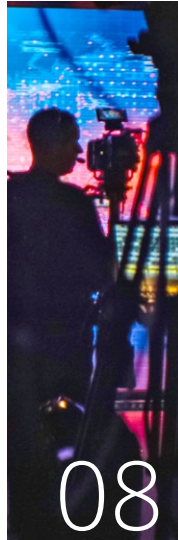




Green Screens

The power of media to help tackle climate change



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Executive Summary

The media industry is transforming to tackle climate change. But it has an important part to play and does not go far enough, yet.

This transformation is partially driven by “push factors”, such as pressure from regulators, employees and stakeholders. However, much activity is driven by companies that strive to use media as a positive force. These will be the media companies that thrive in a net zero future. Media has a direct climate impact through the production activity required to create content. Industry leaders have recently made significant progress to adopt more sustainable production practices, and the industry should now focus on ensuring a completely sustainable supply chain across all stages of production. Industry leaders have an important role to play in driving this change.

However, media’s most significant impact is indirect. It takes two routes.

Firstly, **media content has a significant influence on its audiences.** Media companies have a unique opportunity to use creativity and reach to promote values and behaviours that help create a more sustainable planet. Media companies must develop an intentional editorial strategy to achieve this, which takes account of the type of content,

the expected audience, and the desired impact. Increasingly, this strategy should extend beyond the on-screen content, and include impact monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of content and refine the editorial strategy. Industry collaboration will be crucial here.

Secondly, **media companies (especially advertisers) should carefully evaluate which third party brands they work with** to amplify the “greenest” brands and products.

As is the case within every industry, climate and sustainability must become core to strategy for media organisations to drive widespread change. Media companies must ensure that their objectives reflect their climate ambition, and ensure all employees and leaders understand their own role. In parallel, investors, audiences and regulators within the media industry also have an important role to play.

Media organisations are the storytellers of our world. They should focus on telling one of the biggest stories of our time – how we overcome climate change. Media companies that embrace this opportunity will likely thrive in the long-run, create a fulfilling environment for their people, and create a template for others to follow.



Why are we talking about the power of media to help tackle climate change?

The media industry has room to improve, and there are several internal and external reasons to do so. Affecting change with respect to climate is challenging due to cultural inertia, path dependency, a lack of knowledge, and fears about it being “too late”. However, these challenges can be addressed, and overcoming these will enable media - with its power to influence peoples’ values and behaviour - to play a major role in slowing climate change.

Why is this important?

The media industry has a unique and crucial role to play, and it is transforming to tackle the climate crisis.

This transformation is being partially driven by “push factors”. As the world becomes more aware of climate change, industries must respond to pressure from stakeholders and the need to survive in a future net-zero world. Employees want to be confident that their work and employer have a positive impact (a **2020 survey from Unily** found that 65% of UK office workers were more likely to work for a company with strong environmental policies). Hence, being an industry leader in sustainability is becoming more important for companies to attract and retain talent. Audiences are also demanding climate-related content; in a **2020 survey from Global Action Plan**, 77% of 16-34s year-olds in the UK wanted to see more environmental issues included in drama programmes, and 76% were worried environmental issues were not getting enough exposure on TV since the onset of COVID-19. Further, **net zero targets, new reporting requirements and regulations** have caused media companies to change their operations.

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria are also becoming a major focus for investors. ESG assets refer to securities which tend to score highly on ESG metrics. ESG assets are on track to



exceed \$50 trillion by 2025, and 21% of pension funds and insurance companies are developing impact-investment strategies.

The transformation of media companies is also being driven by an aspiration in some employees to take advantage of their power and platform to better the world. Importantly, this is not at odds with traditional business incentives, as **the most proactive companies in the movement against climate change will be the ones that thrive in a net-zero future.**



Why is this hard?

Shifting mindsets, cultures, and behaviours on a large scale is never straightforward. The objective—to reach a point where sustainability is integrated into every facet of the media organisation—will be fraught with challenges.

