

AtoZero

Guiding your
organisation on
its journey to
net zero

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Why net zero?



The urgency

Change isn't coming.
It has arrived.

To avoid catastrophic climate change, we need to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels. Today, we are already at 1.1°C and feeling the effects, meaning that the window for achieving our target and avoiding the most catastrophic impacts of climate change is rapidly closing.

The global community has responded with the Paris Agreement - but progress is falling short. Collectively, we are all responsible for our impact on the planet and it is vital that, as a global community, we move urgently beyond low carbon, to no carbon.

But in order to get there, we need to quickly transition towards a net zero economy by drastically reducing the amount of emissions we produce as well as removing carbon from the atmosphere through the growth of carbon sinks (like trees, wetlands and mangroves) and innovative new technologies.



The risk

Business as usual
may mean no business at all.

Faced with this urgency governments are legislating, investors are asking tougher questions, and society is demanding action. All the while, the climate is changing.

Businesses could soon find themselves at risk of non-compliance; losing investment; left behind in the market; threatened by supply chain instability; and exposed to extreme weather events.

Managing the risks of climate change is fast becoming a necessity if we wish to ensure the long-term prosperity of our commercial interests and investments. Future-proofing your organisation means adopting a net zero strategy. Businesses must now transform themselves from A to Zero.

Why net zero?



The opportunity

Those that act today thrive tomorrow.

Where there is risk, there is also opportunity. The climate challenge presents a chance for businesses to lead the way and build reputational and competitive advantage. The world is seeking solutions for a future-fit zero carbon economy, and business has the capability to evolve and deliver.

Effective action means improving efficiency, reducing costs and driving innovation to achieve success.

Put simply, climate action makes commercial sense.



The ambition

Act now for net zero

We're already helping some of the world's leading businesses transition to net zero.

Empowering them to fulfil the growing demands upon them to set targets, disclose their progress and achieve compliance. Enabling them to reduce their emissions through wide-reaching business transformation and digital decarbonisation. Helping them to cancel their remaining carbon emissions through certified offsetting projects which fund international sustainable development and preserve vital natural carbon sinks.

While the task is not small, the need is clear, and the ambition must be zero.

What is net zero?

Net zero is a state where we add no incremental greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

This means achieving a balance between carbon emissions and carbon sinks through a combination of emissions reduction and carbon sequestration.

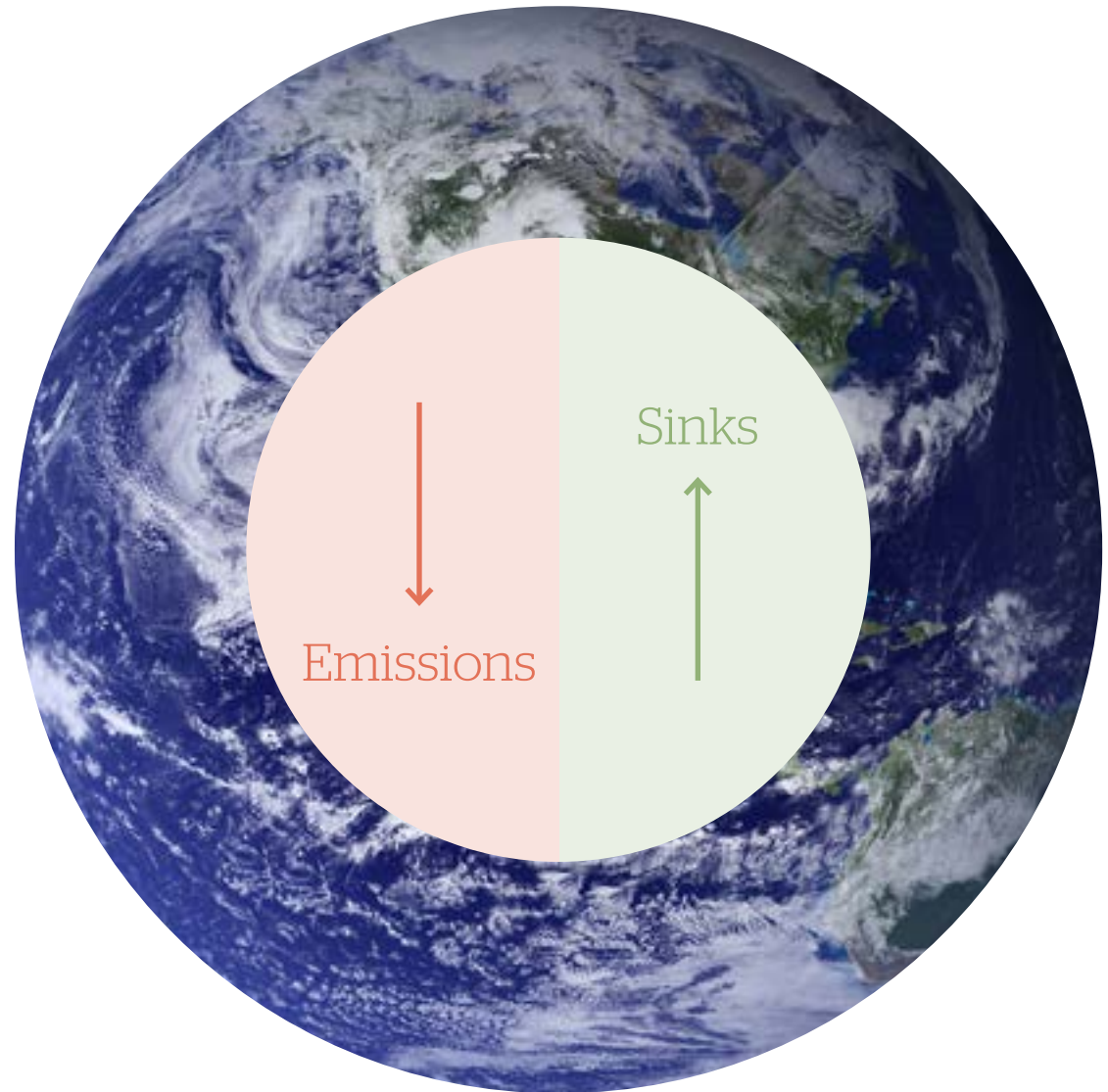
Attaining net zero requires reducing your greenhouse gas outputs to zero or getting as close as possible and offsetting your remaining emissions via removal/ sequestration of an equivalent quantity of carbon from the atmosphere. In short, what continues to be emitted, must be removed.

