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# **Sustainability Definitions**

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**SUSTAINABLE X**

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# Overall Terminology

Term	Definition
<b>ESG</b>	A set of criteria used to assess the sustainability and ethical performance of a company or investment.
<b>Sustainability</b>	The ability to maintain or preserve the environment, society, and economy in a manner that ensures future generations can meet their needs.
<b>Climate change</b>	The long-term changes in the Earth's average temperature, precipitation, and wind patterns.
<b>Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)</b>	The business approach that focuses on promoting the well-being of society and the environment, beyond financial performance.
<b>Renewable energy</b>	Energy from sources that are replenished naturally and do not run out, such as wind, sun, and water.
<b>Circular economy</b>	An economic system where waste and pollution are designed out and resources are kept in use for as long as possible.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The variety of life in a given ecosystem, including the variety of species, their genes, and the ecosystems they inhabit.
<b>Sustainable development</b>	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
<b>Energy efficiency</b>	Reducing the amount of energy required to perform a task or meet a demand.

## Overall Terminology

Term	Definition
<b>Water scarcity</b>	A shortage of water resources caused by population growth, urbanisation, and climate change.
<b>Sustainable transportation</b>	Transportation systems that are environmentally friendly, economically viable, and socially accessible.
<b>Ecological footprint</b>	The amount of land and water required to sustain a particular lifestyle or population.
<b>Zero waste</b>	A philosophy and approach to minimise waste by reducing, reusing, and recycling resources.
<b>Natural capital</b>	The stock of natural resources, such as forests, wetlands, and minerals, that provide ecological goods and services.
<b>Corporate sustainability</b>	The integration of environmental, social, and governance considerations into a company's strategy and operations.
<b>Sustainable tourism</b>	Tourism that minimises its impact on the environment and supports local communities and economies.
<b>Sustainable finance</b>	Investment and lending practices that support environmentally and socially responsible projects.

# Carbon Terms

Term	Definition
<b>Carbon offsetting</b>	A process where individuals or organisations can compensate for their greenhouse gas emissions by funding equivalent emissions reductions in other projects, such as renewable energy or reforestation.
<b>Greenhouse gas emissions</b>	The release of gases that trap heat in the atmosphere, leading to climate change.
<b>Carbon credits</b>	Units of emissions reductions that can be bought and sold, allowing companies or individuals to offset their emissions by funding equivalent reductions in other projects.
<b>Carbon footprint</b>	A measure of the total greenhouse gas emissions produced by an individual, organisation, or product over its entire life cycle.
<b>Carbon capture and storage (CCS)</b>	A technology that captures carbon dioxide emissions from industrial processes and stores them underground, preventing them from entering the atmosphere.
<b>Carbon neutral</b>	A term used to describe an individual, organisation, or product that has a net zero carbon footprint.
<b>Net zero</b>	A target to balance the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced with the amount removed from the atmosphere.
<b>Carbon pricing</b>	A system where a price is placed on carbon emissions, creating an economic incentive to reduce emissions.
<b>Carbon tax</b>	A tax levied on the emissions of carbon dioxide.
<b>Scope 1 emissions</b>	Direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by the organisation.
<b>Scope 2 emissions</b>	Indirect emissions from the consumption of purchased electricity, heat, or steam.
<b>Scope 3 emissions</b>	All other indirect emissions that occur in the value chain of the organisation.

