

PRECOP 28 WHITE PAPER – Polish perspective on climate issues before COP 28



Global Compact
Network Poland



GRUPA
PTWP



PRE**COP**28

KATOWICE 5-6 OCTOBER 2023

PRECOP 28

WHITE PAPER – Polish perspective on climate issues before COP 28



Network Poland



OUR MISSION:
**MOBILIZE A GLOBAL
MOVEMENT
OF SUSTAINABLE
COMPANIES
AND STAKEHOLDERS
TO CREATE
THE WORLD
WE WANT**

THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT



HUMAN RIGHTS

- 1 Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- 2 make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.



LABOUR

- 3 Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- 4 the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- 5 the effective abolition of child labour; and
- 6 the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



ENVIRONMENT

- 7 Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- 8 undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- 9 encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.



ANTI-CORRUPTION

- 10 Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.



We know it is still possible to make the 1.5 degree limit a reality. And we know how to get there – we have roadmaps from the International Energy Agency and the IPCC. It requires tearing out the poisoned root of the climate crisis: fossil fuels. And it demands a just, equitable renewables transition. Leaders must drastically up their game, now, with record ambition, record action, and record emissions reductions. The next round of national climate plans will be pivotal. These plans must be backed with the finance, technology, support and partnerships to make them possible. The task of leaders at COP28 is to make sure that happens. This COP will respond to the Global Stocktake – an inventory of country’s climate plans which will show just how far the world is from meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement. That response is vital. Voluntary initiatives and non-binding commitments can play an important role. But they are no substitute for a global response agreed by all. The response to the Global Stocktake must light the fuse to an explosion of ambition in 2025. It must align with what the science tells us is needed. It must set out plans to massively increase ambition and investment in adaptation. It must commit to a surge in finance and cooperation. And it must set an expectation for more ambitious and detailed national climate plans. That means national plans with clear 2030 and 2035 targets, that align with 1.5 degrees, that cover the whole economy, and that plot a course for ending fossil fuels¹.

António Guterres

Secretary-General of the United Nations
Chair of the UN Global Compact Board



¹Secretary-General's press conference on UNEP Emissions Gap Report Launch; 20.11.23



Climate change represents the biggest single threat to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The climate crisis is already straining economies, crippling droughts, heat waves and devastating floods are threatening communities and ecosystems in Poland, in Europe, and around the world. The world is boiling, breaking records for average global temperatures both on land and at sea in recent months.

If we are slow to rising global temperatures to our 1.5 degree goal, we must halve greenhouse gas emissions by the end of this decade and reach net zero by 2050. But current national commitments and actions fall far short of these goals. Time is running out to avoid a global climate catastrophe, and we all know that business cannot thrive on a dying planet.

Friends and colleagues, it is time for the world to prioritize the renewable energy transition, and the private sector must be at the heart of this shift.

The UN Global Compact calls on all companies to set near term Science Based Targets that are aligned with the 1.5 degree pathway and long term Science Based Targets that are aligned with the new net zero standard. Self-declared goals are not enough. Companies must ensure that their targets are verifiable up to date with the latest climate science and are being reported and monitored transparently.

I'm happy to report that companies with approved targets through the Science Based Targets Initiative, or SBTi, for which the Global Compact of the founding partner are demonstrating significant progress.

In fact, typical SBTi approved companies have been even more ambitious than the 1.5 degree trajectory, typically reducing emissions twice as fast as required.

In Poland, I have been pleased to see companies increasingly working towards improved air quality, renewable energy solutions, and the decarbonization of the transport sector. But business must do more, and we must do it faster. That is why the UN Global Compact launched the Forward Faster Initiative last month to guide companies in key areas where they can make the biggest, fastest impact before 2030. And climate action is one of those priority areas.

We invite all companies to join this exciting initiative and bring others on board. For more than two decades, the UN Global Compact has worked to build bridges between industry leaders, governments and the United Nations. We know that this collaboration can spur what we call an ambition loop, where bold government policies and private sector leadership reinforce each other to push action to the next level. If we hope to create a more resilient global community, we must all commit to swift and immediate action on climate².

Sanda Ojiambo

Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations Global Compact, CEO & Executive Director UN Global Compact



² Sanda Ojiambo speech on PRECOP 28; 5.10.23



Foreword

We are at the halfway mark for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, better known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is a perfect moment to reflect on how much we have already achieved, where we are in the process and how much work still needs to be done. The data collected in the Sustainable Development Goals Report for 2023 does not convey optimism. It identifies only 15% of 169 SDG targets to be on track, with the remaining 85% showing either limited advancement or reversal in progress. Among the SDGs with the weakest progress, we can identify climate related goals such as sustainable cities and communities, life below water and life on land. This should be a wake-up call to all stakeholders to accelerate climate action and implement science-based solutions in place of inadequate action. With this goal in mind UN Global Compact Network Poland together with the PTWP Group organises an annual PRECOP Climate Conference. This publication outlines the most important conclusions from PRECOP 28 organised on the 5-6th October 2023.