Drastic reduction in emissions is the cornerstone of a net zero strategy. Offsetting and sequestration will play a vital role but cannot alone achieve the no-carbon economy that we need to safeguard our future.

What is carbon neutrality?

Carbon neutrality is similarly the process of offsetting emissions to neutral. However, it does not remove/sequester carbon from the atmosphere (although it can in part). It is achieved through purchasing carbon credits from offsetting projects that reduce/avoid carbon emissions, for example by financing renewable infrastructure or reducing deforestation.

Carbon neutrality plays a vital role in our transition to net zero. As the markets and technology for sequestering are developed, avoided emissions credits are helping to protect the carbon sinks and precious ecosystems that we have and so urgently need to preserve.



The journey to net zero

The fundamentals of reaching net zero and beyond...



Analysis Action Planning

Your starting point is defining your emissions baseline - all emissions you are directly or indirectly responsible for across your entire value chain - against which you will track your progress to net zero. With this you can define a strategy and set a science-based target for emissions reduction.



Carbon Neutrality Transition Now

Reduce your emissions across your value chain through efficiency measures, stakeholder engagement, renewable energy, and investments in business transformation.

Offset any remaining emissions throughout your journey to demonstrate urgent climate action, support sustainable development and achieve carbon neutrality.



Net zero Achieving the target

Achieve and maintain net zero by reducing your business emissions to zero or as close to as possible and removing carbon equivalent to any remaining emissions you have from the atmosphere.



The Vision Zero and beyond...

Increase your positive impact on planet and society by maintaining net zero emissions whilst continuing to invest in sustainable development and nature-based solutions.

To compensate for historical emissions. To continue the ongoing journey to tackle climate change and protect our futures.

Digital can unlock decarbonisation

Digital technology is an enabler for businesses to reduce carbon emissions. EcoAct and Atos bring together their unique expertise in climate strategies and digital innovations to offer end-to-end support to clients at all stages of their net zero journey.



Measure your digital impact

Increasingly, IT footprints are having more impact as organisations become more digital. Measuring and reducing your digital impact can help achieve your net zero ambition.

A Digital Decarbonisation Assessment (DDA) measures your IT carbon footprint and takes an in-depth look at your organisational goals and carbon-reduction actions. It will show you exactly how and where to move forward effectively on decarbonisation towards net zero.



Digital technology can cut emissions

Digital technology can help businesses significantly reduce carbon emissions and is a key enabler of decarbonisation. We help organizations digitalise and evolve, embedding decarbonisation into processes that ensure future-proofing digital for a low carbon world.



Decarbonised workplace

Truly digital workplaces can not only reduce your organisation's carbon footprint but can also increase user productivity and employee collaboration.

The Atos portfolio of digital IT services and low carbon hardware can help increase service efficiencies and create meaningful emissions reductions. These digital innovations deliver better experiences for your customers and employees and a more secure and sustainable way of working now and into the future.



