



SCIENCE
BASED
TARGETS

DRIVING AMBITIOUS CORPORATE CLIMATE ACTION

GETTING STARTED GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS

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ABOUT SBTi

The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) is a corporate climate action organization that enables companies and financial institutions worldwide to play their part in combating the climate crisis.

We develop standards, tools and guidance which allow companies to set greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions targets in line with what is needed to keep global heating below catastrophic levels and reach net-zero by 2050 at latest.

The SBTi is incorporated as a UK charity, with a subsidiary SBTi Services Limited, which hosts our target validation services. Partner organizations who facilitated SBTi's growth and development are CDP, the United Nations Global Compact, the We Mean Business Coalition, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

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The SBTi reserves the right to revise this document according to a set revision schedule or as advisable to reflect the most recent emissions scenarios, regulatory, legal or scientific developments, and GHG accounting best practices.

“Science Based Targets initiative” and “SBTi” refer to the Science Based Targets initiative, a private company registered in England number 14960097 and registered as a UK Charity number 1205768.

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ABOUT THE GETTING STARTED GUIDE

This document is designed as a simple guide to support companies in setting near-term and net-zero science-based targets aligned to the [SBTi Corporate Near-Term Criteria](#) and the [SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#). This guide is to support companies at the 'Develop' stage of the [Target-Setting Process](#). Companies should ensure they are familiar with the target-setting process and have followed the necessary steps prior to developing and submitting targets, and follow the required subsequent steps.

Companies should also refer to the [SBTi Services Target-Setting Process](#), [Standard Operating Procedure for the Validation of SBTi Targets](#), [sector-specific guidance](#), and the [SBTi Glossary](#) for further information.

The document is structured as follows:

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<i>This section is aimed at companies that already have validated near-term science-based targets. It provides decision trees covering: 1) Essential checks before beginning the validation process; 2) Target recalculation triggers; and 3) Aligning with best practice and latest climate science.</i>	

GETTING STARTED WITH SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS

NGO, other public organization, etc.

What type of organization are you?

Company or state-owned enterprise

Are you a parent company or a subsidiary?

Parent company

Are you in the oil and gas sector?

Yes

No

Are you a financial institution?

Yes

No

Is your organisation a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME)?

Yes

No

Have you completed a full and recent GHG inventory/screening of scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions?

Yes

Have you included all relevant scope 3 activities?

Yes

See next page

Targets should be set at the parent or group level, but subsidiaries may also choose to set targets as well. Parent companies must include emissions of all subsidiaries in their target submission in accordance with boundary criteria detailed in the [Corporate Near-Term Criteria](#) and the [Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#). See the [SOP for the Validation of SBTi Targets](#) for more details.

Subsidiary

The SBTi does not currently assess targets for cities, local governments, public sector institutions and non-profit organizations. Cities and local governments can set climate targets following the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN) [guidance](#). We encourage other stakeholders to use the climate science-based targets setting methods detailed in the [Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#).

Companies in the oil and gas sector must refer to the Interim Policy on Fossil Fuel Companies. See the [SBTi oil and gas webpage](#) for the latest information.

Financial Institutions may use the [Financial Institutions Near-Term Criteria](#) to set near-term targets, or the [Financial Institutions Net-Zero Standard](#) + the [Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#) to set near-term and net-zero targets.