During the two-day conference, representatives of public administration, business, activists and academics discussed key issues for Poland regarding climate change. Topics raised included the energy transition, sustainable financing, sustainable agriculture or the need to introduce climate education into the Polish core curriculum. The interesting panel discussions that took place had an additional purpose of preparing stakeholders for the negotiations during COP28. We can proudly announce this has been accomplished.

The COP28 Climate Summit agenda is designed to unite a diverse range of stakeholders around specific solutions that must be scaled up to limit rising temperatures to 1.5 degrees, build resilience, and mobilize all sectors to face the upcoming challenges. During the Climate Summit it is the perfect time to exchange views and opinions related to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We look forward to the next series of landmark negotiations leading to concrete declarations of decision-makers. We hope the legacy of the historic “Loss and Damage mechanism” established at COP27 will be taken forward at the Climate Summit in Dubai and once again bring the issue of climate justice to the forefront.

Taking all into account, we are looking forward to fruitful, climate related discussions with international stakeholders in Dubai. We hope you will find this white paper informative, and the presented conclusions will inspire you to act together for a better future.

Wojciech Kuśpik

CEO, PTWP, Initiator of the European
Economic Congress

Kamil Wyszowski

Representative and Executive Director,
UN Global Compact Network Poland

Table of contents

Kamil Wyszowski, Representative/ Executive Director, UN Global Compact Network Poland	
Foreword.....	11
Survey	
Overview of PRECOP 28 participants and their climate action.....	18
Conclusions	
Polish perspective on climate issues during PRECOP 28.....	24
Agriculture for the future.....	25
Circular economy.....	26
Climate education.....	27
Energy transition.....	28
ESG reporting.....	29
Sustainable finance.....	30
Sustainable supply chains.....	31
Sustainable urban development.....	32
Sustainable water management.....	33





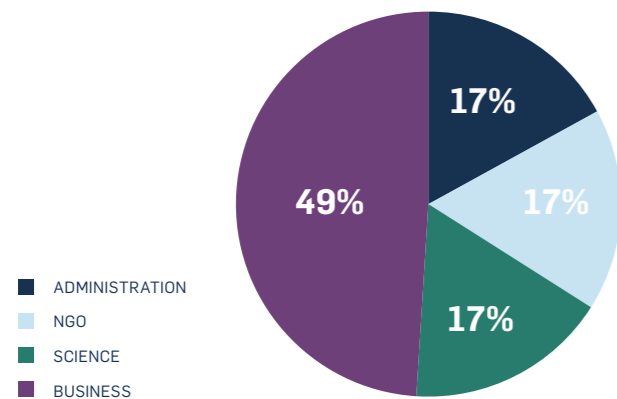
SURVEY

Overview of PRECOP 28 participants and their climate action

For the second time, an event preceding the United Nations Climate Change Conference, PRECOP 28, was held in Katowice, Poland, at the International Congress Centre. The event was attended by approximately 2000 participants.

The composition of the participants clearly shows that the event attracts mainly business representation. However, there is no shortage of representatives from central and local government and the scientific sector. Also in attendance were representatives of the non-governmental sector. About 70% of the participants of PRECOP 28 are decision-makers, holding middle and senior management positions.

PARTICIPANTS OF PRECOP28



75% of the survey participants declare knowledge of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and being familiar with its findings. This suggests that most people are aware of the existence and role of the IPCC in climate change research.

On the other hand, the fact that about 25% of the respondents gave a negative answer to the question about familiarity with the IPCC may prompt the reflection that there is still a need for information about the UN's work in this area, especially among the business community. Despite the existence of the IPCC and its important role in analysing climate change, not everyone has sufficient knowledge about it. Awareness campaigns can help raise public awareness of the issue. The UN plays a key role in coordinating international efforts to reduce climate change, and the results of the Panel's work guide the policies and strategies of many organisations.

The participants of the event made important identifications of barriers to achieving climate neutrality in Poland. Several key findings are worth highlighting:

Political will (60% of the participants): It is a result that suggests the participants believe a key factor impeding progress toward climate neutrality is a lack of sufficient political will. This could mean that more decisive action is needed from the government and policymakers. Climate neutrality issues should be the backdrop of any political activity.

Access to financing (52% of the participants): Lack of access to financing is the second main problem according to the participants. This suggests that funding policies for green initiatives and the availability of financial resources are key issues to consider in the context of green transition.

Regulatory framework (46% of the participants): The identification of the regulatory framework as one of the main barriers shows the need to review and possibly improve existing environmental laws and regulations, but also other policies that affect the implementation of the transition process. Policies should be mutually supportive, not counterposed. Creating a coherent law aimed to support the transition process is of key significance.

Lack of awareness of the problem (50% of the participants): It is a result that underscores that educating and raising public awareness of climate issues is a key element in successfully combating climate change. The introduction of climate education classes in schools is a good example of action. Given that the private sector is a key sector on the road to transformation, special attention should be paid to outreach to entrepreneurs. Business environment institutions, self-regulatory business associations and public agencies can assist in this effort.