IT innovations for offset projects

Technology has a huge potential to help support and develop offset projects. Drones and satellite imagery can survey large areas of land to monitor forest health.

Blockchain transactions can improve verification, transparency, reduced risk of fraud or error.

A to Zero programme

A to Zero is a modular programme reaching across your whole value chain. Guiding your business on its unique journey to net zero.

Our approach has evolved from over 15 years of supporting businesses to manage their emissions and reduce their climate impact. Built on sound strategy and commercial intelligence, with a full armoury of specialist technical tools and expert knowledge, this programme helps ambitious business leaders tackle the climate challenges they face to deliver valuable transformational change.

Below we outline our full, adaptable journey from A to Zero in five modules. Every business will be unique and at different points along their emissions reduction pathway. So not every action and initiative included will be relevant to you. Some of them may already be in hand. But the fundamentals of the programme and how to successfully reach and maintain net zero are applicable for all organisations.



Plan for
Zero



Forecast for
Zero



Measure for
Zero



Change for
Zero



Contribute to
Zero

Plan for Zero

Act with ambition

The first module is about setting your intent, understanding your climate impact and agreeing the boundaries of your net zero ambition.

Boundary and Scope

Planning for Zero will start with establishing the boundaries of your programme by isolating the activities and areas of your business which comprise your climate impact and the emissions you are responsible for.

- **Isolating Scope 1, 2 & 3 emissions:** The Greenhouse Gas Protocol defines these three “Scopes” or boundaries of emissions which relate to the direct or indirect activities of an organisation, but which all need to be taken into account when measuring your full footprint and scoping your net zero strategy. Understanding what the material activities and impacts are within each area is a key first step to any footprinting exercise.

Understand your impact

It is essential from the outset to calculate your total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This will be the baseline against which you track your future progress. It will also enable you to understand your full impact across all Scopes which will be vital for the next strategic steps and essential to achieving net zero.

- **Footprint calculation:** Your carbon footprint should be compliant with an internationally recognised standard for GHG calculation such as the Greenhouse Gas Protocol or ISO 14064. These frameworks ensure that we are all reporting in a standardised manner and that your footprint meets internationally agreed requirements.
- **Supply chain strategy:** The majority of your emissions could well lie within Scope 3, which could make these emissions simultaneously the most challenging and the most important. At EcoAct we have a robust methodology for overcoming the challenges and understanding how to tackle indirect emissions calculation and reduction.



- **Organisational Life Cycle Assessment (OLCA):** Provides a method for large businesses, particularly those with a very wide range of products, geographies and supply chains to tackle the challenges of measuring a full organisational footprint.
- **Digital footprinting:** A Digital Decarbonisation Assessment (DDA) takes an in-depth look at your IT carbon emissions, organisational goals, and carbon-reduction actions to establish a baseline and build a roadmap, so you can move forward effectively on decarbonisation towards net zero.
- **Portfolio footprinting:** Assessing the climate impact of investment portfolios can be extremely challenging, but it's also an essential exercise that financial institutions need to carry out on the path to net zero. For financial institutions, our bespoke tool, ClimFIT, can assess the full impact and find carbon hotspots across your whole portfolio and inform future decision making on your investments.
- **Footprint validation:** Independent assurance of your carbon footprint demonstrates credibility to external stakeholders. This often helps to improve your disclosure performance against the major reporting frameworks and gives you full confidence in your carbon footprint.

Strategy

With an accurate understanding of your full climate impact, you can develop a tailored and robust strategy to achieve your ambitions.

- **Benchmarking:** What are other businesses, your competitors and your industry doing and where do you want to be placed next to them? We would recommend a full horizon scan of the current commercial context relevant to your organisation.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Listening and understanding to stakeholder priorities is important for programme implementation and getting your ambition right. Increasingly, employees want to work for sustainable businesses so this could unlock the potential for employee attraction and retention. This will also be an important stage to set out the governance of and responsibility for your strategy.
- **Materiality Assessment:** This assessment looks at which environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues are most pertinent to the business, enabling proper resource allocation later on and informing a net zero strategy of your priorities.
- **Digital decarbonisation strategy:** Digital technology is an enabler for businesses to reduce carbon emissions and achieve efficiencies. We help organizations digitalise and evolve, embedding decarbonisation into processes that ensure future-proofing digital for a low carbon world.
- **Net zero strategy:** A full strategy can now be articulated, one that is unique and right for your business and informed by a thorough outlook both internally and externally.

Children playing in the fountains at Kings Cross during a record-breaking period of heat

Photo by Gavin Tivey, EcoAct Principal Consultant



Forecast for Zero

Act on analysis

An effective net zero action plan must understand the risks and opportunities that climate change poses to business. It must be able to answer the increasing demand from investors and reporting frameworks for evidence of future security.