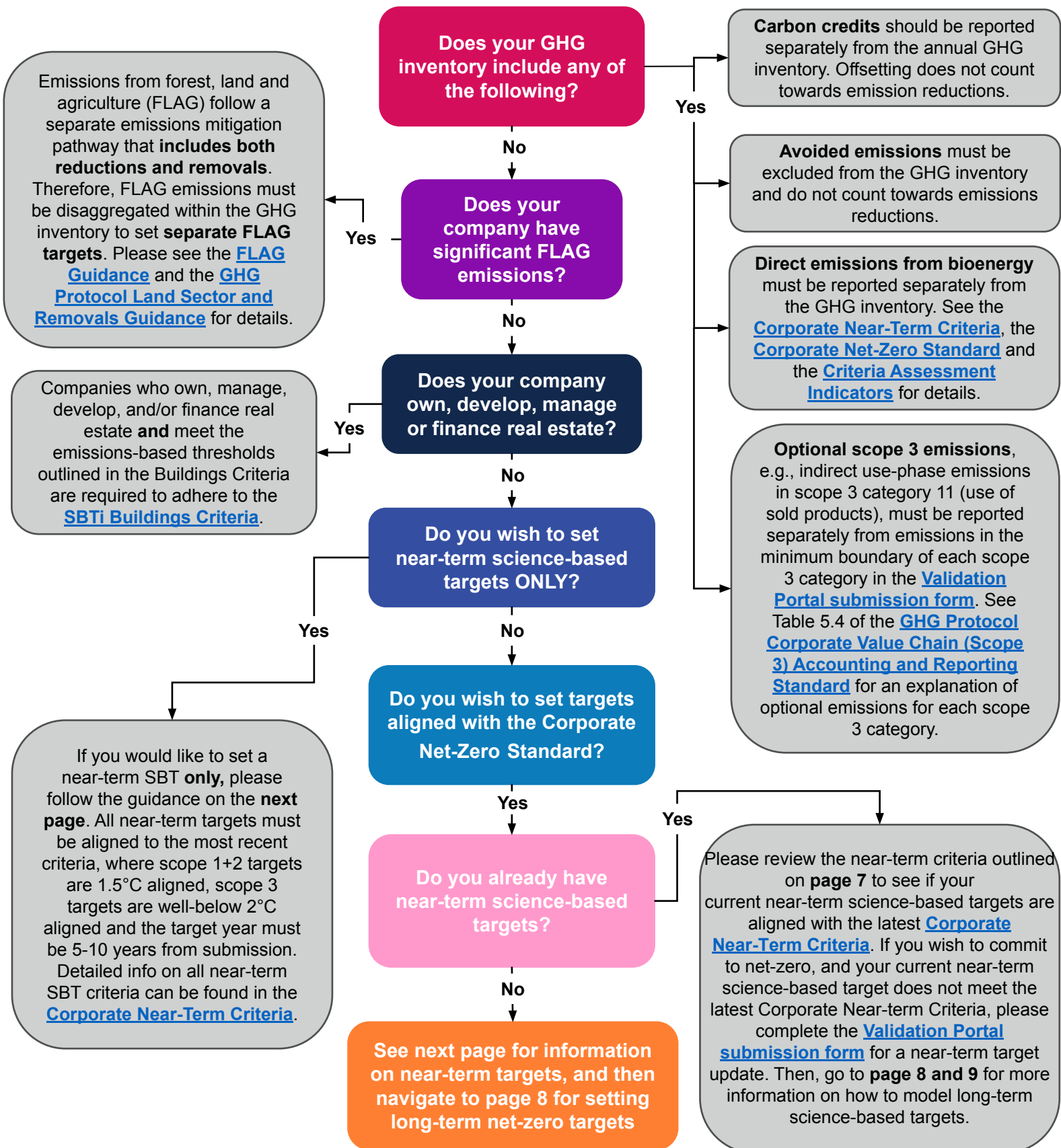
Please see our [SME FAQs](#) for more information. SMEs may choose to submit near-term and net-zero targets through a streamlined route using the [SME Streamlined Target Validation Route](#).

A company-wide scope 1 and 2 emissions inventory must be completed as defined by the [GHG Protocol Corporate Standard](#) and the [GHG Protocol Scope 2 Guidance](#). Companies must complete a scope 3 inventory/screening for all relevant categories considering the minimum boundary of each category per the [GHG Protocol Corporate Value Chain \(Scope 3\) Accounting and Reporting Standard](#). Companies may use the GHG Protocol [Scope 3 Calculation Guidance](#) and [CDP Supply Chain Program](#) as resources. A company can [commit to setting a target](#) in parallel to performing a full scope 1, 2 and 3 GHG inventory.