Social and management issues (about 20% of the participants each): The identification of these two factors as barriers is important because it suggests that the attitude of management (which can be linked to a lack of awareness of the problem) remains a barrier. Social issues concern the just transition, understood as a process whose effects do not adversely affect selected social groups.

In conclusion, the results of this study clearly indicate the need for a comprehensive approach to the environmental transition in Poland, taking into account both political, financial, legal, educational and social aspects. They point to the need for cooperation between government, business and society in the pursuit of climate neutrality.

The results, which identify the strongest drivers towards climate neutrality, provide important lessons:

Access to financing (57% of the participants): The identification of this factor as the most important driver suggests that without sufficient funding it is difficult to put in place the effective measures and investments necessary to achieve climate neutrality. The availability of investment capital is crucial. It is worth noting that access to funds must go hand in hand with information and education on best practices and the effectiveness of solutions.

Good law (54% of the participants): Law that supports environmental goals and promotes sustainable development is of utmost importance. This confirms that effective regulation and legislation are key to the environmental transition. Lawmaking should be a transparent and legible process with clearly defined goals and a path to reach them. The key is to create laws that are logical and not mutually exclusive across sectors.

Education (52% of the participants): Public knowledge and awareness are key factors in the fight against climate change. The result underscores the need to educate the public about climate risks and actions that can help reduce emissions. It is also necessary to constantly monitor public sentiment and the level of awareness of the transition challenge.

Political consensus (49% of the participants): Finding political consensus is important to ensure the stability and continuation of long-term climate protection initiatives. Political support can si-

gnificantly accelerate action. Climate neutrality is a process spread over decades. Tenure of power is not a factor in strengthening long-term policies. Therefore, a clear declaration by all political actors to support this process is important. The quest for climate neutrality should be immune to the ad hoc political gains of the populist narrative.

Social compromise (30% of the participants): The low rates indicate that social compromise may not be considered a key factor by the respondents, who are mainly executives. However, it is worth noting that social compromise is often important, especially for projects that are likely to affect specific social groups. Failure to take this perspective into account can be a challenge in the process of achieving climate neutrality.

In summary, these results reveal the complex nature of the challenge of achieving climate neutrality. Access to financing, good law, education, political consensus and social compromise are key factors that must be taken into account in strategies and actions aimed to accelerate the environmental transition.

When asked about the environmental impact reporting by the organisation represented, 42% of the participants responded positively. More than 50% of the participants do not report, but 2/3 of this group say they intend to do so. 9% of the participants were unable to answer this question.

The participants of the event were also asked about the pro-climate actions provided for in the strategies of the organisations represented.



In terms of specific actions provided for in the strategies of the organisations represented, the PRECOP participants most often indicated:

- Climate education of employees (52% of the participants)
- Creation of an ESG strategy (48%)
- Reduction of carbon footprint in all three scopes in a manner consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement (46%)
- Reduction in emissions intensity (46%)
- Climate education of customers (37%)
- Investing in the thermal upgrading of offices/manufacturing plants (36%)
- Investing in new RES capacity (35%)
- Calculating carbon footprint in three scopes (33%)
- Reduction of carbon footprint in the supply chain (31%)
- Energy/heat/water/raw material recovery and reuse (29%)
- Changing the heat source to low-carbon but not fossil fuel (26%)

The above answers are worth supplementing with specific examples of educational and informational activities, such as:

Climate education of employees:

- Training and workshops Organising regular training sessions and workshops for employees to raise their awareness of the climate change and ways to reduce emissions.
- Internal information campaigns: Creating internal awareness campaigns and environmental challenges that engage employees in climate neutrality goals.
- Awards and activity promotion: Introducing award and activity promotion systems that encourage employees to engage in environmentally friendly activities in the workplace, such as carpooling, recycling or energy conservation.

Climate education of customers:

- Sustainable products and packaging: Informing customers about sustainable products and packaging and promoting their environmental benefits.

- Joint events and actions: Organising community events, seminars and campaigns that engage customers in climate neutrality actions and promote sustainable behaviour.
- Environmental labelling: Introducing environmental labels on products to inform customers about the carbon footprint and other aspects of sustainable production.

Calculating the carbon footprint

- Balance sheets of greenhouse gas emissions: Companies can calculate their greenhouse gas emissions, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄), by creating emission balance sheets. This includes assessing emissions associated with production, transport, energy consumption, and other operational activities.
- External audits of the carbon footprint: Companies can outsource carbon footprint audits to accurately assess the emissions associated with their operations. This enables them to obtain objective and reliable data.
- Using carbon footprint management tools: There are various tools and software solutions to help companies monitor and manage their carbon footprint. These tools can help with data collection and emissions analysis.