Climate Scenario Analysis

Science currently tells us it is vital that we limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. However, at this time, our future is uncertain and there are various possible warming scenarios that we need to be prepared for. Climate scenario analysis (CSA) is now best practice in climate risk reporting and increasingly the expectation. CSA will help you to consider what the world could look like in 10/20/30 years and what changes need to be made now in order to be prepared.

- **CSA:** During this process you would need to select appropriate scenarios and understand the impacts and outcomes of each individual climate trajectory to your specific business. Getting this right is undoubtedly a challenge, but our approach guides you through consideration of materiality and is focused on robust analysis of the most key areas of your business.

Risk and Opportunity analysis

Stakeholders, particularly investors, want to see that against these scenarios you have fully analysed both the risks and the opportunities posed to your business and value chain.

- **Physical and transition risk analysis:** Commercial risk comes in many forms. Climate change is not just about the physical impacts of extreme weather and climatic changes. Best practice now requires you to be reporting on the risks posed by transitional factors such as changing legislative demands, changing customer demands, increasing price (and volatility) of agricultural products and the rising costs or fees of carbon. Undertaking a comprehensive risk assessment will satisfy the demands of your stakeholders and hopefully prepare you for what could be down the road.



- **Opportunity analysis:** According to CDP, the value of opportunities posed by our climate challenge is seven times higher than the cost of realising them. Don't miss the chance for your business to find valuable opportunities along the path to net zero. Stakeholders, particularly investors, also want to see that you have assessed the opportunities of climate change, not just the risks.
- **Mitigation planning:** An increasing number of businesses are assessing climate risk year on year, but there is a significant gap between this figure and the number of businesses that have a plan to mitigate their risks. This should be an essential part of your risk assessment activity.

TCFD Readiness

The recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) have changed the landscape of sustainability disclosures in the last three years with mandatory enforcement a possibility in future. It provides an important framework that can provide the basis of your approach to climate risk.

The TCFD has encouraged a new focus; that instead of just looking at the impact your company has on climate change, you now think what impact(s) climate change has on your company. If you have followed the steps to this point, you already have almost everything you need as recommended by the TCFD. Make sure you get the most value out of this hard work.

- **TCFD/ disclosure gap analysis:** Having a gap analysis done on your existing disclosures will enable you to find areas where improvement is needed. This might also be in relation to your TCFD-aligned disclosures such as CDP. You could be missing out on additional points.
- **Reporting disclosures:** The TCFD requires that you report your climate-related financial disclosures as part of your main annual financial filings, but some companies do choose to write a separate TCFD report outlining their work on the recommended areas of Governance; Strategy; Risk Management; and Metrics & Targets. You will have now the first three of these areas by addressing the points we have already covered, the final one will be part of your next module.



Our 2020 Sustainability Reporting Performance research revealed that 56% of FTSE 100 companies are aligning with the recommendations of the TCFD, up from just 15% in 2018.



Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon, fed by Iceland's second largest glacier. It is predicted that this glacier could be gone in as little as 50 years

Photo by Lucy Haines
EcoAct Senior Marketing & Communications Manager

Measure for Zero

Act on the data

Emissions reductions targets, legislative compliance and effective sustainability disclosures all need robust systems and processes for data management. With this quality data you have the foundation to weather the changing demands of the sustainability landscape, set ambitious targets, map and track the most effective path to net zero.

Data and systems

The right systems can reduce the data collection and reporting burden and help to drive climate and commercial performance. It will also enable you to clearly track and report this performance and your path to Zero. We can help you to define the systems and processes needed to measure, monitor and report energy and emissions data. Ultimately, the credibility of any net zero claim relies on a robust, maintained and audited environmental data management system.

- **System review:** How robust is your system for data collection and monitoring? This is a really important question because the demands on those of us in charge of sustainability data are only increasing, and in the absence of a simple and comprehensive system our job is only going to get increasingly difficult in the age of net zero. If your system is outdated and inefficient, or you find yourself in a sea of spreadsheets and endless email chains chasing people for data, it's probably time for an overhaul.
- **Software selection and procurement:** You don't want to have to repeat the process in a few years' time, so it is essential to put in place a system that is right for you. There are a number of excellent sustainability accounting software platforms out there. At EcoAct we have helped many companies to gather together options based on their specific needs and to make the right choice to ensure they have the data they need at their fingertips ready for compliance and voluntary reporting requirements, and helping them to accurately monitor progress towards their climate targets.





