

Biodiversity



Every plant, animal and bacteria species plays a critical part in the sensitive balance of life on Earth. The term biodiversity describes the enormous variety of these species.

Greater biodiversity means a natural stability for all life forms. If there is a breakdown of biodiversity, it threatens the ability of humans to exist on Earth – that is why you hear the term ‘existential crisis’ linked to the way that human activity is changing the planet.

CO2e



The main culprit of climate change is a greenhouse gas called carbon dioxide (or simply carbon or CO₂). ‘CO₂e’ is the standard measure for carbon emissions created by human activity.

It includes carbon dioxide as well as the other most important greenhouse gases created by human activities that contribute to climate change (e.g. methane) as determined by the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

These are converted to a much simpler to understand ‘carbon dioxide equivalent’, or CO₂e.

Sustainability



A sustainable individual or organisation is one that doesn’t deplete nature or natural resources faster than they re-generate, doesn’t directly or indirectly destroy natural habitat, and doesn’t compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In this way, human civilisation can co-exist with nature.

Greenhouse gases and Climate Change



Greenhouse gases occur naturally. By trapping heat inside the Earth’s atmosphere they help support life on Earth. However human activity, principally through burning fossil fuels such as oil, gas, and coal, is increasing the amount of these so much that we are heating up the planet faster than nature can adjust to it, thus threatening biodiversity.

We’re changing the climate so much that more extreme weather is occurring such as hurricanes, floods, droughts and wildfires. As such, most scientists consider we have a window of 5-8 years to switch to sustainable behaviour and prevent the worst of climate change.

Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3



Scope 1 and 2 refer to carbon emissions that an organisation directly controls. Scope 1 is on-site combustion of gas and oil, fuel for company vehicles, industrial usage of greenhouse gases such as CO₂, and leakage from units such as refrigeration.

Scope 2 refers to the purchase of electricity, steam, heating or cooling that was generated by a third party.

Scope 3 is all other greenhouse gas emissions associated with the activity of an organisation, most notably in their upstream and downstream supply chain. Scope 3 also includes other activities such as business travel, commuting, capital goods, leases, franchises and investments – along with the processing, use and end-of-life of products sold to another organisation or to the end consumer.

Carbon Disclosure Project & Global Reporting Initiative



CDP is a not-for-profit charity that runs a system for investors, companies, cities, states and regions to report on their environmental impacts. Through scoring and reporting, they are encouraging transparency to encourage sustainable business operations. Similarly, the GRI covers a range of topics for sustainability reporting.

The Sustainable Development Goals



Otherwise known as the Global Goals, these are a collection of 17 interlinked targets to "achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". Set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly, they are intended to be achieved by 2030. They cover social as well as environmental topics

Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG)



This is the process of reporting on the environmental and social impacts of business activities. Along with financial reporting, it creates the 'triple bottom line' against which a sustainable business is measured.

Circular Economy



In a traditional 'linear' economy items are made, used and disposed. Items often end up in landfill or are incinerated, so to replace them we will deplete or destroy more natural resources and habitats in an unsustainable way. In a circular economy we keep resources in use for as long as possible, make the most of them, and then recover the raw materials to begin the process all over again.

ISO14001



This **international standard** provides a framework for an effective environmental management system (**EMS**). It does not set performance requirements, rather an EMS allows an organisation to measure compliance against a policy or standard(s), and it encourages continuous improvement.

Science Based Targets for Tackling Climate Change



Organisations that have signed up to the Science Based Targets Initiative are committed to making change in their operations and supply chains to reduce their carbon emissions. This must be in line with the Paris Agreement to limit global warming due to climate change to 1.5oC.

