



SCIENCE  
BASED  
TARGETS

DRIVING AMBITIOUS CORPORATE CLIMATE ACTION

# SBTi SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Version 2.0

June 2025

## 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).

## VERSION HISTORY

Version	Change/update description	Release date	Effective dates
Version 1.0	First version of policy	March, 2024	March, 2024 - January 21st 2025
Version 1.1	Changes made to the scope of this policy to include SBTi Services	January 21st, 2025	January 21st, 2025 - June 11th 2025
Version 2.0	Changes made to add clarity to certain sections and update contacts	June 11th, 2025	June 11th, 2025

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# 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Science Based Targets Initiative (referred to herein as SBTi or the Charity) has the following charitable purposes:

- promoting for the public benefit the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment; and
- advancing education for the public benefit in the subject of climate change including by undertaking and promoting research in this subject and making the useful results of such research available to the public; in particular, but not exclusively, by developing standards, guidance, tools and resources to enable the assessment of businesses' and institutions' targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the performance of products, entities, and financial portfolios against greenhouse gas emission limits informed by science.

1.2 We take **safeguarding** to mean the range of measures in place to protect people working in, for or coming into contact with SBTi, from harm. Everyone coming into contact with SBTi, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief or ethnic origin, has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

1.3 SBTi is committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its beneficiaries, staff, board members, consultants, volunteers and other representatives, and to taking reasonable steps to ensure that anyone coming into contact with SBTi or its activities does not, as a result, suffer harm.

1.4 SBTi carries out its charitable activities of driving ambitious climate action in the private sector by enabling organizations to set science-based emissions reduction targets. As such, SBTi will not be working directly with children or vulnerable adults and its contact with these groups will also be minimal.

1.5 This Policy should be read alongside other relevant group policies, such as the Anti-Bullying and Anti-harassment Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Grievance & Disciplinary Policy.

## 2. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

2.1 This Policy applies to board members, staff, volunteers, consultants and other representatives, including those employed by SBTi (the Charity) and its affiliates, including SBTi Services and SBTi gmbH (referred to together as SBTi) or engaged via an Employer of Record (referred to together as SBTi Parties).

## 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Charity's trustees have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Charity protects from harm all those who come into contact with the Charity. The trustees have oversight of

this Safeguarding Policy and oversee the Charity's handling of safeguarding reports. The trustees also have responsibility for deciding whether any serious incident reports need to be made to the Charity Commission in relation to safeguarding incidents.

### 3.2 The **Safeguarding Officer** will:

- Respond to all safeguarding concerns and enquiries;
- Make any necessary reports to statutory bodies and keep records of any action taken in response to safeguarding concerns;
- Ensure this Policy reflects changes to legislation and is kept up to date in relation to best practice;
- Ensure that SBTi Parties have appropriate training and/or guidance in the application of this Policy;
- Monitor the overall trend of any safeguarding concerns and report annually (or more frequently, as appropriate) to the trustees.

3.3. All SBTi Parties should be familiar with this Policy. In addition, they should conduct themselves in accordance with SBTi's Code of Conduct, which provides guidance on acceptable and desirable conduct.

3.4 Every individual who becomes aware of any suspicions or allegations regarding harm to children or vulnerable adults is required to safely report the matter as soon as possible (and in any case within 48 hours) to the Safeguarding Officer.

## 4. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENTS

4.1 SBTi commits to taking all reasonable measures to ensure people (particularly vulnerable groups) impacted by SBTi Parties, are protected from harm, including exploitation, neglect and abuse of all kinds.

### 4.2 SBTi commits to:

- Developing a 'zero tolerance culture' on abuse, exploitation and neglect within SBTi<sup>1</sup>;
- Integrating safeguarding considerations into all aspects of SBTi, including recruitment and procurement practices;
- Ensuring SBTi Parties understand and are aware of safeguarding issues and comply with this Policy;
- Reporting safeguarding incidents, or concerns to external authorities, as appropriate, and in accordance with best practice;
- Taking appropriate and proportionate action if this Policy is not complied with.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Zero tolerance' means acting on each reported event, protecting the impacted person, taking allegations seriously and handling them confidentially. 'Zero tolerance' does not mean that SBTi will be free from incidents or that all reported incidents will necessarily result in disciplinary action.

## 5. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

5.1 SBTi Parties do not work directly with children or vulnerable adults in connection with SBTi's activities and are therefore not eligible for an Enhanced DBS check.

5.2 SBTi Parties will receive a copy of this Policy or be directed to the Policy on the SBTi website before they commence work for or with SBTi. They will have an opportunity to discuss the Policy and be asked if they have any safeguarding concerns to report.

5.3 If reference checks or other due diligence reveal any safeguarding concerns about the individual, they will not be engaged by SBTi.

## 6. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

### 6.1 Signs of abuse

Abuse can take a variety of forms, such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, psychological abuse, neglect, radicalisation or financial abuse. The following is a list of some signs of abuse – it is not an exhaustive list.