CRaFT is the organisational sustainability planning, tracking and monitoring tool from EcoAct that helps energy managers, directors and boards members make decisions on their journey to net zero with confidence

- **System implementation, training and maintenance:** With any system there will be an onboarding phase involving setting up the system and training, but in the long term a good system should make life a lot easier for gathering data, tracking entries and for any audits that need to be undertaken.
- **Ongoing system management:** Some companies choose to have a managed system whereby the ongoing sustainability measuring and monitoring is performed by an external expert sustainability company. This will depend on the complexity of your data and your level of internal resource and expertise. At EcoAct we manage a number of systems for clients and support them with their annual verification processes.

Targets

Clearly the target is net zero. However, we can't simply wait until the target date if we wish to limit global warming. Interim milestones are needed. Claiming net zero will require a validated science-based target (SBT), which requires emissions reductions along a pathway aligned to scientific consensus on limiting global warming in time. Of course, setting a target is one thing. How are you going to meet it?

- **Science-based target (SBT) setting:** Today over 1000 companies have committed to setting an SBT which is considered the gold standard in emissions reductions targets, particularly among the investor community. Such targets align emissions reductions with the latest climate science for limiting warming to 1.5°C or well below 2°C. For a net zero strategy, it will be expected by your stakeholders, and we would advise, that you set an SBT to put your emissions reductions commitments on the right trajectory.
- **SBTi validation:** Not all companies that have an SBT have had it validated by the Science Based Target initiative (SBTi). In some instances, for example in the Finance sector, this is due to an absence of a Financial Sector methodology (this is coming in 2020...). We would recommend that if you can, you should get your target validated as it will enable you to demonstrate to all stakeholders the credibility of your commitment.
- **Target feasibility, decision-making and progress tracking (CRaFT):** SBTs in principle are simple to set, but being confident of the feasibility of your target and exactly how you are going to reach it is more challenging, and ultimately the most crucial part. At EcoAct, we have developed a visualisation and calculation tool, CRaFT, that can be entirely tailored to a unique organisation. It can itemise all your possible efficiency and reduction initiatives across your various business units, products and/or services and account for contextual factors including the most up to date grid greening projections and estimated business growth to enable you to see how you can reach your target and what investment you will need to do it
- **Informed reduction action plan:** Armed with this knowledge you have all the options to present to the business and are well placed to draw up a strong plan of action for your emissions reductions.

Reporting

Tracking, monitoring and reporting your progress will be ongoing up to and beyond your net zero goal. Therefore, the robust systems and a target backed up by sound data will provide you with a strong basis for high quality sustainability disclosures. We can support with those submissions to maximise your disclosures.

- **Ongoing review:** Over the course of your net zero journey, there will be a need for continual tracking and revision of targets (something CRaFT has been designed to support). It will be necessary to take into account changes to your organisation, updates to legislation, the changing energy landscape, etc. The SBTi also requires that targets are subject to review every 5 years. Their guidance may change as they align to any evolutions in scientific consensus on climate change and advised reduction trajectories.
- **Regulatory compliance:** From Energy Saving Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) and the new Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) regulations, the regulatory expectations on businesses are only going to grow with net zero national or state level commitments. Taking this thorough approach to your net zero strategy will ensure you are ahead of future compliance demands.
- **Reporting frameworks:** Your net zero strategy offers you an opportunity to bolster your sustainability disclosures against all the major sustainability frameworks e.g CDP, GRI, DJSI, etc. EcoAct helps businesses to maximise their disclosures and satisfy their stakeholder demands.
- **Decarbonization Level Agreements (DLAs):** DLAs are the Atos decarbonisation commitment to our clients to help them build a sustainable business. DLAs include a CO2 reduction commitment that is measurable, binding and auditable.
- **Certifications and standards:** Standards already exist for certifying business carbon neutrality either operationally (PAS 2060) or on individual products and services (PAS 2050). On the journey to net zero this could be a way to demonstrate that the work you have done so far is accredited by an internationally recognised standard.



Atelopus spumarius, a species of highly endangered toad in Pastaza, Ecuador

Photo by Sara Campanales, EcoAct Intern



**companies are taking science-based climate action and
around 500 companies have approved science-based targets.**

sciencebasedtargets.org (Oct 2020)

Change for Zero

Act on ideas

With the fundamentals in place, you are ready to start reducing your emissions. Reaching net zero will require transformative change to business and how it operates across its value chain.

Sound daunting? Actually this could be where the greatest opportunity lies for your business to increase efficiency, kick start innovation and enable it to thrive in a zero-carbon world.

Reductions

This incorporates the use of existing (and future) technologies to improve efficiencies and reduce emissions in your business operations. This will require investment and areas of responsibility delegated to all levels of the business, potentially with internal incentives to drive forward progress towards targets.