Reduction of the carbon footprint

- Improving energy efficiency by investing in technologies and practices that increase the energy efficiency of their operations. This could include more efficient appliances, LED-based lighting systems, or improved cooling systems.
- Switching to renewable energy sources such as solar power allows companies to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels and cut greenhouse gas emissions.
- Companies can reduce their emissions by optimising their supply logistics, which includes shortening transport routes, using greener modes of transport, or organising the supply chain more efficiently.
- Industry can work to develop and use materials with a lower environmental impact, which helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production and disposal of materials.
- Companies can invest in carbon offset projects such as afforestation, water purification, or community energy efficiency schemes to balance their emissions.



CONCLUSIONS



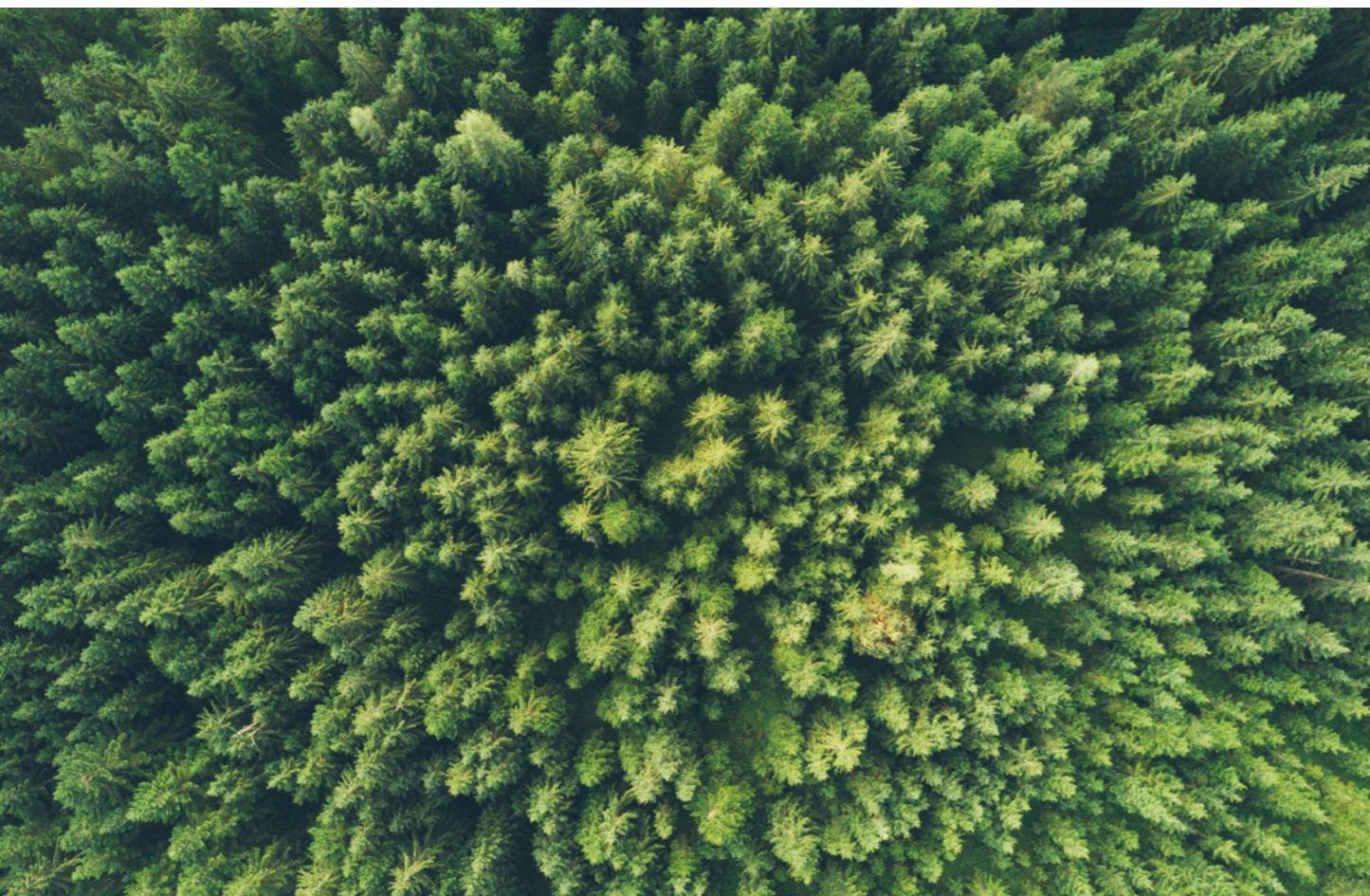
Polish perspective on climate issues during PRECOP 28

During this year's PRECOP, more than 30 debates and side events were attended by 1,300 participants, and more than 2,500 people followed the online broadcast. We met in the prestigious group of Polish and EU politicians, business people, academics, representatives of institutions and organisations to discuss the most relevant topics that will be on the agenda of the Dubai Climate Summit.

