Sustainable Business Council | WBCSD Global Network



How SBC advocates for sustainable business

Our approach, member mandate and priorities for 2026–27

2026

SBC advocates to accelerate progress towards our strategic vision

At SBC, advocacy means making the case for a competitive, resilient economy and giving political decision-makers practical evidence on how to achieve it.

Why it matters

- Good policy and regulation can remove barriers and accelerate sustainable business action, whilst policy and regulatory uncertainty stands in the way.

- A collective, cross-sector voice gives decision-makers stronger, more representative business evidence, and helps them focus on what interventions will make a meaningful difference.

- SBC brings member experience together into practical recommendations and coordinated action on shared priorities.



SBC turns commercial evidence into credible, collective advocacy

How we work:



We bring a clear business lens, and focus on changes that unlock value for members and for New Zealand.



We combine member experience and insights from SBC programmes into practical recommendations.



With a lean team, we prioritise the issues where collective member expertise can make the greatest difference, and where we have clear alignment across the membership.

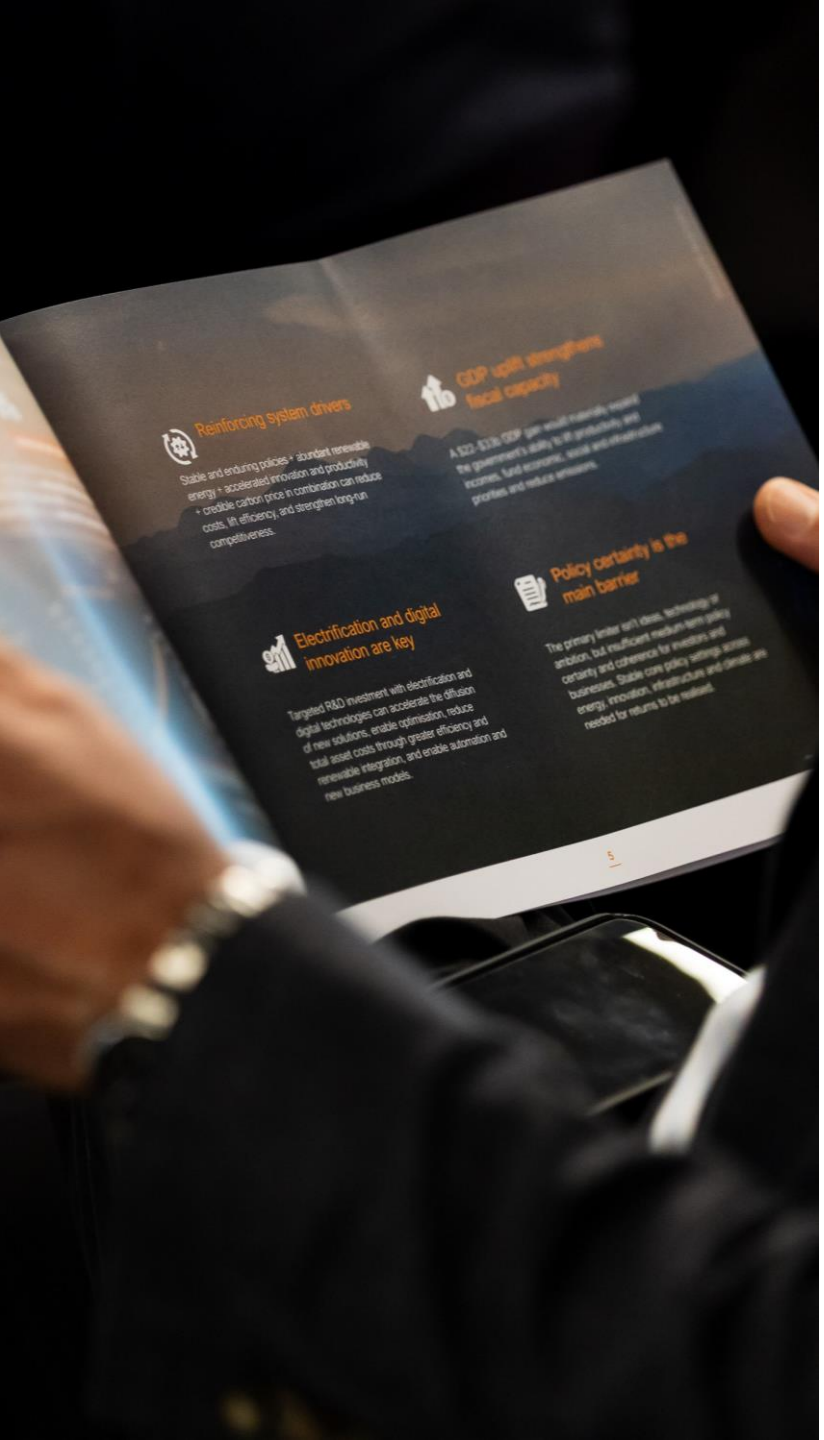


SBC is part of the BusinessNZ Network, but develops its own member-informed positions. We test priorities with our Advisory Board and members



We coordinate and partner with the Climate Leaders Coalition on climate issues. SBC also advocates on selected nature and social sustainability issues.