- **Energy management & systems:** Energy efficiency measures will be an important part of your emissions reduction strategy. Here, there are opportunities for great savings both in energy and in cost. Investing in better systems and processes for energy management could provide a great return on investment whilst accelerating you along your net zero path.
- **Carbon Pricing:** Developing an internal price for carbon in your business can prove a great means to incentivise emissions reductions across your business units and teams. It can help encourage internal teams to innovate and find low carbon alternatives. It could also help minimise your risk and make your organisations more prepared for any future carbon pricing legislation.

Renewables

The energy that powers your business operations will need to come from renewable sources in order to reach net zero. Targets for the purchase and/or generation of 100% renewable energy should be set and you need to ensure that the energy that you do procure can be credibly counted towards your goal.





- **Purchasing strategy:** This might include a review of the current renewables landscape and tariffs, benchmarking tariffs against geographies and scales, and other considerations for renewable energy purchase. Taking into account your ambition will also be important. For example, many companies are making a public commitment to the RE100 initiative, which is a commitment to 100% renewable energy, usually with a target date in mind. EV100 is a similar initiative of businesses committing to the use of electric vehicles in their fleets.
- **Renewable products (RECs, GOs, & REGOs):** Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) and Guarantees of Origins (GOs) enable organisations to guarantee that a specific unit of electricity has been produced from a specific source (e.g. hydropower, wind, solar, etc) and meet the quality criteria prescribed by the GHG Protocol. Ensuring you have these, means you can confidently and credibly report your renewable energy usage. In addition to this, the purchase of these certificates supports the production of energy from renewable sources by driving market demand.
- **Self generation:** Many organisations are also looking to generate their own renewable energy, for which a feasibility assessment will first need to be undertaken. Developing a renewable strategy that includes at least an element of self-generation can support your operational objectives, and provide a protective buffer against energy-related transitional risks such as utility cost increases or carbon taxes.
- **(For energy suppliers) renewable energy assurance:** At EcoAct we also provide third party verification and assurance of suppliers' renewable energy products so they can provide their clients with renewable energy backed by the above certificates.

Carbon Neutrality

To effectively limit global warming, we need to take responsibility for our full impact and take every measure possible to reduce it today. Whilst you activate your business transformation plan, in the interim, you can offset your existing footprint via the purchase of carbon credits from avoided emissions projects. This enables you to contribute to international sustainable development and vital nature-based solutions to climate change. You will also become a carbon neutral business.

- **Nature-based solutions (NBS):** NBS address challenges such as climate change, access to water, social and economic development and disaster risk by putting nature and people at the heart of the solutions. They play a vital role in the global transition to net zero. Supporting these projects could reduce deforestation, improve the health and livelihoods of communities

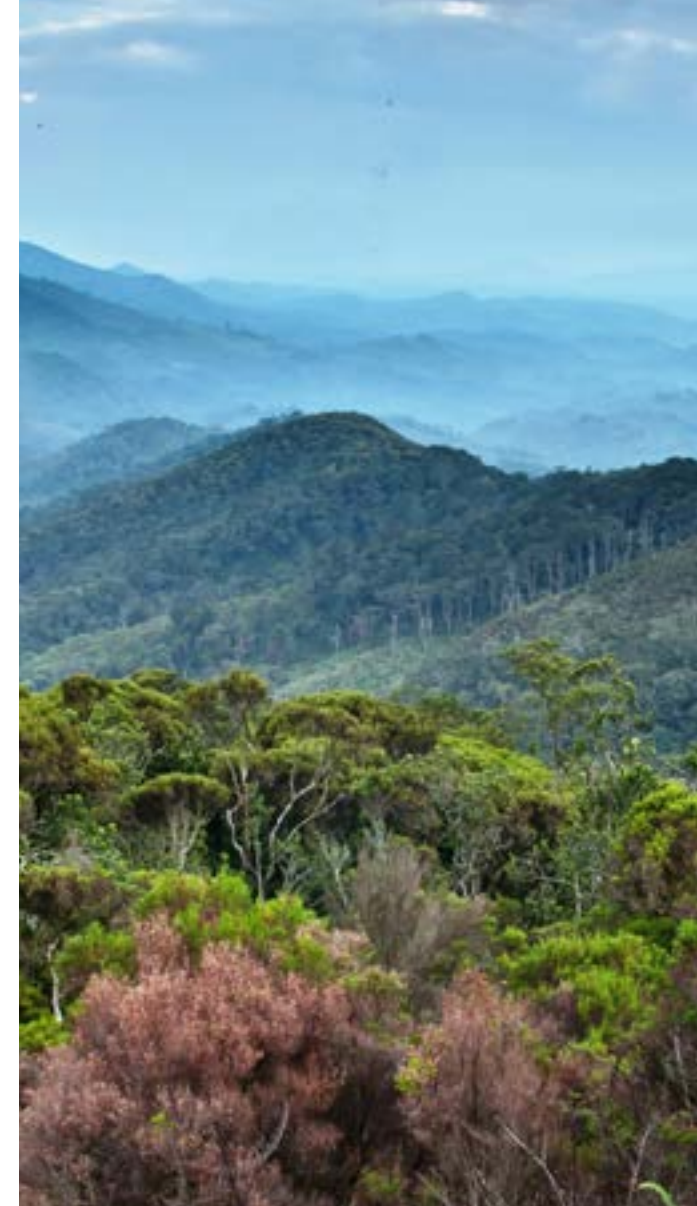
through cleaner cookstoves or help to finance renewable infrastructure to decarbonise energy supply. We put together portfolios of select projects aligned to a company's values and priorities.