Not sure

All relevant scope 3 sources must be calculated before submitting targets to the SBTi. See Table 6.1 (page 61) of the [GHG Protocol Corporate Value Chain \(Scope 3\) Accounting and Reporting Standard](#) for criteria to identify relevant scope 3 activities.

GETTING STARTED WITH SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS



To submit targets for validation, companies will need a registered account on the [SBTi Services Validation Portal](#).

SETTING NEAR-TERM SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS

Use the following table if you want to set near-term SBTs only or if you wish to commit to net-zero and have not already set near-term targets.

Supporting documents	For more details see:	
	1. Corporate Net-Zero Standard: 'Process to set science-based targets' section 2. Corporate Near-Term Criteria	3. SOP for the Validation of SBTi Targets 4. Criteria Assessment Indicators 5. Corporate Near-Term Tool
Scope 1 & 2	Temperature, time frame and emissions coverage Since SBTi Criteria V5.0, companies must set 1.5° C aligned scope 1 & 2 targets, which must be achieved within 5-10 years from the date the target is submitted to the SBTi for validation. Companies must not exclude more than 5% of total combined scope 1 & 2 emissions from the boundary of the GHG inventory or the target boundary.	Methods • Cross-sector absolute reduction: all companies (apart from the FLAG and power sector who must follow sector guidance) reduce emissions at a minimum of 4.2% annually. • Sector-specific pathways: can be absolute reduction or intensity convergence, depending on the sector. • Renewable electricity (scope 2): source renewable electricity at a rate that is consistent with 1.5°C scenarios: • 80% renewable electricity procurement by 2025 and • 100% by 2030 as thresholds.
Scope 3	Scope 3 is less than 40% of overall emissions No scope 3 target required, although encouraged as best practice. See requirements below. Scope 3 is 40% or more of overall emissions Companies must set one or more emission reduction targets and/or supplier/customer engagement targets that collectively cover(s) at least 67% of total scope 3 emissions in conformance with the GHG Protocol Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Accounting and Reporting Standard. Scope 3 target(s) must be aligned with well-below 2°C pathways and targets achieved within 5-10 years from the date the target is submitted to the SBTi for validation.	Methods • Cross-sector absolute reduction • Sector-specific intensity convergence • Economic intensity • Physical intensity • Supplier/Customer engagement • If you have scope 3 operations with transportation emissions, or are in the power or FLAG sectors, please check the sectoral guidance.
Sector-specific guidance	For additional sector guidance on near-term targets, please refer to Table 4 of the Corporate Net-Zero Standard, or the sector guidance page. Transportation emissions: For all transport-related emissions across all sectors, companies should report these emissions on a well-to-wheel (WTW) basis in their GHG inventory. Power: Companies in power must use the sector-specific pathway. FLAG: Companies with at least 20% FLAG emissions, must follow the FLAG guidance to set separate FLAG targets. Buildings: Companies with at least 20% of buildings-related emissions from either in-use operational emissions or upfront embodied emissions from new constructed buildings who develop, own or provide property management services to buildings must follow the Buildings Criteria to set targets on buildings-specific emissions	

The SBTi recommends using the most ambitious decarbonization scenarios that lead to the earliest reductions and the least cumulative emissions.

KEY CRITERIA FOR NEAR AND LONG-TERM SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS

This table is a non-exhaustive summary of the key target boundary, timeframe, method eligibility and minimum ambition requirements for near and long-term science-based targets. For more detail on methods, pathways, criteria and recommendations, see the [Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#).

