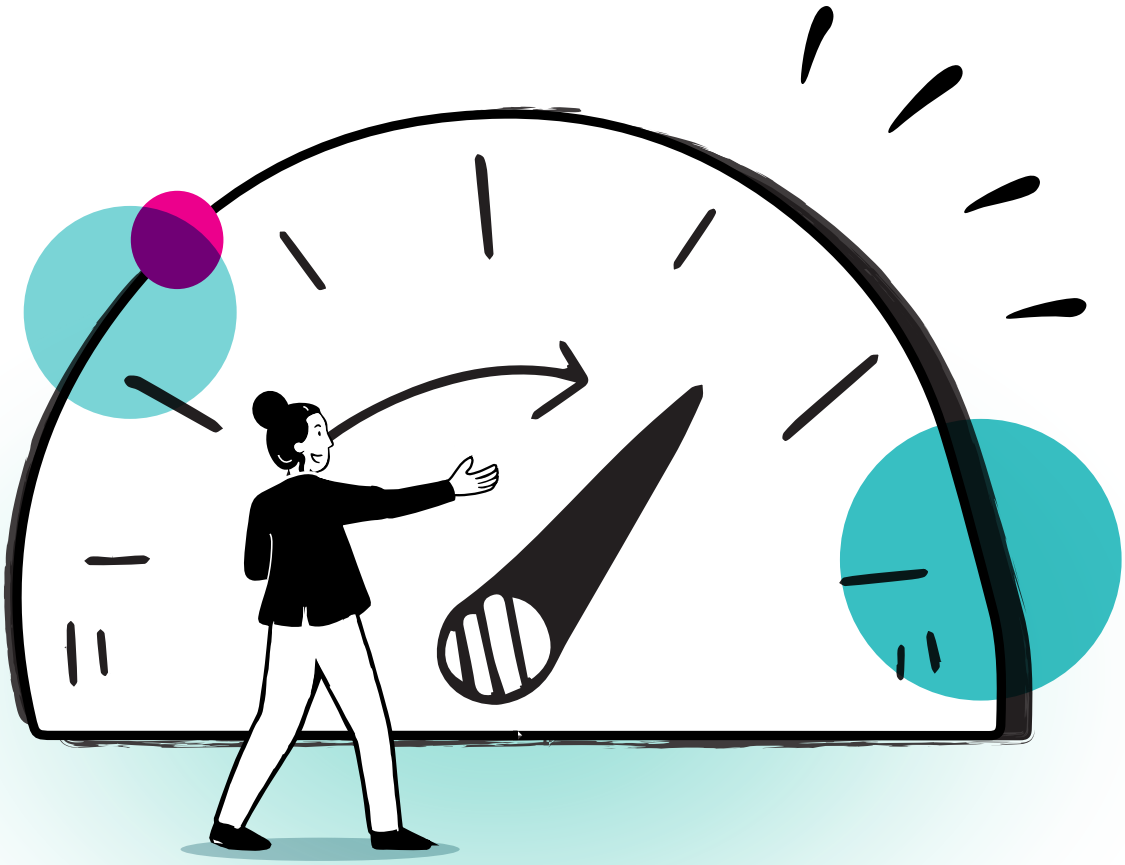
"Summer 2026 in the northern hemisphere recorded 50,000 excess deaths, of which 35,000 are attributed to climate change.[2] The impacts are real and affecting livelihoods, jobs, and economic systems.

Climate transition planning is at the forefront of addressing in a systematic and robust way the move towards net zero models. Adequate and integrated transition planning is enabling innovation and adaptation, critical for competitiveness. We truly believe Ireland is at a critical crossroads and in a unique position to be a centre of excellence on climate transition for a sustainable economy and an inclusive society."

Tomás Sercovich, BITCI CEO

Part 1

The Need to Accelerate





The report [2026 Progress Report on the Climate Action Plan] is also a clear reminder that we must move faster. The scale of change required remains significant. We need to continue focusing on delivering high-impact actions to reduce our emissions and strengthen climate resilience."[3]

An Taoiseach Micheál Martin

With just four years to 2030, Ireland needs to accelerate delivery and achieve much deeper annual reductions to meet our climate targets…not a single sector is on course to hit its [2030] emissions targets."

Dr. Eimear Cotter, Director General of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)[4]

Collective action is central to Business in the Community Ireland. 'Accelerate, the Business Pact for Climate and Nature' is our platform for encouraging robust climate transition planning and credible long-term target setting by business.

By signing up to Accelerate, companies publicly commit to setting a Net Zero by 2050 target, to developing a Climate Transition Plan no later than 2030, and to participating in a Community of Practice where member companies can discuss challenges and opportunities related to transition planning and climate and nature impact in a collaborative environment.

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What is a Climate Transition Plan?

Climate Transition Plans or CTPs are detailed roadmaps outlining an organisation's approach to reaching its climate targets. They outline how a company will adapt its business model and operations, manage the risks and leverage the opportunities of the climate transition. They are designed to bring climate strategy into core business planning and integrate it into every business function. They should include clear, measurable goals and objectives, and translate them into actionable steps that drive tangible progress towards emissions reductions.

Corporate net-zero commitments have become widespread, with more than 13,000 companies worldwide having set or committed to science-based targets.[5] However evidence suggests that only a minority of companies have developed credible, actionable transition plans aligned with those commitments. 80% of FTSE 100 companies have made public net-zero commitments, but only 5% had disclosed transition plans considered sufficiently detailed and credible against the UK Transition Plan Taskforce framework.[6] CDP's 2025 findings show that while companies increasingly discuss climate commitments, only 32% reported having a climate transition plan in place.[7]

Climate transition plans move companies from commitments to action, helping manage regulatory, market, physical and transition risk, changing customer and investor expectations and unlocking opportunities around innovation, operational efficiency, renewable energy, and markets.



As we move deeper into the climate decade, the conversation on transition planning is evolving from ambition and disclosure, towards implementation and delivery. The focus is no longer simply on setting targets or reporting progress. Instead, attention is turning to how organisations translate ambition into investment decisions, business strategy, governance, risk management and tangible outcomes. Effective climate transition planning will increasingly become a key differentiator for businesses across all sectors.

> “The hard truth is that climate targets are running ahead of the systems needed to deliver them. But closing that gap is one of the defining economic opportunities of this era — moving from ambition to action, from individual effort to collaboration...”
>
> **María Mendiluce,**
> **CEO of the We Mean Business Coalition**

Accelerate Pact Signatories as of November 2026

ARUP
Bidvest NOONAN
Bord Gáis Energy
Bus Éireann
BRITVIC IRELAND
Deloitte.
EQUINIX
esw.
GATHER & GATHER
PAUL John Paul Construction
mitie
TESCO IRELAND
VEOLIA
Grant Thornton
sse Airtricity
kyndryl
KSG Catering
Instantor
DANONE ONE PLANET. ONE HEALTH
Vhi



ACCELERATE
The Business Pact for Climate and Nature

Sign the Accelerate Pact

Scan the QR code or visit www.bitc.ie

Accelerate Pact 2026: HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout 2026 we engaged with members to help progress environmental ambition and action in key areas. We are grateful to all the members that participated in these events. Highlights include:

1. Throughout 2026 the Accelerate Pact Community of Practice met online regularly to discuss Climate Risk and Adaptation, and Electrification.

2. Delivered a Knowledge Exchange on the topic of Scaling Emissions Reductions from Transport that heard from Tesco, An Post, Applegreen Electric and Bus Eireann. We followed this up with an Insights Article.

3. Organised a Masterclass on Circularity in the Built Environment, hosted jointly by Arup and A&L Goodbody.

4. Delivered a series of online Peer Support Sessions on the topic of Scope 3.

5. Worked with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's EXEED team to deliver a Lunch and Learn webinar to our members, and included a case study from CRH.

6. Delivered a half day Community of Practice workshop with the World Benchmarking Alliance, hosted by AIB, on the topic of Integrating Nature into Transition Planning.

7. Brought ten member companies - Britvic Ireland, Diageo Ireland, Equinix, Cairn, John Paul Construction, Arup, PM Group, Uisce Éireann Irish Water and Servier Ireland - together for a roundtable with European Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy, Jessika Roswall.

8 Worked with SSE, Bank of Ireland and ESB to train SMEs in their supply chain in carbon literacy, Scope 1 and 2, Scope 3, and Nature as part of our 'Evolve: Future Ready SMEs' programme.

9 Brought members together for Nature Masterclass, hosted by Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine Ireland at its Ringaskiddy facility in Co. Cork.

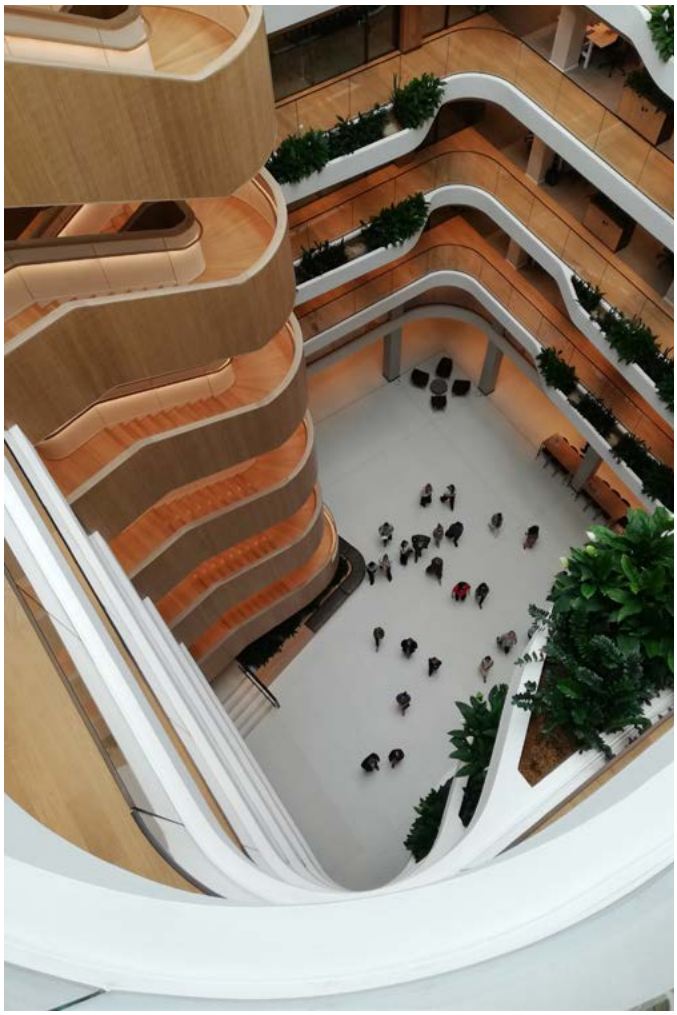
10 Made a submission to the government's consultation on the 2026 Climate Action Plan.

11 Published 'Climate Transition Plans: What does good look like? A guide to Climate Transition Plans' to support member companies to understand best practice in Climate Transition Planning.

12 Published our first Climate Transition Planning position paper, 'How government and business can work together to accelerate an inclusive climate transition' which contains three clear asks of government to progress transition planning and avoid a disorderly transition.

13 Continued our membership of the International Transition Plan Network Community of Practice.

14 We were invited to sit on the government's Circular Economy Advisory Group.



Masterclass on Circularity in the Built Environment, A&L Goodbody and Arup

A sample of testimonials and insights from the membership from the year:

> Was insightful and great to learn from other sustainability leads."
>
> Congratulations for promoting circularity and sustainability in the built environment."
>
> I was unfamiliar with EXEED before today. Many thanks!"



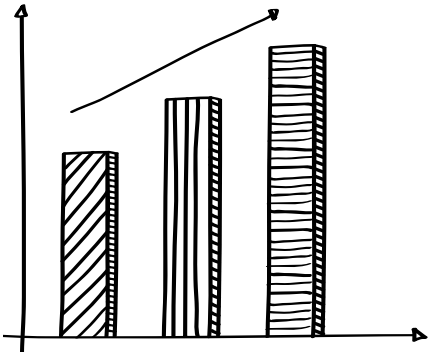
Part 2

Climate Transition Plan Scorecard 2026



Background and Introduction to Methodology

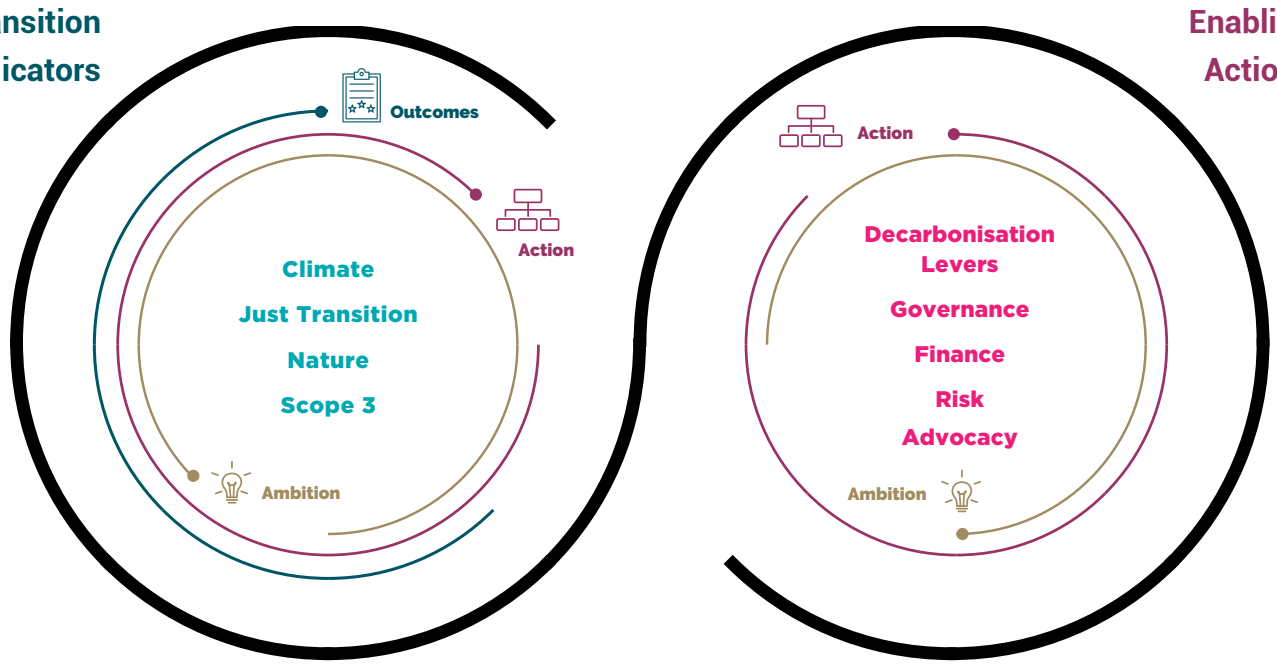
Companies that sign the Accelerate Pact are included in BITCI's annual Climate Transition Plan Scorecard.



Started by BITCI in 2024 as part of Accelerate: The Business Pact for Climate and Nature, the Scorecard helps BITCI understand how leading companies are progressing across nine 'Accelerator Areas' critical to a holistic climate transition, where challenges remain, and how best to support members. It also provides valuable insights to policymakers regarding the ambitions, actions and achievements of some of the companies most committed to sustainability in Ireland.

The nine Accelerator Areas were developed by BITCI subject matter experts and are informed by international best practice, including guidance from the Transition Plan Taskforce (TPT), Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), We Mean Business Coalition (WMBC), World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), Assessing Transition Plans Collective (ATP-COL), the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), and other relevant frameworks.

In 2025, BITCI partnered with the DCU Institute for Climate and Society to finalise the Accelerator Areas.



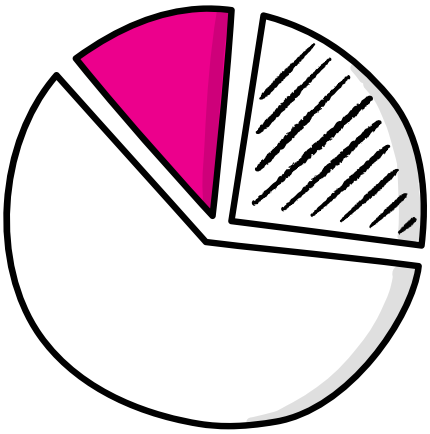
A scoring rubric was jointly developed, drawing on 25 reference documents, including leading guidance from the SBTi, CDP and Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). DCU developed the assessment methodology and undertook the first analysis. The rubric was updated in 2026 to incorporate additional standards and guidance available up to 31 July 2026.