#### A. Children

**Physical Abuse** Physical abuse is the deliberate infliction of pain, physical harm or injury and includes withholding or misuse of medication.

**Emotional Abuse** Emotional abuse is the emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate or causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**Sexual Abuse** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware what is happening. This may involve physical contact, or non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect a child from

physical harm or danger, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

## **B. Adults**

<b>Physical abuse</b>	Physical abuse is the deliberate infliction of pain, physical harm or injury and includes withholding or misuse of medication.
<b>Psychological abuse</b>	Psychological abuse is any pattern of behaviour by another that results in harm and may include insults, humiliation, ridicule, bullying, threats, enforced isolation, interference in relationships and contact between consenting adults, coercion, lack of privacy or choice, and denial of dignity.
<b>Sexual abuse</b>	Sexual Abuse is any sexual activity carried out without consent and which may cause harm to an adult. Sexual abuse may include sexual intercourse, inappropriate touching, offensive or suggestive language, 'voyeuristic' behaviour and exposure to the suggestive or sexually explicit activities of others, including films, photographs, images etc.
<b>Financial or material abuse</b>	Financial abuse is the misappropriation of funds (savings or income) or property of a vulnerable adult. This may include exploitation, theft or fraudulent use of money, misuse of property or possessions and incurring financial liabilities on behalf of a vulnerable adult without their informed consent.
<b>Neglect and acts of omission</b>	Neglect may be deliberate or by default where the abuser is not able to provide the care and support needed or may not recognise the need for the care and support to be given. The abuser may also be neglecting themselves.
<b>Discriminatory abuse</b>	When the vulnerable adult is harassed or discriminated against because of their age, race, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, culture etc.
<b>Self-neglect</b>	Where the adult is neglecting to care for their own personal hygiene, health or surroundings.
<b>Modern slavery</b>	Includes forced labour, debt bondage, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and domestic servitude.
<b>Domestic abuse</b>	Includes controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour and / or violence between people who are or have been intimate partners or family members. Abuse can take a variety of forms, not only physical but also psychological, sexual, emotional, social, financial, intimidation and neglect.

## 6.2 Responding to safeguarding concerns or concerns

If any individual or SBTi Party discloses a safeguarding concern to you, you should:

- Stay calm and listen carefully to what is said, without raising unreasonable expectations;
- Advise the person to contact the Safeguarding Officer;
- Ask questions only to seek clarification;
- Explain that you will be taking notes of the conversation and reporting the matter to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible;
- Report to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

## 6.3 Next steps to be taken by the Safeguarding Officer

6.3.1 On notification of a safeguarding concern, the Safeguarding Officer shall consider the circumstances and decide whether further information gathering is required or what other action may be appropriate, taking into consideration other SBTi policies. For example, for alleged bullying or harassment by SBTi Parties, follow the Anti-Bullying and Anti-harassment Policy.

6.3.2 If the concern relates to the Leadership Team or Board members, the incident shall be reported to the CEO or the Compliance Officer of the Board (if they are not conflicted or involved parties in the incident).

6.3.3 The Safeguarding Officer will ensure that all concerns are properly recorded, and records kept securely and confidentially.

6.3.4 The Safeguarding Officer shall take steps to ensure that the individual who made the disclosure has access to appropriate ongoing support.

6.3.5 SBTi Parties are required to immediately report any concerns of possible/actual harm, including abuse, exploitation, and neglect and policy non-compliance, or risk of such, resulting from action or inaction by anyone covered by this Policy. In the first instance these matters should be safely reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

# 7. SAFEGUARDING BREACHES

7.1 Any SBTi Party or trustee that is found to have breached this Policy may face disciplinary action, ranging from termination of the employment contract to re-training depending on the severity of the breach and on applicable laws and regulations.

## 8. REPORTS TO EXTERNAL AUTHORITIES

8.1 We are committed to reporting any incidents to the appropriate regulatory bodies as may be required. Where there is evidence that criminal activity may have taken place, we will safely report to the relevant police and/or safeguarding authorities.

8.2 We will consider if we should make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission in accordance with their guidance.

## 9. CONTACTS

9.1 The Head of People & Culture will act as the Safeguarding Officer. To contact the Safeguarding Officer, please email [hrcomplaints@sciencebasedtargets.org](mailto:hrcomplaints@sciencebasedtargets.org) with the subject line "Confidential Safeguarding Concern".

9.2 If the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable or the concern relates to the Safeguarding Officer, such concerns may be reported to the Head of Legal who will act in the place of the Safeguarding Officer for the purpose of implementing this Policy. If a safeguarding concern raises legal issues, the Safeguarding Officer may also consult the legal team or external counsel.

## 10. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be regularly reviewed (and at least once a year) to ensure that any incidents which may have occurred will inform its development and / or that it remains fit for purpose in accordance with the work we are doing.



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