

# Leading an employee-led eco movement

## A guide for decision makers



## Foreword by our Founder

Global environmental, social and economic challenges are urgent. As leaders and decision-makers in today's climate, building businesses to believe in is how we can meaningfully contribute to the fight.

So what does being 'a business to believe in' entail?

It's about looking at the issues in the world—the climate crisis, social disparity, racial inequality, to name a few—and ensuring your business is doing its best to move the needle. You don't have to be perfect, that's a paralysing goal. But to meet expectations and capitalise on opportunity, we do have to be trying.

If the task ahead feels mammoth, I have a nugget that will help. Today's workforce, your employees, care. Conversation after conversation that I've had over the past year has proved this; employees at every level are the ones pushing ethical initiatives. This tells me that the energy needed to drive change already exists within organisations. **All you need to do is facilitate it.**

Pawprint has created this guide to help you set the wheels of sustainability in motion. From how to recruit your eco champions, to the importance of company-wide climate knowledge, to a long list of carbon-reducing office ideas, it's a handbook for those looking to drive an employee-led eco movement.

Please do let me know if it's useful or how we could improve it,

Christian

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*The true value of a leader is not measured by the work they do. A leader's true value is measured by the work they inspire others to do.”*

**– Simon Sinek**



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## Step 1 Form a Green Team

A Green Team is a group of employees who care about the environment and their impact on it. As you well know, passion like this is invaluable in a business; it's what turns good into great. If you can recruit from all levels, ensuring there are decision makers available to green-light good ideas, plus eco champions with the passion to push, then the team will turbocharge sustainability initiatives, improve CSR engagement and germinate a green culture from within.

## What will a Green Team do for my business?

### 1. It will promote CSR and an environmental ethos

As the millennial 'purpose generation' will make up 75% of the workforce by 2025, how a company communicates its standpoint on key issues, such as the environment, will determine how it attracts and retains top talent. So, it's worth making your company count.

### 2. It will engage employees with a mutual sense of responsibility

A Green Team fosters cross-departmental collaboration and brings about a sense of community beyond 'this is the place we all work'.

### 3. It will improve employee engagement and productivity

Employees that feel valued and part of the company mission will be more motivated to come in and work hard every day, increasing productivity, output and general office morale.

### 4. It can also save you dollar

A Green Team will often work to find and implement efficient ways to improve a company's running with sustainable benefits, which in turn can save costs. For example, regulating sustainable production and consumption can cut unnecessary waste and generate valuable byproducts, increasing the overall profit margin. Need inspo? Google IKEA's sustainability report.



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*Capitalising on support from willing and passionate colleagues offers a cost-effective way to create change and deliver impact.'*

– Richard Tarboton, Carbon Intelligence

## How to recruit a mean Green Team

First and foremost, **find your eco champions**. These are individuals who care about the cause and already have their finger on the pulse of all things sustainability. If you put out the call and no one answers, you've asked wrong. [8 in 10 employees expect their employer to act on climate change](#), and many are [‘engaged and willing to help, but aren't always given the incentives, tools and support to do so.’](#)

**Top tip** including information on how joining the Green Team will benefit its members is marketing 101.

Some benefits might include:

- Networking with people from different departments/seniority levels
- Public speaking practice
- Opportunity to shape the direction of the business and its sustainability objectives
- Building up knowledge of climate change and how people experience it
- An incentive, e.g. free lunch once a month

### **Do you have an eco champion in your company?**

*Want them to act as a brand ambassador for your sustainability initiatives?*

*Pawprint will be hosting a series of 'Eco Energiser' events later this year, which will amplify the voices of employees turning their organisation into something they can believe in. **Nominate them through [beth@pawprint.eco](mailto:beth@pawprint.eco)***

Next, **ensure diversity of thought**. This means recruiting members who represent various creeds, ethnicities, sexualities, ages, genders, departments, regions and levels of seniority. Climate change affects everyone differently, and diversity of thought prevents any blind spots from sending your initiatives down the wrong path.

**Top tip** please ensure you have at least one decision maker on the team. This not only prevents bottlenecks, but also sends a clear message that the business takes the issue seriously.

Finally, **communicate the team's purpose** and the commitment it entails to your whole company. As part of this, **invite volunteers to get involved**. If you find yourself with hoards of keen responses, pat yourself on the back for being part of such a purpose-driven organisation. Then decide if it would be more effective to split your volunteers into department-specific, region-specific or initiative-specific teams with a self-appointed leader to act as a liaison.

This could also be a nice opportunity to encourage some friendly, inter-team competition to drive even greater improvements ***\*cough cough cue Pawprint\****.

