



Sustainable
Business Council

WBC Global
Network

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COUNCIL ANNUAL PLAN 2025/26

Mobilising New Zealand's most ambitious businesses to build a thriving and sustainable future for all New Zealanders

www.sbc.org.nz



FOREWORD

A changing world: The need for leadership

The world is experiencing significant change, with sustainability challenges and opportunities being shaped by global forces – political and economic shifts, technological advancements, cultural trends, and demographic changes. These forces are redefining the landscape in which businesses operate, making leadership and decisive action more crucial than ever.

In periods like this, it is essential to pause, take stock, and reaffirm our commitment to a New Zealand where business, people, and nature thrive together. Now is the time to refocus our efforts, ensuring we take meaningful action in areas where we have influence and control.

SBC's commitment and collective action

For 25 years, the Sustainable Business Council (SBC) has built momentum, forging a path for businesses to lead on sustainability. Today, we face another pivotal moment – one that demands resilience, leadership, and a steadfast commitment to progress.

As SBC, we are uniquely positioned, representing around 40% of New Zealand's GDP, with both the mandate and the ability to drive climate action and sustainable business, inspiring others to do the same. And our members are stepping up to the challenge. I am incredibly proud and inspired by the bold steps and innovative solutions emerging from within our network.

In the year ahead, SBC will continue to lead, build coalitions, influence policy, and help provide the vision New Zealand businesses need to take action. Our strategy remains our anchor, ensuring we stay true to our long-term vision while adapting to an ever-evolving global landscape.

Looking ahead: Objectives for 2025

Our focus areas for the year ahead include:

- Continuing to be a beacon of inspiration – leading with our vision
- Maintaining a strong, impactful advocacy voice aligned with the SBC strategy
- Driving high-impact action in climate, nature, and social sustainability
- Empowering executives and sustainability professionals to lead

Taken with our strategy, these focus areas are woven through work programme.

We invite all our members and partners to engage with this plan. Through shared commitment and collaboration we can turn our vision into reality.



Mike Burell

Chief Executive

Sustainable Business Council



SBC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The [SBC Strategy 2023 – 2027](#) sets out the approach we will take to achieving our vision, purpose and ambition.

SBC/CLC VISION

A New Zealand where business, people and nature thrive together.

PURPOSE

To mobilise New Zealand's most ambitious businesses to build a thriving and sustainable future for all.

ASPIRATION

A New Zealand that is Climate and Nature positive by 2050.

BY 2030

New Zealand businesses are:

- Reducing emissions in line with national and international requirements;
- Preparing for and adapting to a changing climate;
- Placing people and communities at the core of their business decision-making; and
- Balancing economic, environmental, and social outcomes in their business models and value proposition.



LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABILITY

Supporting members to be ambitious on sustainability and encouraging other businesses to go further.

ACTION ON CLIMATE AND NATURE

Accelerating the transition to a future that is zero emissions, resilient, and nature regenerative.

THRIVING PEOPLE

Members are contributing to a just transition and acting on the most material issues facing society.

MEMBER SERVICES

Capability building, collaborations, peer-to-peer learning, events, storytelling, communications.

MEMBER REPRESENTATION

Partnerships, advocacy, media engagement, international engagement, thought leadership.



STRATEGY IN ACTION

SBC's focus areas for the year:

