



“Climate change is the defining challenge of our time. I also believe it is the most potent game-changer for business over the next century. It is an opportunity we must seize. I want to challenge you. I want to see you in the vanguard of an unprecedented effort to retool the global economy into one that is cleaner, greener and more sustainable.”

— UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, June 2010

# CARING FOR CLIMATE: THE BUSINESS LEADERSHIP PLATFORM

A CALL TO BUSINESS LEADERS



United Nations Global Compact





## Climate Risks and Opportunities –

### Everybody's Concern and Everybody's Business

The magnitude and urgency of the climate challenge are becoming increasingly apparent. Climate change has direct impacts on the way humans live on the planet, and how businesses operate. While the poorest countries and societies will suffer the most, the climate crisis will affect everyone.

Climate change is a top priority for the United Nations. Through the personal dedication and leadership of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and the work of all its agencies and specialized bodies, the UN strives to ensure that all parts of society — including business — contribute to addressing climate change.

Business leaders around the world realize that climate change and environmental degradation pose important new risks and opportunities for their companies' competitiveness, growth and development. Through innovation and long-term investments in energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies, business has the solutions to turn the climate challenge into market opportunities.

## Caring for Climate –

### The UN's Initiative for Business Leadership on Climate Change

Caring for Climate was launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in July 2007. The initiative is jointly convened by the United Nations Global Compact and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Caring for Climate endeavors to help prevent a climate change crisis by mobilizing a critical mass of business leaders to implement and recommend climate change solutions and policies. The initiative helps companies to advance practical solutions, share experiences, inform public policy as well as shape public attitudes. Chief executive officers who support the Caring for Climate statement are prepared to set goals, develop and expand strategies and practices, and publicly disclose emissions as part of their existing disclosure commitment within the Global Compact framework, that is, the Communication on Progress.

Over the past several years, leaders among Caring for Climate signatories have demonstrated remarkable progress in pursuing comprehensive long-term strategies on energy efficiency and innovative low-carbon technologies within their processes, products and services throughout their value-chains.

## Caring for Climate – Why Engage?

Caring for Climate offers maximum value for signatories. Participation in the initiative affords signatory companies a multitude of benefits, including the ability to:

- Demonstrate leadership in advancing practical solutions and strategies addressing climate change;
- Align a climate change business strategy with a UN-led initiative that has high visibility;
- Communicate publicly a company's actions on climate change;
- Share best and emerging practices and gain access to the experiences of peers;
- Shape the climate change policy agenda and call for policy frameworks that reward leadership and innovation.

## Engagement Opportunities

Caring for Climate recognizes that climate change is also a challenge to development and the sustainability of the global market. As such, the initiative places a strong emphasis on enhancing the role of business in finding strategic solutions to adapt to the impacts of climate change on development i.e. on peace and security, water sustainability, poverty reduction, energy and food security.

Caring for Climate offers signatories on-going engagement opportunities to:

- Develop thought leadership and best practice recommendations on priority areas such as (i) climate change and development, (ii) low-carbon innovative solutions and technology and (iii) disclosure and transparency;
- Inform the international climate change policy agenda in the context of UN Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings, SG High-Level Panels and the Rio+20 process;
- Participate in the annual meeting of signatories, a learning forum to discuss strategies, showcase practices and analyze actions;
- Engage in regional and national multi-stakeholder dialogues in cooperation with Global Compact Local Networks;
- Contribute to Caring for Climate annual progress reports and publications.

More information on Caring for Climate activities and events can be found at: [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org).



## Caring for Climate – The Business Leadership Platform

### A Statement by the Business Leaders in the UN Global Compact

Since business leaders from around the world first came together to issue this statement in 2007, the magnitude and urgency of the climate challenge has become more apparent. Climate change is a momentous threat to development, to peace and security, and to market stability. While the pace of action by governments, businesses and society at large has increased, our efforts, individually and collectively, must be accelerated further if the threat of catastrophic climate change is to be removed effectively. It is with this in mind that we renew our call to the business community to make a lasting commitment to climate action now.