			Scope 1 and 2			Scope 3			
Near-term science-based targets	Target boundary		95% coverage of scopes 1 & 2			If scope 3 represents more than 40% of total emissions: target boundary must cover minimum 67% of scope 3 emissions			
	Target year		5-10 years from date of submission			5-10 years from date of submission			
	Method eligibility and minimum ambition	Method	Absolute reduction (i.e., ACA)	Sector-specific intensity convergence (i.e., SDA)	Renewable electricity (scope 2 only)	Cross-sector absolute reduction (i.e. ACA)	Sector-specific intensity convergence (i.e. SDA)	Supplier or customer engagement	Scope 3 physical and economic intensity reduction
		Eligibility and minimum ambition	- Minimum of 4.2% linear annual reduction (LAR) dependant on base year - Exception: FLAG pathway is 3.03% LAR	Depends on sector and company inputs	80% RE by 2025 100% RE by 2030 and thereafter a maintenance target	2.5% LAR	Depends on sector and company inputs (SDA)	Suppliers/c customers have science-based targets in line with the latest Corporate Near-Term Criteria	7% year-on-year physical/economic intensity reduction in annual compounded terms
Long-term and net-zero science-based targets	Target boundary		95% coverage of scopes 1 & 2			90% coverage of scope 3			
	Target year		2050 or sooner (2040 for power and maritime SDA targets)			2050 or sooner			
	Method eligibility and minimum ambition	Method	Absolute reduction (i.e., ACA)	Sector-specific intensity convergence (i.e., SDA)	Renewable electricity (scope 2 only)	Cross-sector absolute reduction (i.e., ACA)	Sector-specific intensity convergence (i.e., SDA)	Supplier or customer engagement	Scope 3 physical and economic intensity reduction
		Eligibility and minimum ambition	90% reduction (cross-sector pathway) 72% reduction for FLAG - Other sector pathways vary	Sector/commodity pathways vary	100% RE by 2030 and thereafter a maintenance target	90% reduction (cross-sector pathway) 72% reduction for FLAG - Other sector pathways vary	Sector/commodity pathways vary	Not eligible for long-term science-based targets	97% overall reduction for both physical and economic intensity
					Not eligible	1.5°C ambition	Well-below 2°C ambition		

SETTING LONG-TERM NET-ZERO SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS

Companies must set long-term science-based targets that align to 1.5°C for a target year no later than 2050 as part of their net-zero commitment. These targets cover at least 95% of scope 1 & 2 emissions, and at least 90% of scope 3 emissions. See the following pages for more information on criteria. This page describes the methods that companies can use to set long-term targets and how they can be applied.

Method name	More about the method	Which companies can use this method?	Which emission scopes does it apply to?
Cross-sector absolute reduction	Absolute emissions are reduced by an amount that is, at minimum, consistent with the cross-sector pathway. Also referred to as 'absolute contraction'. The minimum reduction is calculated as an overall amount (e.g., 90% overall for the cross-sector pathway).	All companies, except companies in the power or FLAG (forest, land and agriculture) sectors.	All scopes
Sector-specific absolute reduction	Absolute emissions are reduced by an amount that is, at minimum, consistent with a sector-specific pathway.	FLAG, iron & steel, cement and buildings.	All scopes
Sector-specific intensity convergence (i.e., SDA)	Physical emissions intensity targets are calculated based on all companies in a sector converging to a sector-specific emissions intensity by 2050 or sooner. Also referred to as 'physical intensity convergence' or 'SDA'. For long-term targets, the target emissions intensity is equal to the sector's emissions intensity in 2050 (2040 for the power and maritime transport SDAs).	Recommended for companies in heavy-emitting sectors, or with heavy-emitting activities. See box below for FLAG commodity pathways and page 10 for other sector pathways.	All scopes
		FLAG commodity pathways - Beef - Chicken - Dairy - Maize - Leather - Palm oil - Rice - Wheat - Pork - Soy - Timber & wood fiber	
Renewable electricity	Companies actively procure at least 80% renewable electricity by 2025, 100% renewable electricity by 2030, and maintain 100% renewable electricity procurement thereafter.	All companies	Scope 2
Scope 3 economic intensity reduction	Economic emissions intensity is reduced by an amount that is, at minimum, consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C. The minimum reduction is calculated as an overall 97% reduction.	All companies	Scope 3
Scope 3 physical intensity reduction	Physical emissions intensity is reduced by an amount that is, at minimum, consistent with 1.5°C. The minimum reduction is calculated as an overall 97% reduction.	All companies	Scope 3

1.5°C PATHWAYS FOR SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS

This page offers an overview of the resources available to companies for setting 1.5°C science-based targets and the available pathways.