The 2026 Climate Transition Plan Scorecard is the second annual assessment and was conducted independently by DCU researchers from DCU Business School, DCU School of History and Geography, and DCU School of Communications. Experts assessed 16 companies across the nine Accelerator Areas using publicly available information, including sustainability reports, transition plans, annual reports, governance and risk policies, CDP disclosures, Taskforce on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) reports, lobbying policies and company websites. Documents had to have been published by 20 August 2026 to be considered. Companies were required at minimum to have published a Sustainability Report to be included. The number of documents reviewed per company ranged from five to 37, with a median of 14.

As in 2025, the assessment is mainly qualitative. Assessors use the scoring rubric as a framework and apply expert judgement to evaluate how well company disclosures align with good practice. The scorecard reflects a professional interpretation of the evidence, rather than a quantitative or checklist-based assessment.

The methodology has limitations. These are detailed in Appendix 2 along with the measures designed to address them.

Findings should also be interpreted in context. Participating companies vary significantly in sector, size and maturity, and material issues differ between organisations. The purpose of the research is not to rank companies, but to understand the overall progress of this cohort across the nine Accelerator Areas, helping BITCI to support our members and also inform engagement with government.



DCU provided BITCI with the scores, expert analysis, and evaluator assessment sheets. BITCI developed a key to aid our members' understanding, and the analysis and recommendations that follow represent BITCI's interpretation of these findings.

See Appendix 2 for an expanded overview of the Methodology

An overview of DCU's analysis

Dr. Aideen O Dochartaigh
Associate Professor in Accounting, DCU Business School,
Principal Investigator - Climate Transition Plan Scorecard Project

This is the second year that DCU has conducted the Climate Transition Plan Scorecard analysis. The analysis consisted of expert review of over 250 publicly available documents across 16 Accelerate companies. While this is a small sample of companies, the in-depth analysis provides valuable insights on the challenges to the climate transition in the business sector and the best practices companies are taking to address them.

The Scorecard is a snapshot of businesses preparing for a 2C world. Scientists have told us that this will be very different from our current one - extreme heat, storms, flooding and sea level rise will make life exponentially more difficult for millions of already vulnerable people, and make the world a more uncertain and challenging place to do business. Seven of the nine planetary boundaries have been breached, and we are already seeing the human and business costs of irreversible tipping points. Critical infrastructure is also increasingly exposed to emerging risks such as water stress and extreme weather.

In this context of breaching or approaching fundamental ecological limits, not all business growth is sustainable. In Ireland, we have a clear national decarbonisation pathway through our carbon budgets, which set out sectoral emissions limits for Electricity, Transport, Agriculture, Built Environment and Industry. Meeting the next three carbon budgets requires rapid emissions reduction in all major economic sectors. This means choices and trade-offs for businesses, policymakers and other influential institutional actors on the level of growth or contraction that is sustainable in different sectors. The private and public investment and policy levers put in place now will shape what the future looks like for people within and beyond Ireland.



Sectoral decarbonisation requires combined convergence on net zero by the relevant economic actors. Many of the Accelerate companies are leaders in their sectors, reducing emissions and providing examples of effective and novel best practice initiatives across multiple decarbonisation levers. For example, in this small sample we see granular mapping of emissions from individual products, measurement of biodiversity net gain across sites, the establishment of youth or future generations boards, and scenario analysis incorporating realistic scenarios where the company does not in fact meet its emissions targets.

However, the analysis also indicates that even ambitious businesses are not decarbonising fast enough. While outcomes have improved slightly, these scores are still low, and some companies' emissions are increasing. It is also sometimes unclear how ambitious decarbonisation pathways will be achieved. Many roadmaps assume a dramatic drop off in carbon emissions at a medium-term date, for example in 2035 or 2040, without necessarily matching this ambition with clear decarbonisation levers or investment. Furthermore, targets for key decarbonisation levers are proving challenging, with some companies reporting that they are behind on targets for renewable energy, EVs or alternative fuels.

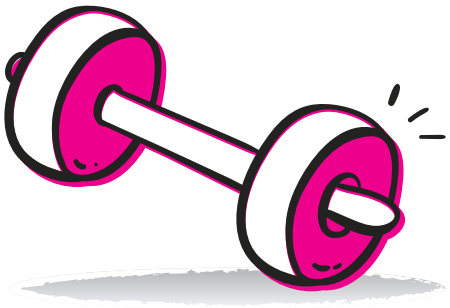
In addition, better consideration and reporting of financial risks and investment is needed. Potential financial impacts of climate and biodiversity risk are rarely quantified and if they are, are not always consistent with the scale of the risk assumed in the accompanying scenario analysis. Investment in climate and nature is typically reported on an ad hoc basis, in the form of funding for specific projects, rather than as a percentage of total capital and operating expenditure. There is also very limited disclosure of investments that actively harm the transition.

The innovation needed to achieve more sustainable business models is there, but for this to translate to sectoral decarbonisation, business action, investment, and policy levers must prioritise business activity that translates to meaningful outcomes for society, and does not further jeopardise planetary and human health.



BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY IRELAND

Company Strengths



1 **Ambition has increased in eight of the nine Accelerator Areas:** Climate Targets and Progress ambition remains unchanged at 69% while every other area sees increased ambition (between 1 and 8%)

2 **Improvements in outcomes visible:** Progress on Climate Targets has increased by 5% since 2025, moving to 51%, and outcomes on Scope 3 have improved from 3%, increasing to 46%

3 **Companies are improving in Nature ambition and in measuring Nature outcomes:** Ambition on Nature has increased by 8%, from 51% in 2025 to 59% in 2026, and data is now available to measure outcomes for Nature whereas it wasn't in 2025.

4 **Scope 3 improvements visible:** Scope 3 ambition increased by 8% since 2025, actions increased 5% and outcomes 3%. Companies are engaging with the challenge of emissions from purchased goods and services and from the use of sold products. Measurement is also improving.

5 **Detailed decarbonisation roadmaps are evident:** There is evidence of decarbonisation roadmaps with short, medium and long-term timelines and milestones, as well as estimated emissions reduction from specific decarbonisation levers e.g. renewable energy, EV fleet.

6 **Advocacy is the most improved Accelerator Area:** Ambition has increased 7% since 2025, increasing to 50%, action has increased 5% to 56%, and it is the only area in which all the companies assessed last year improved.

Areas for Improvement

1 **Maintenance of sustainability in executive compensation is varied:** There is evidence of companies dropping sustainability metrics or reducing their weighting in in executive compensation structures.

2 **Room for improvement on approach to environmental investment:** Climate and Nature investment is typically reported on a project basis, when the EU Taxonomy recommends that it is a percentage of total expenditure.

3 **The impact of climate risk on the financial position is often not quantified or underestimated:** The potential financial impacts on the business of climate and biodiversity risk are not often quantified and if they are, are not always consistent with the scale of the risk as estimated in the accompanying scenario analysis.

4 **Uneven progress in reducing Scope 3 emissions:** Some companies are achieving absolute reductions year on year, for example due to changes to products sold, product innovations, and reduced business travel, while some have reduced Scope 3 intensity despite revenue increases, albeit with an overall Scope 3 increase. There is evidence of significant increases which for some companies is explained by improved measurement or changing of categories. Supplier engagement is common across the companies. There is variance in maturity of Scope 3 accounting with some at very early stages.

5 **Only half of companies analysed published a stand-alone CTP or equivalent:** The majority of signatories include decarbonisation roadmaps in their reports., however best practice is a stand-alone climate transition plan that goes beyond carbon. This variability presents a significant challenge to finding and analysing publicly available climate and sustainability data.



Overall Findings

KEY

- NASCENT: <40%
- DEVELOPING: 40-54%
- PROGRESSING: 55-69%
- ADVANCED: 70-84%
- LEADING: 85%+
- INSUFFICIENT DATA (ID)



2026

2026 AVERAGES PER ACCELERATOR AREA				
	AMBITION	ACTION	OUTCOMES	OVERALL
Climate Targets and Progress	69%	57%	51%	59%
Nature	59%	58%	48%	55%
Just Transition	50%	49%	ID	50%
Scope 3	56%	51%	46%	51%
Decarbonisation Levers	70%	63%		67%
Governance	71%	66%		69%
Finance	65%	66%		65%
Risk	71%	69%		70%
Advocacy	50%	56%		53%

Comparison of 2025 and 2026

AMBITION	2025	2026	CHANGE
Climate Targets and Progress	69%	69%	0%
Nature	51%	59%	8%
Just Transition	44%	50%	6%
Scope 3	48%	56%	8%
Decarbonisation Levers	68%	70%	2%
Governance	68%	71%	3%
Finance	64%	65%	1%
Risk	69%	71%	2%
Advocacy	43%	50%	7%

ACTION	2025	2026	CHANGE
Climate Targets and Progress	51%	57%	6%
Nature	59%	58%	-1%
Just Transition	48%	49%	1%
Scope 3	46%	51%	5%
Decarbonisation Levers	66%	63%	-3%
Governance	63%	66%	3%
Finance	63%	66%	3%
Risk	68%	69%	1%
Advocacy	51%	56%	5%

OUTCOMES			
	2025	2026	CHANGE
Climate Targets and Progress	46%	51%	5%
Nature	ID	48%	N/A
Just Transition	ID	ID	N/A
Scope 3	43%	46%	3%
Decarbonisation Levers			
Governance			
Finance			
Risk			
Advocacy			



Findings: Nine Accelerator Areas

Transition Indicators

CLIMATE TARGETS AND PROGRESS

Setting robust, science-aligned ambitious GHG emissions reduction targets, and monitoring and achieving progress across all three scopes is core to a credible climate transition plan.

In this category, overall ambition, action and performance on climate targets is evaluated, but Scope 3 is evaluated in more detail as a separate category (see below). Scores in this category reflect, for example, whether the company has developed robust targets across all scopes, followed appropriate methodologies and achieved emissions reductions.



AMBITION		
69%	69%	0%
2025	2026	CHANGE

ACTION		
51%	57%	6%
2025	2026	CHANGE

OUTCOMES		
46%	51%	5%
2025	2026	CHANGE

HEADLINE FINDINGS

- Average overall scores in this Accelerator Area improved in 2026.
- Ambition was unchanged at 69%
- 2026 saw improved Action (up 6%) and Outcomes (up 5%).



KEY STRENGTHS

1. Strengths in this area include ambitious target setting, having detailed and transparent emissions calculation methodologies and making progress on reducing emissions.

2. There is also evidence of detailed explanations of assumptions and calculations behind their emissions figures.

3. Ambitious target setting: All of the companies eligible to do so (15 companies) have either had their targets validated by SBTi (10 companies), have submitted their targets to SBTi for validation (three), or are preparing to do so (two). A number of companies had climate targets that are ahead of national climate targets.

81%

(13 of 16) of the companies had

reduced their total emissions from their base year

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. There is variance in the disclosure of assumptions on which the emissions calculation methodology is based.

2. Emissions are increasing for three companies, despite their having made investments in decarbonisation levers. This was largely due to increased Scope 3 emissions, particularly from:
   - an increase in emissions from sold products.
   - purchasing greater volumes of emissions-intensive goods.
   - purchasing greater volumes of emissions-intensive services, notably technology services.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- ☐ Scrutinise any rapid drop in emissions and the rationale behind it.
- ☐ Ensure your assumptions underlying emissions calculations are transparent in your reporting.
- ☐ Make sure to highlight both market- and location-based Scope 2 emissions.
- ☐ Consider re-assessing the products and services that are leading to emissions growth, and ask if there are less emissions-intensive options.
- ☐ Acknowledge that even if emissions increases are slower than business growth (i.e. relative decoupling), if *absolute* emissions increases, this still adding molecules of greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere.
- ☐ Assess where your electricity is coming from and how that electricity is produced.

GOOD PRACTICE

Bidvest Noonan reports emissions reductions across all Scopes and in major Scope 3 categories including purchased goods and services and employee commuting.

Britvic publishes a document with the basis for reporting behind its key sustainability performance indicators, including Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, explaining the reporting boundary, limitations and uncertainties, and the scope of independent assurance.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
AMBITION	**REFERENCE FRAMEWORKS**
• Set targets to reduce GHG emissions across Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 in line with a 1.5C pathway, and reaching net zero by a specific time period, such as 2040 or 2050 at the latest. - Targets should cover gross absolute emissions. - Targets should cover near-, medium- and long-term horizons (interim targets for 5 to 10 years until 2050. Interim targets exceeding 10 years should not be accepted.) • NEW 2026: Publish a transition plan and update this regularly e.g. every three to five years.	• ATP-Col • CDP • SBTi
Action	
• Name and describe methodologies. • Validate targets with SBTi. • Include offsetting in targets for the last 5% to 10% of emissions only, as per SBTi's corporate net-zero standard. • Ensure targets follow from a baseline year and that this is not too dated (more than five years old, for instance) • Use a denominator for intensity metrics that is relevant to the company's activities and not subject to variability in external factors. • Do not base Scope 2 GHG reduction targets on contractual electricity instruments or energy attribute certificates. • If avoided emissions or carbon credits are included in targets, provide a clear explanation. • NEW 2026: Has third party assurance of targets and progress been undertaken and is the approach explained clearly and in detail?	• CDP • GHG Protocol • SBTi
Outcomes	
• Disclose progress on targets • Reduce emissions in line with targets.	• CDP • SBTi

NATURE

85% of the companies that make up S&P Global 1200 have a significant dependency on nature. Essentially, every business is dependent on nature and ecosystems somewhere along their value chain. This statement holds true when looking at a business's impacts on nature also. Acting to halt and reverse nature loss should be an imperative for every business.



Taskforce on Nature Related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) and Nature Action 100 provide much of the guidance in nature actions and measurement, along with the World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA)'s nature benchmarking methodology and the nature sections of the CDP, GRI and European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) guidance. Science Based Targets for Nature (SBTN) also provide guidance on how to design and implement nature targets into corporate transition plans. Scores reflect, for example, whether the company demonstrates an understanding of its impacts and dependencies on nature, possesses credible nature based targets, and achieves positive outcomes.

Best practice in this area entails demonstrating an understanding of your companies impacts and dependencies on nature, possession of credible nature-based targets and achievement of 'biodiversity net gain' outcomes.

AMBITION



ACTION



OUTCOMES



HEADLINE FINDINGS

- Ambition has increased by 8% since 2025
- Actions have decreased by 1% since 2025

KEY STRENGTHS

1. There is evidence, albeit not uniform, of an explicit recognition of the impacts and dependencies on nature.
2. Companies engaging with the (TNFD) are positioning nature in the context of business risk.
3. Investment in nature restoration projects is evident, as is setting of specific nature related targets such as reducing water consumption, or sourcing deforestation-free commodities.

2026 marks the first year that outcomes for nature are measurable, with a baseline of 48%

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Certain companies that have a large footprint on nature via infrastructure nevertheless deem nature not material to the business
2. There is evidence of prioritisation of site- or project-level biodiversity targets and outcomes over organisational level outcomes
3. There is evidence that outcomes are intensity-based rather than absolute, water use / unit for example. Oversight of the absolute trend would be welcome in addition to intensity metrics.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- ☐ Explicitly recognise your company's impacts and dependencies on nature.
- ☐ Consider engaging with the TNFD.
- ☐ Set specific nature related targets / KPIs.
- ☐ Consider using absolute targets in addition to or instead of intensity targets.

GOOD PRACTICE

In 2026, Mitie set a target for nature-positive sites as a percentage of total Mitie hub sites. The 2026 baseline is 8%, with the target increasing annually to reach 33% in 2031.

While Veolia plc (parent company of Veolia Ireland), is the only company analysed to have published a TNFD report, several others are considering or planning to do so, including Arup, Grant Thornton, SSE, Tesco and VHI.

Compass Group (parent of Gather & Gather), has completed water risk assessments for 14 commodities that its supply chain relies on.

Deloitte has developed a Nature Footprint Assessment tool to assess the impact of the Irish firm on nature.