# Building Terms

Term	Definition
<b>Green Building</b>	The design, construction, and operation of buildings to minimise their impact on the environment through efficient use of resources such as energy, water, and materials.
<b>Life cycle assessment (LCA)</b>	A comprehensive evaluation of a product's environmental impact, from extraction of raw materials to disposal.
<b>Sustainable agriculture</b>	Farming practices that promote soil health, conserve water, reduce pesticide use, and protect biodiversity.
<b>Sustainable procurement</b>	The practice of sourcing goods and services from suppliers that promote sustainability and minimise environmental impact.
<b>BREEAM</b>	A widely used environmental assessment method for buildings in the UK that evaluates sustainability performance in areas such as energy use, water efficiency, and waste management.
<b>Passivhaus</b>	A building standard that emphasises the use of energy-efficient design and materials to minimise heating and cooling requirements.
<b>Green roofs</b>	Roofs covered with vegetation that help to reduce energy consumption, manage stormwater runoff, and enhance urban biodiversity.
<b>Low-carbon heating</b>	Heating systems that use renewable energy sources such as air source heat pumps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
<b>Greywater recycling</b>	The reuse of wastewater from sinks, showers, and other sources for non-potable purposes, such as irrigation.
<b>Living walls</b>	Walls covered with vegetation that help to improve air quality, reduce energy consumption, and enhance the urban environment.
<b>Energy performance certificates (EPCs)</b>	Certificates required by law in the UK that provide information on a building's energy efficiency and recommendations for improvement.

# Building Terms

Term	Definition
<b>Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS)</b>	Systems that manage stormwater runoff in a way that reduces the risk of flooding and enhances the local environment.
<b>Low-emissivity (Low-E) windows</b>	Windows with a special coating that reduces the amount of heat that is lost, thereby reducing energy consumption.
<b>Sustainable materials</b>	Materials that are produced in a manner that minimises environmental impact, such as recycled or sustainably harvested wood, bamboo, or cork.
<b>LEED certification</b>	A rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to evaluate the environmental performance of buildings, with different levels of certification based on various criteria.
<b>BREEAM certification</b>	A sustainability assessment method for buildings and communities in the UK that evaluates their environmental, social, and economic performance.
<b>Eco-label</b>	A label or certification that indicates a product meets certain environmental standards, such as using sustainable materials or having low emissions.
<b>Sustainable sourcing</b>	The practice of procuring goods and services from suppliers that have demonstrated a commitment to sustainable practices.
<b>Sustainable finance</b>	A financial approach that takes into account ESG factors when making investment decisions, with the goal of promoting sustainable development.
<b>Cradle to cradle</b>	A design philosophy that aims to create products and systems that are biodegradable, recyclable, or compostable, with materials and resources being cycled back into the production process.
<b>Blue economy</b>	An economic model that emphasises the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth while preserving the health of marine ecosystems.
<b>Ecological footprint</b>	A measure of the impact of human activities on the planet's natural resources and the ability of these resources to replenish themselves.



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all. The SDGs are:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. No Poverty                              | 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities     |
| 2. Zero Hunger                             | 12. Responsible Consumption and Production |
| 3. Good Health and Well-Being              | 13. Climate Action                         |
| 4. Quality Education                       | 14. Life Below Water                       |
| 5. Gender Equality                         | 15. Life On Land                           |
| 6. Clean Water and Sanitation              | 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions |
| 7. Affordable and Clean Energy             | 17. Partnerships for the Goals.            |
| 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth         |  |
| 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure |  |
| 10. Reduced Inequalities                   |  |

The SDGs provide a universal framework for countries to work towards a sustainable future, taking into account the interconnections between economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development.





### 1. No Poverty

Beyond income alone, what matters to people is whether they can realise their aspirations for themselves and their families. This means having food security, access to basic services such as healthcare, transportation and education, and living in peaceful, stable societies.



### 2. Zero Hunger

The goal is for commitment for business engagement in the global effort to advance food security and sustainable agriculture. Focus is on the key pillars food and agriculture, which are aligned with the five elements of the Zero Hunger Challenge: (1) Sustainable Food Systems; (2) Rural Poverty; (3) Loss and Waste of Food; (4) Access to Adequate Food and Healthy Diets; and (5) Ending Malnutrition.



### 3. Good health & well-being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. By ensuring that workers have safe working conditions and access to health services, companies establish healthier staff and better relationships which in many cases has positive effects on productivity.



### 4. Quality education

SDG 4 is driven by the target to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Investing in education is essential to developing a skilled workforce for the future and improving economic growth.