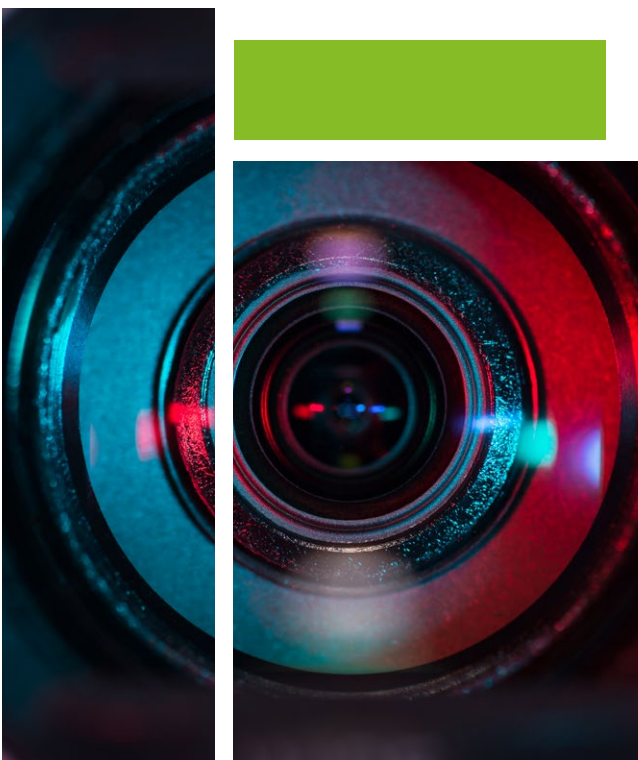
Cultural inertia (a desire to avoid cultural change) and path dependency (a phenomenon where past events or decisions constrain future events and decisions) can affect people at all levels within media organisations, and ultimately cause reluctance to change. For example, decision-makers may find considering sustainability adds an extra complexity to content and vendor selection.

Audiences may also need to overcome cultural inertia and path dependency—changing behaviours to create a more sustainable lifestyle can be daunting. In many cases, a media company does not know enough about its own supply chains, is uncertain about the most impactful way to reach audiences through content, and is unsure how to effectively improve production practices. These factors may lead to insufficient resources dedicated to sustainability.

Similarly, audiences may not know what behaviour changes they should make; a **2021 survey from Sky and the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT)** found that only 16% of respondents knew what they needed to do to act sustainably.

Some individuals, within both audiences and organisations, may believe that it is too late to take action on climate change, or that they have no power as an individual to make a change, and it is not worth the effort to bother trying.

There might also be a resistance to change due to clashing priorities in the short term. For instance, if an advertising agency's clientele scores poorly on sustainability metrics, the firm may opt to prioritise short term revenues. This will generally lead to a slower pace of change, as agencies can only refresh clientele over the long-term to maintain cash flow stability.

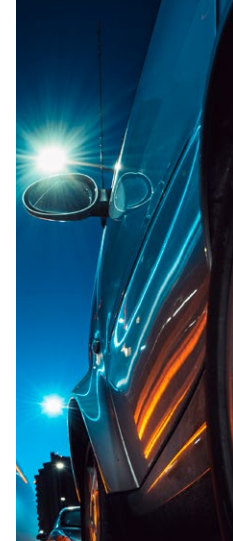


Why is media powerful?

If media companies can overcome these challenges, media can play a central role in improving sustainability both internally and in their audiences.

Media content inevitably influences values and audience behaviour. The **Mirrors and Movers study** (2013) identifies six 'modes' by which this occurs, and the **Common Cause Handbook (2011)** explains how the values promoted by media can consequently perpetuate "neighbouring" values and "suppress" opposing values within audiences. Media companies are uniquely placed to use creativity and reach to promote principles and behaviours that help create a more sustainable planet.

This is not a radical idea. Media has already used its power to tackle major societal issues in the past, such as reducing smoking, encouraging the use of seatbelts, and reducing drink driving.