Learn what Pawprint can do to engage your employees [here](#).

## Checklist for the first few meetings

Got your superhero cape in your bag and your inauguration speech at the ready?  
Here are some pointers for what to cover after that...

- ❑ General housekeeping, including intros, appointing any team leaders and a discussion of where and how often you want to meet.
- ❑ Evaluate where your company currently stands on the enviro-scale. Start with some easy, company-wide areas such as recycling efforts, communal food, and energy efficiency. And remember, this is a space for positive change, no finger-pointing allowed.
- ❑ Flag any major holes, flaws or goals that require urgent attention from the team first.
- ❑ Research tasks and ideate how best to encourage employee participation ([Pawprint](#) can be your idea to bring to the table), and action incremental changes from the top.

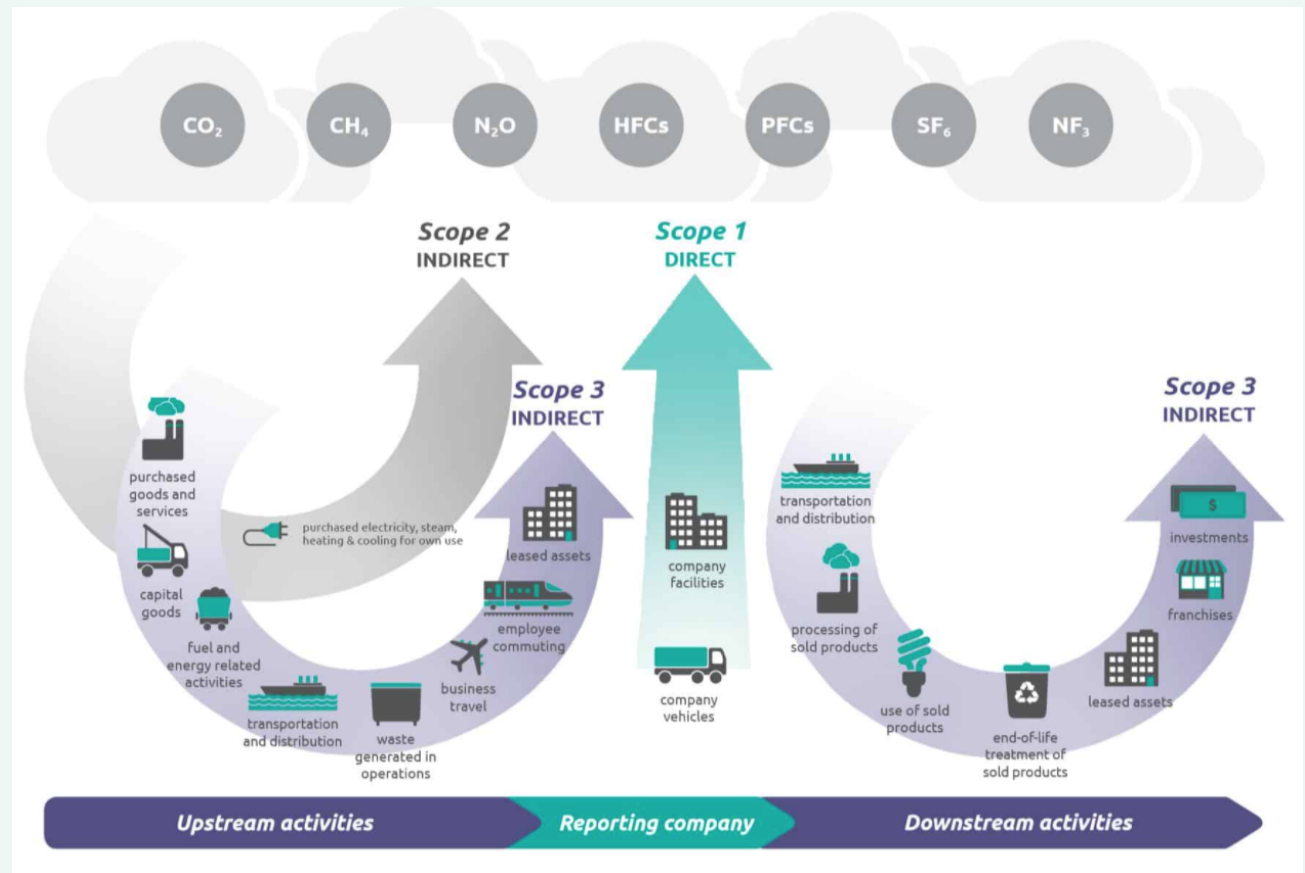
Phew, time for some lunch.

