



PM
SOCIETY

Sustainability



NET ZERO

The PM Society Sustainability Tool Kit is designed to help agencies of every size to make changes to the way they operate and reduce the carbon impact of our sector. The advice is inspired by the progress of our colleagues in the wider advertising industry, as well as the standards required by our clients in the pharmaceutical sector.

We hope you find it practical and easy enough to implement in a time- and resource-pressured agency environment.

Thank you for playing your part.

We'll keep you posted with updates.

Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016.

Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

To achieve this long-term temperature goal, countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century.

The Paris Agreement is a **landmark in the multilateral climate change process** because, for the first time, a binding agreement brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects.

“No one will protect what they don't care about, and no one will care about what they have never experienced.”

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

Pharmaceutical and life science agencies

The context and challenge

A ranking of the world's most sustainable organisations is published each year by Canadian research firm Corporate Knights. It rigorously assesses more than 7,000 companies with a turnover in excess of USD 1 billion against key metrics of sustainability, which includes carbon footprint.

In the pharmaceutical and life science sector, the **top 100** in 2024 included Novo Nordisk, Novosymes, Sanofi and AstraZeneca.

In compiling this list, the authors note that thousands of businesses have made net zero commitments, but very few have 'credible, science-based plans to de-carbonize their operations and supply chains.'

As PM Society members we are part of that supply chain and our clients need our support to help them to **achieve their own net zero goals.**

Source: The Global 100 list: How the world's most sustainable corporations are driving the green transition. Available from: <https://www.corporateknights.com/rankings/global-100-rankings/2024-global-100-rankings/the-20th-annual-global-100/>



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

There are many resources and organisations who offer support and services to businesses, and this is not an exhaustive list, nor is it the only way. We know that in a busy agency world it can be difficult to prioritise new initiatives that aren't client-related, so this is intended to be easy to follow and select the tools that **work for your agency.**

As we compile this, we are also conscious that some agencies are already being asked by their clients to adopt to specific sustainability practices, but as there is no overriding consensus or framework, the approaches vary. A useful starting point would be to reach out to your clients and ask them what they are looking for from their suppliers.

Depending on the approach you take, **it can be a complex and time-consuming process,** so you will need to allocate time and resource. Some agencies find it easier to hire consultants who know how to navigate the process.

You can also reach out to us in **the PM Society Sustainability Group**, and if we can't help, we'll put you in touch with someone who can.

COMMIT TO ACTION AND SET A BUDGET

Appoint a sustainability champion in your agency

Set an annual budget and allocate sufficient time

Join the PM Society Sustainability Group

Follow us on LinkedIn

Still not sure...

Talk to us

GETTING STARTED

Scientifically validated targets
should be based on 1.5°C

Measure your carbon footprint using a carbon footprint calculator

Set reduction targets, using science-based targeting (SBTi)

Don't want to work alone? Choose a sustainability platform

Follow our suggested Steps to Action

Still not sure...

Talk to us

WRITE A SUSTAIN- ABILITY POLICY

These are examples of some approaches to sustainability. The sustainability platforms on the next page have templates that can be adapted.

AstraZeneca approach

Business actions from Ecologi

Cuttsy+Cuttsy approach

Tips and templates for small businesses

Still not sure...

Talk to us

What's your current sustainability profile?

These tools can all be used to **measure your carbon footprint**. This is not a definitive list, we've chosen the ones that are most relevant, or are already used by clients. Many also offer comprehensive tools and resources to set and track performance targets and also offset carbon use. We hope to share experiences and feedback from members going forward.

Ecologi

Geared to smaller companies to help them get started quickly. Offers carbon footprint analysis software to assess energy use and set targets for net zero. Service includes funding carbon-offsetting schemes that are backed by the UN, and tree-planting - you can plant a forest in your company name.

Ecovadis

This is a globally recognised solution and claims to be the number one provider. It is the preferred sustainability solution for some client companies. Service includes an initial rating, areas for improvement and ongoing benchmarking. Costs are tiered from small business to enterprise solutions.

Ad Net Zero

Scheme organised by the Advertising Association specifically for the ad industry. Has a lot of big agency buy-in. Includes carbon assessment, training and events, practical tools. Some are free, with annual membership for the full programme.

AdGreen

AdGreen supports the industry to reduce the energy cost of ad production through free training and resources. Many larger agencies have become a principal partner to collect a levy to fund the cost of sustainable initiatives.

CDP

A global organisation that encourages businesses to disclose their environmental impact. Includes a framework for assessment and scoring which member businesses use to assess their supply chain.

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

Allows you to calculate your own personal impact and challenge yourself to make change.

The steps to action

1. Reduce energy consumption

According to [Ad Net Zero](#), the two main ways an agency can cut energy consumption is to reduce air travel and switch to renewable energy. Work from home policies make this harder to implement. Consider tools such as [Giki Zero Pro](#), an employee programme to build a sustainability culture.

2. Reduce your advertising production and media carbon costs

As an industry most of our production costs are involved in film and digital tools and channels: Ask your media and production partners about their carbon footprint and include this in your planning and recommendation to clients. For advertising [WARC.com](#) has a lot of useful advice, such as running digital ads during off-peak times and reducing the energy consumption of downloads. For production, turn to [AdGreen](#), they have a lot of advice and free training for how to reduce the carbon impact of advertising production.

3. Sign up to offsetting schemes

Offset any energy use by funding carbon removal schemes. Some of the sustainability platforms included in this toolkit offer the option to do this. There is also the [United Nations carbon offset platform](#).

4. Switch to sustainable suppliers

Choose to work with suppliers that have a clear sustainability policy and who demonstrate commitment to meeting science-based net zero targets. For media and production suppliers, follow the [AdGreen](#) framework mentioned in Action 2. [CDP.net](#) lists companies worldwide that are leading the way in a net zero, nature positive future.

The steps to action

5. Gain and share knowledge

Empower your teams and your agency by encouraging learning. Many of the sustainability platforms include learning, e.g. **AdGreen** and **#Changethebrief**. These are some other courses our PM Society Sustainability Group members have found useful:

University of Cambridge **Business and Climate Change: Towards Net Zero Emissions** is run over 8 weeks.

Futurelearn is free and courses are typically run over 2-4 weeks.

6. Introduce sustainability into your proposals to clients

This is not just about meeting the demands of procurement. As creative partners we can be ambassadors for change too.

The **Change the Brief Alliance** works on behalf of the ad sector to train agency teams to embed sustainability into their responses to client briefs.

7. Spread the word

Please help us to spread the word, share ideas and successes and inspire others. Together we are all making a difference.

Follow us on **LinkedIn**

Contact the PM Sustainability Group if you'd like to become a member and lend a hand.

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Our purpose

The PM Society Sustainability Group seeks to educate, inform, and engage PM Society members and non-members on this vital issue – to accelerate an industry-wide movement towards sustainability at the scale and pace required by the science.

Thank you

We are grateful to all our clients and agency partners who have shared their experience, time and knowledge to help us all achieve net zero goals.