Cross-sector resources	The Corporate Near-Term Criteria and Corporate Net-Zero Standard provide cross-sector pathways for near-term and long-term science-based targets.
Sector-specific resources	Companies that operate in specific sectors should refer to the sector resources summary webpage for an overview of the sector-specific standards, criteria and guidance resources which companies and financial institutions can use now, plus those we plan to develop.
Other sectors	Companies operating in sectors not listed or for which the sector-specific standard is not yet finalized should use SBTi's Corporate Near-Term Criteria and/or Corporate Net-Zero Standard to set targets.

SECTOR CLASSIFICATIONS

This table is a non-exhaustive summary of the key thresholds for sector-specific target setting. Refer to the SBTi [Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#), [Corporate Near-Term Criteria](#) and sector-specific resources for complete details.

Sectors	Sub-sectors	Required to use sector-specific resources?	Sector thresholds
Built Environment	Buildings	Required	If: - Business activities meet the intended user categories¹, and in-use operational emissions from owned and/or managed buildings constitute at least 20% of total scope 1, 2 and 3 (categories 1-14) emissions, AND/OR - Business activities meet the intended user categories², and upfront embodied emissions from new developments or acquisitions of a building as a first owner constitute at least 20% of total scope 1, 2 and 3 (categories 1-14) emissions within 3 years prior to the year of target submission.
Financial Institutions	Financial Institutions: Near-term	Required	If an entity generates 5% or more of its revenue from investment or lending activities. Entities with insurance underwriting or capital market activities shall refer to the thresholds for the SBTi Financial Institutions Net-Zero Standard.
	Financial Institutions: Net-zero	Required	If an entity has 5% or more of their revenue from any of the five financial activities (lending, asset owner investing, asset manager investing, insurance underwriting and capital market activities) individually shall use the SBTi Financial Institutions Net-Zero Standard.
		Optional	If: - An entity has 5% or more of their revenue from the five financial activities in aggregate but less than 5% of their revenue from the five financial activities individually are recommended, but not required, to use the SBTi Financial Institutions Net-Zero Standard. - Real economy companies generating 5% or more of their revenue from financial activities that have the same underlying emissions already covered in the company's scope 1, 2 and 3, categories 1-14 targets (e.g., automotive manufacturers that offer loans or lease financing for their products) are recommended, but not required, to use the SBTi Financial Institutions Net-Zero Standard.
Forest, Land and Agriculture	Forest, Land and Agriculture (FLAG)	Required	If: - FLAG-related emissions are 20% or more of total scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, AND/OR - Company's sector classification is any of the following and FLAG-related emissions are 5% or more of total scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions: forest and paper products: forestry, timber, pulp and paper, rubber; food production: agricultural production; food production: animal source; food and beverage processing; food and staples retailing; tobacco.
Industry	Cement	Optional	If: - Clinker production constitutes at least 5% of total scope 1 emissions, AND/OR - Category 1 emissions related to purchased clinker and/or cement/cementitious product are present, AND/OR - Category 15 emissions related to clinker production by investments are present.
	Steel	Optional	If: - Emissions associated with the iron and steel core boundary³ are at least 5% of total scope 1 and 2 emissions, AND/OR - Emissions within the iron and steel core boundary occur in scope 3 categories 10, 11 and/or 15. - Emissions associated with purchased steel occur in scope 3 category 1.

^{1,2} Intended user categories are: developer, owner-occupier, owner-lessor, property manager and financial institution. Refer to the [Buildings Criteria](#) for additional information.

³ Refer to the [Steel Guidance](#) for definitions of the iron and steel core boundary and applicable activities.

