

THE **GREEN**
TRANSITION
HAS STARTED.
IS YOUR
WORKFORCE
STRATEGY
READY?



TIME IS RUNNING OUT

We have entered a crucial decade for climate change.

COP26 (the United Nations Climate Change Conference) saw the signing of the Glasgow Climate Pact, a series of decisions and resolutions that build on the framework of the [Paris Agreement \(2015\)](#). Numerous signatories have set out their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) in order to meet emissions reductions targets.

Deadlines are tight. It is now widely acknowledged that the 2050 target initially earmarked as the year in which many countries would become carbon neutral is not bold enough.

To avoid the impacts of climate change becoming irreversible, a more ambitious target of 2030 [has gained traction](#). Chiefly, this will require governments to keep global heating to 1.5 degrees (and preferably below). CO2 emissions in 2030 need to be 32 gigatonnes lower than current levels to hit the 1.5-degree goal, meaning an [annual cut of 7.6%](#) each year from 2020 to 2030.

If temperatures hit any higher, warming could be [‘locked in’](#) and the devastating effects of climate change could spiral out of control.



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Under pressure

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While a range of institutions, including policymakers and educators, are being called upon to guide the green transition, organisations are facing additional pressure to accelerate their decarbonisation efforts.

Pressure is being applied from both the top and bottom, with various stakeholders demanding that a more concrete commitment is made to sustainable operations.

- **Consumers:** People are mobilising their collective power – as citizens, investors, clients and customers, and exercising their spending power to prioritise sustainability. Research by IBM found that [71% of consumers](#) surveyed indicated that traceability of products is ‘very important’, and many are willing to pay a premium to those who provide it.
- **Colleagues:** [In a recent survey by the World Economic Forum](#), nearly 70% of respondents stated that if a company has a strong sustainability plan, it would affect their decision to stay with the company long term.
- **Policymakers:** 30% of the [EU’s €1.8 trillion budget and recovery plan](#) has been set aside for green investments, sending a clear signal to organisations who chose to invest in the research and development of sustainable practices.
- **Action Groups:** An ever-growing number of grassroots groups, established charities and regulatory bodies are closely monitoring the actions of organisations – and [ensuring the spotlight shines harshly](#) on those failing to deliver on their commitments.

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Sustainability as a source of competitive advantage

Forward-thinking organisations who respond to the pressure being applied – going beyond regulatory requirements and reviewing, realigning and redesigning ways of working that are centred around more sustainable practices – could benefit from more than just a moral victory.

Research has shown that companies who actively address Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) concerns achieve higher equity returns and operating profits and are less likely to experience stock volatility. It's time to do the right thing – not only for profit, but for people and the planet.



Definitions

Green Skills: The technical skills, knowledge, behaviours and capabilities required to tackle environmental challenges.

Green Jobs: The specialist roles focused on specific domains and initiatives, united by their desire to improve environmental outcomes.

Green Transition: The strategic shift to a more sustainable way of living, working and operating. Within this sustainable paradigm, consumption does not exceed the volume of renewable resources produced by the Earth.

THE STUMBLING BLOCKS TO SUSTAINABILITY

The challenge presented by a green transition cannot be underestimated.

Compounding the challenge for organisations are several strategic talent concerns that threaten to derail large-scale, meaningful change before it is even fully underway.

Top talent has already checked out

At a time when the world is 'powering up' for the transition to green, the energy sector is facing a number of disruptive departures.

Reports place the volume of talent set to retire within the next decade anywhere between [one-fifth and a quarter](#) of the current workforce.

Alongside a ['retirement crunch'](#), an increasing number of workers are taking long career breaks – and opting not to return. [A report by the National Grid](#) estimates that more than 75% of women who leave the engineering sector after maternity leave are initially eager to return, but are [deterred by inflexible working hours](#).