- **The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Companies are increasingly expected to demonstrate how they are contributing to these important global goals. All of our projects are aligned to various SDGs, such as improving health; improving sustainable economic growth; improving gender equality; preserving biodiversity and life on land; and of course, urgently tackling climate change. Finance from the carbon credits contributes to these goals with funding to communities that need it most and that, without the sale of carbon credits, would be without important financing to make their lives more sustainable.
- **Verification, carbon credit retirement & offset certification:** When you offset your emissions, ensure to select an experienced and credible supplier. Also ensure that the projects have been validated by internationally recognised standards. At EcoAct, we also undertake our own audits in addition to the verification process so that we can ensure our clients of the robustness of the projects they are investing in. We also manage the process of credit retirement on international carbon registries and provide certification of offsets
- **Stakeholder engagement and communication:** How are you going to communicate your actions? What types of projects would resonate with your stakeholders? Undertaking engagement activities will be an important formative step when tackling offsetting initiatives. You will need a strong communications strategy so you can engage your stakeholders and confidently communicate your offsetting initiatives and your wider net zero action plan.

Supply Chain

We have experience in helping companies develop effective strategies for managing and reducing emissions across their full value chain. As previously outlined, you will need to have gone through the process of measuring your supply chain (Scope 3) emissions in order to understand the emissions hotspots and how to prioritise your reduction and climate mitigation activities.

- **Supplier engagement:** Reducing your emissions is going to be a collaborative process and you will need to work with your suppliers to overcome the challenges and reduce impacts. This is where there is opportunity to mutually benefit from innovation, increased efficiency and enhanced reputation. You will need to first focus on the emissions hotspots in your supply chain.
- **Procurement strategy:** It will be essential that you start to incorporate requirements or standards relating to climate into your procurement policies and have a strategy for sustainable sourcing. This will



Avoided emissions offsetting projects are helping to protect precious existing carbon sinks and ecosystems, like this one in the Bale Mountain region in Ethiopia, which is under threat from expanding agriculture

ensure you are setting up the right partnerships, protecting against reputational damage and driving climate action among manufacturers and producers.

- **Financing projects in the value chain:** You might want to think about the opportunities for investment in sustainable development projects within your own supply chain, which will safeguard the sustainability of a particular resource that you purchase, whilst enabling you to avoid or sequester emissions that can contribute to your offsetting strategy.

Innovation & redesign

We can support you in reviewing existing products and services to find opportunities for more efficient processes, materials, ingredients and opportunities to innovate. This could lead to new products and services, differentiation from competitors and new market opportunities.

- **Life Cycle Assessment (LCA):** An LCA is a widely used methodology to assess the environmental impacts of a product or service throughout its life cycle - from raw material extraction, manufacture and use, to end-of-life disposal, recycling or reuse. This enables you to make informed choices on how to effectively reduce the impacts of your product/s and service/s not just at supplier stage, but across its full life cycle.
- **Design process review and feasibility studies:** This is a valuable opportunity to stimulate innovation, by assessing more sustainable choices related to product design and manufacturing. For example, what is the comparative footprint of one ingredient over another? This can inform your decision-making and guide you towards making sound choices and a more low-carbon business.
- **Collaboration and partnerships for innovation:** Climate change is a shared challenge that cannot be addressed in isolation by any state, organisation or individual. A central part of the solution means collaborating and engaging with your partners, customers and suppliers. At EcoAct we can facilitate this interaction, leveraging our experience of working across multiple sectors and geographies with businesses of all shapes and sizes to develop alternative, innovate solutions.
- **Redesigning a decarbonised workplace:** Digital innovation can deliver better experiences for your customers and employees and a more secure and sustainable way of working. Switching to innovative digital solutions, energy efficiency measures, renewables energy, emission reduction action plans and carbon pricing tools helps to increase service efficiencies and create meaningful emissions reductions.
- **Industry solutions:** Digital innovations for specific industry challenges help improve both efficiencies in operations and emissions. For example, industry specific Digital Twins, smart cities, connected vessels for logistics and transportation, and predictive maintenance are some of the solutions we have already delivered.