SECTOR CLASSIFICATIONS

This table is a non-exhaustive summary of the key thresholds for sector-specific target setting. Refer to the SBTi [Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#), [Corporate Near-Term Criteria](#) and sector-specific resources for complete details.

Sectors	Sub-sectors	Required to use sector-specific resources?	Sector thresholds
Energy	Power	Required	If: - Emissions associated with electricity generation⁴ are at least 5% of total scope 1 and 2 emissions, AND/OR - Emissions associated with the generation of purchased electricity⁵ resold to end users (scope 3 category 3) are at least 5% of total scope 3 emissions.
Transport	Automaker	Required	If emissions from manufacturing and lifecycle use of applicable vehicles ⁶ are at least 5% of total scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions
	Aviation	Optional	If: - At least 5% of total scope 1 and 2 emissions are from jet fuel combustion, AND/OR - Well-to-wake emissions associated with aviation occur in scope 3 categories 4, 6 and/or 9.
	Land Transport	Optional	If well-to-wheel emissions associated with road and/or rail transportation ⁷ occur in scope 3 categories 4, 6, 7 and/or 9.
	Maritime	Optional	If: - At least 5% of total scope 1 and 2 emissions are from maritime transportation activities⁸, AND/OR - Well-to-wake emissions associated with maritime transportation⁹ occur in scope 3 categories 4, 6, 7 and/or 9.

Companies for which the use of sector-specific resources is optional, not required, may use the [Corporate Near-Term Criteria](#) or [Corporate Net-Zero Standard](#) to set targets.

^{4, 5} 100% renewable electricity generation is not eligible for the Power SDA.
⁶ Refer to Automaker-C1 in the [Land Transport Guidance](#) for applicable vehicle types.
⁷ Eligible vehicle types include: 2-3 Wheelers, Light duty vehicles, Buses, Mini-buses, Medium freight trucks, Heavy freight trucks, Urban rail, Non-urban rail and/or Rail activities.
^{8,9} Refer to Appendix 2 of the [Maritime Guidance](#) for applicable vessel types.

GETTING READY FOR NET-ZERO TARGET VALIDATION

This section is aimed at companies that already have validated near-term science-based targets that would like to submit long-term targets as part of a net-zero commitment. The following questions are essential checks that companies must go through before beginning the validation process.

QUESTION	RESPONSE	ACTION
1. Do your current near-term science-based targets meet the Corporate Net-Zero Standard's ambition requirements?	Yes, my scope 1 & 2 targets align with 1.5°C and my scope 3 targets align with at least well-below 2°C.	Go to question 4
	No, my scope 1 & 2 targets do not align with 1.5°C and/or my scope 3 targets do not align with at least well-below 2°C.	Go to next question
2. Do your validated targets align with at least 1.5°C for scope 1 and 2; and well below 2°C for scope 3?	Yes	Go to next question
	No	Please resubmit your near-term targets for validation using the Validation Portal .
3. If your target was validated five or more years ago, have you reviewed all your active targets in compliance with the SBTi's "Mandatory target review" criterion (Corporate Near-Term Criteria C26 / Corporate Net-Zero Standard Criteria C32) and the Mandatory Five-Year Review Guidance ?	Yes, and we found that our targets are not consistent with the latest SBTi criteria.	Please follow the 'Mandatory Five-Year Review Guidance' document and resubmit your near-term targets for validation using the Validation Portal .
	Yes, and we are confident our targets are consistent with the latest SBTi criteria.	Please follow the Mandatory Five-Year Review Guidance and go to next question
	No	Please review your targets to check they are consistent with the latest SBTi criteria.
	Not applicable, my target was validated less than 5 years ago.	Go to next question
4. Do you wish to make any other amendments to your current near-term science-based targets? E.g., addition of targets, change in base year, amend base year inventory.	Yes	Go to next page
	No	

To submit targets for validation, companies will need a registered account on the SBTi Services [Validation Portal](#).