## Step 2 Measure your carbon footprint and set science-based targets

The Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol is a widely recognised framework that guides organisations on how to report their emissions.

At present, we are only required to report on Scope 1 and 2—direct emissions plus emissions from the energy we buy. Considering the scope of Scope 3, however, this leaves a lot of GHG completely unaccounted for... Pawprint calls for businesses to invest in a complete carbon audit, which includes all of fluffy Scope 3.

Source: GHG Protocol





## Measuring your organisation's entire carbon footprint is important for many reasons

- It unearths your biggest carbon leaks (read: biggest opportunities to reduce your carbon footprint).
- It gives you a starting point from which to springboard into low-carbon existence.
- It aligns your company with the eco movement, putting pressure on other organisations to follow suit.
- It demonstrates commitment and a sense of urgency to customers, investors and employees.
- It will keep you ahead of regulation. SECR mandates that large organisations report on Scope 1 and 2. Don't waste time hoping Scope 3 isn't next.

## How to measure your organisation's carbon footprint

There are a number of ways you could go about this. Below we've outlined three of them, ranging in time vs cost investment:

### 1. Working with an expert

For example, Small World Consulting (owned by Pawprint's Scientific Advisor, Mike Berners-Lee). SWC specialises in carbon accounting, particularly Scope 3 measurement, and assists with identifying hotspots and setting bold targets.

Pros	Cons
Accuracy and efficiency	It's a more expensive option
Guidance on target setting	No skills are brought in-house
Big picture thinking which ensures a coherent response to climate change	

### 2. Working with a science-based tool\*

For example, Compare Your Footprint. Created by a team of environmental management consultants, this tool requires you to enter data about your business (e.g. how much energy you used within a certain period), and returns a report detailing the carbon footprint of whatever you entered.

Pros	Cons
Inexpensive	Time consuming
Some skills are brought in house	No guidance on target setting
Easy to use	Accuracy is in your hands

### 3. Hiring in the skills

For example, creating a role or small team in your company to focus on carbon footprinting/sustainability.

Pros	Cons
Skills come in-house	It's more expensive than doing it with the team you have
A dedicated team means dedicated time	

**\*Here are some useful resources for measuring your organisational carbon footprint:**

- Carbon Trust's [Carbon Footprinting Guide](#)
- GHG Protocol's [Scope 2](#) and [Scope 3](#) guidance
- SBTi's '[Best practices in scope 3 greenhouse gas management](#)' report
- Ecoact's [Homeworking Emissions Whitepaper](#)

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*Having a science-based target helps keep us on track. It means we know what we need to do in the short and medium term to meet the longer-term vision.*

– KEIKO SHIGA,  
Sustainability Department, Sony Corporation

## Setting reduction targets in line with climate science to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees.

‘Science-based targets’ are the only kind of climate targets, as far as we (and the planet) are concerned. Whilst all individual, carbon-reducing actions are worthy of celebration, businesses going through the rigmarole of carbon footprinting really should be looking to the less-than-2-degrees-warmer horizon and figuring out how they can contribute to us all getting there. If you’re stuck on where to start with this, take a look at the [Science Based Targets Initiative](#). Nearly 1500 organisations have pledged to reduce their emissions in line with science. Join them?

Want to go a step further? With **Pawprint**, employees are empowered to measure, understand and reduce their carbon footprint at home, work and beyond. Businesses receive anonymised carbon and sentiment data, transforming ESG from a box-ticking exercise into a measurable impact. [Learn more.](#)

### Step 3 Create company-wide understanding of (and commitment to) the climate crisis

To come at sustainability purely from the perspective of cutting carbon is short sighted. Don't get us wrong, cutting carbon is a big thumbs up (we'd have to say that), but when it comes to employee engagement in particular, you've got to view your efforts through the kaleidoscope of your employees' experiences.

***Not everyone is experiencing climate change in the same way.***

Your employee population is made up of a diverse range of people; in terms of climate change, some may have grown up in a family that doesn't believe in it, while others grew up in a town that's now under water due to rising sea levels.

If you want to fuel sustainability initiatives with employee enthusiasm, make sure you—and your employees—are

approaching sustainability with a deep understanding of how it intersects with other global issues. This will ensure that your actions are welcoming and inclusive, and encourage everyone to join you on your journey to becoming a business to believe in.