Kyndryl reduced total water consumption by 6% in 2025 from the prior year, and 10% in water-stressed areas.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Ambition	**Reference frameworks**
• Set specific, comprehensive and measurable nature targets to avoid and reduce key drivers of nature loss and to restore and regenerate ecosystems. • Commit to avoid and reduce impacts on nature. • Demonstrate understanding of impacts and dependencies on nature and nature-related risks/opportunities across the value chain. • Show awareness of key drivers of nature loss and/or need to restore and regenerate ecosystems throughout the value chain. • Design targets in an integrated manner which fit within the wider climate/environmental targets. • Validate nature targets with an impartial and independent third party.	• APT-Col • CDP • ESRS • Nature Action 100 • SBTN • TNFD • TPT
Action	
• Identify opportunities to reduce negative impacts on nature, and restore nature in the value chain. • Use resources sustainably to safeguard dependencies. • Engage with the ACT-D framework or other framework to assess and disclose nature related impacts, risks and opportunities. • Engage with key stakeholders. • Build nature expertise within the workforce. • Do not rely on largely tokenistic action. • Do not use nature-based solutions to offset carbon emissions which do not achieve meaningful carbon reductions.	• Capitals Coalition • CDP • ESRS • TNFD • WBA
Outcomes	
• Monitor absolute change in biodiversity due to activities. • Achieve continued, quantitative reductions or improvements in relevant topic-specific metrics. • Ensure current trajectory is consistent with EU and Irish Nature restoration targets, for example the National Biodiversity Action Plan.	• CDP • ESRS • Nature Action 100 • Nature Restoration Law • TNFD • WBA

JUST TRANSITION

Just transition in the context of this analysis means considering the social implications of the transition to a low carbon society and economy, and how this will impact workers, communities and customers. While just transition is most obviously applicable to companies in energy and heavy industries, its fundamental principles such as social dialogue and meaningful engagement on climate with employees, communities and value chain workers apply to all companies.

Scores reflect the efforts companies have made to consider the social implications of its' climate impacts and the impact of its CTP on employees, communities and society, and its progress on measurable outcomes in relation to just transition.



AMBITION



2025 2026 CHANGE

ACTION



2025 2026 CHANGE

OUTCOMES



2025 2026 CHANGE

HEADLINE FINDINGS

- Ambition has increased 6% since 2025, rising to 50%
- Action score has increased to 49%
- There remains insufficient data across the 16 companies to assess outcomes in just transition



KEY STRENGTHS

1. The Accelerate Pact energy companies have specific just transition targets and clear reporting of outcomes.

2. There is evidence of engagement in the supply chain with policies to support human rights, a consideration of how climate change will impact communities, and collaboration with suppliers on climate mitigation.

3. There is ample evidence of companies practicing the principles of just transition, albeit usually without framing these actions as progressing a just transition.

12 of the 16 companies had insufficient data to provide an Outcomes score for Just Transition, showing an understanding of metrics is required.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Specific just transition targets, actions and outcomes are largely restricted to energy companies.

2. Limited companies had sufficient data to provide a score for Outcomes, showing an improvement of Just Transition metrics is required.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- [ ] Develop a company just transition statement.
- [ ] Develop specific just transition targets and actions.
- [ ] Apply a supply chain lens to just transition to highlight trade-offs that may displace negative environmental or social impact from one stage of the supply chain or from one stakeholder to another. For example, reduced business travel emissions due to increased use of digital technologies may have a just transition implication if it results in reduced hiring and retention of employees.

GOOD PRACTICE

centrica

Centrica (parent company of Bord Gáis Energy) has a dedicated and comprehensive section on just transition in their CTP which outlines the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of just transition. In June 2026 opened a new £35m training and research facility, which aims to train 3,500 engineers and technicians over the next 10 years in skills for the energy transition, such as heat pump and battery storage installation.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Ambition	**Reference frameworks**
• Recognise the social dimensions of climate change. • Set measurable just transition targets e.g. jobs to be created, minimising jobs lost. • Establish a just transition statement and/or policy. • NEW: Establish a commitment to engage in social dialogue on the just transition with appropriate parties e.g employee representatives. • Identify any potentially adverse implications of the company's climate action activities on its employees and communities along the value chain.	• ATP-Col • GRI • WBA • We Mean Business
Action	
• NEW: Mitigate negative harm for stakeholders impacted by the transition. • Implement programmes to support just transition e.g. retraining of employees in high-emissions sectors, redeployment of employees when jobs are lost. • Actively engage employees and communities in the development of its climate action activities and climate transition planning. • Take action to support accessibility and affordability of low carbon products or services. • Engage in revenue sharing or co-ownership models with local communities (if applicable). • Engage in beyond value chain mitigation (BVCM) - mitigation action or investments that fall outside a company's value chain, including activities that avoid or reduce GHG emissions, or remove and store GHGs from the atmosphere. • Identify human rights risks related to project activities among stakeholders and recognise such stakeholders as rightsholders in the context of engagement.	• ATP-Col • Carbon Trust • GRI • SBTi • TNFD

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Outcomes	
• Disclose outcomes in relation to just transition, such as: • Number of employees that have been retrained/ offered training • Number of jobs created as a result of the transition plan v number of jobs lost. • Percentage of locations where the transition plan affects local communities and Indigenous Peoples. Evidence of dialogue and agreement • Dialogues and agreements with workers on the transition plan • Percentage of sourcing locations where an assessment has been conducted regarding how the organisation's transition plan would affect value chain workers.	• WBA

SCOPE 3

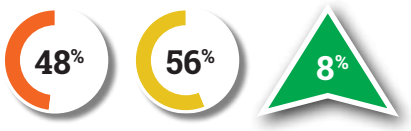
The Scope 3 category complements the Climate Targets and Progress category by considering not just targets and emissions reduction outcomes, but also allowing a closer look at actions companies take to reduce their value chain emissions.



Scope 3 emissions are estimated to account for an average of 75% of a company's total emissions and accounting for Scope 3 is complex and challenging. Therefore Scope 3 is a distinct Accelerator Area. Companies are evaluated on Scope 3 targets and progress but also on Ambition, Action and Outcomes in relation to supplier and customer engagement. GHG Protocol and ATP-Col, along with CDP, ESRS and SBTi provide related guidance.

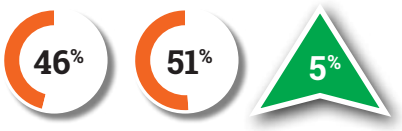
Scores for this category reflect, for example, the company's approach to supplier engagement, its consideration of both upstream and downstream sources of Scope 3 emissions, and its progress on reducing Scope 3 emissions.

AMBITION



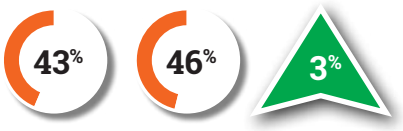
2025 2026 CHANGE

ACTION



2025 2026 CHANGE

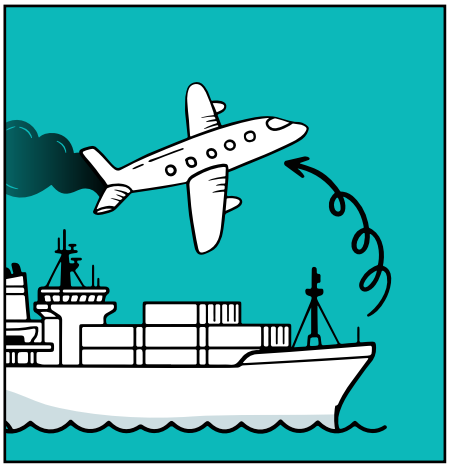
OUTCOMES



2025 2026 CHANGE

HEADLINE FINDINGS

- Ambition saw a jump of 8% since 2025.
- Actions improved by 5%, rising to 51%.
- Outcomes improved by 3%, rising to 46% - however note not all companies are included in this calculation of the average for Scope 3 outcomes because only 14 of 16 reported on Scope 3.



KEY STRENGTHS

1. All companies are engaging with suppliers to reduce emissions, for example through initiatives such as sustainable procurement strategies or supply chain codes of conduct.

2. There is evidence of good and improving ambition and measurement – with evidence of companies having set short-, medium- and long-term Scope 3 targets, increasing the number of Scope 3 categories measured, and detailed mapping, measuring and monitoring of these emissions.

3. Targets related to supplier engagement are visible, for example aiming for a large percentage of suppliers to have set science-based targets by a certain date.

47%

of the companies reporting on absolute Scope 3 emissions had reduced absolute Scope 3 emissions from the base year

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Not all companies in the sample report on their Scope 3 emissions.

2. Variation is evident in the approach to engaging with customers to reduce emissions from the use of sold products, despite the proportion of emissions that tend to come from this category.

3. Some companies in the sample reported a reduction in intensity rather than absolute Scope 3 outcomes, or increased Scope 3 emissions. Regarding the latter, it should be noted that it is possible that this is a result of improved measurement, for example by increasing the number of categories included or measuring more or higher quality data. The increase therefore would reflect *methodological* changes - rather than an overall atmospheric addition of emissions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- ☐ Consider engaging with customers to reduce emissions.
- ☐ Set supplier engagement targets.
- ☐ Scrutinise Scope 3 emissions trends.
- ☐ Report on Scope 3 outcomes (even if emissions are increasing). This may lead to a short term increase in Scope 3 emissions but the transparency will likely help with long term reductions.

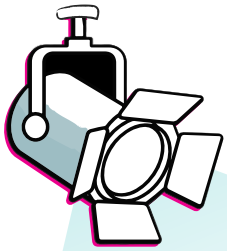
GOOD PRACTICE

COMPASS IRELAND

Compass has completed a comprehensive mapping of its food footprint, which accounts for a large portion of its Scope 3 emissions, particularly purchase of meat, dairy and dry groceries. In 2025 it analysed over 5,000 recipes and developed a traffic light system to classify recipes from very low to very high carbon impact. The company has used this to develop a net zero pipeline with interventions such as replacing animal proteins with plant proteins and developing new recipes like 50/50 beef/lentil or mushroom bolognese and burgers, focused on the most high-impact recipes. Compass Ireland reports on the results of these initiatives at a large client site, where the number of very high carbon dishes on the menu was reduced by 37%.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Ambition	**Reference frameworks**
• NEW: Set near-term Scope 3 targets for value chain emissions by one of the three pathways in line with SBTi guidance: • - Overarching Scope 3 emissions reduction targets. • - Overarching supplier and/or consumer alignment target. • - Category or activity specific targets. • Do Scope 3 near-term targets cover significant categories representing at least 5% of Scope 3 emissions . • If long term targets have been set for Scope 3, they should cover 100% of Scope 3 emissions. • Include details of materiality assessments i.e. calculate and disclose all material Scope 3 categories and provide an explanation for categories that are not relevant. • Define scope of client/supplier engagement strategy. • Integrate GHG reduction targets in client/supplier engagement strategy. • Embed goals to reduce Scope 3 emissions in the procurement and operations divisions. • Establish a strategy to influence or enable customer choices and behaviour in order to reduce GHG emissions related to the company's activities.	• ATP-Col • CDP • ESRS • GHG Protocol • GRI • SBTi • SBTN
Action	
• Engage suppliers in developing their own transition plans which align with a 1.5°C world. • Conduct hotspot analysis to identify strategic suppliers. • Set clear requirements regarding climate-related expectations from strategic suppliers, including a monitoring mechanism. • Implement activities and initiatives that help, influence or otherwise enable customers to reduce their GHG emissions.	• ATP-Col • CDP • GHG Protocol • GRI • SBTi
Outcomes	
• Reduce supply chain emissions in line with Scope 3 Net Zero ambitions. • Measure and report the impact of the client/supplier engagement strategy e.g. suppliers/trade customers are reducing emissions.	• ATP-Col • CDP • ESRS • GHG Protocol

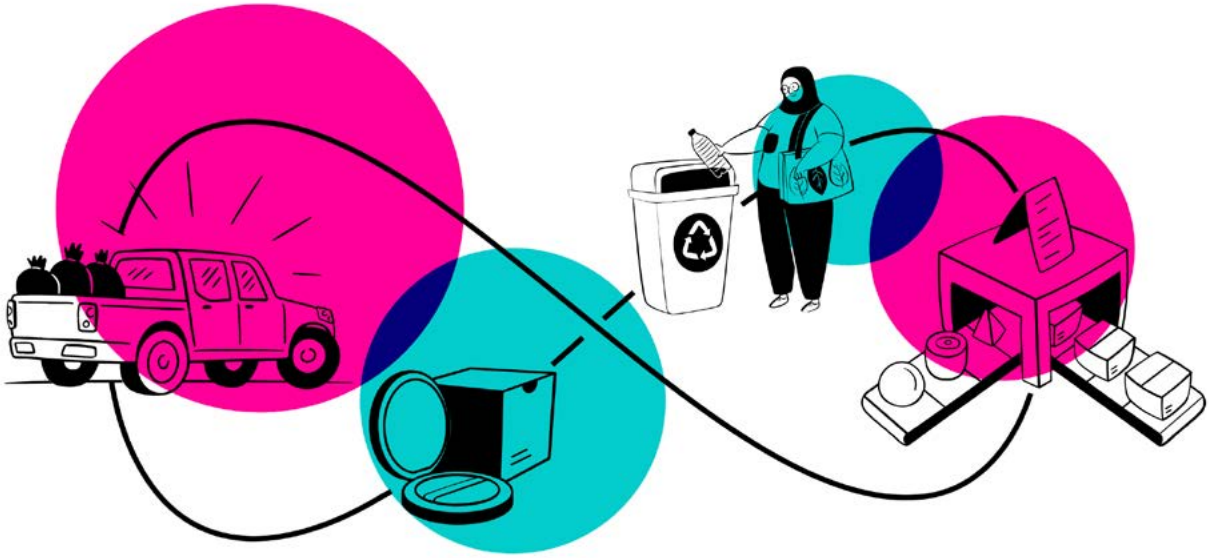
SPOTLIGHT



BITCI's Evolve: Future Ready SME Programme brings together member companies and the SMEs in their value chains to drive meaningful sustainability action. Through targeted training, expert guidance and tailored support, SMEs build their knowledge and confidence to understand their impacts, reduce emissions and identify opportunities to create long-term value.

To date, we have worked with ESB, SSE, Bank of Ireland and Musgrave Group on this programme. Find out more here: Sustainable Supply Chains – bitci

EVOLVE
Future Ready SMEs
Empowering SMEs to grow sustainable, inclusive businesses

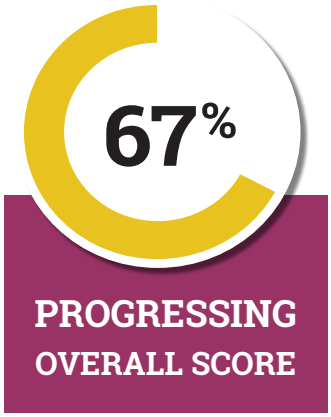


Enabling Actions

DECARBONISATION LEVERS

Decarbonisation levers are the practices which support companies to achieve the targets set out in their CTP. They vary depending on the company and sector but typically include water, energy, waste, supply chain and other resource management. SBTi emphasises that decarbonisation levers should contribute to emissions reduction across all scopes. ESRS, TPT, Climate Action 100+, GHG Protocol and CDP also advise on how these levers should be constructed and how assessment of these levers should look.

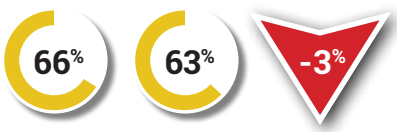
Scores for this category reflect, for example, if the company has quantified the emissions reductions from each planned decarbonisation lever, has avoided an over-reliance on unproven technologies, and has levers that cover each scope.



AMBITION



ACTION



HEADLINE FINDINGS

- Ambition increased by 2%, and is now in the 'advanced' category
- Actions have decreased by 3%



KEY STRENGTHS

1. Eleven of the sixteen companies had made available a Climate Transition Plan (CTP), Net Zero plan or decarbonisation roadmap and a number of the remaining companies are planning on developing one.

2. All companies are taking action to decarbonise e.g. procuring renewable energy, moving to electric vehicles or hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO), and improving energy and waste management.

3. There is evidence of detailed descriptions of decarbonisation levers mapped to each Scope 3 category.

2 of the 10 companies assessed in 2025 saw their score for Action in Decarbonisation Levers increase

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. There is evidence of decarbonisation pathways being used which show a sharp albeit unexplained emissions drop in 2035/2040.