These challenges are by no means limited to the energy sector. But as more turn to the industry to guide a sustainable shift, leaders must make the changes needed to ensure that vital experience and skills are not leaving when they are needed most.



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Skills acquired today could be irrelevant tomorrow

Similar to the [digital transformations](#) we are currently witnessing across the globe, emerging technologies and evolving priorities are making it difficult to anticipate the skills that will be needed to meet the ambitious carbon cutting and Net-Zero pledges made by organisations.

While the specific skills may be undefined, what is evident is that cross-functional, multi-skilled teams will be critical.

The households of tomorrow, for example, will be required to switch from natural gas heating to a [network of technologies](#), including solar panels, heat pumps and Electric Vehicle charge points. Manufacturers, architects and builders will need to understand and optimise interlocking systems in order to keep inhabitants warm – and working.

For those already operating in green roles, including Sustainability Officers and Executives, their skillsets are set to become more expansive as 'green' takes centre stage.

Teams will need to encompass individuals who possess specialist technical knowledge and skills, but also those with strong negotiation, communication and leadership capabilities to oversee large scale change management projects that are necessary to embed sustainability across an organisation.

How organisations opt to [attract, source, manage and retain](#) the data-driven, tech-savvy innovators and pioneers could prove critical to the execution of a more sustainable, and successful, strategy.



Competition is fierce – and sustainability is currently in second place

The demand for green skills has surged in recent years. [Data from 2021 shows](#) that over a million jobs across the UK, US, France and Germany featured sustainability within the title of the role, an increase of over 100% compared with 2019.

Unsurprisingly, the need for green skills is particularly acute in the energy sector. In the UK alone, it is estimated that the industry will need [over 400,000 new recruits by 2050](#) – half of which will occupy roles that currently do not exist.

But the pool of individuals with relevant skills is failing to keep pace. While job postings to LinkedIn requiring green skills have [increased annually by 8% since 2015](#), the share of green talent has grown by just 6% in the same period.

[Further data](#) from LinkedIn paints a concerning picture for the energy sector. Although 'Environmental Services' and 'Renewables' feature in the Top 5 Industries for professionals with green skills by current talent pool size, 'Internet', 'Apparel and Fashion' and 'Luxury Goods' take top spots based on percentage growth. Many key players within these industries have crafted attractive benefits and compensation packages and boast a future-focused culture.

With the volume of workers moving into green and 'greening' jobs already too low, and with more organisations adopting environmentally positive operating models, companies must consider [how they position themselves](#) to attract from a small – but strategically vital – talent pool.



Going green won't be good for everyone

Decarbonisation will '[fundamentally reshape the economy, creating new markets and imperilling others.](#)'


The shift is already underway. In 2015, the [ratio of jobs](#) in the US Oil and Gas industry compared to the Renewables and Environment sector sat at 5:1. By 2020, the ratio was closer to 2:1 and it is predicted that the number of 'Renewables' roles will outnumber those in Oil and Gas by 2023.

While the green transition is predicted to create approximately [200 million roles by 2050](#), we are also facing a loss of around 185 million roles linked to carbon-intensive sectors. Although the scale of displacement and reallocation may be less severe than that prompted by other trends, such as Artificial Intelligence and Automation, thousands of workers will still require support and training to ensure their career can survive the shift.

Companies should also be concerned by emerging data that indicates an 'unjust' transition, with many long-standing inequities persisting across the globe:

- **Gender:** [A worrying 'green gender gap' exists](#) – and it hasn't improved in over five years. In 2021 across the globe, for every 100 men considered to possess 'green talent', there were only 62 women.
- **Age:** Millennials are leading the growth in green talent. While this offers an opportunity for younger generations to have a positive impact throughout their career, more experienced professionals are at risk of being '[excluded](#)' from the green transition.
- **Income:** The share of green talent grew by 39% between 2015 and 2021 in high-income countries. For their low-income counterparts, [the growth rate was just 18%](#).