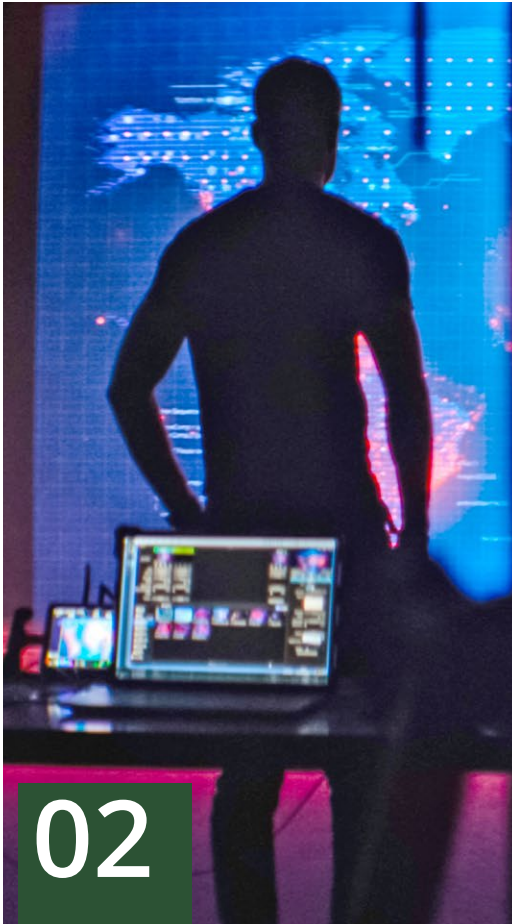


Case Study | Drink Driving

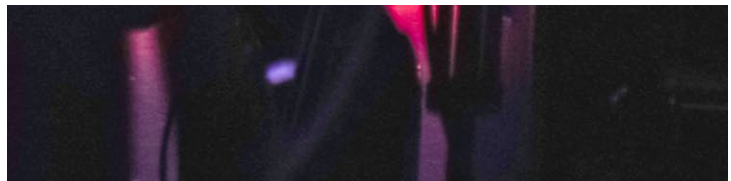
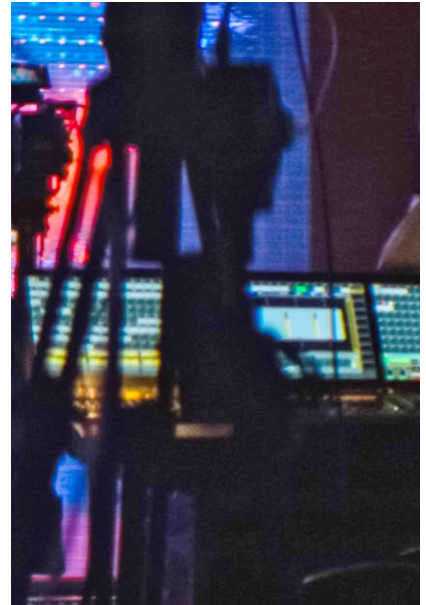
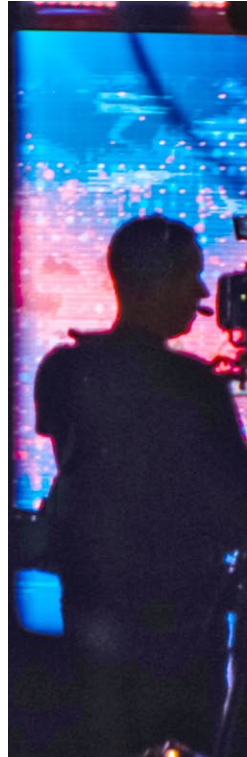
Studies have shown the **significant effect of mass media campaigns on reducing drunk-driving and alcohol-related crashes over the past 50+ years**. The BBC launched its first drink-driving advert in 1964, which took a relaxed tone initially, before shifting to graphic, hard-hitting advertisements in the following years which proved more effective. The core message has varied over the years, focusing on different people: the driver, the driver's family, and innocent victims. Crucially, advertisements have become more emotional over time.

Clearly, content can affect behaviour, and media can be used to tackle a major societal issue.

For media companies to achieve "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes" (which is required to limit global warming to 1.5°C according to the **UN**), they must strive to have an impact beyond just production and content. Media companies can lead the way when it comes to integrating a holistic sustainability approach.



02



What actions can media companies take to help tackle climate change?

There are multiple opportunity levers for the media industry's climate action. Firstly, production practices must continue to change to reduce emissions and other environment impacts. Secondly, climate-focused content can impact the broad audiences that are reached. Thirdly, media companies should consider other elements within their control, including the brands that they work with and methods for amplifying the impact of their content.

What can be done in media production?

There is an opportunity for larger media organisations to become leaders in sustainable production, while influencing smaller suppliers and contractors to become more sustainable too. The importance of sustainable production, and the opportunities for potential improvement, have been highlighted in reports such as the **Screen New Deal** by albert, the BFI and ARUP.

What has been done to date

Significant strides have been made by environmental organisations to help media companies be more conscious of their climate impact during production. From a film and TV standpoint, BAFTA's **albert** is leading the way in providing easily accessible information, tools and resources for film and TV companies.

Their offering includes Carbon Action Plans for productions, designed to provide a clear pathway to reducing the carbon footprint of production, a carbon calculator to measure and understand their carbon impact, and sustainable production certifications to showcasing sustainable productions.

Many fast-movers have already committed to sustainable production. Major broadcasters including Sky, ITV, BBC and others have committed to mandatory albert certification for all of their productions.