2. Several decarbonisation pathways are based on assumptions of unconfirmed changes in policy or financial incentives, and this was more likely in companies behind on their targets for decarbonisation levers.

3. Some companies have a mismatch between their decarbonisation pathway and their risk assessment. For example, a company might have a decarbonisation pathway based on assumptions that it will achieve its 1.5C targets, while the climate risk assessment is based on a 2C minimum threshold.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- ☐ Develop a standalone Climate Transition Plan that includes a decarbonisation roadmap.
- ☐ Clearly map your company's decarbonisation pathway and show how each decarbonisation lever maps to emissions reductions. Include a timeline, and commitments to assess progress at regular intervals.
- ☐ Ensure the targets that your decarbonisation pathway is aimed toward correspond to your risk assessment.
- ☐ Clearly state the assumptions on which your pathway is based.
- ☐ If relying on rapid emissions reductions from 2035/2040, clearly explain your rationale and the levers that will lead to this drop.
- ☐ Quantify the emissions reductions expected from each decarbonisation lever.

GOOD PRACTICE

VEOLIA

Veolia has developed a detailed decarbonisation pathway with levers for Scope 1, and 2 and 3, quantifying expected reductions from each lever and in some cases identifying sub-levers e.g. Scope 3 emissions reduction from waste is expected to come from a combination of methane capture, removal of plastics before incineration and CO2 capture.

Bus Éireann

In its *Sustainability Strategy 2024-2030*, Bus Éireann maps its target emissions trajectory in line with targets, identifying key emissions sources and decarbonisation levers for all scopes, and maps expected milestones and targets in the near-, medium- and long-term e.g. 100% zero emissions urban fleet by 2034

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Ambition	**Reference frameworks**
• Put decarbonisation levers in place in line with emissions reduction targets. - Decarbonisation levers should cover and impact Scope 1, Scope and Scope 3 emissions. • Set targets for key decarbonisation levers e.g. renewable energy. • Quantify the GHG emissions reduction which will result from the decarbonisation levers and indicate the expected timeframe. • Establish an action plan to meet targets.	• ATP-Col • CDP • GHG Protocol • GRI • SBTi • TPT
Action	
• Identify the number of decarbonisation levers that are currently in the implementation stage. • Ensure estimated contributions of the decarbonisation levers are realistic and not overestimated. Provide hypotheses, calculations and figures for each decarbonisation lever, and justify the internal capability to achieve them. • Independently verify calculations. • State key assumptions regarding dependencies on external factors relied on to implement decarbonisation levers and meet emissions reduction targets. • Ensure decarbonisation levers are aligned with recent technological and process changes within the sector e.g. technology readiness of technological innovations to reduce emissions. • Ensure decarbonisation levers will not lead to an increase in climate-related risks or have other negative environmental or social impacts. • Estimate future cumulative GHG emissions (i.e. locked-in emissions) implied by the company's installed and planned production assets (or products). • Ensure that the company's production capacities are consistent with strategic ambition. • NEW: Where renewable energy is used as a decarbonisation measure, detail the basis, quality and length of the energy agreement.	• ACT/WBA • ATP-Col • CDP • Climate Action 100+ • SBTi • TPT

FINANCE

Financially resourcing a climate transition plan is critical to its achievement. A company's climate transition plan should detail targets and investments in decarbonisation levers and how investments contribute to climate and nature goals. ESRS, CDP, TCFD, TPT, SBTi and Climate Action 100+ all provide guidance.



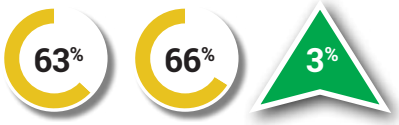
Scores reflect whether the company has allocated significant financial investment to climate goals, whether investment appraisals incorporate sustainability principles, and evidence of aligning investment with international climate goals, such as ending investments in activities that undermine the transition

This is an area where companies often struggle. For example, a 2025 Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) study found that less than 1% of the 2000 companies assessed disclosed plans to phase out capital from carbon-intensive assets, and just 2% aligned capital spending with long-term decarbonisation targets.

AMBITION

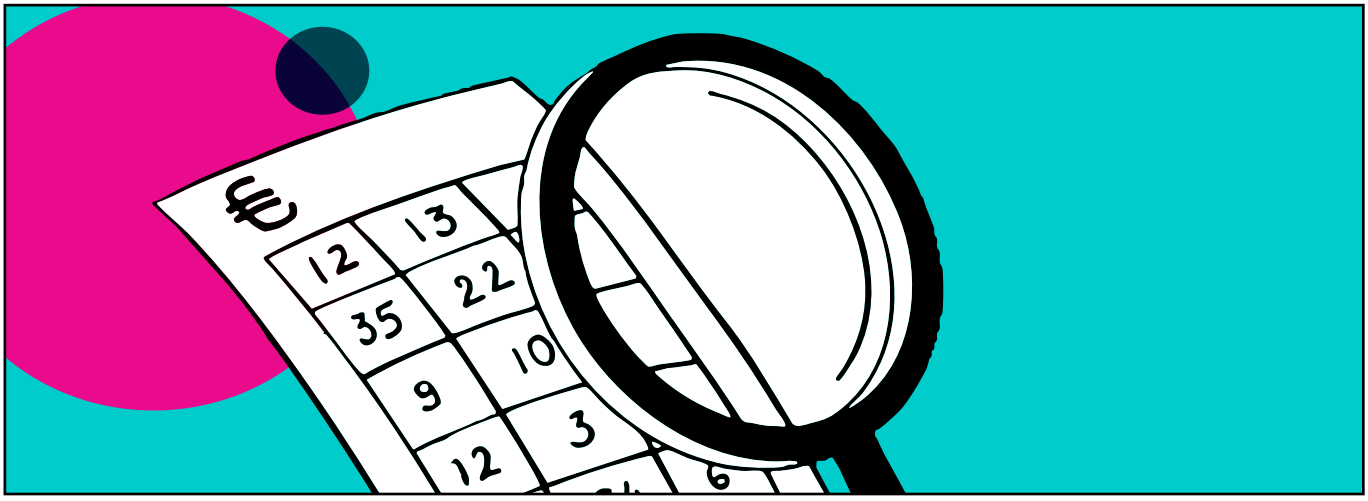


ACTION



HEADLINE FINDINGS

- Ambition increased by 1%
- Action increased by 3%



KEY STRENGTHS

1. There is evidence of target-setting for investment in climate and nature, and of reporting progress against the target.

2. Half of the companies showed evidence that their investment in climate or nature projects is increasing over time, with some companies indicating that they intend to increase it and some documenting positive environmental impacts from these investments, such as emissions reduced or energy saved.

3. There is evidence of companies considering climate or environmental considerations in investment appraisal or other financial decisions such as procurement, and implementing an internal carbon price used in decision-making.

All of the sixteen companies are investing in climate-related projects

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. There is variance in *aggregate* disclosure of climate or nature investment, with some of the companies disclosing qualitative or project-focused information only.

2. Only two of sixteen companies published taxonomy-alignment assessments.

3. For some companies their fossil fuel phase out involved investment in technologies such as Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) which come with concerns in terms of scalability and nature impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- Report in line with relevant taxonomies.
- Set measurable targets for environmental investment and disclose as a percentage of total investment. Taxonomy alignment requires that companies report the percentage of their capital and operating expenditure classified as 'Green' with the EU Green Taxonomy.
- Measure the positive environmental impacts due to environmental investment.
- In line with the SBTi's criteria, invest at a level that is appropriate for how difficult and expensive it is to decarbonise your industry.
- Consider environmental considerations in investment appraisal and procurement.
- Scrutinise the evidence base and trade-offs of technologies that are purported to support fossil fuel phase out e.g. Carbon Capture and Storage.

GOOD PRACTICE

TESCO IRELAND

EQUINIX

Tesco has launched two SLBs (€750m and £400m) linked to its Scope 1 and 2 emissions targets.

Equinix is a large issuer of green bonds globally, issuing $2.6bn in 2025, and produces a detailed annual report of how the funding is allocated

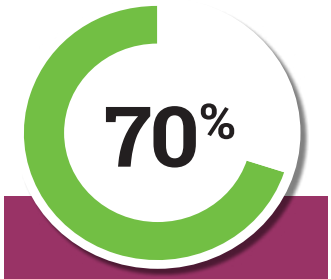
* *Companies typically issue green bonds to raise finance for sustainability related projects, and SLBs are financing instruments where the conditions of the bond incentivise the company to perform better on selected sustainability metrics e.g. the company would have to pay a higher interest rate to bondholders if it did not meet its climate targets*

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Ambition	**Reference frameworks**
• Set targets for investment in climate and nature projects. • Allocate investment to each stated decarbonisation lever. • Measure and disclose financial allocations (CapEx and/or OpEx) in climate solutions compared to the total financial allocations of the company. • NEW: Detail investment in climate adaptation and resilience specifically. • NEW: Complete a Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) assessment and Taxonomy-alignment analysis in line with Taxonomy requirements/	• CDP • Climate Action 100 • ESRS • EU Platform on Sustainable Finance • GRI • TNFD • TPT
Action	
• Incorporate sustainability principles in investment appraisals. • Demonstrate alignment of any existing portfolios with net-zero pathways across all scopes. • Direct funds to socially inclusive climate projects, fostering stakeholder engagement, and upskilling workers for green jobs. • End investments in activities that undermine the transition in accordance with the selected decarbonisation scenario. • Ensure investments (existing and planned) in available low-carbon technologies/climate solutions and the decarbonisation are consistent with the investment needs of the sector. • Document and report impacts of investment in climate and nature projects e.g. if the company has invested in EVs or retrofitting, it should present the emission reduction impact. • NEW: Increase investment over time.	• CDP • Climate Action 100 • GRI • ISO 32210 • TCFD • TNFD • TPT

RISK

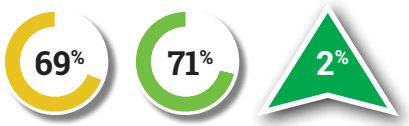
Climate change poses serious risk to business operations, infrastructure and supply chains. Identifying climate and nature risks through scenario analysis and management and monitoring of these risks is essential in transition planning. TCFD, TNFD and CDP are the key guiding frameworks on risk.

Scores for this category reflect, for example, whether the company has carried out a climate scenario analysis and shared the pathway and assumptions on which its CTP is based (considering both physical and transition risk), and whether it has reduced its exposure to climate risk or set targets to do so.



ADVANCED
OVERALL SCORE

AMBITION



2025 2026 CHANGE

ACTION



2025 2026 CHANGE

HEADLINE FINDINGS

- Ambition increased by 2%
- Action increased by 1%



KEY STRENGTHS

1 All companies have implemented Board-level oversight of climate risk.

2 All companies integrate climate risk into their risk assessment and management, and those that have deemed climate risk material have a related risk management strategy with near-, medium- and long-term plans to manage them. Climate risk was not limited to physical risk, with many companies considering the **transition risk*.**

3 Some of the companies consider the financial implications of climate risk, estimating for example the potential impact of climate risk on overall revenue, increased costs from carbon tax on commodities, annual profit impact, or damage to infrastructure.

* ***Transition Risk:*** *the regulatory, market, geopolitical, technological and social risks that come from the transition to a low carbon global economy.*

14 of 16

companies report in line with TCFD,

although the level of detail in disclosures varies. TCFD reporting is most comprehensive among large multinationals who include a TCFD mapping in their Annual Report and filings.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1 There is variance in the level of detail publicly provided as to the financial risks of climate change to the business.

2 There are gaps in risk assessment, including variance in incorporating the risk of nature breakdown and loss, as well as the risk of **stranded assets.***

3 Not all companies had carried out a climate scenario analysis (although this is not unexpected in smaller companies with less capacity to engage with climate risk, or companies in less exposed sectors).

* ***Stranded asset:*** *assets that suffer unanticipated or premature write-downs, devaluations, or conversion into liabilities*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- [ ] Conduct climate risk scenario analyses at different levels of warming.
- [ ] Be explicit about the risk nature loss or breakdown poses to your business.
- [ ] Detail any existing or expected effects of climate related risks and opportunities on the company's financial position (in line with International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) IFRS S2) - especially in terms of stranded assets.
- [ ] Consider having a target for reducing exposure to climate risk, a TCFD best practice.
- [ ] Ensure your approach to climate risk is commensurate with the material and financial threat.

GOOD PRACTICE

Grant Thornton

Grant Thornton (US firm) completed a climate scenario assessment to evaluate physical and transition risks that climate change poses to the business over the short, medium and long-term and have quantified as a % the climate-related risks that could impact the firm's annual revenue.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Ambition	**Reference frameworks**
• Set targets for reducing exposure to climate risk. • Develop an action plan to reach near, medium and long term targets and prevent transition risks. • Conduct climate scenario analysis taking into account physical, transitional and systemic risk over near, medium and long term. Disclose the assumptions and variables used. • Identify business activities facing material transition risk and material physical risk over the near, medium and long term i.e. revenue facing climate risks.	• CDP • IFRS S2 • TCFD • TNFD
Action	
• Monitor and review climate and nature risk e.g. documented process for tracking risk and early warning indicators. • Ensure mitigation actions taken based on scenario analysis are conducive to addressing risk concerns. • Display evidence of good risk management e.g. decarbonisation levers should align with transition risks and adaptation strategies with physical risks. • Integrate and embed climate risk management indicators, measures and controls into normal organizational processes and core risk management processes and policies. • Include in risk criteria a risk scoring system that includes risk factors, defined scales of risk levels, and a risk matrix to measure risk for the purpose of prioritizing and making proper decisions. • Adequately resource risk management, including financially. • Board-level oversight of climate change risks. • Take the risk of asset stranding into account, including assessing locked-in emissions, if applicable. • Consider interconnections between climate-related risks and other risks. • NEW: Detail existing or expected effects of climate related risks and opportunities on the financial position of the company.	• CDP • EU Platform on Sustainable Finance • IFRS S2 • OECD • TCFD • TNFD

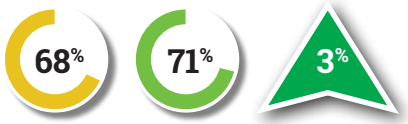
GOVERNANCE

Accountability for climate goals should be integrated into each level of the company, with top level oversight of climate commitments and progress. Best practice CTPs are developed in consultation with multiple business functions and have executive and Board support. Guidance on governance was drawn from several frameworks including ESRS, CDP, TCFD, SBTi, TPT and Climate Action 100+.

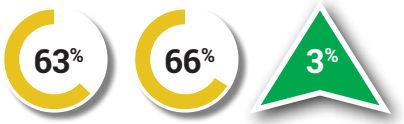
Scores reflect whether the company has clearly defined its climate governance structure, has identified accountability and incentive structures for climate transition goals, and has climate and nature expertise on the Board or plans to do so.



AMBITION



ACTION



HEADLINE FINDINGS

- Ambition and action increased by 3%

KEY STRENGTHS

1. All sixteen companies implemented structures of responsibility and accountability for sustainability, with some having a specific Executive responsible for sustainability.

2. In all companies, climate targets are approved by the Board and there is regular reporting to the Board on progress. Some companies have a Board-level sustainability committee.

3. Seven of the sixteen companies have integrated sustainability into incentive structures.



only half

of the companies have sustainability expertise on the Board - although this is not always climate or nature expertise.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Three of the sixteen companies have removed or deemphasised sustainability-related targets in incentive structures.

2. Higher resourcing to sustainability governance is most evident in resource-intensive sectors, leaving room for improvement in other sectors.

GOOD PRACTICE

CIÉ (parent company of Bus Éireann) established its Youth Board in 2024, a group of 18 - 25-year-olds selected from an open competition. The Board meets quarterly and consults on a range of the company's priority areas, including sustainability projects.