With organisations eager to do the right thing for the planet, they must also ensure that they give people – across countries, education and income levels – every opportunity to succeed.



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Siloed thinking presents a serious threat

In many organisational structures, 'going green' is currently viewed in silo. Sustainability is a separate and additional lens through which to guide financial or operational decisions, with concern concentrated to Health and Safety, Human Resource or dedicated Sustainability departments.

In order to achieve a green transition, a shift must first occur in perception. Starting with the Executive Board and cascading throughout the organisation, environmental considerations must be engrained into business-as-usual.

From sustainable innovation, design and manufacturing to optimising delivery and selling the sustainable option 'as standard', successful organisations in the transition will require every employee to have some level of green skills to be effective.

Quite simply, all jobs will need to be green.



Are you
ready to discuss
your green
skills strategy?

GET IN TOUCH

IS YOUR WORKFORCE STRATEGY READY FOR THE GREEN TRANSITION?

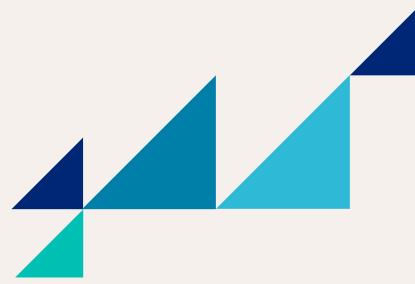
More than 3,000 companies across the globe have set, or are in the process of setting, Science Based Target Initiatives that will tie them to reducing their emissions.

Widespread funding has also facilitated the rapid development and evolution of the technology required to strive towards more sustainable practices. We are witnessing Carbon Capture Usage and Storage (CCUS) enable zero carbon power sources, introducing low carbon hydrogen into existing gas networks and overseeing an expansion of the electric vehicle network.

But it is people that will power an organisations' green transition.

Reducing emissions, championing clean energy and ultimately, preserving the planet for future generations, will require highly motivated, appropriately skilled individuals, equipped with the necessary tools and techniques to instigate a transition to a greener way of working.

But a difficult truth persists. While the volume of green talent is steadily rising, we are far from having the sufficient green talent, green skills or green jobs in place to deliver the green transition.



With so much at stake, the workforce strategy that organisations deploy to source, attract, onboard and retain crucial talent may prove to be a source of advantage, for both the planet and profit.

In response, we have combined our global expertise and deep market knowledge to create a three-step strategy for building a **greener, cleaner** and more **sustainable** workforce.

