

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Axis: 5. Fostering Human and Social Development ▾

Key objective: 19. Culture, cultural heritage protection and climate action ▾

Solution: **Decarbonising Creative Influence**

Host Initiative: Creatives for Climate

Scope: Global

Levers assessment: *(each lever is described in the guidance document)*

- **Risk-informed decision-making:** ▾
 - *Rationale:* ▾
- **Technology shifts:** ▾
 - *Rationale:* ▾
- **Knowledge & Capacity building:** Low maturity ▾
 - *Rationale:* While awareness of sustainable communication is growing, most creative professionals lack the frameworks and training to critically evaluate greenwashing in briefs or to effectively embed low-carbon principles in their storytelling
- **Inclusive decision-making governance & design:** ▾
 - *Rationale:* ▾
- **Standards & Taxonomies:** Low maturity ▾
 - *Rationale:* [Existing net zero standards (e.g., Greenhouse Gas Protocol, Science Based Targets Initiative), only address operational emissions for the creative industry, with no application to client-facing work in advertising and communications.
- **Supply:** ▾
 - *Rationale:* ▾
- **Demand:** Low maturity ▾
 - *Rationale:* [Agency selection by clients still prioritises delivery capacity and budget over climate alignment; while some health-sector clients model best practice by avoiding fossil-fuel linked firms, agencies rejecting such briefs remain unrewarded.
- **Public/private finance:** ▾
 - *Rationale:* ▾
- **Partnerships and collaboration:** Medium maturity ▾
 - *Rationale:* [Coalitions of creative agencies, such as the Ethical Agency Alliance and the Advertised Emissions Working Group, are fostering alignment, and collaborating with other professional services (e.g., law, consulting). However, participation remains uneven due to resource constraints and concerns about anti-competitive behaviour.
- **Policy & regulatory:** Medium maturity ▾

PLAN TO ACCELERATE Regulators & Public agencies ▾

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

- *Rationale: [In the absence of mature standards, regulatory oversight on agencies' climate-related claims on behalf of clients remains reactive, driven by increasing though isolated cases against greenwashing that are started to influence agency behaviour]*
- **Public opinion:** Medium maturity ▾
 - *Rationale: High-profile cases and legal complaints against major agencies (e.g., WPP, Havas) are increasing public awareness of the sectors' role in climate accountability.*

Expected impact of this plan on the 2030 targets (if any): ▮ ▮ ▾

[\[Details on the expected impact of this plan, including which levers it focus and target/KPIs from the 2030 Climate Solutions, GST, SDGs or other processes\]](#)

Expected impact of this plan on the 2030 targets

This Plan to Accelerate directly advances one of the most ungoverned, but systemically powerful forces in the global economy: **the influence of creative communications in shaping emissions, behaviour, and public understanding.**

By 2028, the plan will establish a new global framework for **measuring, governing, and incentivising climate-aligned creative influence** across advertising, marketing, and PR.

By providing a method to measure this creative influence, and tools to align creative portfolios with climate solutions, this solution will make the creative industries a measurable, accountable driver of the just transition — ensuring that cultural influence accelerates, rather than obstructs, progress toward the 2030 goals, in 2021 Purpose Disruptors and Econometrics Agency Magic Numbers calculated the UK's 'Advertised Emissions' was 186 million metric tonnes of CO₂e, in 2022 this rose to 208 million metric tonnes, indicating the advertising industry is moving in the wrong direction fuelling unsustainable consumption.

Contribution to Global Targets and Frameworks

- **2030 Climate Solutions & Global Stocktake (GST):**
 - Closes governance and accountability gaps within non-state actor sectors by embedding *Advertised Emissions (AE)* and *Serviced Emissions (SE)* into global climate standards and procurement systems.

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

- Delivers on Action Areas for **Business and Finance Alignment** and **Culture, Heritage & Education**, linking decarbonisation with cultural transformation.
 - Supports GST outcomes by advancing transparency, integrity, and inclusion in climate action.
 - **Sustainable Development Goals:**
 - **SDG 13 – Climate Action:** Reduces indirect emissions through demand-side transformation.
 - **SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production:** Shifts public norms and marketing systems toward low-carbon lifestyles.
 - **SDG 16 – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions:** Strengthens information integrity and accountability in public discourse.
 - **SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals:** Operates through a multi-stakeholder coalition linking science, standards, and practice.
-