John Paul Construction and VHI have voluntarily aligned with Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) reporting, although they are out of scope.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Ambition	**Reference frameworks**
• Set targets in relation to governance, such as percentage of the Board with climate and nature expertise, board training, incentives. • Ensure the Board has a clearly defined role in supporting the company to reach its emissions targets and achieve the goals of the Climate Transition Plan. • Embed climate change at the highest decision-making level of the company.	• ATP-COL • CDP • SBTi • TCFD • TPT
Action	
• Ensure the Board has climate and nature expertise. • Link executive compensation to achievement of climate and nature objectives, with specific KPIs incorporated. • Apply negative consequences if climate and nature targets are not met. • Ensure the Board has a role in ensuring stakeholder engagement in the Climate Transition Plan. • Clearly define and publicly disclose leadership accountabilities regarding the transition plan. • Invest in measures to maintain and enhance climate competence among board and executive management teams e.g. Board training.	• CDP • Climate Action 100+ • GRI • SBTi • TCFD • TNFD • TPT • WEF/CGI

ADVOCACY

Through advocacy or 'Responsible Policy Engagement (RPE)', the company lobbies for policy conditions that facilitate climate transition, including engaging with governments, peers, trade associations and external organisations, aligning corporate affairs and sustainability teams' narratives, and advocating for meaningful change within their value chain and in wider society. ESRS and CDP disclosure frameworks request details on company advocacy activities. SBTi, Climate Action 100+ and the We Mean Business Coalition provide guidance on integrating advocacy into a transition plan.



Scores reflect, for example, evidence of a commitment to align external and peer advocacy with the company's climate and nature goals, the company's involvement in sustainability networks/alliances, and adequate disclosure of lobbying activities.

AMBITION



2025 | 2026 | CHANGE

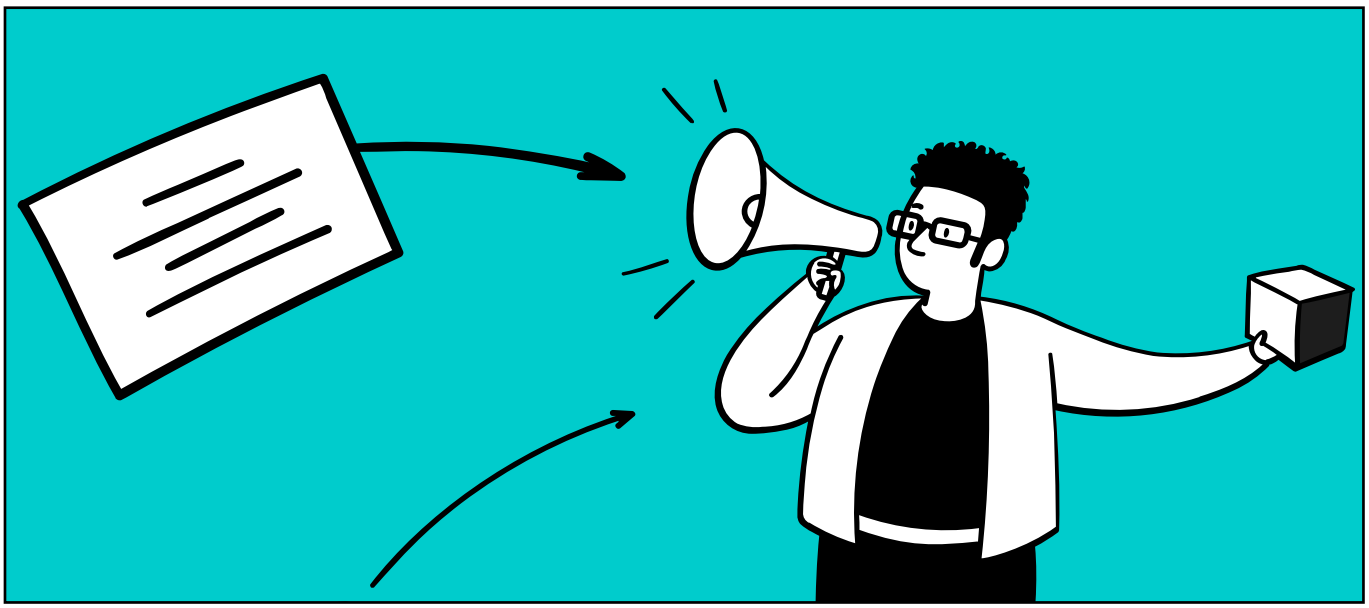
ACTION



2025 | 2026 | CHANGE

HEADLINE FINDINGS

- 7% increase on 2025 advocacy ambition
- 5% increase in action on 2025



KEY STRENGTHS

1. Good examples seen include working with the government to implement key decarbonisation levers or advocating in favour of specific climate policies, and all of the companies are engaged with multiple networks working on climate and nature action.

2. In most cases for Accelerate signatories, environmental advocacy is focused on climate, but there is also evidence of companies advocating for nature.

3. There is evidence that some of the companies have conducted a climate alignment assessment of their trade association memberships, and some have published the results and rationale.

All companies assessed in 2025 improved their Advocacy score in 2026

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. There is variance in the disclosure and analysis of trade association and network memberships.

2. Many companies have significant memberships but do not assess their climate and nature-positive alignment or assess it only as part of their CDP disclosure - not in publicly accessible disclosures.

3. There is a lack of clarity around alignment criteria for trade associations, with some companies indicating that they do not agree with all of the positions of the associations they are involved with, but do not elaborate on the positions or approach they take, be it influence or exit.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS

- ☐ Assess your policy engagement for alignment with the Paris Agreement.
- ☐ Develop and publish a statement aligning your company's advocacy with the goals of the Paris Agreement (as recommended by CDP).
- ☐ Work with the government to implement key decarbonisation levers.
- ☐ Advocate in favour of climate and nature positive policies.
- ☐ Conduct a climate alignment assessment of your trade association memberships and publicise the results and rationale publicly.
- ☐ Consider your trade association alignment criteria and your company's approach to misalignment, and update regularly.
- ☐ As national WBCSD partner, BITCI supports member engagement with the Centre for Positive Policy Engagement to strengthen business-government collaboration on investment-positive climate and sustainability policy.

GOOD PRACTICE

sse Airtricity ARUP

Arup states that it will "advocate for changes in policies and practices that support nature-positive outcomes" (Arup, 2025:33).

SSE conducts an annual review of its climate policy engagement, explaining how it assesses its policy engagement for alignment with the Paris Agreement, and presenting the results of the assessment of 20 trade associations, across five climate policy positions. SSE also actively works to encourage trade associations to change their positions, for example to more explicitly support just transition. SSE also develops two climate scenarios, one where it meets its 2030 targets and one where it does not, using the latter to highlight suggested policy interventions.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Ambition	**Reference frameworks**
• Develop a statement about how advocacy activities support the goals of key environmental agreements (Paris Agreement, Climate Action Plan etc) • Demonstrate alignment of public policy engagement (if any) with the achievement of the goals of the Climate Transition Plan.	• CDP • Climate Action 100 • EPE
Action	
• Engage with governments to support emissions reduction, biodiversity and just transition. • Engage with policy and decision makers to increase societal decarbonisation. • Collaborate with peer actions, alliances, coalitions, trade associations or business platforms with positive actions for facilitating and accelerating the transition. • Do not support peer actions or alliances that undermine the transition and lobby against climate-friendly policies. • Actively engage in collaborative research and development programmes on decarbonisation with peers. • Disclose membership in trade organisations or industry bodies, expenditures towards climate-related lobbying activities and the main topics covered by lobbying activities in relation to the transition. • *NEW: Establish policies, codes of conduct etc on responsible lobbying related to climate and nature.*	• ATP-Col • Change Climate • EPE • SBTi • The Carbon Trust

CASE STUDY

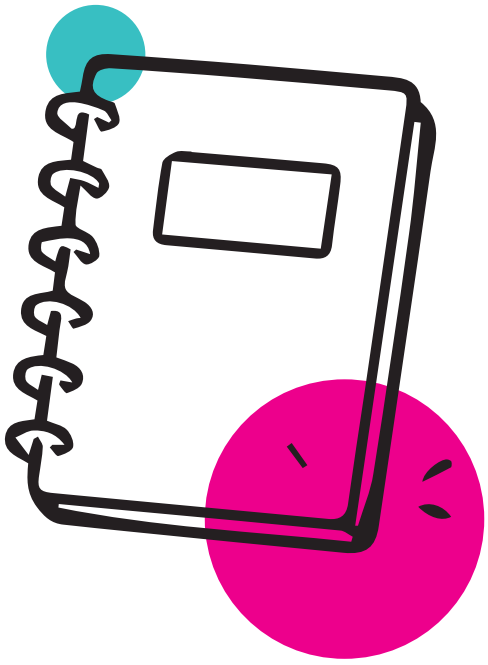
Instantor Sanbra Fyffe signed the Accelerate Pact in 2026

Instantor

Instantor has provided the industry with proven plumbing and heating products since patenting the first brass compression fitting in 1926. Today, we are a recognised leader in press solutions which allow pipe and fittings to be installed ~ 35% faster than traditional methods. Sister brand Tucson Pumps also manufactures a range of circulating, shower and booster pumps.

During the past decade, we have strengthened our capability to provide customers with an innovative, secure, environmentally responsible and ethical source of supply. **Development of products with extended working lives is a key component of our sustainability strategy.** Significant investment has equipped Instantor's head office with a state-of-the-art laboratory, which undertakes life cycle and endurance testing, equivalent to that of major associations.

This, combined with products that are designed using 100 years of expertise, and the careful use of quality assured materials such as CW617N brass and 304 stainless steel, enables Instantor products to be supplied with **guarantees of up to 50 years.** This helps to reduce the consumption of resources and energy needed to manufacture and distribute alternatives that need to be regularly replaced.



Instantor's press solutions also remove the need for torches, heat mats, flux and the fumes associated with soldering and brazing. For Tucson Pumps, sustainability is equally important, and the latest range of pumping technologies have been developed to deliver significant energy savings.



Instantor's state-of-the-art test centre

With innovation entrenched within our DNA, a new generation of materials has also been embraced. To comply with the incoming EU Drinking Water Directive, Instantor's compression fittings are now available in premium CW511L lead-free brass. The Instantor Press range has also been enhanced with fittings manufactured from lead-free PPSU.

Instantor's commitment to environmentally responsible manufacturing extends far beyond our product portfolios. ESG represents a strategic pillar of the business, overseen by a team of specialists who continuously evaluate operations to identify areas for improvement. In addition, **we have attained accreditations including ISO 14001, EcoVadis, Sedex and the Business Working Responsibly Mark from BITCI.**

Furthermore, Instantor has committed to Accelerate, The Business Pact for Climate and Nature. Deirdre Byrne, Divisional ESG & Certifications Manager at Instantor, explained: "The signing of Accelerate represents an important step in our sustainability journey. We have underpinned our commitment to responsible practices in addition to holding ourselves accountable for reaching our sustainability targets".

Part 3

Enabling Conditions: What business needs from government to accelerate an inclusive transition



Overview

> The challenge is that ambition has scaled, with widespread net zero commitments, but policy frameworks still lag... Businesses are taking action, but face a fragmented, reactive policy environment that lacks clear investment signals...there is limited space for business and government to align, problem-solve, and translate ambition into implementation.
>
> **Business Breakthrough Barometer 2026**
> **(World Business Council for Sustainable Development)**

This section draws on engagement conducted throughout 2026 with representatives from our network. The purpose was to understand what individual members perceive as implementation barriers to their environmental progress that could potentially be resolved fully or in part by government. These sessions with CEOs, sustainability practitioners and sector representatives provide insights into their experiences of implementing climate transition plans and highlights both sector-specific and cross-cutting barriers that impact pace and scale of delivery. The findings are not representative of the whole BITCI membership – only those who availed of the opportunity to engage.

Members were engaged with via events, one-to-one meetings and a focus group. It is important to note that members were often not certain where the solution lies, lending further rationale for increased dialogue between business and government on the reality of the challenges they face in their efforts to meet ambitious targets.

Additionally, the responses are reflections of member perceptions of the gaps, and these perceptions may themselves be flawed. For example, members could be unaware of certain initiatives or may have limited capacity to engage.

Members were prompted to consider several areas reflected in the WBCSD Business Breakthrough Barometer. Interviews were carried out in a semi structured manner and therefore suggestions of barriers that do not fit under any of these headings were also included.

This is a complement to the relevant findings in the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment Report on Barriers to Achieving Climate Progress 2026 – 2030[8] .

#1 ENABLING CONDITION

A more consistent approach from all government departments and clearer guidance, signalling, and pathways for business

- Participants felt that government departments and public bodies do not consistently demonstrate that sustainability is a strategic priority, with some reporting limited scrutiny, engagement or expectations.
- Businesses argued that a more joined-up approach, with common expectations and messaging across departments, would provide a stronger mandate for business action and investment.
- Participants highlighted a particular need for expanded direction on nature-related action.
- Businesses called for greater recognition of the positive role they can play in delivering national sustainability goals, emphasising that many organisations are seeking to lead and innovate on climate and nature action, and that government could more actively acknowledge and support this contribution.

Testimonials from BITCI Members

> I get neither pressure nor interest from my overseeing department [in terms of sustainability] - "We are accustomed to less scrutiny than the other [companies].

> Big part of it is a lack of consistency…there needs to be a common approach from every government department…we need to know they value sustainability."

> It's beneficial when our stakeholders set out their stall on transition planning and provide us with guidance and clear timelines…in depth guidance for us regulated entity is very helpful, and we would value more guidance on nature."

> Clarity around timelines and pathways for innovations such as district heating would be welcome so we don't waste money retrofitting now if we'll need to do it again in a few years [to accommodate district heating]."

> The changes to the Omnibus was devastating and took away the certainty we had...and that's huge risk."

Recommendations to government

- ✔ Expand direction on nature-related business action.
- ✔ Ensure more consistency in government direction on climate and nature.
- ✔ Enhance coherence of departmental expectations of and engagement with companies.
- ✔ Increase recognition of positive sustainability actions and sentiment from business.

#2 ENABLING CONDITION

An appreciation that addressing Scope 3 emissions is the way to sustainably transform all interconnected systems

- Businesses emphasised that achieving climate and nature goals will require a shift from an organisation-by-organisation approach to one focused on system-wide change.
- Participants noted that most of their impacts lie beyond their direct operations, particularly within value chains, meaning that meaningful progress depends on coordinated action across sectors, supply chains and the wider economy.
- Respondents questioned whether sufficient 'systems thinking' exists within government and across departments to address interconnected challenges such as decarbonisation, resource use and nature loss.
- Participants highlighted the challenges in accelerating the circular economy, noting that existing market incentives often favour linear, single-use models.

Testimonials from BITCI Members

> Scope 3 is the system, I've 99.6% of my emissions in Scope 3, but who is doing the systems thinking [at government level and within departments]?" We are in a polycrisis and a systems change approach is needed."

> The issue for us is our associated emissions...our 51% reduction by 2030 isn't going to move the dial for Ireland."

> The power of Scope 3 in terms of engagement and influence potential remains untapped… we need to appreciate that reducing Scope 3 [emissions] means mutually reinforcing benefits [for everyone]."

> There is inertia in terms of the circular economy, is it because it's so hard? Unfortunately, the profit motive is there for single use."

Recommendations to government

- ✔ Increase emphasis on enabling collaboration for supplier and customer influence to reduce Scope 3 emissions.
- ✔ Consider increasing systems thinking education across government.
- ✔ Shift away from linear, single-use models.
- ✔ Facilitate collaboration across sectors.

#3 ENABLING CONDITION

Accelerated permitting and project-approval processes, enabled by an improved grid that facilitates increased renewable energy generation and transmission

- While many organisations are ready to invest in decarbonisation projects, respondents reported that slow and complex approval processes often delay implementation.
- Delays in accessing funding decisions and uncertainty around application processes were also seen as obstacles, making it difficult for businesses to plan investments and deploy capital efficiently.
- While many organisations are willing to invest in renewable energy, electrification and other decarbonisation measures, they reported that insufficient grid capacity is limiting what can be achieved in practice.
- Businesses identified electricity grid capacity and infrastructure delivery as fundamental enablers of the low-carbon transition and stressed that grid investment underpins wider economic and climate objectives, including housing delivery, industrial competitiveness and foreign direct investment, arguing that decarbonisation will only succeed if energy infrastructure is developed at the pace and scale required to support growing electricity demand and increasing renewable energy generation.
- Participants described challenges connecting new renewable generation, electrifying buildings and vehicle fleets, and expanding low-carbon operations due to constraints at substations and within the wider network. These bottlenecks can prevent businesses and their suppliers from progressing projects, even where private investment and ambition already exist. In some cases, renewable energy generation cannot be utilised or exported because the necessary infrastructure is unavailable.