Step 1: Crafting a greener culture

Step 2: Building a skilled workforce

Step 3: Developing strategic, sustainable operations



STEP 1: CRAFTING A SUSTAINABLE CULTURE

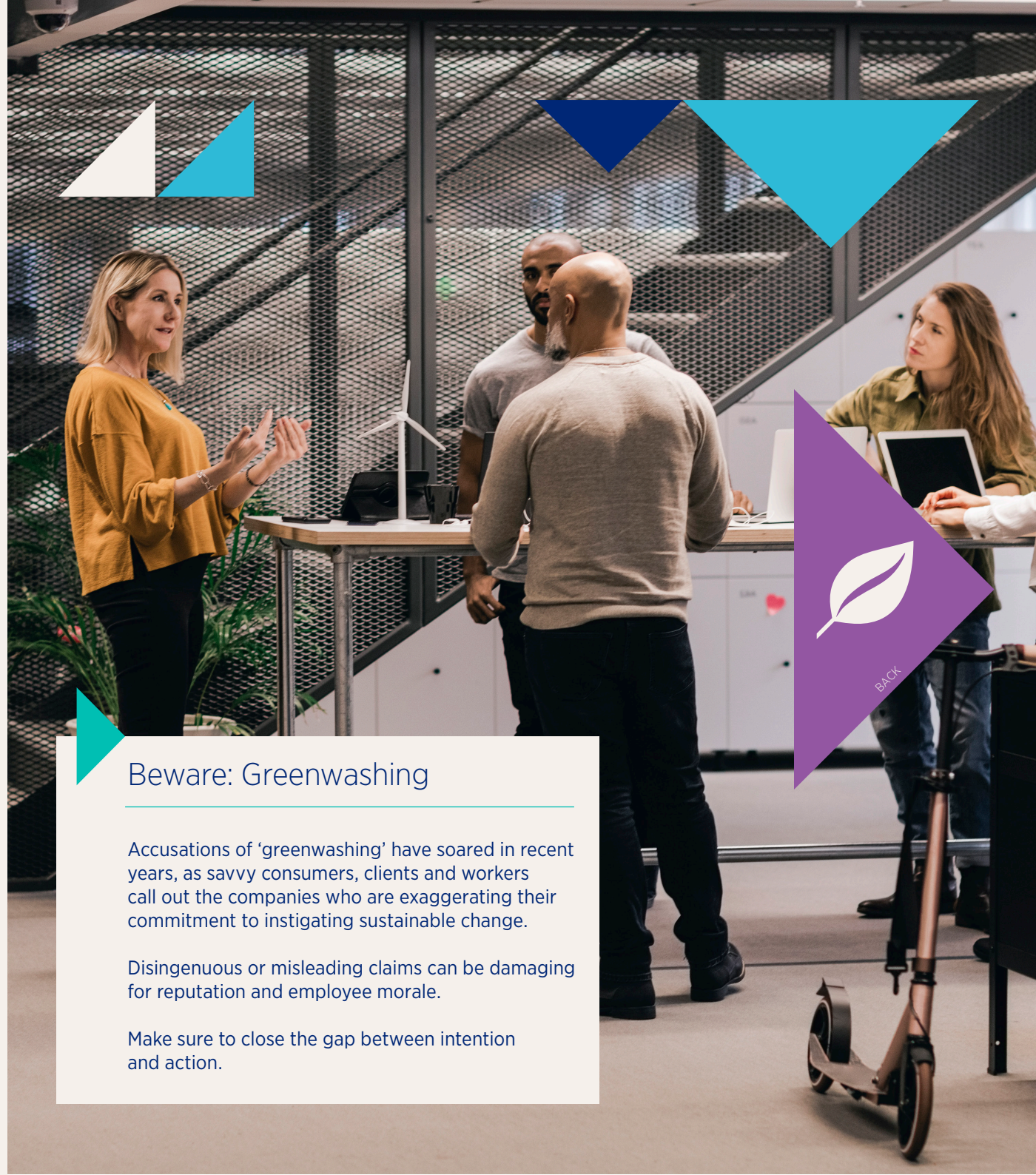
As temperatures and sea levels rise, it's becoming more difficult to disregard the importance of transitioning to a greener way of living and working.

But there is a gap between knowing and doing. While 90% of executives think sustainability is important, just 60% have a sustainability strategy in place.

The companies that commit to a green transition must break established habits, reshaping a workforce that has been trained to generate economic value 'without much regard' to its impact on the planet.

Meaningful change will require a cultural overhaul. Fragmented pockets of difference within an organisation will not be enough.

Embedding sustainability into the foundation of an organisation ensures that the purpose, mission and objectives of a company become centred around a more holistic way of thinking.



Beware: Greenwashing

Accusations of 'greenwashing' have soared in recent years, as savvy consumers, clients and workers call out the companies who are exaggerating their commitment to instigating sustainable change.

Disingenuous or misleading claims can be damaging for reputation and employee morale.

Make sure to close the gap between intention and action.

From the top:

As with any significant initiative or change management project, it is vital that leaders set the tone.

Senior executives must be the ones to put sustainability on the strategic agenda, with supporting actions that demonstrate the importance of embedding better ways of working across the organisation. Progress should be monitored frequently, including

the attainment of targets and ongoing management of sustainability-related issues.