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How SBC undertakes advocacy

SBC undertakes advocacy in the following ways:

1. **Thought leadership through reports and articles**
2. **Submissions to government and agency consultations and select committee inquiries**
3. **Key policy documents: e.g., election-priority papers and briefings to incoming ministers**
4. **Meetings and roundtables with officials, MPs, political candidates and Ministers**
5. **Media statements and other communications**

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How we develop our policy positions

Listen	Develop	Validate	Advocate	Report back
We hear directly from members about the barriers and opportunities they see through collaborations, regular conversations and formal feedback, and make use of their subject matter expertise.	We bring member evidence together with policy and political insight, and find common ground across the membership to shape political direction and form practical recommendations a government can implement. If we cannot reach strong alignment, SBC will not take a position	We test our positions back with members, through written feedback and policy workshops, roundtables and working groups.	We take the collective view to ministers, opposition spokespeople and officials to advocate for policy settings that enable our members to deliver on sustainable, competitive economic activity.	After significant consultations, workshops and advocacy activity, we report back on what we heard, the position developed and how member input shaped the final outcome.

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How you can get visibility over our advocacy activity

Ongoing

Transparency

We publish all advocacy reports and submissions on our website, where they can be accessed by all.

Quarterly

Board oversight and member updates

We report on our engagements, reports, submissions, media statements and any progress or areas of concern, so our activities are transparent and we remain accountable. We provide a view of upcoming activities for the quarter ahead. This is available to members only.

Six monthly

Forward visibility

We set out a six-monthly advocacy work plan, which shows what topics and projects are upcoming, and helps members forward plan and shape priorities. This is available online.

Annual

Impact Reporting

Our annual impact report will show how SBC advocacy has influenced policy and government decisions.

As needed

Rapid response

When a significant policy issue emerges requiring a timely response but we lack clear mandate, SBC seeks member views rapidly to develop a position, or understand where we cannot take a position.

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Over the next 6 months we will deliver core advocacy whilst expanding our thought leadership

Core advocacy programme:

Energy and transport decarbonisation

Advocate for the recommendations set out in 2026 Election Priorities paper, and continue gathering evidence from members.

Develop political relationships

Engage political stakeholders before the election, then brief incoming ministers to reinforce the asks in our 2026 Election Priorities briefing.

Anti-modern slavery legislation

Maintain momentum on modern slavery legislation.

Further focus areas – Subject to member interest, policy developments and funding

AI and data centres

Funded

Develop a position on sustainable data centres and AI use.

Future of the NZ ETS

Partially funded

Develop SBC policy positions on an effective emissions trading scheme to support any reform programme.

Adaptation

Unfunded

Use collaboration projects to inform early conversations on the next National Adaptation Plan.

Nature

Unfunded

Continue engagement on voluntary nature and carbon markets and wider nature policy settings.

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What we plan to deliver over the next six months

- **NOV** — Share draft **data centre position paper** for member feedback
- **NOV** — Convene **ETS workshop** to understand member positions on the future of the NZ ETS
- **DEC** — Develop **briefings for incoming ministers**, based on the election priorities paper
- **FEB** — Publish a **sustainable AI thought leadership paper**
- **Q1 2027** — Hold **meetings with new ministers**
- **MAR 2027** — Respond to the Climate Change Commission's (CCC) updated **advice on the fourth emissions budget**

*** Dates are indicative and subject to change. Activities are planned, and subject to confirmation.**

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Known external policy milestones through to 2030

Indicates forward work priorities and shapes when SBC is likely to consult with members or advocate

Q2–Q3 2027	Climate Change Commission annual emissions monitoring report & first End of Budget report
H2 2028	CCC advice on preparing the third emissions reduction plan and the second National Adaptation Plan
2029	CCC review of the 2050 emissions target
2030	Third emissions reduction plan

These milestones currently focus on climate because they are set in legislation. Milestones and timings will become clearer after the election.

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How members can get involved

Set direction

Tell us which issues matter, where policy or regulatory barriers are slowing progress, and highlight emerging issues through SBC programmes, including Communities of Practice, collaborations and regular check-ins with your relationship managers.

Share evidence

Share case studies, data, implementation experience and practical insights that strengthen SBC's policy positions and advocacy.

We make use of subject matter experts in the membership to deepen our collective understanding.

Build the position

SBC shapes, shares and refines policy positions with members through one-to-one conversations, issue-specific policy workshops and written drafts of submissions, reports and thought leadership pieces for feedback.

Speak directly

Executive-led engagements with Ministers help to set the political agenda.

Practitioners can join policy roundtables and meetings to share practical insights directly with key decision-makers (by invitation). This will generally be connected to particular programmes and collaborations.

Reinforce messaging

Use SBC shared messages to support your own conversations on priority issues.

Contact the SBC's Director – Policy and Advocacy to discuss how to get involved: awhite@businessnz.org.nz

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