Testimonials from BITCI Members

> There's a massive backlog on approval for anaerobic digestion [AD] plants. A lot of our suppliers are sat on plans looking to get going but just can't get them through...suppliers are frustrated that AD plants have like five, six years in the planning, and they haven't even put a spade in the ground yet."

> By the time we hear back from [funder], it's essentially too late, the project has already started. It's helpful to have confirmation before the application process so you can access CapEx which is good, but there needs to be more clarity on the process and timelines."

> It's really difficult to actually deliver low carbon infrastructure, [in the housing sector] we rely on other infrastructure being put in place so that we can actually deliver on houses..."

> There are instances of suppliers in our supply chain that have massive roofs that want to install solar to decarbonise their operations but can't because the local substation doesn't have capacity to take the additional load."

> We've got a lot [of solar] installed, but we can't turn them on because we're waiting for the final inspection."

Recommendations to government

- ✔ Increase the resourcing of permitting decision-making structures and simplify the process.
- ✔ Increase export licenses for rooftop solar.
- ✔ Resource the ESB to expedite the development of commercial export licenses.
- ✔ Increase grid capacity.

#4 ENABLING CONDITION

Increased incentives to transition, clarity of communication and an environment that rewards improvement, innovation and risk

- Respondents noted that policy changes, regulatory uncertainty and unclear signals can undermine confidence and discourage investment in long-term sustainability initiatives.
- Participants identified gaps in both financial and non-financial incentives, arguing that existing market structures do not always reward those making transition investments. Examples included split incentives between landlords and tenants, insufficient recognition of low-carbon products in procurement processes and missed opportunities to use data and market mechanisms to drive decarbonisation across entire sectors e.g. in the agriculture sector.
- Many also called for clearer communication on the supports, infrastructure and opportunities available to businesses, noting that sustainability funding and partnership opportunities are often difficult to navigate. Respondents pointed to successful examples of collaboration between business, government and civil society such as the Woodland Environmental Fund and argued that similar models should be expanded to accelerate progress.
- There was also strong recognition that innovation and decarbonisation involve risk. Businesses stressed the importance of policies and funding mechanisms that can help share this risk, support experimentation, and unlock private investment in emerging solutions.

Testimonials from BITCI Members

> The Omnibus [changes] de-incentivize people and companies from doing something because if it's constantly changing, you know...then where are you supposed to put your money?"

> There is no incentive for our landlords to invest in renewable energy when they aren't the tenant."

> I don't know of any other country that has a national scheme that can understand consistently a market average [in terms of carbon emissions] for livestock sectors...that has massive potential if it can be built into a wider incentive mechanism for a net zero transition up and down the whole supply chain."

> Business needs more visibility about what is available in terms of [renewable energy] infrastructure...what's missing is the idea that business, government and civil society are working together for carbon infrastructure...people know what is there for the home sector, there's a lot of talk about it all the time but it's not the same for business..."

> Need to appreciate there is a potential that we're going to invest in projects that fail – but if they work, they're really going to decarbonize what we're trying to do. Sometimes it's not a sure thing that it's going to work."

Recommendations to government

- ✔ Ensure regulatory certainty to encourage investment.
- ✔ Clearly communicate the supports available to business.
- ✔ Ensure market structures reward those making transition investments.
- ✔ Incentivise commercial landlords and the leasing business to retrofit and install solar panels on suitable buildings.
- ✔ Recognise that innovation for decarbonisation involves risk. Consider funding mechanisms to help share this risk, support experimentation, and unlock private investment in emerging solutions.

#5 ENABLING CONDITION

Procurement and tenders reflecting and rewarding positive action for the environment

- Businesses reported that demand for low-carbon products and services is not yet strong or consistent enough to justify the scale of investment required for rapid decarbonisation. While sustainability is increasingly referenced in procurement and tendering processes, participants felt that cost, speed and delivery timelines often continue to outweigh environmental performance in purchasing decisions.
- Respondents highlighted examples where sustainability criteria are either weakly weighted, treated as a compliance exercise, or ultimately deprioritised when projects face cost pressures. This can make it difficult for pioneering businesses to realise a return on sustainability investments.
- Participants also pointed to procurement processes, subsidies and public sector purchasing as important levers for creating demand and accelerating market transformation.
- They argued government can play a critical leadership role by embedding stronger sustainability requirements into contracts, valuing verified environmental performance, and using public procurement to stimulate demand for low-carbon products and services.

Testimonials from BITCI Members

“Sustainability for low carbon products is being pushed at tender stage with a high weighting, but when push comes to shove that drops off, and if the sustainable option is costing more, it can very quickly be designed back out again…happening less than the past, but definitely still there, still happening.”

The time it takes to procure low carbon products for a project can result in delays, one day lost on a project can cost millions…you’re more likely to pay the money than pay the time.”

The client, often the government, needs to set the standard for decarbonisation…low carbon products also need to be considered in contracts.”

Tendering is talked about a lot but we’re still seeing very few come through where sustainability is included, and where it is included, it’s still a tick the box…What’s being asked of sustainability in tenders is not moving quick enough, it’s still the basics of carbon reduction targets, it hasn’t gone into the weeds enough in terms of how good you are. Sustainability questions in tenders need to encourage continuous improvement to enable leaders to differentiate themselves.”

The REDD3 has made [planning] clearer but also more complex, it is nearly a deterrent to renewable investment because the approval process takes so long and you’re not sure if you’re going to get it or not…led to us reconsidering certain projects due to the level of complexity...in the past your confidence level at planning stage was a lot higher, from 85-90% certainty then to ~65-70% now, it’s made getting investment harder.”

Recommendations to government

- ✔ Evolve tender criteria and questionnaires to reflect increased ambition and recognise progress already made by industry.
- ✔ Actively reward high-performing bidders that demonstrate strong sustainability practices.
- ✔ Progressively tighten sustainability tender requirements to help drive continuous improvement across the sector.
- ✔ Integrate circular economy principles and the CO2 ladder in procurement processes, especially for construction.
- ✔ Embed stronger sustainability requirements into contracts, valuing verified environmental performance and use public procurement to stimulate demand for low-carbon products and services.

#6 ENABLING CONDITION

Harmonised standards and certifications with the EU and create faster and clearer pathways for bringing innovative low carbon solutions to market

- Businesses highlighted that slow, complex and sometimes inconsistent approval, certification and market-entry processes are limiting the adoption of low-carbon products, materials and circular economy solutions.
- Participants expressed frustration that proven technologies and approaches already deployed elsewhere in Europe can face lengthy delays in gaining acceptance in Ireland, creating uncertainty for innovators and slowing decarbonisation efforts.
- Respondents called for greater alignment with European standards, clearer pathways for bringing new products to market, and more streamlined certification and funding processes.
- They argued that robust testing and evidence remain essential, but that successful international experience and existing research should be sufficient to accelerate deployment in Ireland, rather than repeatedly reassessing proven solutions.
- Participants suggested that policymakers should work collaboratively with businesses to pilot, trial and scale innovative solutions in real-world settings. This was seen as particularly important for advancing circular economy opportunities, where businesses believe significant environmental and economic benefits remain unrealised despite strong evidence and successful examples from other countries.

Testimonials from BITCI Members

“Are we in the EU and are we going by their rules or are we not? If it’s good enough for the rest of the EU, why is it not good enough for here? Just hurry things up, time is of the essence, and we can’t just be waiting around if there’s a perfectly good solution somewhere else...”

[There is] only one certified eco cement producer [in Ireland].”

We need a bit more of an open forum for discussion. Sometimes you’re dealing with a closed door, which is not very open to listen to industry in terms of ‘Look, this is the research, this is what we can draw on from other countries’ and maybe start to look to how we can develop pathways for bringing low carbon products into market…On C&D waste for example, Netherlands and Switzerland are well ahead…they would be well established for a decade or more now at this stage.”

You need to have the rigorous testing done, but if that is standing up and it matches up with what’s happened in other countries then how can we start to start to roll that out?”

It’s not just having a meeting and talking about what we can do…instead let’s ask how can we start to look at some trials or pilots, where we can start to implement some of these changes? There’s only so much research you can do in the lab, just you need to get out and do trials on site.”

Recommendations to government

- ✔ Accelerate and simplify certification and market-entry approval processes.
- ✔ Reduce delays in deploying already proven technologies and approaches.
- ✔ Align with European standards for bringing new products to market.
- ✔ Work collaboratively with businesses to pilot, trial and scale innovative solutions in real-world settings.
- ✔ Progress regulatory changes to allow appropriately treated construction and demolition (C&D) waste to be reused as fill material to support circularity, reducing landfill dependency, lowering material costs, and contributing to national resource efficiency goals.
- ✔ Develop measures to grow the supply of certified eco-products, as current availability is limited and cost-prohibitive which is constraining demand and slowing the scale-up of innovative providers.

#7 ENABLING CONDITION

Improved public dialogue and conversation on the transition requirements and opportunities, and an appreciation that social licence is critical to delivering the transition

- Businesses highlighted that delivering the infrastructure needed for the climate transition will require stronger public engagement and a more coherent national conversation about the scale of change required.
- Participants noted that projects such as renewable energy developments, grid upgrades and anaerobic digestion facilities can experience significant public opposition, even where planning and regulatory processes have been completed.
- Respondents felt that opposition is often driven by a lack of understanding of how climate, energy and infrastructure priorities fit together, as well as misinformation about new technologies.
- They argued that discussions on climate action are frequently fragmented, with insufficient communication about why infrastructure is needed, how it contributes to national goals, and what the implications are for communities, businesses and society more broadly.
- Many participants stressed that regulatory reforms alone will not be enough to accelerate delivery if public support is lacking. Instead, they called for government, business, civil society and local leaders to work together to build trust, communicate consistently, and engage communities early and meaningfully in the transition.

Testimonials from BITCI Members

“There is opposition to wind farms, the message is that they are only being built because they’re there to feed data centres rather than meeting a broad, a societal need...there needs to be a national conversation around the requirement for infrastructure so that we can actually meet our targets and transition to an energy resilient economy.”

I don’t think we’re having a national conversation about all of that. It’s all very... piecemeal. You know, we talk about our carbon plan, our climate plan, but I don’t think we really talk to people about how does this all join up? What does this mean for us all? We need a societal coherence in that this is the way we need to go.”

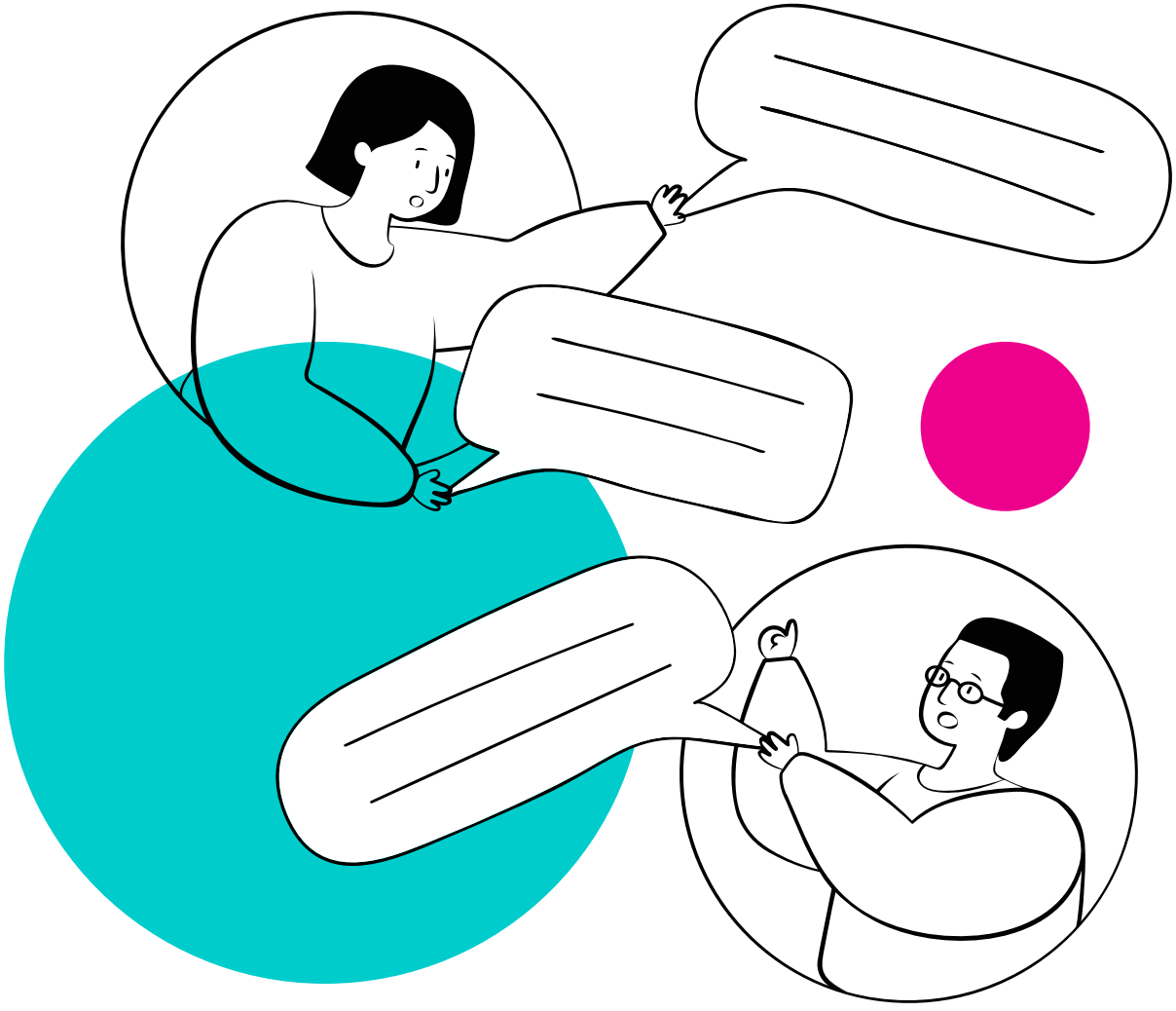
People seem to be surprised when something is being built, even though it was zoned for that in the first place, you know, many years before, because I think we’re just not having those conversations at the right level.”

You’ll see signs around the country that solar farms cause cancer, that if you had an anaerobic digester nearby, you might grow two heads...but 25 plus years ago in Europe, anaerobic digestion was just a matter of course.”

Building societal buy in for infrastructure requires multistakeholder reiteration of key messages at national and local level.”

Recommendations to government

- ✔ Communicate to communities why infrastructure is needed, how it contributes to national goals, and what the implications are.
- ✔ Work with business, civil society and local leaders to work to build trust, communicate consistently, and engage communities early and meaningfully in the transition.
- ✔ Facilitate a national conversation around the national requirement for energy generation and transmission infrastructure.
- ✔ Increase promotion and communication of local development plans.



#8

ENABLING CONDITION

SMEs to be supported with resources, skills and tools to engage effectively in the transition and climate literacy is built across society via educational and workforce channels

- Businesses emphasised that achieving climate goals will depend on the participation of SMEs and smaller suppliers, many of whom currently lack the resources, skills and tools needed to engage effectively in the transition.
- Participants noted that a significant proportion of businesses fall outside the scope of sustainability regulations, creating a risk that parts of the economy are left behind as larger organisations advance their climate ambitions.
- Practical, accessible, simple carbon accounting tools, and targeted guidance and free or low-cost support programmes – for example SME Climate Hub - were identified as key enablers of wider participation and something that could be increased.
- More broadly, businesses highlighted the need to further embed climate and sustainability literacy across education, training and workforce development systems.
- Participants argued that sustainability competencies should become a core part of apprenticeships, trades and third-level education, helping to build the skills needed for the transition across all sectors of the economy.

Testimonials from BITCI Members

> Small businesses need support and skills and literacy to participate in this because otherwise they're going to be excluded from something."

> There is an immaturity [in some suppliers]. CSRD isn't going to deliver that for us because most of these people will be out of scope...there's this huge amount of people outside of regulatory compliance".

> SMEs don't have an easy way of just calculating their carbon footprint, and it's not that difficult if you are given the right tools, even a really simple carbon calculator tool for SMEs, just focus on Scope one and two. I want to be able to go to a supplier and say we're asking you for this, but actually here are some supports that you can get free of charge that will actually help you to figure this out so that you don't have to do it on your own."