Simply paying lip service to sustainability will result in a superficial culture. Ensure that authentic, meaningful change can cascade throughout the organisation by positioning yourself as a strong advocate for sustainability.

Make it measurable:

Many workers will be driven by a desire to do what's right for the planet.

But creating a financial incentive that is tied to the achievement of a focused sustainability strategy sends a clear signal that such behaviours are valued – and rewarded. This practice is growing in popularity; the [BT Group recently linked 10% of bonuses](#) for eligible managers to BT's performance in carbon reduction and digital skills.

Leaders will need to remain cognisant, however, that some sustainability initiatives cannot be tied to easily quantifiable metrics. Cutting carbon emissions, for example, is a necessary ambition.

But just as critical to successfully embedding sustainability into an organisation's culture will be the less tangible metrics, such as the behaviour change of employees. Work with your teams to implement energy saving practices, reduce plastic usage and encourage alternative modes of travel to work, for example.

Extend the opportunity:

A key part of a sustainable company culture will also be in the actions that organisations take beyond the office.

The impact of climate change will be felt far beyond the workplace, disproportionately impacting already vulnerable communities. Organisations must fund, find or fund initiatives that champion sustainability, equipping people with the tools and skills to make a difference.

Organisations could also consider direct involvement. As part of the 'Helping for your tomorrow' framework at Hays, for example, every employee has at least one paid Volunteering Day per year to [support 'aligned causes'](#), which includes the environment.

Organisations are in a privileged position to enact change for the better.

Tell the story:

Ensuring sustainability is a key pillar of your organisation's culture is essential. But how you communicate your transition to a greener way of working could shape the long-term success of your strategy.

Organisations should deliver [clear and timely communication](#) to employees that outlines how a shift to more sustainable practices will help them execute their role effectively. Generate momentum by sharing 'quick wins' that encourage people to break established habits.

Celebrate [sustainability-related achievements](#), mark key awareness dates in the calendar and participate in [community-based events](#).

By bringing the workforce on the journey – and encouraging involvement at every stage – organisations create a collective narrative. When everyone 'owns' sustainability, meaningful change can occur.

To the external market, a sustainable culture could be a [source of advantage](#) when competition for talent is fierce. We'll explore this in greater depth in Step 2, but with research indicating that [nearly 40% of candidates](#) have selected one job over another due to an organisation's sustainability practices, how you market your culture could enhance your talent strategy.



STEP 2: BUILDING A **SKILLED**, SUSTAINABLE **WORKFORCE**

The scale of sustainability demands that all roles must have at least an element of 'green'.

Organisations will likely need Chief Sustainability Officers and Senior Sustainability Executives with the relevant technological expertise to enhance decision making, but they'll also need to ensure that their procurement professionals are making decisions based on carbon reduction and impact across the whole product lifecycle, or that sales teams are signposting the sustainability credentials of products and services.

Organisations will need to build a workforce strategy at a time when we are heading towards a global skills gap. A carefully considered blend of [Enabling](#), [Elevating](#) and [Externalising](#) the workforce, grounded in a strong company culture, will ensure businesses are best placed to execute a more sustainable service delivery.



Remove the roadblocks

80% of people who will be employed in 2030 are [already in the workforce](#).

This represents an enormous volume of workers who will need to acquire green skills to power an organisation's transition.

There are, however, a number of barriers that are [preventing personal development](#). Research indicates that high costs, lack of time, and uncertainty around which skills to develop (in part, due to the overwhelming number of opportunities on offer) are holding some individuals back.

Adjacencies = Agility

The shift away from carbon-intensive industries will [displace millions of workers](#) across the globe.

But it is in this shift that organisations can search for emerging green talent. Research has found that [over 90% of the UK's oil and gas workforce](#) have medium to high skills transferability, making them well positioned to work in adjacent energy sectors.