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*If we don't have a planet to live on, then we can't fix any social issues... [But] if we save the planet at the expense of equality, is that even a planet we want to live on?*

– Hana Kajimura,  
Sustainability Manager, Allbirds



## Learning together

Keen to develop a company-wide understanding of how climate change affects people around the world, but not sure how? Here are some ideas for your Green Team:

- Create a regular **Green Team newsletter** with a round-up of recent articles, podcasts, documentaries, veggie recipes, carbon-cutting lifestyle hacks, etc. Here you can also spotlight your eco champions to thank them for their work.
- Implement **green lunch 'n learns**, where employees can present on a sustainability issue they have read about or invite an expert to come and speak.
- Check out **Pawprint's Eco Blog** to learn about all things carbon footprint. We recommend reading '[What is the average carbon footprint, globally?](#)' to start you off.
- Start a **free office eco library or book club**. 'Ideas to Postpone the End of the World' by Ailton Krenak would make a perfect first read.
- Kick off a **monthly eco event**. This could be a talk from a local environmental enterprise, a trip to a relevant exhibition, or a workshop on growing your own food or repurposing unused objects.

## Some useful resources

- BLab recently released a [Climate Justice Playbook for Organisations](#)
- Intersectional Environmentalists have an amazing [resource hub](#)
- Use [@chicksforclimate](#), [@earthrisestudio](#), [@hellohubbub](#) on Instagram as springboards for discovery.

## Step 4 Reduce the carbon footprint of your office

So you've set and committed to science-based targets, now how to achieve them...

Since Pawprint is focused on helping organisations engage employees on sustainability, we're going to stay in our lane and focus on recommendations that impact employees.

**Please note:** There are a million other ways you can reach your targets and we're *certainly not* recommending that you let all of the responsibility fall on employees. **These ideas should run alongside the operational and structural changes you're making to achieve your goals.**

### Some carbon-cutting ideas that employees can contribute to

#### Scope 2

With the right tools and support, employees can help you save energy at your offices/facilities. You could:

- Bring in experts to do weekly training sessions or a one-off workshop

#### Scope 3

- Switch your pension provider to one that doesn't invest in deforestation/fossil fuels/tobacco, etc, and/or encourage employees to switch to the ethical fund (if that's an option). Check out [Make My Money Matter](#) to learn more.
- Offer more vegetarian/vegan options in the canteen (you could even introduce meat-free, or plant-based days) AND educate your employees on why it's important to eat less meat and dairy. BrewDog recently started displaying the carbon footprint of each

- Include a weekly energy saving tip on your newsletter
- Provide access to [Pawprint](#) which teaches employees how to save energy in a fun and engaging way. Here you could even set up a competition, which challenges groups to reduce their energy footprint. The group that saves the most energy receives a green reward!

dish on their menu—if you work with a consultant to measure your carbon footprint, this could be a nice side project to encourage low carbon eating at work.

- Ask employees to audit the suppliers they work with, to find out what their ethics and environmental practices are. If they don't align with your business', request that they outline a plan to change within a certain timeframe. This is such a major area for businesses to utilise their influence.
- Create or commission a sustainable procurement plan to guide employees towards items with the lowest impact on people and the planet.
- Create and communicate recycling (kerbside and e-waste) policies, and provide the right bins and signage to enable employees to dispose of waste responsibly. [Donate Digital](#) is a fantastic charity that takes old or unused IT equipment and distributes it to children in need.
- Create an electric fleet plan; one which identifies when existing vehicles will be past their sell-by date and ensures that their replacements are electric. Also, teach employees who drive regularly about low-carbon driving, e.g. accelerating and

decelerating gently. Energy Saving Trust has a [useful resource hub](#) for finding an ecodriving training supplier.

- Reduce business travel through policy; release a statement (and document it in your employee handbook, or wherever you keep your policies) that limits corporate travel to only VERY necessary trips. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that a lot can be achieved on Zoom.
- Incentivise slow commuting and slow travel. Some ideas here include monthly loans for, or money towards, public transport season tickets, and additional 'journey days' tagged on to annual leave allowance for those that can prove they're not flying to a holiday destination. We recommend asking your employees what would work best for them; there's no point introducing the Bike To Work Scheme if everyone lives 50 miles out!
- Encourage or incentivise employees to switch to a renewable energy provider at home. [Big Clean Switch](#) helps organisations give free green energy to employees.

## Share your targets



*Communicating your organisational carbon footprint to employees can help engage them in the process of carbon reduction and energy management.*

– *The Carbon Trust*

As shown in Carbon Credential's recent Carbon Commitment Report, of the 1000 employees surveyed, 74% had no idea what their organisation's carbon reduction targets were, or whether any had been set, yet the majority of them felt the company wasn't doing enough to engage them on carbon cutting.