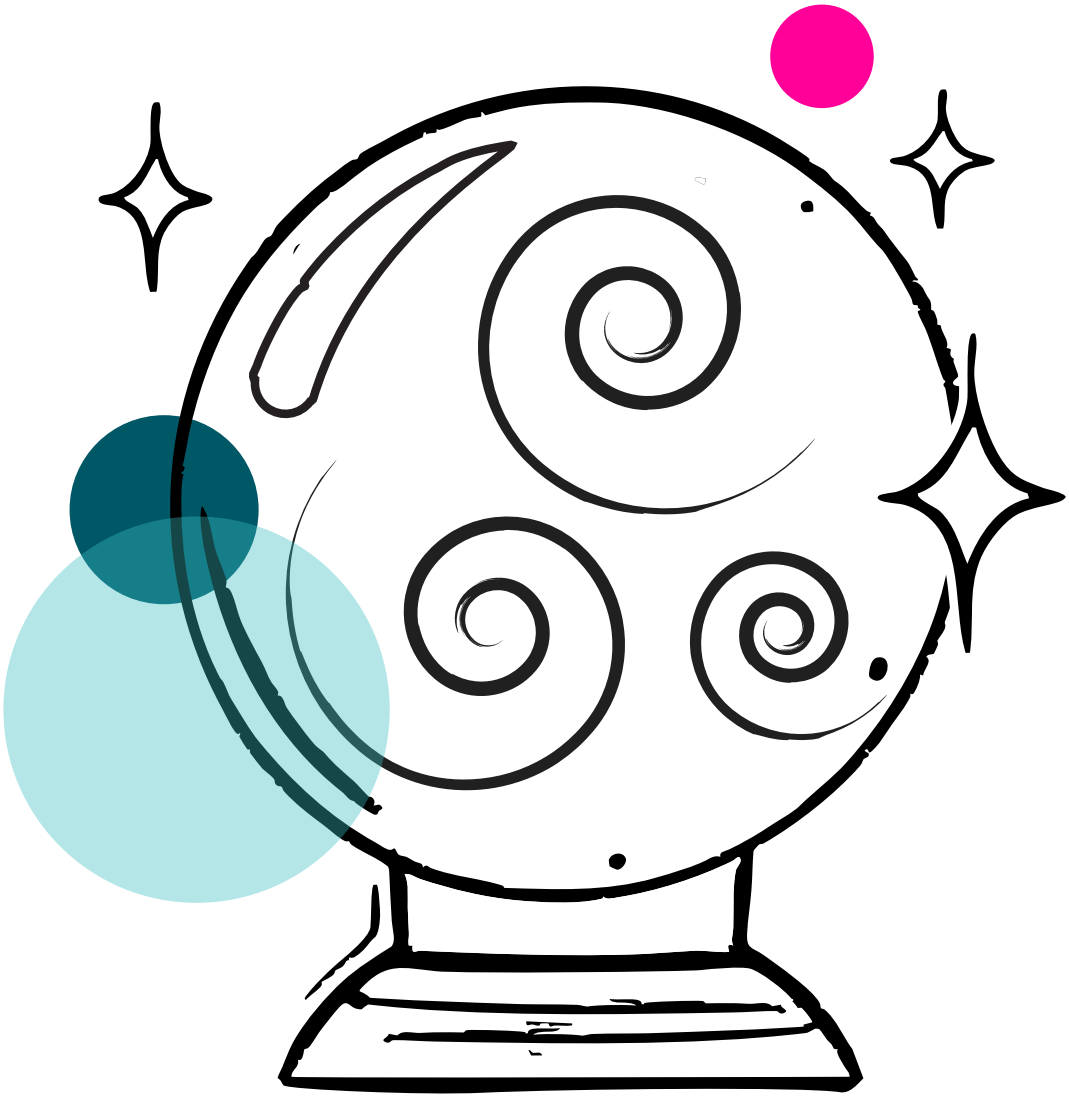
> I think it [carbon literacy] needs to be in every apprenticeship, every trade, there should be modules on it...if you're doing a business degree, you should have it. If you're doing an engineering degree, you should have it. If you're in one of the trades, you should have it as well."

Recommendations to government

- ✔ Ensure carbon literacy is part of all curricula for all roles nationally.
- ✔ Expand awareness of the SME Climate Hub and other initiatives to allow carbon accounting by SMEs.
- ✔ Support initiatives to build the capacity of SMEs, such as *BITCI's Evolve: Future Ready SMEs Programme.*[9]

Part 4

Looking to the Future



Role of Government

> The pace of deploying new energy technologies this decade will increasingly depend on whether governments, companies and international institutions can work together to overcome barriers to investment and infrastructure development."
>
> **International Energy Agency Breakthrough Agenda Report 2026**[10]

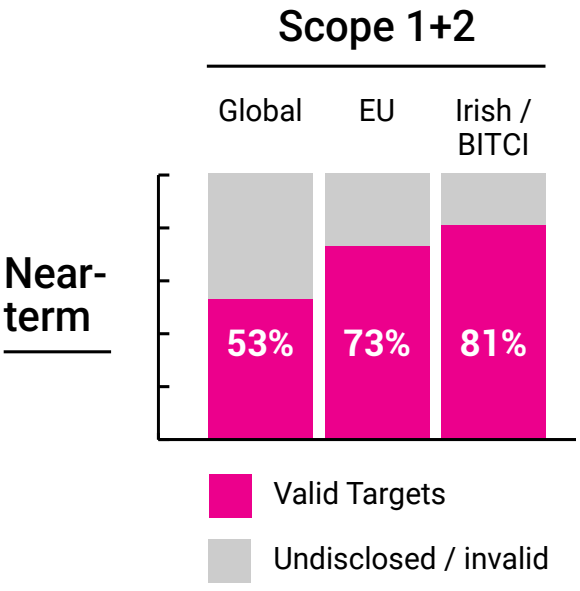
We know that the rapid emissions cuts required depend on changes that no single segment of society can deliver alone. Changing systems to result in positive environmental outcomes depends partly on governments enabling business to accelerate emissions reductions.

We have provided in this report eight Enabling Conditions that a subset of the whole BITCI membership firmly believe will help them to reduce emissions at pace and scale. The report has also highlighted how the Accelerate Pact signatory companies – innovative, committed leaders to sustainability - are doing in nine areas critical to a fast and fair transition. It is hoped that these insights will support various government departments in designing their support of business for maximum impact.

Companies in Ireland are ambitious. As shown by the World Benchmarking Alliance's latest assessment,

> **companies headquartered in Ireland or belonging to BITC are more likely to set near-term targets that the EU-based sample.**

They are also more likely to set long-term targets than the global sample.[11] It is important that this ambition is acknowledged, and that the achievement of these targets in supported by the Irish government.



Source: World Benchmarking Alliance presentation to BITCI members, 10th September 2026

In the first instance, we recommend that government increase the signalling and support for developing robust Climate Transition Plans. Climate transition plans contain a wealth of data that can inform government understanding of potential sector trajectories. In Ireland, this information could:

- Inform the National Economic Climate Plan.
- Identify opportunities to support/expand sectoral and cross-sectoral innovation.
- Identify private sector and semi-state exemplars.
- Facilitate better and more consistent communication with business.
- Inform the development of national strategies and action plans, for example the Just Transition Strategy.
- Support the convening of all relevant players to construct a coherent and robust roadmap in particular sectors.

Increasing the number of high-integrity and credible CTPs available from business in Ireland would also likely assist the government in meeting the targets set out in the Climate Act and Climate Action Plan because without plans for reaching targets, Ireland's economy is exposed to the risk of unseen assumptions, missed targets and severe financial penalties - as well as a disorderly transition that leaves communities behind. Government has a critical role to play in ensuring that CTPs are widespread, credible, actionable and can deliver results.

Below are three recommendations that we believe would help accelerate climate transition planning in Ireland. All can be found in our publication, 'How government and business can work together to accelerate an inclusive climate transition'

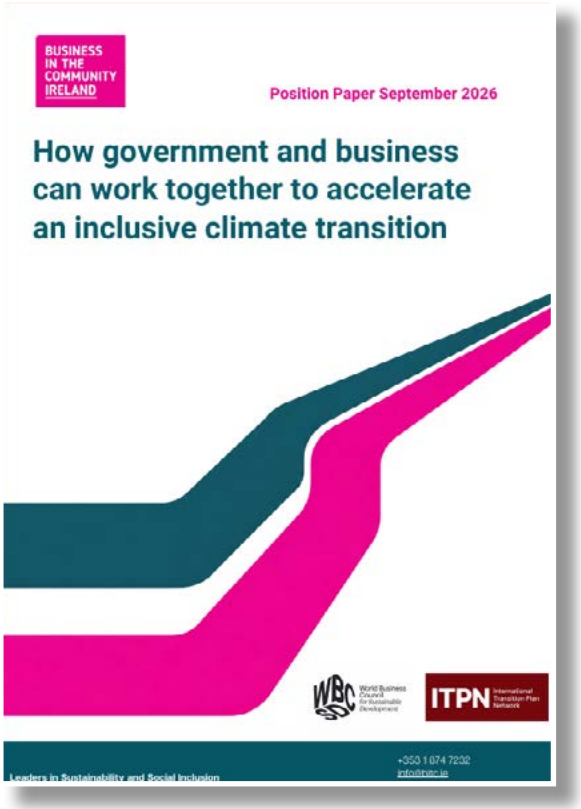
BITCI Recommendations to Government

1 **Encourage climate transition planning by business**
The Department of Enterprise and the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment should recommend that businesses create transition plans. The Enterprise 2035 Strategy should explicitly recognise climate transition plans and their importance for business.

2 **Support and endorse national transition planning initiatives**
Climate Action Plan 2026 and successive updates should identify climate transition planning as a key tool for achieving Ireland's climate goals and support initiatives including Accelerate: The Business Pact for Climate and Nature.

3 **Develop a standardised transition plan disclosure framework for Ireland**
The Department of Enterprise and the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment should work with BITCI members and wider business leadership to develop standard transition plan guidance for businesses operating in Ireland.

Implementing the above would greatly improve the quality of data, dialogue and planning available to business and government. They would help business to turn climate ambition into action, unlocking a more resilient, competitive economy that mitigates the risk of a disorderly transition and of increased societal inequity.



In addition to the recommendations for creating more favourable enabling conditions, the 2026 Climate Transition Plan Scorecard shows where companies are challenged in delivering outcomes. DETE and DCEE could specifically support and encourage companies to:

1. Retain incentives for executive achievement of sustainability outcomes.
2. Improve transparency on climate and nature related investment.
3. Consider the financial implications of climate and nature risk on their business.
4. Innovate to reduce Scope 3 emissions.
5. Understand the just transition metrics they should measure to align with Ireland's just transition ambitions.



Role of Business

Progress is happening. Scores improved in eight of the nine Accelerator Areas this year, with Climate Targets & Progress remaining stable. Companies are strengthening their approach to nature, improving the measurement of nature-related outcomes, expanding the scope and quality of Scope 3 emissions accounting, and developing more detailed decarbonisation pathways. Advocacy significantly improved since last year, showing that that cohort of sixteen companies understands the importance of policy engagement.

However, the question remains, is progress happening fast enough? Nationally and internationally, challenges remain – and that is reflected too in the findings of this report. Companies report they are behind on reaching their ambitious targets, approaches linking sustainability performance with executive remuneration remain inconsistent and there is evidence of backtracking, and greater transparency on climate and nature related investment would be welcome. Many decarbonisation pathways continue to rely on steep emissions reductions after 2035, while climate and nature risks are not always reflected consistently in scenario analysis or quantified risk assessments. And in some cases, emissions are increasing.

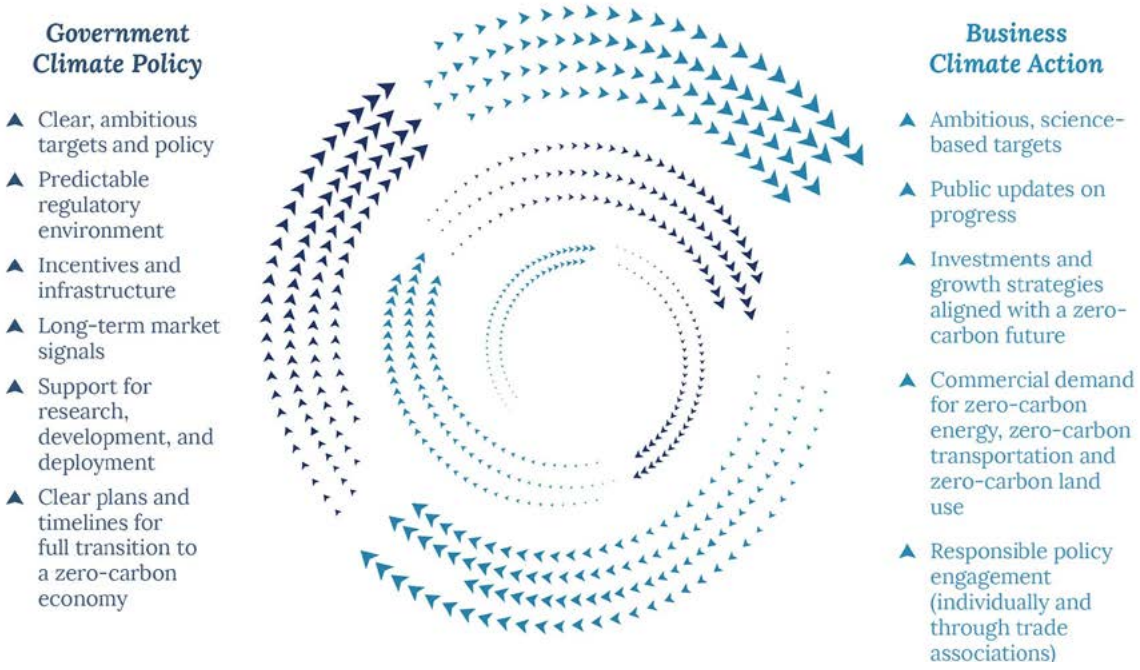
There is also the vast challenge of reducing Scope 3 emissions, and we commend the engagement with suppliers and customers, although of course more could be done.The road ahead will not be easy, but we commend signatories for signing Accelerate and for helping BITCI understand the strengths and challenges within this community of leaders.



Importance of Advocacy by Business

> Accelerating implementation requires a more targeted, collaborative approach to policy engagement from business – focused on enabling the systems that make sustainable business models viable.[12]
>
> **2026 Business Breakthrough Barometer from the WBCSD, the annual global pulse check on how businesses at the forefront of the transition are responding to climate risks, opportunities and market shifts**

It is highly positive that Advocacy was the most improved Accelerator Area and the only area in which every company assessed in 2025 showed improvement. We believe that business should not wait for governments to set ambition on climate. As we have seen internationally in recent years, government positioning can be erratic. Instead, business can and should hold the line on climate, and by doing so it can give government a consistent foundation from which to advance ambitious policies. These in turn can give business the clarity and confidence to unlock further investment in climate solutions. This is represented by the "ambition loop" - a positive feedback loop in which bold government policies and private sector leadership reinforce each other and together accelerate climate action.[13]



Source: The Ambition Loop: How business and government can advance policies that fast track zero-carbon economic growth (2018)[14]

> Companies cannot wait passively for the right conditions to emerge; the leaders of today are shaping markets and accelerating the conditions needed for wider progress. Companies therefore have an important role to play in helping governments understand what is needed to unlock investment and reduce emissions. This includes advocating for stable regulatory frameworks, and ensuring that lobbying activity, trade association memberships and public policy positions are aligned with climate targets and plans. Companies have a role in shaping this shift – and leadership now means using their influence responsibly to accelerate it.
>
> **María Mendiluce, CEO of the We Mean Business Coalition**[15]



A Call for Collective Business Action

The need to change systems also underpins why a collective approach is so critical – one company alone cannot change a structural dependency or an entire system. The good practice shown by companies in every Accelerator Area exemplifies the importance of peer-to-peer learning, which is central to Accelerate: The Business Pact for Climate and Nature.