Particular attention during the discussion was given to the transition of the energy sector towards the elimination of fossil fuels and the reduction of environmental and climate impacts. The challenges and opportunities arising from industry decarbonisation processes were an important part of the discussions at PRECOP. The topic of sustainable financing and investment in the low-carbon economy was also not to be missed in Katowice.

We also discussed the problems of the transport sector facing the challenge of achieving decarbonisation without loss of function.

When speaking of halting global warming and mitigating the already visible and growing effects of the climate catastrophe, we could not leave out the topic of sustainable agriculture and rational water management. Necessary changes are also needed in urban policies to better adapt to climate change. Transforming the economy to a circular model – producing zero waste and using resources rationally – was also an important area of focus for PRECOP. The above actions would not have been possible without transparent communication against greenwashing and climate education, which should be a mandatory part of education in every country.



Agriculture for the future

- The transition of agriculture to a more sustainable direction should definitely accelerate and, above all, be equitable so that it can fit in with the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The key to agricultural transition is to increase the share of new agricultural models, such as regenerative agriculture, precision agriculture and agroforestry. Innovative agricultural models, such as controlled environment agriculture, should be supported and encouraged for implementation by the State.
- Commonly used agricultural models reduce the biodiversity of agrarian areas with what can lead to the displacement of native species by invasive species.
- We should raise the prestige of the farming profession. Farmers who choose a sustainable agricultural model provide ecosystem services to society as a whole in addition to the product itself. By choosing sustainable practices, they contribute to cleaner air, cleaner water bodies or increased biodiversity.
- Farmers should have greater access to information on modern farming models, including training and subsidy applications. Technological solutions should be open and accessible to all who want to use them.
- Only through the cooperation of farmers, entrepreneurs and research centres are we able to develop agricultural production that is good for the climate and the environment, as well as profitable for agricultural entrepreneurs
- Investments in the agri-food sector should be focused on technologies that
 - Reduce the negative impact on the environment,
 - Increase the resilience of agricultural production
- The private sector is already noticing the changes brought about by the transformation of the food system and is itself encouraging its suppliers to follow suit. The use of raw materials and products from regenerative agriculture is becoming increasingly popular.



Circular economy

- The circular economy is embedded in the tenets of the Sustainable Development Goals through Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. Businesses should be more ambitious about implementing the circular economy in their business strategy.
- Companies looking to implement the circular economy into their business model need to think strategically. Closing the entire circuit in an enterprise is a long-term process that requires a change in the management model. This change should take into account already developed solutions that do not negatively affect the environment.
- In their strategies, companies should refer to the 3R hierarchy and focus primarily on prevention, minimisation and eco-design. The private sector equates the circular economy with recycling and waste sorting, while its foundation should be non-waste.
- Eco-design is a key element in implementing a circular economy. Currently, products designed according to a linear model are being launched on the market, and then companies are trying to adapt them to a more circular business model.
- A product already produced should be treated as a resource. Its potential should be realised to the fullest. At the time of designing, every product should combine 5 dimensions: function, form, quality, affordability, sustainability.
- The new design process should take into account:
 - Renewable or recycled materials
 - Standardisation of the production process and design process
 - Reduction of post-production waste
 - Ease of product care and repair
 - Many applications for the parts used in the product
 - Adaptability of the product to the needs of life – easy to assemble and disassemble
 - Recyclability – in terms of the materials used and their combination
- The challenge of closing the circuit in a company depending on the industry it represents. In any industry, it is necessary to look at the entire value chain and the full range of possibilities of the solutions being implemented in order to choose the ones that are most efficient.
- The manufacturing sector is already seeing the need to become a service sector as well. As part of closing the circuit in a company, businesses are beginning to offer specific services such as repair.
- When the cost of repairing a manufactured product exceeds the value of the product, we should use solutions that work in other models – such as surcharges for a particular service.
- The low price of some products is due to the lack of factoring in all production costs, including environmental costs. When choosing such products, the consumer should be aware of this.
- When a product is too expensive for consumers then they get it from the secondary circuit.
- Less availability or high price of resources need not be an obstacle but may be a motivation to change the management model and implement the circular economy faster in the enterprise.
- Regulations should require the private sector to strive for authenticity and transparency. Legislation must impose strategic and long-term goals on business for implementing the circular economy and support ambitious solutions that have already been successfully implemented by others.
- ESG reporting can help build a brand's competitiveness in the market through efficient use of resources, reduction of waste used, and aggregation of data in reporting. The private sector should learn how to use the potential of the data collected to create a non-financial report. Reporting should be a resultant of the corporate strategy.