### 5. Gender equality

Companies that focus on women's empowerment experience greater business success. Research shows investing in women and girls can lead to increases in productivity, organisational effectiveness, return on investment and higher consumer satisfaction (UN Global compact). A growing number of business leaders recognise the importance of women as leaders, consumers, entrepreneurs, workers and caretakers. They are adapting their policies, programs and initiatives to create environments where women and girls thrive.



### 6. Clean Water and Sanitation

Clean water and sanitation are one of the most fundamental goals. Competing demands for clean fresh water (agriculture, households, energy generation, industrial use, ecosystems) are exacerbated by the effects of climate change putting more pressure on water quality and availability. This is particularly relevant in urban areas. Businesses can help by adopting values and practices that aim to safeguard long-term availability of clean water, provide sanitation and prevent pollution for all stakeholders in their water catchment area.



### 7. Affordable and Clean Energy

Countries can accelerate the transition to an affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy system by investing in renewable energy resources, prioritising energy efficient practices, and adopting clean energy Pharmaceuticals and infrastructure. Businesses can maintain and protect ecosystems and commit to sourcing 100% of operational electricity needs from renewable sources. Employers can reduce the internal demand for transport by prioritising telecommunications and incentivise less energy intensive modes such as train travel over auto and air travel.



### 8. Decent work and economic growth

Sustained and inclusive economic growth can drive progress, create decent jobs for all and improve living standards. This goal can be supported by providing opportunities for everyone to get work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration.



### 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, together with innovation and infrastructure, can unleash dynamic and competitive economic forces that generate employment and income. They play a key role in introducing and promoting new pharmaceuticals, facilitating international trade and enabling the efficient use of resources.



### 10. Reduced Inequalities

Businesses have a responsibility to avoid contributing to inequality. As well as simply respecting human rights, organisations must not be complicit in perpetuating biases and discrimination. They can have a positive impact on addressing inequality through inclusive business models that provide empowerment for marginalised groups in the workplace, marketplace and community.



### 11. Sustainable cities and communities

Cities and metropolitan areas contribute about 60 per cent of global GDP. However, they also account for about 70 per cent of global carbon emissions and over 60 per cent of resource use. Business can play a vital role in enabling communities to become more sustainable by providing specific infrastructure, technology, services and financing solutions. They can also contribute positively to the overall optimisation of urban systems to create inclusive, safe, sustainable and disaster resilient cities.



### 12. Responsible consumption and production

Doing more and better with less. It is also about decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, increasing resource efficiency and promoting sustainable lifestyles. Sustainable consumption and production can also contribute substantially to poverty alleviation and the transition towards low-carbon and green economies.



### 13. Climate action

Companies can contribute to this SDG by decarbonising their operations and supply chains through continuously improving energy efficiency, reducing the carbon footprint of their products, services and processes. This should include setting ambitious emissions reductions targets in line with climate science. In addition, companies can scale up investment in the development of innovative low-carbon products and services. They should also build resilience in their operations, supply chains and the communities in which they operate.



### 14. Life below water

Oceans face the threats of marine and nutrient pollution, resource depletion and climate change, all of which are caused primarily by human actions. This creates global socio-economic problems, including health, safety and financial risks. Businesses can contribute by preventing and mitigating their detrimental impacts on marine environment. They can also support businesses and people who depend on oceans, whether it be for employment, resources, or leisure.



### 15. Life on Land

Society relies on biodiversity and the goods and services it provides for human well-being and for the provisioning of raw materials that produce greater material welfare. All businesses, regardless of their size, location or sector, depend upon and have a direct or indirect impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services through their operations, supply chains or investment choices.



### 16. Peace and justice, strong Institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. Provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Corruption causes inefficiencies and renders transaction costs uncertain, is anti-competitive, and hampers businesses' ability to comply with other obligations.



### 17. Partnerships to achieve the Goals

Society relies on biodiversity and the goods and services it provides for human well-being and for the provisioning of raw materials that produce greater material welfare. All businesses, regardless of their size, location or sector, depend upon and have a direct or indirect impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services through their operations, supply chains or investment choices.