GETTING READY FOR NET-ZERO TARGET VALIDATION

This section is aimed at companies that already have validated near-term science-based targets that would like to submit a net-zero target. The following conditions are important for companies to review to understand if they have triggered a near-term target recalculation, per the conditions set out in Corporate Near-term criterion C27 and Corporate Net-Zero criterion C33.

5. Since submitting your near-term science-based targets to the SBTi, have any of the following occurred?*

* The SBTi requires companies to apply a significance threshold of 5% or less. For base year emissions, a change of 5% in an organization's total base year emissions would trigger a base year emissions recalculation. A change of 5% or more in the base year emissions covered within a target boundary would trigger a target recalculation.

Scope 3 emissions became 40% or more of overall scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions.

The consolidation approach chosen for the GHG inventory has changed.

Exclusions in the inventory or target boundary have changed significantly and/or exceeded allowable exclusion limits (more than 5% of scope 1 and 2 emissions and/or more than 33% of scope 3 emissions).

Significant changes in company structure and activities that would affect the company's target boundary or ambition (e.g., acquisitions, divestitures, mergers, insourcing or outsourcing, shifts in product or service offerings).

Adjustments to data sources or calculation methodologies that resulted in significant changes to the organization's total base year emissions or to the target boundary base year emissions (e.g., the discovery of significant errors or several cumulative errors that are collectively significant).

Other significant changes to projections/assumptions used in setting your science-based target.

If you answered **yes** to **any** of the above AND your company's target(s) no longer meet SBTi criteria (e.g. required ambition or boundary requirements), you have triggered a target recalculation, and we ask that you recalculate and resubmit your near-term science-based targets for revalidation using [the Validation Portal](#).

*Please note that companies are eligible to resubmit near-term targets as part of a net-zero package submission.

To submit targets for validation, companies will need a registered account on the SBTi Services [Validation Portal](#).

GETTING READY FOR NET-ZERO TARGET VALIDATION

This section is aimed at companies that already have validated near-term science-based targets that would like to submit a net-zero target. Although companies may not be required to update their targets based on the answers to these questions, doing so will help align with best practice and the latest climate science. Considering these questions will help prepare for the validation process and ensure it runs as smoothly as possible.

QUESTION	RESPONSE	ACTION
6. Are your targets still representative of your business model and realistic given your current mitigation strategy?	Yes	Go to next question
	No	Go to next question
7. Do your near-term science-based targets use a base year before 2015?	Yes	If the base year of your near-term target is before 2015, you may want to update the base year of your targets to align with the new net-zero criteria that use a base year of 2015 or later.
	No	Go to next question
8. Would you like to update the timeframe of any of your near-term targets? In particular, are you approaching your near-term target date?	Yes	Companies should assess whether they are on track to meet rapidly approaching targets. If you would like to update the timeframe of your targets, use the target resubmission process.
	No	Go to next question
9. Companies do not have to set near-term scope 3 targets if scope 3 emissions represent less than 40% of total emissions. Does this situation apply to your company?	Yes	Companies in this situation may wish to set near-term scope 3 targets as part of their net-zero commitment to complement their long-term targets.
	Yes, but we've already set scope 3 targets	Go to next question
	Not applicable, my company's scope 3 emissions represent more than 40% of total emissions so we are required to have a scope 3 target.	Go to next question
10. Did your company model targets using intensity methods (in particular using the sector-specific intensity convergence method (i.e., SDA))?	Yes	Please check that your targets still meet the ambition requirements using the Validation Portal . If they do not meet updated requirements, consider resubmitting your targets.
	No	Go to next question
11. Have you reviewed any sector-specific guidance to check for applicable updates?	Yes, there have been developments in my sector that impact my targets.	Consider updating and resubmitting your targets to meet updated sector requirements.
	Yes, and there haven't been any developments in my sector that impact my targets	Congratulations! You've completed all the necessary checks on your validated near-term science-based targets to prepare you for net-zero target validation.
	No	The SBTi encourages you to review our sector guidance page before proceeding.

To submit targets for validation, companies will need a registered account on the SBTi Services [Validation Portal](#).

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