However, sourcing solely from this talent pool will leave many organisations falling short

Organisations must take steps to tackle these issues. Covering costs and offering bite-sized, [modular learning opportunities](#) showcases the importance that companies attach to acquiring green skills, supporting workers as they balance development with their day jobs.

Companies must cut through the noise, signposting the most critical skills and encouraging employees to see sustainability as a source of [continuous learning and development](#).

on skills. In the face of high demand, hiring managers will need to be innovative in their approach. Crucial talent could be hiding in plain sight, already working within the organisation in Operational or Project Management roles and with a clear understanding of [how your business 'ticks'](#).

By investing in secondments, mentoring and targeted external training programmes, many organisations are creating a steady supply of skills to help them avoid battling in tight talent wars.



Do better on diversity

Limiting global heating and transitioning away from fossil fuels will require the kind of creative, challenger thinking that is often a product of cross-collaboration across diverse teams.

But current statistics paint a concerning picture. In the 'traditional' energy sector, from which many skills adjacencies will be sourced, women account for just [22% of the workforce](#). To build their 'green teams', organisations must think beyond traditional talent pools.

Many are opting to outsource to the growing contingent labour market. Since 2020, [76% of larger organisations](#) have added at least

one person to their sustainability teams, with most preferring to bring in consultants to quickly [inject the expertise needed](#).

And when it comes to attracting the next generation of employees, organisations are increasingly focused on [acquiring young talent](#) with green skills, rather than university degrees. Employers must ensure, however, that the [candidate experience is optimised](#) for Generation Z, who expect a strong company culture (see Step 1) and consistent communication.

[Dedicated workforce partners](#) can offer data-driven insights to guide organisations to these emerging or alternative talent pools.

Short-term thinking will create long-term problems

Being ahead of the curve will give organisations an advantage in the labour market.

Recruiting or reskilling early is predicted to be a '[critical enabler](#)' to an organisation's green transition. But in an already scarce talent market, companies will need to create a [holistic attraction and retention strategy](#),

supported by a strong culture focused on sustainability, to stand apart from the competition.

Leaders need to create a workforce strategy today with the talent of tomorrow in mind, enabling them to drive forward their green agenda into 2030 – and beyond.

STEP 3: STRATEGIC, SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

With a strong company culture attracting and retaining a range of skills, organisations can look to review and realign their operating models to ensure a more sustainable way of operating.

It is at this stage that organisations shift from intention to action. A green transition will be tricky, requiring companies to move beyond a mentality of simply meeting regulatory requirements – or claiming to do so.

But those who make a clear and sustained commitment to doing the right thing are set to unlock 'immense opportunity', for both profit and the planet.



BACK

Linear thinking is creating losses

Current consumption patterns [operate in linear models](#). Collectively, companies and consumers take, make and dispose at a volume that exceeds the Earth's natural resources.

Collaboratively, organisations and individuals will need to strive towards eliminating waste, recycling or repurposing materials and taking ownership of sustainable disposal to reduce the burden of production and waste on the planet.

Encouraging consumers to [break habits](#) and amend attitudes towards ownership is part of a much broader project, but organisations can play their part by managing water use and waste generation within their own facilities, or reallocating energy

supply away from carbon-intensive sources.

Reviewing the activity of suppliers and working together to optimise the way in which materials are sourced or how products are distributed, ensures sustainability becomes a strategic priority throughout the value chain. Many organisations are taking it one step further, requiring teams tendering for service delivery to [detail their environmental considerations](#) and extending the length of contracts to enable results to be realised over time.

With a [360-degree dedication to sustainability](#), organisations drive credibility and encourage consumers to match their ethos.

Be driven by your data

Over the last decade, data has quickly become 'the new oil'. But as we strive to decarbonise operations, data should instead be seen as '[the new soil](#)' - for sustainable innovations and digital transformation strategies.