If you're thinking 'what a missed opportunity', then great minds think alike. Employees care about climate change, so sharing your science-based targets is as much an employee engagement activity as it is one of accountability/marketing/brand building/ESG/etc. And with the power to accelerate carbon reduction, not doing everything in your power to engage them is to dawdle towards the door while your house burns down around you.

Not to be dramatic.

## How to share your science-based targets



*Environmental transparency and accountability are vital to tracking progress towards a thriving, sustainable future*

– [Carbon Disclosure Project](#)

It's said so often, it feels like an old adage (perhaps it is?); 'when it comes to building trust, transparency is key'. This stands for employees, customers, investors and anyone else who looks to your organisation for leadership.

There are two key facets to environmental transparency within organisations; first, reporting and second, distribution. Below we've outlined some thoughts, tips and guidance which should help you get started.

### **Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)**

CDP is a hub for corporate climate change information, apparently the largest in the world. The data can be viewed by anyone, including investors, customers and employees. Reporting through them validates your efforts and safeguards the reputation of your company. [Check them out here.](#)

## Reporting

Be upfront about where you find yourself today as well as where you're aiming to get to in the future.

First, create a report of your carbon footprinting exercise. In it, include:

- Your methodology
- Any organisational boundaries you set (e.g. we included suppliers but not customers)
- How you collected your data and any gaps it includes or assumptions you made
- The science-based targets that you've set off the back of your findings

Then, report routinely on the progress you're making towards your targets. This can be annually, or semiannually, depending on how much carbon you emit and how much progress you've made towards your targets (by that we mean, if you've made amazing progress and want to shout about it then you might want to report more frequently. If you've made only a small amount of progress, still stick to your predetermined schedule).

Our biggest tip is to invest in making the report readable. Don't bog people down in scientific jargon and endless data. Of course, make that stuff available, but the Average Jo pretty much just wants to know where you started, where you're at, and how far you've got to go.

For an example of a company that's done this \*beautifully\*, check out [BiBy Beauty's 2020 Carbon Report](#). See what we did there?

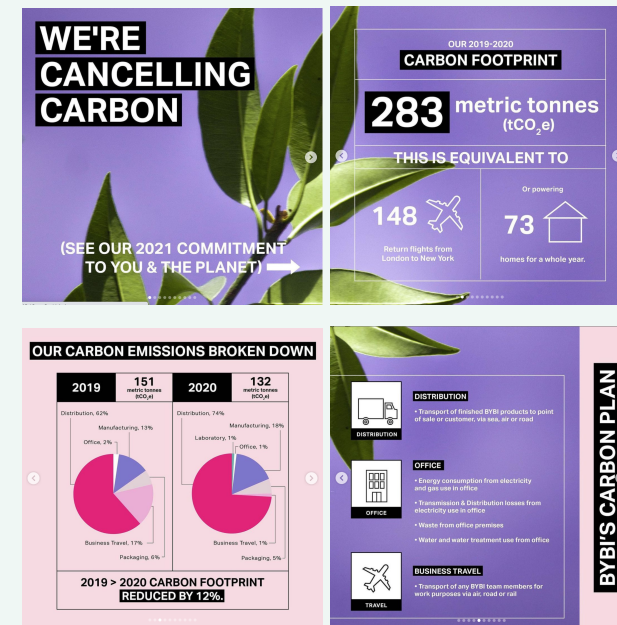


## Distribution

Once you've got your report(s), you need to encourage people to look at it. And no, mentioning it at the bottom of a newsletter isn't enough. You really need to make a BIG deal of it; at the very least, every employee should be aware of it and know where to find it.

### How to achieve this?

Send it out in an email from the CEO, post a snapshot version of it on your socials (again, see [BiBy Beauty's](#) below), add it to (or create) a 'sustainability' tab on your website, if you have an intranet put it on the home page. Shout loud and proud about knowing your starting point and having a clear path to your desired end point. In our mind, there's nothing cooler.



Source: [ByBiBeauty](#)



## Engagement

Since we've harped on and on about the importance of employee engagement in tackling organisational emissions, it feels right to end this guide on a reminder:

Engage with employees every step of the way—when you're measuring your footprint, defining your science-based targets, deciding what reduction activities

to try, even when you're compiling your reports. Ask for your employees' opinions on everything to bring them along with you on the journey.

To reiterate what our Founder, Christian, said at the beginning of this guide, 'the energy needed to drive change already exists within organisations.

**All you need to do is facilitate it.'**



Learn what Pawprint can do to engage your employees [here](#).