Sustainable production techniques

include the use of cloud platforms to reduce paper usage on set, buying 100% renewable energy, and utilising the circular-economy for unwanted scenery, props and furniture.

Beyond the UK, **Green Screen** is an EU funded initiative across eight key European film-making regions, supporting film and TV production companies and suppliers to adopt green measures, train staff on sustainable practices and create new jobs linked to sustainable working.

In advertising, **Ad Net Zero** is an initiative aiming to help advertising companies achieve net zero in ad operations by 2030. In 2020, they released AdGreen – a carbon calculator for advertising productions, enabling advertisers to be more aware of their carbon footprint. They offer guides and action plans for advertisers to achieve a carbon net zero status during production.



Call to action

Leadership and management

The opportunity for media organisations to have a positive climate impact during production extends beyond that of their own behaviour. The potential for media industry leaders to influence the behaviour of all producers and suppliers within their supply chain is significant. This idea can already be seen in the UK, where it is mandatory for any producers for BBC, ITV, Channel 4, UKTV, Sky, TG4 or Netflix to use the albert carbon calculator to monitor their carbon footprint.

Additionally, major broadcasters have committed to reduce Scope 3 emissions in their production supply chain in order to meet their Science Based Targets for Net Zero and have asked major suppliers to participate in CDP reporting (Carbon Disclosure Rating, a measure of the environmental sustainability of a company, based on voluntary disclosures by the company itself). Through this, the industry leaders are bringing smaller producers along with them on the road to reducing the negative climate impact of production, where this positive practice may not have occurred otherwise, due to a lack of incentive, a lack of knowledge, or a lack of resources.

There is significant scope for industry leaders to indirectly affect the behaviour of smaller suppliers through their supply chain. By introducing a policy of working exclusively with net zero suppliers and contractors during production, the likes of caterers, venues, specialist equipment contractors etc. will have a strong incentive to improve their production practices, with the potential reward of securing contracts with the biggest media organisations, and enhancing their own reputation as a climate conscious supplier.



What can be done in media content?

Although it's important for all companies to reduce their direct environmental impact, there's an even bigger opportunity for content creators: using the influence of content to impact society as a whole. Some refer to this as **media's "brainprint"** i.e. its intellectual and psychological impacts on the large audiences it reaches. As argued by the 2020 report from the Responsible Media Forum, **The Superpower of Media - Mirrors or Movers II: managing the societal impacts of content**, these impacts are "unequivocally enormous" compared to the industry's direct environmental impact relative to other industries.

Research from Goldsmiths University and Smart Energy GB found that 20% of people feel encouraged to turn off lights and reduce energy use if they see TV characters modelling those behaviours, while 15% have been inspired by TV characters to start growing their own fruit and veg.

Incorporating climate into content depends on three things – the type of content, the audience that the content will reach, and the desired impact. It's therefore essential to have a flexible editorial strategy rather than a rigid broad-brush approach for all content.

01 What type of content?

Different content types provide different opportunities for incorporating climate. Climate change can be woven into a soap's storylines and characters (as long as it makes sense to the audience and doesn't feel out of place or tokenistic). For example, **multiple soaps** joined forces to experiment with this during the week of the COP26 conference; this included characters exploring veganism, sustainable allotments and climate change activism.

Climate topics can be discussed explicitly in a documentary (like **David Attenborough: A Life On Our Planet**) or on a news show (like **The Daily Climate Show**) in order to deliver information seriously and from a trusted source.

As Max Boykoff, author of **Creative (Climate) Communications**, explains, comedy can help break through barriers and connect audiences with the serious and complex issue of climate change in an accessible and engaging way. For example, a COP26-themed episode of **Frankie Boyle's New World Order** on the BBC discussed "The Earth is dead and we killed it" in the comedian's trademark, provocative style.

The effect of environmental issues on people can be brought to life through a drama or film, such as rising sea levels threatening people's homes in **Beasts of the Southern Wild**.

Children's shows can instil simple but important messages and behaviours in audiences of all ages. For example, the BBC works with an educational consultant to create a balance between entertainment and distilling big themes for young audiences in **CBeebies series Go Jettors**.

Planet Placement, developed by albert, includes guidance and case studies across content types to provide inspiration to content creators and remind them that it's vital to continue delivering authenticity, impact, emotion and creative excellence while incorporating climate into their content.

02 What audience will the content reach?

Content creators should consider who is going to watch the content, and what stage they might be at in their climate change journey. This is challenging to ascertain, and naturally audiences aren't homogenous, but it's important to consider for the messages to land.

