

How to become a carbon neutral business in four steps

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The road to becoming a carbon neutral organisation is complicated and not the same for every business.

To help you understand the different stages of achieving carbon neutrality through offsetting your carbon emissions via verified projects, our Marketing Executive, Charlotte Bland, has put together a guide featuring the four steps to help you achieve this.

1. Don't wait! Start your carbon offsetting journey sooner rather than later.

There are a few reasons why you shouldn't delay starting your journey to becoming carbon neutral. As pressure from consumers and stakeholders continues to mount on businesses, it is more important than ever that organisations start to explore how to reduce their carbon emissions and their impact on the planet.

You may also want to begin your carbon offsetting journey now as carbon credit prices are expected to rise due to an increase in demand over the next few years; avoid paying large amounts for offsetting your carbon by taking those vital first steps.

Starting this journey sooner rather than later means that you can fulfil your customer's requirements by improving your environmental credentials, elevate your reputation and become a leader in sustainability.

The first step in your journey to carbon neutrality is to understand your organisation's current carbon emissions. This can take time and resources to analyse, with organisations needing to calculate and report on their scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions. Through understanding these emissions, businesses can see what they can reduce as part of their net zero strategy and which emissions are unavoidable and should be offset by investing in carbon offsetting projects.

With projects that help businesses offset their emissions becoming increasingly popular, we recommend starting your journey as soon as possible.

2. How to choose the right offsetting scheme for your business

With so many different offsetting schemes (<https://www.teamenergy.com/consultancy/carbon-offsetting-insetting/>) out there, it can be overwhelming when trying to find one that aligns with your organisation's values and what you are looking to achieve.

Due to its current lack of regulation, the Voluntary Carbon Market is often referred to as the 'wild west'; to avoid choosing the wrong project, make sure you do your research.

Learning as much as possible about the projects you are interested in can help you understand how your carbon credits will be used. By ensuring the scheme is validated to the highest accreditation will mean you are investing in a verified project and will ensure your business does not get accused of

greenwashing.

These verifications include:

- Verified Carbon Standard (VCS)
- Gold Standard Voluntary Emission Reductions (VER)
- UK and EU Emissions Trading Standard (EU + UK ETS)
- United Nations Certified Emission Reductions (CER) programmes.

3. Get your carbon neutral status verified

If you want to ensure that your carbon neutral strategy and targets are of the highest standard, then we recommend getting your strategy verified.

By verifying that your carbon reduction strategy and carbon offsetting investments are in line with the latest climate sciences, you are demonstrating that you are serious about being carbon neutral, that you are on track to reduce your emissions, and avoid greenwashing accusations.

Although there are different routes, we recommend doing this through the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi)

(<https://www.teamenergy.com/consultancy/net-zero-and-carbon-reduction-consultancy/what-is-the-science-based-targets-initiative>) which will verify your plan and target for reducing your greenhouse emissions, as long as they are in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement of limiting the Earth's warming to 1.5C.

By getting this stamp of approval from the SBTi, you can future proof your organisation's growth, save money, gain resilience against regulation and boost confidence for customers, employees and stakeholders.

4. So now that you are carbon neutral, what's next?

Now that your organisation has offset its residual carbon emissions, you can celebrate becoming carbon neutral.

While this is a great achievement, there is still more work to do. Becoming carbon neutral typically means that you will not increase your carbon emissions, so focusing on how you can keep your emissions down will play a key role in this journey.

If you already have a net zero strategy in place, then take this opportunity to begin implementing those projects in your plan, and reducing your carbon emissions completely. However, if you have become carbon neutral but aren't sure what the next steps are, now is the perfect time to start setting your net zero targets and plan out your strategy for reaching them.

It is important to remember that although becoming a carbon neutral business is a great step in the right direction, it does not mean you do not have any CO2 emissions.

Now that you are carbon neutral, it is time to use that as a solid foundation to start defining, shaping

and creating a carbon reduction strategy. By working with a net zero consultancy, you can secure a plan to support you in meeting your next milestone: becoming a net zero organisation.

(<https://www.teamenergy.com/consultancy/net-zero-and-carbon-reduction-consultancy/>)

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Notes to Editors

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About TEAM

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TEAM's customers come from the private sectors including retail, transport and banking, and public sectors such as education, government, NHS and the emergency services. Public sector organisations can also benefit from TEAM's services under various pre-tendered government frameworks.