Contribute to Zero

Act on commitments

The final link in the chain. net zero is achieved when you cancel out all your carbon by sequestering or capturing it to remove from the atmosphere the equivalent to any emissions you are still working to reduce.

Removals strategy

What you want to achieve from offsetting will be defined in this strategy. There will be various factors to take into account such as whether you are aiming for net zero or whether you wish to increase your commitment so that you are removing more carbon than you are emitting. You will need to assess the changing carbon market and evaluate which particular projects and locations you wish to invest in.

- **Verification, carbon credit retirement & offset certification:** Sequestration projects will need to comply to the same credible standards as offsetting projects that avoid emissions. As the number of tree planting programmes increases and new technologies develop for carbon capture and storage, it will be important to ensure the credibility of the projects being selected and that these projects provide robustly measured removals of CO₂ as well as social and environmental value.

“Sequestration” in this context means to remove, or to take out, carbon from the atmosphere. This is most commonly associated with planting trees.

Although reforestation is a great way to store up carbon and restore natural habitats, it is not the only way. Peatlands, mangroves and tidal marshes (often referred to as “blue carbon”) hold very large amounts of carbon, more in fact than tropical forests. Therefore, the restoration of coastal ecosystems which continue to be depleted, will also be a powerful tool for tackling climate change, as well as reinstating natural defensive barriers to its impacts.

Technology may also play an increasing role in the future as such mechanisms as Bio-energy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS) or Direct Air Capture (DACCS) continue to be developed.



Project Development

We are experienced project developers having developed our own verified offsetting projects and can advise businesses looking to develop their own as part of their net zero strategy. As the demand for carbon credits grows on our journey to net zero, developing your own project could be an investment for the future and may provide you with surplus credits.

- **Deciding on the project:** Deciding what type of project you wish to create, where and how it will meet your objectives is really important. We understand how to develop a successful project that delivers true carbon reductions or removals, whilst simultaneously contributing to the SDGs and our wider commitments for sustainable development.
- **Feasibility studies (international and domestic projects):** Developing a project is a large investment in finances and resource, so it is vitally important that a comprehensive feasibility study is undertaken before any work goes ahead to ensure that it is a sound investment.
- **Support with verification and audit processes:** Having developed our own accredited offsetting projects and supported the verification of projects for others, we have experience of the process, from feasibility through to credit delivery. This includes getting through the in-depth auditing process required of project verification.
- **Digital innovation:** As experienced project developers, we can see how technology can help support and manage offset projects. For example, Blockchain transactions can improve verification of transactions, increase security and reduce risk of fraud or error. Forest health can benefit from drone technology that can monitor large areas of land using multi-spectral satellites imagery, while mobile devices can effectively monitor tree plantings and tree growth.



There is a perception that offsetting enables polluters to simply pay to continue polluting. In our research into the FTSE 100 companies in 2019, we found that 92% of companies that purchase carbon credits also have an emissions reduction target. 51% have set or committed to set a science-based target, which are the most ambitious and do not permit offsets to be used to achieve the target.



Saplings ready to be planted as part of the TIST Project in Africa. Farmers are provided financial reward for nurturing and monitoring the trees. The products of these native species also provide farmers with additional sources of income.

Photo by Valerie Morgan
EcoAct Climate Expert

Conclusion

The most important journey you'll make

Taking your business from A to Zero is a journey. There is no doubt that undertaking transformative change to reach net zero will be a challenge but, with only this next decade left to limit global warming to relative safe levels, it is a challenge we must all face together.

Our approach to net zero has been designed to make the pathway there clearer and to help you mitigate the risks and seek out the opportunities that you can uncover for your business along the way. It means investments in action but also returns. This is not just a pathway to net zero, it is also a pathway to commercial resilience and longevity.

We believe that business has a particularly important contribution to make, to reduce its impact and, in so doing, help its clients and consumers to do the same. To take the lead on net zero.



FACTSHEET

Climate action. Commercial sense.

EcoAct, an Atos company, is an international consultancy and project developer, dedicated to helping businesses and organisations succeed in their climate ambitions. We simplify the challenges associated with environmental sustainability, remove complexity and empower individuals and teams to deliver bespoke solutions for a low carbon world.

Our experience tells us that climate action and commercial performance are no longer mutually exclusive. Our mission is to lead the way in delivering sustainable business solutions that deliver true value for both climate and client.

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