Climate education

- States should work to develop systemic changes in the basic education system. It is crucial to introduce climate education into the core curriculum, taking into account the climate crisis and the biodiversity crisis. The people imparting knowledge, i.e. school teachers, academics, PhD students should also be educated about the climate crisis. We should pay special attention to those who are about to complete their education, primarily university students and final-year high school students.
- Parents and parents-to-be should be aware of climate change and, by their actions, should demonstrate good role models for future generations.
- The contents of the documents adopted by the EU and the UN that define our relationship with nature and the environment should be implemented into school education.
- We live in a world where we are fighting the challenge of information excess, not scarcity. We need to move away from teaching behaviours by heart, and teaching critical thinking, open-mindedness, asking questions, being open to different perspectives, including connecting the dots, explaining processes, should be a key part of education.
- Speaking of the climate crisis, let us pay attention to the rhetoric. While successful education does not take huge knowledge, it has to be imparted skilfully. Intimidation does not motivate action and additionally leaves a feeling of powerlessness, thus deepening climate depression. Greater environmental awareness is not always associated with stronger action to halt climate change. When talking about climate change, let us inspire and give a sense of empowerment.
- Climate education should not be limited to school education. Decision-makers both in business, i.e. management groups, boards of directors, supervisory boards, and in public administration – officials, decision-makers – should also be aware of climate change. This will effectively accelerate awareness building and influence their further decisions.
- Climate education should be introduced into Europe's climate change adaptation strategy.



Energy transition

- The energy sector is the basis for the good functioning of the State. The country's energy security is a key aspect that should be ensured. Russia's aggression on Ukraine has shown that energy supply can be used as a weapon.
- District heating is the first sector the transformation of which we have to deal with and whose requirements under Fit for 55 should be implemented as soon as possible.
- Green hydrogen is seen as a key component of the European Union's energy transition. Even a partial replacement of the produced grey hydrogen with green hydrogen would be a major success and the beginning of a change.
- Low- and medium-voltage grids significantly affect the development of RES and the pace of the energy transition.

The role of the ERO president is crucial in ensuring the stability of the electricity market.

- We should take dynamic measures to introduce next-generation technologies, because a great number of the grid networks already in place in Poland are ageing and, at the same time are immature. It can be helpful to draw on the knowledge and experience of other countries.
- The amplitude of prices (during the day and evening) guarantees profitability for energy storage. Although there is uncertainty whether it will continue to be profitable amid rapid scale-up.



ESG reporting

- When reporting, companies must not forget the social (S) and corporate governance (G) elements, which are as important as reporting and reducing the company's environmental impact (E).
- Systems should be implemented to support SMEs in reporting. Larger companies with SMEs in the supply chain need to make sure they are prepared to report and calculate their carbon footprint. This is the basis for larger companies to have their emissions accurately mapped in Scope 3.
- ESG reporting should motivate companies not only to decarbonise the company but also the products themselves.

Change must start with the design itself, and sustainability should be built into every stage of doing business.

- The CSRD should prompt companies to change their management strategies and link key business decisions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals as well as the ESG.
- Implementing a sustainability strategy requires putting long-term gains, both financial and non-financial, above short-term financial goals.



Sustainable finance

- Financing the energy transition is a challenge for EU Member States. The EU has been continually increasing its financing of the energy transition through targeted funds and instruments (including the Instrument for Reconstruction and Enhanced Resilience, the Cohesion Fund). It is the use of EU funds and so-called blended finance, i.e. funds in public-private partnerships, that are the best mechanisms for financing the transition. Reaching for more money from taxpayers is a worst-case scenario that will exacerbate the negative phenomena of the transition period, such as energy poverty and the weakening of society's economic status.
- The EU funds innovation-related programmes that support technologies for improving energy efficiency, such as Horizon Europe, the Innovation Fund, and LIFE, which provides 1 billion euros in funding to support energy efficiency over the 2021-2027 timeframe. Building national capacity for innovation and investment in technological development is also crucial. To this end, it is necessary to design an investment plan based on solid data and identified transformation needs.
- Sustainability reports are becoming (thanks to legislative changes) reliable tools for measuring the actual environmental and social impact of companies' activities, taking into account not only internal issues of the organisation but also the impact on the external environment and value chain involvement.
- RES investments are becoming increasingly profitable as indicated by data from the International Renewable Energy Agency. The benefits of RES must also become more visible to businesses. It is worth considering additional incentive mechanisms, not only in the form of legal liberalisation (e.g. access to transmission grids, or direct lines), but also the financial incentives that follow them, which will reduce the costs associated with RES connection.
- The key to building a stable electricity system in the context of RES is energy storage, a technology we are familiar with and already use on some scale. Investment in energy storage facilities will make it possible to effectively manage the carbon gap created in the process of transitioning away from coal and fully utilise the potential of RES.
- In financing nuclear power, the choice of the construction and maintenance financing process is crucial. The State is obliged to take the lead in this process of securing the risks associated with the establishment of the first major power plant. Consideration should also be given to the use of already known methods of financing such investments, such as the Mankala model or the SaHo model that has been developed in Poland.