Expected Systemic Impact by 2028

- **Creative influence becomes measurable and governed** – Serviced Emissions referenced in **SBTi, GHG Protocol, and/ or ISO Net Zero** Standard, closing the current loophole in the creative sector by requiring agencies to account for both operational and client emissions when setting and validating net zero targets
 - **Procurement aligns with climate integrity** – 100 public and private commissioning systems integrate fossil-free and information-integrity standards.
 - **Industry transformation – 1000+ agencies** applying SE and Creative Integrity Standards; **SMEs equipped** to lead fossil-free transitions.
 - **Regulatory alignment** – Regulators and auditors use AE to evaluate marketing-related emissions and narrative harm.
 - **Narrative shift** – Documented reduction in high-carbon advertising (e.g. SUVs, aviation, red meat) and measurable increase in just-transition storytelling.
-

2030 Outlook

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

By 2030, creative influence will be **a governed climate lever** — quantified in emissions accounting, reflected in procurement, embedded in policy, and mobilised to accelerate cultural transformation. This plan turns the world's storytellers, advertisers, and media strategists into active agents of decarbonisation and justice, unlocking new pathways to deliver the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
Workforce Transformation A global creative and communications workforce equipped with climate integrity skills, frameworks, and standards. Sector-wide literacy and uptake of Serviced Emissions frameworks, catalysing a shift in industry norms and everyday practice. 20,000+ professionals trained across 10 regional hubs by 2028.	Global	Deliver flagship courses, toolkits, and training programs through the Creatives for Climate Academy and regional hubs. Localise training to ensure contextual relevance and accelerate adoption. Establish peer-learning and trainer networks to scale impact efficiently. Create pathways from learning to practice (e.g. certification, matchmaking with briefs, agency alliance onboarding). Support global brands and their teams in mass	Existing ... ▾	Knowledge & ... ▾	Creatives for Climate	Novemb... ▾	Multi-stakehol... ▾	Oxford Net Zero, CISL, Conscious Advertising Network , Purpose Disruptors

¹ Such as national governments, companies, investors, cities and local governments, technical institutions, MDBs, regulators & public agencies, utilities & system operators, youth & indigenous peoples groups, multi-stakeholders platform (non-exhaustive)

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
		adoption of accountable and transparent business practices aligned to the Global Initiative for Information Integrity. Expand ChangeTheBrief learning programme across the globe among major agencies and brands, to equip practitioners with skills to mainstream sustainable lifestyles and behaviours in marketing and advertising campaign work.						
Agency Testbed and Alliance Mobilize the supply-side leadership that operationalises new standards and shows what a climate-aligned creative sector looks like in practice. A global alliance of 500+ agencies integrating climate integrity and serviced emissions		Onboard agencies through formal MOUs outlining integrity commitments. Working with alliance leaders to co-develop tools, frameworks and creative campaign models. Coordinate advocacy	Existing ... ▾	Supply ▾	Creatives for Climate	Novemb... ▾	Companies ▾	Oxford Net Zero, Purpose Disruptors

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
into their operations. A living evidence base demonstrating climate-aligned business models, creative practices, and campaign outcomes. Proof points and best practice that shape wider industry norms, procurement standards, and regulatory approaches.		and campaigns showcasing climate-aligned narratives. Drive regionalisation and local co-ownership to ensure scalable, culturally relevant implementation. Feed implementation data into wider policy and industry frameworks. Coordinate and collaborate with other professional services providers (e.g., lawyers, management consultants, to cross pollinate learnings) Work with industry practitioners in Advertised Emissions working group stress test framework to feedback into key action areas						

PLAN TO ACCELERATE Regulators & Public agencies ▾

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
Brand Integrity & Market Shift Activate the demand-side lever, ensuring that the market rewards and sustains climate-aligned practices, making integrity the competitive norm rather than the exception. A demand-side shift led by 500 brands and 500 agencies, moving €500M of budgets toward climate-aligned communications. Procurement and commissioning processes that embed narrative accountability and climate integrity. A visible set of brand-agency partnerships signalling new market norms and accelerating industry-wide transition.		Launch the Brand Integrity Pledge to codify commitments in procurement and commissioning. Mobilise brand commitments to shift budgets away from high-carbon narratives. Facilitate partnerships between ethical agencies and aligned brands. Use advocacy, storytelling, and campaigns to amplify market transformation stories and build momentum.	Existing ... ▾	Demand ▾	Creatives for Climate	Novemb... ▾	Companies ▾	Oxford Net Zero, Global Climate Health Alliance
Health Sectoral Fossil Free Leadership		Mobilize Health Sector Signatories	Existing ... ▾	Knowledge & ... ▾ Demand ▾	Global Climate Health Alliance	Novemb... ▾	Multi-stakehol... ▾	Creatives for Climate, ACT Climate Labs