Organisations must be meticulous in their efforts to track their

ecosystem. End-to-end supply chain visibility will require collaboration across a number of [technologies and teams](#), but when deployed effectively will eliminate wastage, highlight environmental risk and support organisations in stabilising their supply chain amid disruptions caused by climate change.



Put your money where your mouth is

The world will need to rely on a wealth of technology to reduce emissions.

Some systems are already available at a commercial scale. Existing onshore wind and solar photovoltaic systems, for example, account for around a [quarter of the emissions abatement](#) achieved across Europe.

But the remaining work will need to be driven by technologies that are currently in the pipeline. Incumbent organisations will

need to match the appetite shown by start-ups in investing in, [integrating and scaling climate-technology](#) to power more sustainable processes.

Many companies will need to [onboard](#) or [outsource](#) to access this specialist knowledge - or risk being left behind and ultimately, face paying a higher price as the costs of transitioning to a low-carbon economy decrease, whilst those in a fossil-fuelled world continue to soar.

Let's take the first step in your journey to a more sustainable strategy

CONTACT US

SUSTAINABILITY IS FAR FROM SIMPLE

Planning, implementing and refining a sustainable strategy, with the skills in place to support the transition to a greener way of working, is of critical concern to business leaders.

But organisations are just one part of a much larger, more complex puzzle. To power the shift, other key players will need to ensure sustainability is a central part of their strategy.

Governments and Policymakers

- Lay out a long-term, holistic strategy that offers [stability for educators and organisations](#) to commit to funding training and technology and gives people the confidence to acquire skills and pursue a green job.
- Encourage a rapid shift away from fossil fuel exploration and production, creating clear market demand for renewable energy via payment premiums and reductions.
- Ensure effective regulation is in place to [curb climate misinformation](#) and 'fake news'.



Education Providers

- [Ensure the STEM pipeline is brimming with quality](#) from early education to university, paying particular attention to the participation of women and ethnic minorities.
- Embed sustainability across the curriculum, ensuring ESG literacy and encouraging the shift to Net-Zero to be viewed as a whole society issue.

Financial Institutions

- Cut ties with carbon-heavy companies and work to decarbonise investment portfolios.
- Champion funding for green initiatives, facilitating the funding needed ['for the world to change its ways'](#).
- Offer advice and guidance for those eager to invest capital in the tools, technology or training required in the shift to Net Zero.



- Align with organisations to build hyper-focused [training programmes](#) (including the development of critical soft skills such as leadership and communication) that enable individuals to enter businesses ready to make a change.





Fiona Place
Group Head of
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THE **FUTURE** MAY BE **BRIGHT**, BUT IT MUST ALSO BE **GREEN**

The urgency of the situation is undisputed. And while world leaders may have mapped out a path for us to follow, many are yet to start their journey.

Swift, meaningful and sustained action will be necessary, with educators, organisations, policymakers and action groups working in unison; sharing resources and expertise to ensure a worldwide shift to a more sustainable way of living and operating.

Preserving the planet will require a monumental global effort. In response, this report has offered a cyclical strategy to support organisations eager to play their critical part in the transition.

Three key steps, which include ensuring sustainability is central to their values, sourcing the green skills

necessary to enable their transition and systematically reviewing and realigning their operating models will support companies as they embed a more sustainable way of operating.

Already facing a chronic talent shortage, these changes will challenge organisations of all sizes, operating across every single industry. With the support of a dedicated workforce partner, companies can unlock access to global talent pools, futureproof skills pipelines and ultimately, build an insight-led talent strategy to power their green transition.

The three steps and their recommended actions are by no means an exhaustive list, nor can they be seen merely as an annual tick-box exercise. Organisations must go beyond compliance and use the resources, expertise and talent at their disposal to accelerate decarbonisation efforts.

After all, there is no Planet B.



Speak to
the team at
**Enterprise
Solutions** today.

[CONTACT US](#)

GREEN MUST BE A GLOBAL CONCERN

To kickstart
your green
transition, speak to
the team at Enterprise
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