The Accelerate Pact Community, although relatively small, is a community of leaders lighting the path ahead. We wish to commend the practitioners that have been involved with the initiative throughout 2026:

Emma Cullen	Sustainability Manager	Arup
John Bynum	Associate Director & Arup Ireland Buildings Sustainability Lead	Arup
Paula Kirk	Director, Business & Markets Leader	Arup
Declan Ryan	EHS Manager	Bidvest Noonan
Laura Addison	Social Value and Purpose Manager	Bidvest Noonan
Martina Donohoe	Sustainability and Safety Director	Bidvest Noonan
Nina Cullimore	Environmental Manager - U.K.	Bidvest Noonan
Claire Smith	Head of Corporate Affairs	Bord Gáis Energy
Niamh Farren	Sustainability Manager	Bord Gáis Energy
Emma Culleton	Assistant Sustainability Manager	Britvic Ireland
Kevin McGourty	Senior Sustainability Manager	Britvic Ireland
Elena Wrelton	Senior Sustainability Manager	Bus Éireann
Rory Leahy	Chief Safety and Sustainability Officer	Bus Éireann
Stephanie Maher	Chief Engineering & Critical Infrastructure Officer	Bus Éireann
Fiona Holton	Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Manager	Danone
Grace Milton	Head of Corporate Affairs Ireland	Danone
Caítlín Flanagan	Sustainability Lead	Deloitte

Frank van Aalsum	Regional sustainability Lead EMEA (former)	Equinix
Peter Lantry	Managing Director	Equinix
Vincent Brady	Senior Electrical Engineer	Equinix
Elise O'Neill	Senior Legal Counsel, Head of Sustainability and ESG Law	ESW
Anthony Reilly	Head of Food Strategy and Sustainability	Gather & Gather Ireland Ltd
Diarmuid Doyle	Commercial Manager	Gather & Gather Ireland Ltd
Áine Keogh	Head of Sustainability	Grant Thornton Ireland
Andrea Borain	Sustainability Associate Director	Grant Thornton Ireland
David McKenna	Head of Sustainability	John Paul Construction
Sumit Kadam	Sustainability Advisor	John Paul Construction
Amy O'Leary	Sustainability Lead	KSG
Catriona O'Hara	Commercial Manager	KSG
Margaret Clapham	Head of Business Development	KSG
Mary Kilcullen	Operations and Business Development	KSG
Dominic Nolan	Associate Director, Social Impact	Kyndryl
Laerke Ladefoged Ryan	Customer Partner	Kyndryl
Ann Hughes	QHSE & Risk Director	Mitie Facilities Management Ltd
Camila Carnevale	ESG & Sustainability Partner	Mitie Facilities Management Ltd
Brian Tighe	Finance Director	Sanbra Fyffe Instantor
Deirdre Byrne	ESG & Certifications Manager	Sanbra Fyffe Instantor
Eoin Thynne		Sanbra Fyffe Instantor
Matthew Connolly	ESG Executive & IMS Internal Auditor	Sanbra Fyffe Instantor
Neil O'Brien	Operations Manager	Sanbra Fyffe Instantor
Greg Sutherland		SSE Airtricity

Kelly Dwyer	Sustainability Analyst	SSE Airtricity
Mia Fahey McCarthy	Head of Sustainability	SSE Airtricity
Andy McGregor	Head of Sustainability	Tesco Ireland
Deirdre Corrigan	CR Manager	Tesco Ireland
Eimear Lynch	Sustainability Manager	Tesco Ireland
Louise Glennon	Head of Public Affairs & Community	Tesco Ireland
Áine Flanagan	Head of Marketing, Communications, Corporate Responsibility	Veolia
Emer Haughey	Head of Sustainability	VHI Healthcare
Fiona Murphy	Group Sustainability Manager	VHI Healthcare
Gerard Keogh	Net Zero Lead	VHI Healthcare
Linda Valentine	Sustainability Specialist	VHI Healthcare

We also wish to thank the companies who, although not signatories, took part in the Community of Practice:

- An Post
- CRH
- Eirgrid
- Gas Networks Ireland
- Glenveagh
- Lidl
- Ornua
- Stryker

Companies that wish to take part can learn more here: [Accelerate, The Business Pact for Climate and Nature – bitci]

ACCELERATE
The Business Pact for Climate and Nature

Appendices

Appendix 1: Projected sectoral performance against national and sectoral emissions reduction targets

	Target (2018 – 2030)	With Existing Measures (WEM)	Emissions gap WEM	With Additional Measures (WAM)	Emissions gap WAM
Electricity	-75%	-55%	20% higher than target	-61%	14% higher than target
Transport	-50%	-15%	35% higher than target	-28%	22% higher than target
Buildings (Commercial and Public)	-45%	+6.8%	51.8% higher than target	+2.7%	47.7% higher than target
Buildings (Residential)	-40%	-13.1%	26.9% higher than target	-18%	22% higher than target
Industry	-35%	-10.1%	24.9% higher than target	-11.8%	23.2% higher than target
Agriculture	-25%	-4.2%	20.8% higher than target	-19.1%	5.9% higher than target

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2025–2030* (2026), available at: https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/air-emissions/irelands-greenhouse-gas-emissions-projections-2025-2030.php.

Appendix 2: Climate Transition Plan Scorecard Methodology

Introduction

This year's Climate Transition Plan Scorecard analysis was conducted by DCU researchers, in collaboration with BITCI. While BITCI advisors were involved in some aspects of the research project, notably identifying updated standards and guidance to support updating the scorecard, and gathering some of the documents of analysis from the Accelerate companies, the analysis and scoring was conducted entirely by DCU. This independent expert assessment supported the credibility and integrity of the benchmarking exercise. None of the DCU research team had any identified conflicts of interest with any of the Accelerate companies that would impact the objectivity of the exercise.

The analysis involved a team of researchers, led by the Principal Investigators (PIs). The PIs identified subject-matter experts from across the DCU Institute for Climate and Society and assigned them to Accelerator areas according to their expertise (Table x). The analysis was preceded by a review and update of the scorecard itself and by gathering the documents of analysis - reports and other disclosures produced by the Accelerate companies. These processes are described in turn below.

RESEARCH TEAM		
Assessor	**Accelerate Areas**	**Role**
Dr Aideen O'Dochartaigh Associate Professor in Accounting DCU Business School	Governance Overall review	Principal Investigator 1 (PI1)
Dr Jimmy O'Keeffe Assistant Professor in Environmental Systems DCU School of History and Geography	Decarbonisation levers Advocacy	Principal Investigator (PI2)
Dr Anh Vu Assistant Professor in Finance DCU Business School	Finance Risk	Expert evaluator 1 (EE1)
Dr Trish Morgan Assistant Professor in Communications DCU School of Communications	Nature Just Transition	Expert evaluator (EE2)
Dr Dave Robbins Associate Professor in Communications DCU School of Communications	Climate Targets & Progress Scope 3	Expert evaluator (EE3)
Emma Comerford Research Assistant DCU Business School	Identifying headline items in all areas	Research Assistant (RA)

Updating the Climate Transition Plan Scorecard

The scorecard tool was developed in 2025 by the researchers in collaboration with BITCI, and the related methodology is documented in the 2025 *Climate Transition Plan Scorecard Insights Paper* (O'Dochartaigh *et al*., 2025). The purpose of the tool is to capture best practice in each of the Accelerator Areas, and the scorecard consisted of a list of good practices, against which each Accelerate company was benchmarked. These good practices were identified through a review by the researchers and BITCI advisors of multiple external corporate sustainability benchmarks and reporting frameworks. The 2025 scorecard drew on 25 reference documents (detailed in Appendix B of the 2025 report), including some of the most widely-used climate and nature corporate reporting guidelines such as those from Science-based Targets Initiative (SBTi), Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), and Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). To maintain the relevance of the scorecard as a measure of best practice, the researchers and BITCI agreed that the 2026 iteration would be updated slightly, to incorporate new or updated recommendations from key standard-setting bodies.

In updating the scorecard, it was aimed to achieve a balance between integrating up to date recommendations and, conscious that some of the companies had been benchmarked against the first iteration of the scorecard, maintaining a level of consistency to ensure fair comparison with the prior year. BITCI advisors, PI1 and the Research Assistant identified and reviewed the latest publications from the major standard-setting bodies to identify new best practices. For example, one of the most significant new frameworks was the new Corporate Net-Zero Standard Version 2.0 from SBTi, published in June 2026. Key new points in the reviewed standards were identified, and, consistent with the prior year approach, items common to multiple guidelines were prioritised. New documents were restricted to those that were finalised as at 31 July 2026, which meant that standards in development, such as the forthcoming updates to the GHG Protocol, were excluded. The key new documents are detailed in the reference list (CDP, 2026; EPE, 2026; EU Platform on Sustainable Finance, 2025; GRI, 2025; IFRS, 2025; SBTi, 2026; World Benchmarking Alliance, 2025).

The changes to the scorecard are highlighted in the updated 2026 Assessment Criteria detailed in Appendix X, with new items and slightly updated text distinguished. Where the text was updated slightly, the new text is highlighted in red. When scoring the companies, the assessors were asked to not overly emphasise new items, such that companies assessed based on last year's criteria were evaluated largely on the same criteria.

Documents of Analysis

As in 2025, the documents analysed to conduct the review included sustainability reports, climate transition plans, annual reports, statements of strategy, environmental, risk and governance policies, and relevant web pages, for each Accelerate company. Documents were obtained through a) companies voluntarily submitting relevant documents to BITCI and b) through reviews by two of the DCU researchers and two BITCI advisors of the company websites in the first instance, followed by supplementary general internet searches to check for specific documents e.g. CDP disclosure indices, TCFD reports, Annual Reports, lobbying policies etc. The minimum documentation required for a company to be included in the analysis was a Sustainability Report. The cut off point for gathering relevant documents was 20th August 2026, with no documents published after this date considered.

A key reference document was identified for each Accelerate company, typically its Sustainability Report or Annual Report, and assessors were directed to review this document first, and then review the additional reference documents. The number of unique documents reviewed for each company ranged between five and 37, and the median number of documents reviewed was 14. The most recently published documents for each company were reviewed first through a detailed analytical reading, with prior year documents reviewed in less detail and largely for clarification of certain points e.g. to compare or confirm specific disclosures such as carbon emissions or governance policies. All companies included in the prior year analysis had published new key documents which were analysed this year.

As noted in 2025, companies do not currently report or present sustainability information in a standardised way. For example, the purpose of the Climate Transition Plan Scorecard is to evaluate corporate climate transition plans (CTP), but only half of companies analysed published a stand-alone CTP or equivalent (although most include decarbonisation roadmaps in their reports). This variability presents a significant challenge to finding and analysing publicly available climate and sustainability data. As a result, some relevant information may not have been included in our analysis despite significant efforts being taken to do so.

Data Analysis

The approach to the analysis drew on standard methods applied in the academic literature on corporate sustainability reporting analysis. There are multiple approaches to assessing corporate sustainability disclosures, for example analysing performance data, measuring quantity of disclosure, extracting quantitative information or qualitative themes, or analysing tone and sentiment (Helfaya and Whittington, 2019). Consistent with the prior year approach, the approach taken to the scorecard analysis is largely qualitative and interpretive. The Assessment Criteria functions as a foundational coding protocol, with the evaluator going back and forth between the guidance and the corporate disclosures. This abductive approach is consistent with interpretivist content analysis, where the reader makes inferences from the text which are not independent from their own conceptual contribution to the analysis (Vourvachis and Woodward, 2015).

The approach is limited in that it does not allow precise comparison of set criteria across companies, and incorporates an element of judgement by the expert assessors. The analysis does not for example involve counting keywords or number of pages, or assessing compliance with specific disclosure items. However, the scorecard's design is in line with its purpose. As noted in the 2025 Scorecard report, the volume of relevant existing evaluation frameworks, reporting guidelines and regulations, means there are hundreds of indicators which could potentially be included in each Accelerator Area. Rather than attempt to itemise every indicator, the scorecard seeks to capture most of the best practice guidance in each area, providing guidance to the assessors to review and benchmark the company information. The relative lack of granularity, in contrast for example to disclosure indices such as CDP or GRI, makes the scorecard adaptable to different types of company and across different sectors. It also supports evaluation in line with the principles of the Accelerate Pact - setting ambitious targets, taking substantive action, and achieving meaningful outcomes - rather than measuring volume of disclosure. We acknowledge that what the scorecard gains in adaptability it loses in granularity, and therefore the results of the benchmarking exercise should be contextualised by companies and readers as just one of the many available tools to assess company engagement and performance on climate, nature and just transition.

We also took measures to address the limitations of interpretivist content analysis and support the validity and reliability of the analysis. As detailed in the description of the analysis phases below, PI1 and each evaluator communicated regularly in advance of and during the analysis, holding discussions to question assumptions and confirm approaches. During the process of updating the scorecard methodology, BITCI advisors and the PIs had a series of discussions

on the proposed changes and to agree on a consolidated methodology. In the final phases, PI1 also cross-checked the work of the other assessors, clarifying particular scores and narratives to ensure consistency across assessors and companies.

The analysis took place in a series of phases designed to make the methodology as robust, reliable and replicable as possible, within the context of an approach that required some qualitative judgement. The PIs were involved in each phase, the RA in phase 1, and the EEs in phases 2, 3 and 4.

Phase 1: Initial high-level review

The PIs and RA agreed an initial approach to extracting headline information from the latest company documents. The RA reviewed all of these documents and extracted headline GHG emissions figures and any key quantitative information in other Accelerator Areas. In the case of existing companies that had been analysed in 2025, new information was prioritised. The headline information was recorded in bullet points by the RA in the spreadsheets provided to the EEs, with a view to giving the evaluators some initial context on the company's engagement and performance, to support their analysis. The RA and PIs had a series of discussions throughout this process, which took place over approximately a month, to validate the approach and review the headline information gathered for consistency across the sample.

Phase 2: Engagement with the expert evaluators (EEs)

Initial discussions were held between the PIs and each expert evaluator individually to introduce the EEs to the project. The expert evaluators were then provided with blank analysis sheets for each company detailing the Assessment Criteria for each Area, along with the documents of analysis and a word document written by PI1 explaining the Accelerator Areas, introducing the companies, and providing guidance on scoring. Guidance on scoring included advice on how to score subsidiaries of a group or global parent, on referencing, and on integrating the headline information gathered by the RA. For example, guidance on how to score subsidiaries advised the EEs to evaluate all of the available information and take both company and parent performance into account when scoring the company, distinguishing between global and national information in their comments.

Phase 3: Data analysis

The expert evaluators each independently conducted an analytical reading of the documents of analysis gathered for each Accelerate company, focusing on the Accelerator Areas they were assigned to. In line with approaches in the literature, their reading included, inter alia, focusing on information or sections relevant to their area, gaining an understanding of the organisation's business, extracting performance data and other detail, and keyword searches (Stubbs *et al.*, 2026). The EEs recorded their scores and narrative rationale for the scores in the shared google sheets. As the evaluators progressed their analysis, PI1 communicated regularly with them through meetings and emails, allowing evaluators to sense-check their assumptions. The data analysis took place over a period of approximately four weeks.

Phase 4: Thematic analysis and consolidation

When each EE had completed their analysis, PI1 reviewed the scores and narrative analysis to extract the common themes across all companies. This thematic analysis, completed in google docs, itself involved a number of phases. First, PI1 recorded which companies had addressed which elements of the scorecard under each Accelerator Area, by recording the element e.g. "Board oversight of climate risk" or "Scope 3 emissions reducing", and noting the companies that had addressed it. This analysis was divided into strengths and areas for improvement, with the areas for improvement typically the corollary of the strengths. Other items identified by the EE in their narrative analysis, beyond the best practice elements in the Assessment Criteria, were also noted here, such as novel initiatives. Second, PI1 made a list of questions for the EE based on the thematic analysis, including querying particular scores and drawing attention to documents that may not have been analysed. PI1 then met the EE and discussed their analysis, including these questions. These were substantive discussions of approximately 60 - 90 minutes. Finally, if appropriate, the EE revised their scores and updated the narrative analysis depending on the conclusions of the discussion. This phase took place over approximately two weeks.

Phase 5: Review and write up

This phase was completed by PI1, who drew on the thematic analysis and consolidated scores to derive and write up key insights for strengths and areas for improvement under each Accelerator Area, along with observations on the overall scores. This included some comparative analysis with last year's scores. The write up was then reviewed by BITCI advisors and refined further by PI1. These insights are presented in the findings section of this report.

Appendix 3: Climate Transition Plan Scorecard References

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