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
The health sector drives a measurable shift toward fossil-free communications integrity. Health institutions, professional associations, and medical companies and device manufacturers, collectively adopt fossil-free procurement and commissioning policies—cutting ties with agencies that work for fossil fuel clients. This coordinated action establishes new ethical norms in public health communications and influences parallel reforms across allied sectors.		Expand the Fossil-Free Health Communications Commitment to onboard hospitals, medical associations, research institutions, and health NGOs. Target at least 100 new signatories ahead of the next COP to demonstrate unified health sector leadership. Produce a visual, data-driven exposé mapping PR agencies’ fossil fuel ties and their role in spreading health- and climate-harming disinformation. Ground the content in public health evidence and community case studies showing the real-world impact of fossil fuel narratives. Engage in policy discussions and global health forums to advocate for fossil-free						

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
		communications as a matter of health integrity and public trust. Deliver the ‘conflict of interest’ evidence and the pathways for agencies and media owners to phase out fossil fuel clients through socialising the Blueprint to phase our fossil fuels globally.						
Create a Global Standard for Advertised Emissions Develop the technical calculation of Advertised Emissions working in partnership with standard setters	Global	Develop the global standard to measure Advertised Emissions Work with academic practitioners from University of Portsmouth, Oxford Net Zero and global standards bodies to refine Advertised Emissions calculation, and stress test within the advertising sector for broader industry adoption. Support the consultation stage to test the updated criteria with the industry by working with early adopters and network of industry leaders to feedback into consultation process	Existing ... ▾ New acti... ▾	Knowledge & ... ▾ Policy & regul... ▾	Purpose Disruptors, Oxford Net Zero	June 20... ▾	Multi-stakehol... ▾	Oxford Net Zero, Creatives for Climate

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
Integration of concept of ‘serviced emissions’ into major net zero standards Expanding the scope of climate accountability to include both operational and client-related emissions when setting and validating net zero targets		Ensure that <i>Serviced Emissions</i> (beyond operational or facilitated emissions) are referenced within key carbon accounting and net-zero frameworks (e.g., SBTi, GHG Protocol, ISO Net Zero Standard), building on measurement methodologies such as <i>Advertised Emissions</i> to capture the full climate impact of client work.	Existing ... ▾	Standards & T... ▾	Oxford Net Zero	June 20... ▾	Technical insti... ▾	Purpose Disruptors, Exponential Roadmap Initiative, Creatives for Climate, Legal Charter 1.5

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
Create mandate for adoption of Advertised Emissions by Industry Launch a peer-reviewed academic paper in an established journal that validates and strengthens the <i>Advertised Emissions</i> methodology, establishing its scientific		Academic validation strengthens adoption by industry bodies (WFA, Ad Net Zero, creating a bridge between research and real-world implementation. Establish renewed momentum around advertising's role in consumption related emissions blending advertising studies, behavioural science, and climate accountability. Disseminate findings through academic conferences, policy briefings, and industry summits, positioning the work as a benchmark for ethical transformation in the creative sector.	Existing ... ▾ New acti... ▾	Knowledge & ... ▾ Policy & regul... ▾	Purpose Disruptors		▢ ▾	Oxford Net Zero, Creatives for Climate

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
Advertising Ecosystem Adoption and Stress Testing Work with a diverse set of agency agencies, media owners, and brands to pilot Advertised Emissions assessments; publish results and learnings to drive sector-wide adoption.		Work with 10 large global agencies, media owners, technology platforms and brands to pilot <i>Advertised Emissions</i> assessments across high-impact campaigns and categories. Publish results and learnings to demonstrate practical application, comparability, and capability to encourage widespread adoption. Use empirical evidence from live campaigns to validate the methodology’s accuracy, strengthen the emissions model, and refine calculation boundaries.		Knowledge & ... ▾ Policy & regul... ▾	Purpose Disruptors		▢ ▾	Creatives for Climate

Decarbonizing Creative Influence

Output	Action Scope	Action	Type of action	Implementation Lever	Responsible	Time horizon	Stakeholder engagement ¹	Committed Stakeholders
Create campaigns and cultural outputs delivering measurable narrative shifts. Build capacity and desire among advertising and creative industries to demonstrate their potential as catalysts for sustainable cultural change. Drive the narrative of “living well within limits” to become a mainstream cultural story — influencing policy, media, and brand communications.		Through a series of campaigns across high-consumption regions, citizens are invited to imagine and embrace a “<i>Good Life</i>” within planetary limits — rooted in connection, wellbeing, and nature. Launch 4 flagship cross-sector campaigns to reach audiences across at least 3 high-consumption regions (e.g. North America, Europe, Australia). Undertake quantitative and qualitative research to show measurable shifts in public attitudes toward consumption, sufficiency, and wellbeing.			Purpose Disruptors		▾	Creatives for Climate, Conscious Advertising Network