Sustainable supply chains

- European regulations motivate the private sector to create ESG strategies and decarbonise businesses. This direction is often set by large, multinational corporations using the Science Based Targets Initiative, for example. Small and medium-sized enterprises show weak interest, high uncertainty and a closed attitude towards ESG. Larger entities should support them in these processes, as they usually fall within Scope 3 of larger companies.
- The decarbonisation of transport should move toward low-emission vehicles and resource alternatives to fossil fuels. The private sector is beginning to decarbonise transport by replacing fleets with electric vehicles, hydrogen vehicles or biofuel vehicles. The challenge for these solutions, however, is the inadequate infrastructure and low availability of such vehicles as well as higher costs.
- In anticipation of widely available alternatives to internal combustion vehicles, we should work on freight efficiency by shortening supply chains, better logistics and freight organisation, or reducing empty transport.
- The use of telematics will allow companies to choose the most economical route by which to reduce emissions. Collecting data, testing new models will also allow them to adapt more quickly to the specifics of electric transport.
- One solution to reducing transport emissions is to try to introduce new standards for vehicular traffic, including greater control of driving techniques – moving at speeds of no more than 85km/h reduces emissions, saves money, and improves road safety.
- As we focus on a more sustainable transport solutions and supply chain, we need to adapt them to the current level of market development in the country concerned. The environmental impact of a particular mode of transport will depend on the energy mix in a country – electric transport will not always have the smallest carbon footprint.
- Biofuels are an alternative to fossil fuels. They have significant reduction potential and are easily adaptable to internal combustion vehicles. What poses the biggest challenge is their availability. Only a few European countries offer this resource. We should work on making the use of this fuel more common, as this is the path that will allow us to go through the transition period until we find a zero-/low-carbon and common means of transport.
- To reduce carbon-intensive transport, we should convince people to switch from the car to public transport. In many places, the car fills a large gap of transport exclusion – it is reasonably versatile and has a large range. In order for public transport to be able to compete with the internal combustion car, public transport infrastructure should be expanded. Expansion of bus and train services should take place at the city and regional levels, but also on long-distance routes.
- The concept of 15-minute cities is capable of dramatically reducing the carbon footprint of transport. Only the availability of well-connected buses and trains, bike paths for direct access to schools, workplaces, hospitals and administration can convince people to give up their cars.
- Decarbonisation and the transition to low-carbon transport will not happen without a change in consumption patterns. It is crucial to convince businesses and consumers to make much more sustainable choices. This needs to happen in tandem with a design paradigm shift which will prioritize pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure over space for individual cars.
- The pillar of this change should be the cooperation and collaboration of all actors in the dialogue. A systemic approach is capable of accelerating the achievement of climate neutrality from both the business and national levels.