Continuing to be a beacon
of inspiration –
leading with our vision

Maintaining a strong,
impactful advocacy voice
aligned with the SBC strategy

Driving high-impact
action in climate, nature,
and social sustainability

Empowering executives
and sustainability
professionals to lead

2025/26 Key Pillar Priorities	Priority Action Areas	Outcomes for Members
Action on Climate and Nature		
Advocacy: Working with the Climate Leaders Coalition (CLC) to influence ambitious bipartisan government climate policy	Utilising a unified business voice on behalf of members to advocate for continued climate action as a key mechanism for economic growth Continued advocacy for climate-aligned policies, policy stability and certainty to enable continued business investment in climate action	Publication of a thought-leadership report on the business imperative for climate action (supported by our Leadership in Sustainability) Ongoing direct member engagement to support messaging and political engagement to maximise impact
Nature restoration: Partnering with members and government for nature restoration to enhance climate benefits	Engaging with members to understand requirements and scope for a possible large-scale collaboration between businesses, with potential to encompass Government if appropriate	SBC perspectives are incorporated into the development of government policy. If appropriate, a large-scale member collaboration is initiated
Communities of practice: Working with members to ensure they have the tools, information and connections to support their delivery of climate related work programmes	Delivery of capability building opportunities across nature, climate mitigation, adaptation, and transition Continued upskilling and support for members on mandatory reporting requirements	Members are supported and enabled to adapt, transition and make emissions reductions at pace Members have support from SBC to adopt leadership positions and deliver effective change through their organisations

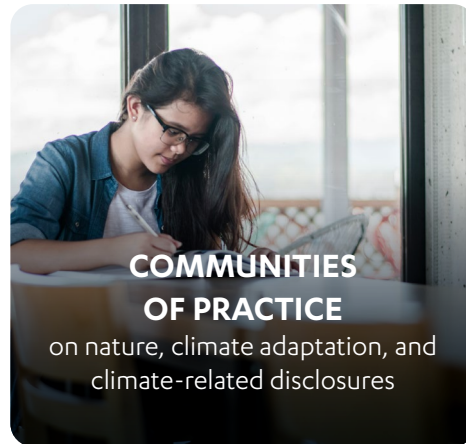


2025/26 Key Pillar Priorities	Priority Action Areas	Outcomes for Members
Leadership in Sustainability		
Thought leadership: Sharing insights into global and emerging sustainability trends	Delivery of quarterly reports based on both World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) insights, and local best practice for example on themes such as the economic imperative for sustainability, resetting targets, maximising the value from sustainability reporting and global macro trends	Publication of a SBC thought-leadership report on the business imperative for climate action (see Advocacy outcomes above) Members are given exposure to international best practice and the opportunity to share their work on a global stage
Executive engagement: Empowering Executives to actively demonstrate and emphasise the business imperative for sustainability	Hosting bi-annual networking opportunities for Council members featuring prominent guest speakers Engaging Council members in peer-to-peer learning opportunities to support them to integrate sustainability into business strategy and capital allocation	Executives are mobilised and supported to build partnerships with other leaders to drive system level change
Promoting transparency: SBC's member commitments	Streamlining the requirements members are expected to meet across climate, nature and social sustainability to focus on high impact areas and align with WBCSD's global best practice	Members are pursuing required commitments in line with SBC's global best practice Members are committed to continuous improvement, promoting greater transparency and accountability
Thriving people		
Human rights: Building business capability in due diligence to identify, address and communicate their human rights risks	Co-hosting the Collaborative Advantage Programme with Deloitte and Walk Free - six weekly online deep dives into topical social sustainability issues including Modern Slavery masterclasses	Members are supported to embed social outcomes into business practices and decision making
Resilience: Growing the Inner Development Goals movement in New Zealand	Delivery of practical workshops on the Inner Development Goals, a framework of transformative skills designed to support individuals and companies in developing the inner capacity needed to contribute effectively to global challenges	SBC members and the wider sustainability profession are supported to build greater resilience in order to deliver impactful sustainability out-comes



OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

In support of SBC's key pillar priorities, members also have access to a [range of other connection opportunities](#), including:



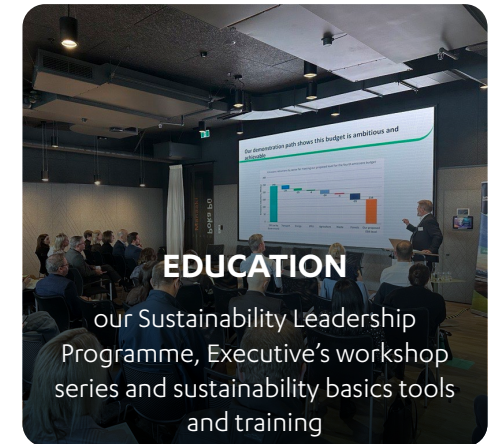
COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

on nature, climate adaptation, and climate-related disclosures



COLLABORATIONS

including our freight decarbonisation programme and scope 3 emissions work stream