### WE, THE BUSINESS LEADERS OF THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT:

#### RECOGNIZE THAT:

1. Climate Change is an issue requiring urgent and extensive action on the part of governments, business and citizens if the risk of serious damage to global prosperity, sustainable development and security is to be avoided.
2. Climate change poses both risks and opportunities to businesses of all sizes, sectors and regions of the world. It is in the best interest of the business community, as well as responsible behavior, to take an active and leading role in deploying low-carbon technologies, increasing energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions and in assisting society to adapt to those changes in the climate which are now unavoidable.

#### COMMIT TO:

3. Taking further practical actions to improve continuously the efficiency of energy usage and to reduce the carbon footprint of our products, services and processes, to set voluntary targets for doing so, and to report publicly and annually on the achievement of those targets in our Communication on Progress.
4. Building significant capacity within our organizations to understand fully the implications of climate change for our business and to develop a coherent business strategy for minimizing risks and identifying opportunities.
5. Engaging more actively with our own national governments, inter-governmental organizations and civil society to develop policies and measures to provide an enabling framework for business to contribute effectively to building a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy.
6. Continuing to work collaboratively with other enterprises both nationally and sectorally, and along our value-chains, to set standards and take joint initiatives aimed at reducing climate risks, assisting with adaptation to climate change and enhancing climate-related opportunities.

7. Becoming an active business champion for rapid and extensive climate action, working with our peers, employees, customers, investors and the broader public.

#### EXPECT FROM GOVERNMENTS:

8. The urgent creation, in close consultation with the business community and civil society, of comprehensive, long-term and effective legislative and fiscal frameworks designed to make markets work for the climate, in particular policies and mechanisms intended to create a stable price for carbon.
9. Recognition that building effective public-private partnerships to respond to the climate challenge will require major public investments to catalyze and support business and civil society led initiatives, especially in relation to research, development, deployment and transfer of low-carbon energy technologies and the construction of a low-carbon infrastructure.
10. Vigorous international cooperation aimed at providing a robust and innovative global policy framework within which private investments in building a low-carbon economy can be made, as well as providing financial and other support to assist those countries that require help to realize their own climate mitigation and adaptation targets while achieving poverty alleviation, energy security and natural resource management.

#### AND WILL:

11. Work collaboratively on joint initiatives between public and private sectors and through them achieve a comprehensive understanding of how both public and private sectors can best play a pro-active and leading role in meeting the climate challenge in an effective way.
12. Invite the UN Global Compact to promote the public disclosure of actions taken by the signatories to this Statement and, in cooperation with UNEP, communicate on this on a regular basis.



## How to join Caring for Climate

All UN Global Compact business participants are invited to join Caring for Climate. To become a signatory, please send an email indicating the support of your chief executive to [climatechange@unglobalcompact.org](mailto:climatechange@unglobalcompact.org).

Signatories are recognized on the Global Compact website at [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org).

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“Combating climate change is one of the defining challenges but also opportunities for this generation in terms of a transition to a low-carbon, resource efficient Green Economy. **In curbing and cutting greenhouse gas emissions, society can generate new kinds of jobs and businesses. Other pressing issues can also be addressed from poverty and access to electricity to air pollution and the conservation of forests and other scarce natural resources.** The Caring for Climate Initiative is one way business leaders can contribute to change, while assisting to ensure that the future happens by design rather than by default.”

— Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director

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### About the United Nations Global Compact

Launched in 2000, the United Nations Global Compact is both a policy platform and a practical framework for companies that are committed to sustainability and responsible business practices. As a multi-stakeholder leadership initiative, it seeks to align business operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption and to catalyze actions in support of broader UN goals. With more than 8,000 signatories in over 135 countries, it is the world's largest voluntary corporate responsibility initiative. [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)



### About the United Nations Environment Programme

The mission of UNEP is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. UNEP is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, with regional offices in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, West Asia, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean. The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP DTIE) is the division within UNEP responsible for working with business and industry. With its longstanding activities in the areas of sustainable production and consumption, energy, ozone, chemicals, trade, economics, finance and corporate responsibility, UNEP DTIE aims to help decision-makers develop and adopt policies that are cleaner and safer; make efficient use of natural resources; incorporate environmental costs and reduce pollution and risks for humans and the environment.

Caring for Climate is funded by voluntary contributions of signatories via the Foundation for the Global Compact, [www.globalcompactfoundation.org](http://www.globalcompactfoundation.org).

For more information about Caring for Climate, please visit [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org).