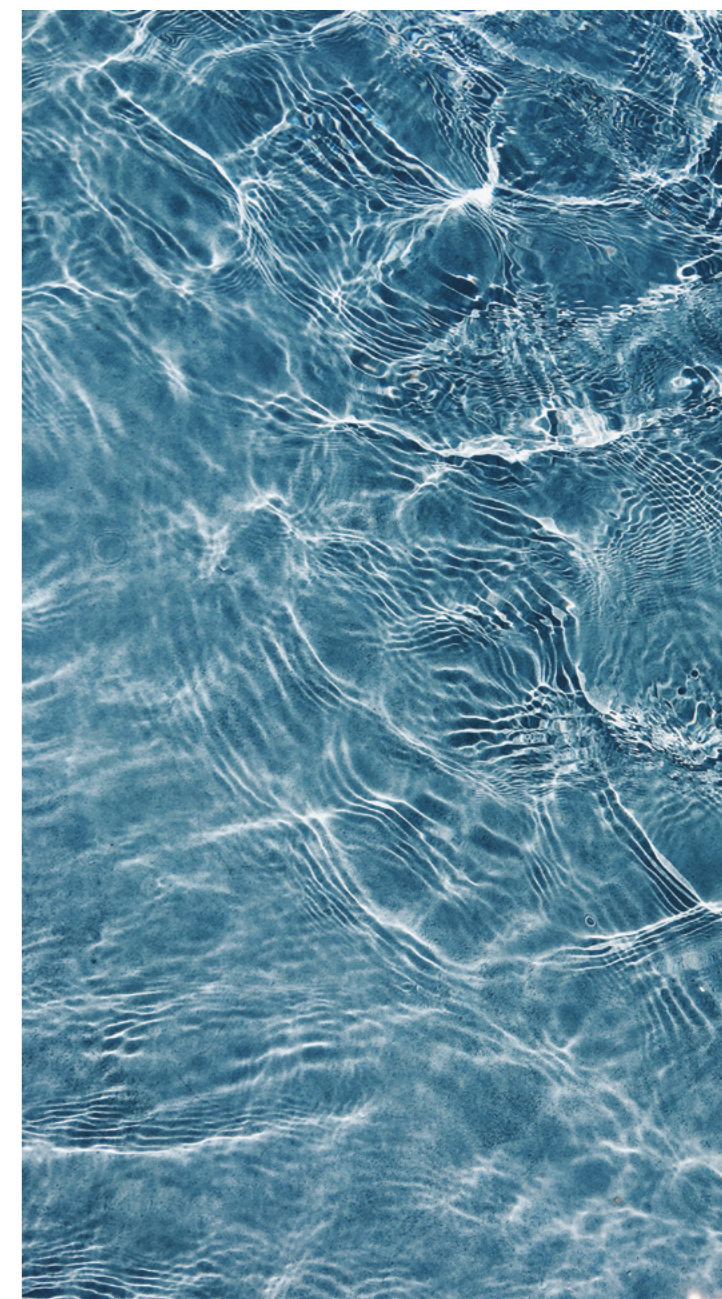
Sustainable urban development

- The goal of sustainable urban development should be to ensure a high quality of life for city residents. When changing city plans, we must take their needs into account. Cities are developing rapidly, as are the communities that live in them.
- Climate change adaptation in cities should first focus on cities and areas most affected by climate change. Mitigating the phenomenon of urban heat islands or protecting cities along the coastline is crucial.
- Pro-climate measures in cities are beginning to pay off and bring economic benefits. The funding model for initiatives is also changing. Previously, taxes were the main source of finance, but now more and more ventures are relying on external funding from institutions or development banks.
- Improving the energy efficiency of buildings, including energy consumption reduction in cities by 75%, is key to achieving the energy transition. New technologies and innovations in construction can help.
- An area that needs fundamental changes and subsidies is urban transport – as it is one of the most emission-intensive branches of the urban economy.



Sustainable water management

- The topic of water resources should be more visible in the public space. Politicians and local governments should also focus on other aspects, and not limit themselves to water quality monitoring and illegal wastewater discharges.
- The same government department should not be in charge of conservation and use of water resources. This creates a conflict of interest and neither department is well managed.
- The most important problems we have to solve taking into account the entire water and wastewater management are droughts, floods and poor water quality. To do this, we need to work with researchers, practitioners, regulators and local government bodies.
- Current methods of combatting drought involve the construction of dam reservoirs, hydroelectric or regulating structures. These are not solutions for a systemic approach to drought, as they operate in a specific region. Priority should be given to restoring proper water relations over large areas, e.g. through landscape retention and construction of gates on drainage ditches.
- Water for municipal purposes is taken to the greatest extent from groundwater, to a small extent from rivers, and even less from dam reservoirs. Restoration of groundwater resources should be a key action to maintain water balance. Groundwater should be a strategic resource that is specially protected for us.
- Agriculture and agricultural water use are perhaps the biggest threat to water bodies. This is very well illustrated by the eutrophication of the Baltic Sea caused by fertiliser and nutrient runoff from fields. We should work to minimise the impact of agriculture on groundwater.
- More than ¾ of deep wells are contaminated and contain non-potable water. This is due to the lack of sanitation, increasingly dense housing, increasing population, and improving hygiene status, which implies an increased use of hygiene and sanitation products.
- River monitoring should be expanded, and the results should be widely available. Monitoring wastewater for the presence of viruses, pathogens or microplastics will allow more effective protection of water from pollution.
- We should make better use of wastewater to be able to close the water cycle more efficiently. Investments in recovering minerals from wastewater can replace fossil ingredients of mineral fertilisers.
- In order to effectively fight floods, we should not build up floodplains, as they are a natural buffer during water surges. Moving floodbanks and widening fluvial terraces may help. This will allow the restoration of natural riparian forests, which help fight climate change by binding carbon.



PUBLISHER:

Network Poland

UN Global Compact
Network Poland
ul. Emilii Plater 25/64
00-688 Warszawa

CO-PUBLISHER:

Grupa PTWP
Plac Sławika i Antalla 1
40-163 Katowice



Know-How Hub
Centrum Transferu Wiedzy

EDITORSHIP:

Kamil Wyszowski
Zuzanna Pałejko
Jacek Woźnikowski
Zuzanna Szpil
Tomasz Czech
Julia Grzybowska

GRAPHIC DESIGN:

tuPałejko | tupalejko.pl

PHOTOS:

unsplash.com

TRANSLATION:

Lidex

Warszawa 2023



Network Poland

This publication was prepared based on data and source materials collected between October and November 2023, unless stated otherwise.

Authors have conducted their work independently, describing phenomena and formulating recommendations based on the data and source materials, which authenticity and exhaustiveness they have not verified. Therefore, the authors are not responsible for them and cannot guarantee the authenticity and exhaustiveness of the publication.

None of the authors of this publication cannot be liable in any way for using information from it without their knowledge or consent. Authors do not bare any liability for actions or consequences bared by third parties or any decisions made based on this publication.

Opinions presented in this publication represent individual views of the authors.
Photos and graphics come from private resources of the authors or public sources.
All rights reserved.©

Uniting business for a better world!

ISBN 978-83-967970-6-3



9 788396 797063



Network Poland

ul. Emilii Plater 25/64
00-688 Warszawa
www.ungc.org.pl