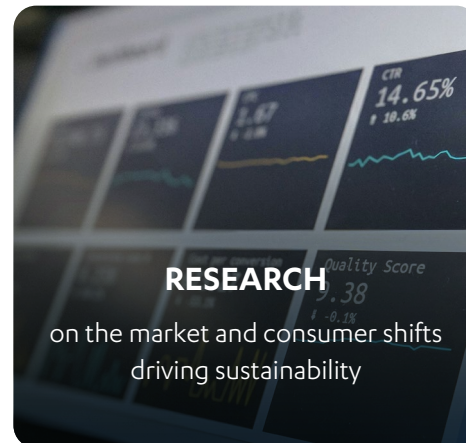
EDUCATION

our Sustainability Leadership Programme, Executive's workshop series and sustainability basics tools and training



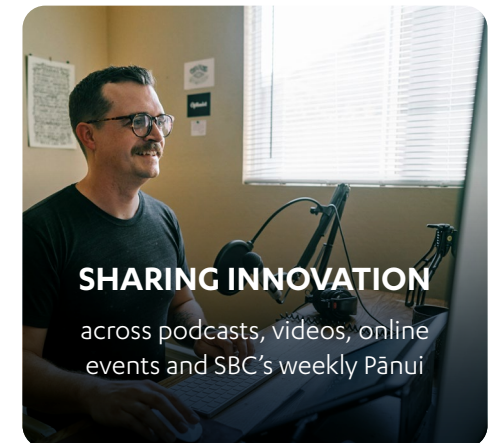
EVENTS

our beginning and mid-year events, Executive-only functions, and the Climate Change & Business Conference



RESEARCH

on the market and consumer shifts driving sustainability



SHARING INNOVATION

across podcasts, videos, online events and SBC's weekly Pānui



SPOTLIGHT ON



THE BETTER FUTURES REPORT

Produced by Kantar in partnership with SBC, this flagship report surveys 1,000 New Zealanders on what social and environmental issues matter to them, providing key evidence to support the prioritisation of sustainability within businesses.



RENEWABLE FREIGHT CERTIFICATE

Transport is New Zealand's second-largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, of which the movement of freight equates to approximately one quarter. As part of our work to decarbonise the freight sector we are developing a framework for a market-based renewable freight certificate system, with the aim to build and implement it.



CLIMATE CHANGE & BUSINESS CONFERENCE

SBC will deliver the 17th Climate Change & Business Conference in partnership with the Environmental Defence Society. New Zealand's leading and longest running annual event of its kind, the theme of the 2025 conference is *Ambition. Accountability. Action.* With a variety of compelling speakers and a programme line up that aims to tackle critical and timely topics, the event will continue to provide key networking opportunities for members.



42% of New Zealand's GDP



129 members



275,438 full-time jobs



14% of New Zealand's labour force



\$174 billion collective turnover

Members, jobs and turnover as of March 2025

ABOUT US

The Sustainable Business Council (SBC) is an Executive-led membership organisation of nearly 130 businesses from all sectors, ambitious for a sustainable New Zealand.

Our vision is a New Zealand where business, people and nature thrive together. We actively work to fulfil our purpose of mobilising New Zealand's most ambitious businesses to build thriving and sustainable future for all.

Our network gives our members unparalleled influence and empowers them to take large-scale collective action.

SBC connects member businesses, partners, and sectors to create impact that no single business could achieve alone.

We hold our members to account by asking them to fulfil member commitments and championing our members to be at the leading edge of sustainability. In doing so, we inspire other businesses to take action.

SBC also hosts the [Climate Leaders Coalition](#), a CEO-led leadership beacon for business action on climate change in the political and public arenas.

We are a division of BusinessNZ, and the only New Zealand-based Global Network Partner of the [World Business Council for Sustainable Development](#) in Geneva.

JOIN US

We welcome organisations who are ambitious for a more sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand to join the SBC membership. Visit our website below and get in touch with us to learn more about becoming a member.

sbc@businessnz.org.nz

www.sbc.org.nz

Businesses from all sectors, ambitious for a sustainable New Zealand