For example... Is the audience likely to understand highly scientific language? Is the audience aware of the issue of climate change and keen to understand what they can do to help? Is the audience feeling confused or anxious about climate change? Might some audience members be influential in business and government, and therefore have the power to make larger scale changes in society?

The diversity of the audience is also an important consideration. Content creators could **portray a diverse range of people speaking out on climate change** in order to better reach underrepresented groups and make the topic more accessible to them while allowing society to benefit from richer conversations and solutions based on wider experience.

03 What impact are you trying to have with this content?

There are six modes by which media content affects society, and content creators should be intentional about which of these they are aiming for with a particular piece of content.

First, questioning e.g. revealing hidden aspects of the climate issue and helping audiences to understand how their own actions might be having an impact. Questioning can be a powerful way to invoke further actions from audience members and wider society, bringing new challenges and possibilities into awareness.

Second, campaigning e.g. deliberately setting out to change audience behaviour in a particular way, such as reducing their flights. Campaigning requires focus on a specific outcome, providing clear direction for the content and impact measurement. However the challenge is to ensure the content still entertains and appeals to audiences rather than appearing to be preaching.

Third, inspiring e.g. showing audiences a net-zero world that they want to strive to reach, and making positive behaviours around climate seem more attractive.



This is the driver for **Global Action Plan's Flickers of the Future movement** – as they put it, “the way that we depict the future plays a critical part in how it unfolds” and “we would all be more motivated to change our behaviour in the here and now if we understood how much better it would be for all of us to live in a more sustainable future”. Additionally, inspiring content about future possibilities can provide a fun and fulfilling creative avenue for those developing it.

Research from Goldsmiths University and Smart Energy GB, analysing 45 of the UK's most watched television shows, found that *Grand Designs* was the most “green” show i.e. exhibiting the most eco-friendly behaviours on screen. With a frequent focus on creating new buildings from recycled and sustainable materials, the show may help to inspire audiences to improve the sustainability of their homes without sacrificing comfort, durability and personality.

Fourth, silencing e.g. deliberately excluding climate change deniers from content in order to prevent their views from reaching audiences. Silencing is a controversial impact that should only be attempted after careful consideration. For instance, it might be more impactful (and less ostracising to certain audiences) to engage with climate

change deniers in a thoughtful way that understands their views and opens a balanced debate, without promoting those views.

Fifth, amplifying e.g. highlighting climate-related stories in order for the urgency of the issue to become more apparent to audiences. As with silencing, this should be carefully considered – if one topic is being amplified, another topic is being silenced. If amplifying a particular topic, the challenge is to ensure content doesn't become repetitive and lose its effect on audiences.

Sixth, normalising e.g. demonstrating conversations and behaviour changes in order for audiences to become familiar with them and more easily incorporate them into their own lives. For example, *The Repair Shop* from the BBC demonstrates the circular economy to audiences and makes repair of items seem more achievable. Normalising is most effective for on-screen characters that viewers find relatable, and can be a gentle way to incorporate climate into a wide range of content without requiring significant character or storyline changes.

The star-studded Netflix film *Don't Look Up* helped generate a global conversation about the risks and urgency of climate change, i.e. questioning and amplifying.

Another example is Sky drama **Temple**, where the show's creators have "included a continuous drum beat of sustainability and climate change themes" in order to amplify the issues and normalise environmental activism (through the storylines of a key characters), despite climate change not being the show's major storyline.

The **framing guide developed by FrameWorks Institute and On Road Media** provides six important principles that should be applied to any content where the desired impact is to drive and normalise action around climate change – which needs to become a much higher priority for content. Awareness about climate change is rising, but unless audiences feel that action can have real impact, they may not be motivated to change, and may not understand what they should be doing across their work and personal lives.



Call to action

Individuals and teams directly involved in creating content

Start taking the time to answer the above three questions for each piece of content.

Commissioning teams

Encourage content creators to answer these questions from the outset.

Management

To go even further and ensure that these questions are answered in a systematic way for every piece of content from the outset, this should be incorporated into the greenlight process, in the same way that sustainable production has become part of the greenlight process for many organisations.

What else can be done?

Media companies often work with other brands, including collaborating on content, producing adverts, and showing adverts to their audiences. Therefore the climate impact of a media company is affected by which third party brands and products it represents.

One example of a framework that can be used by media companies to consider which brands they work with and the impact this has is **Purpose Disruptors'** 'Advertised Emissions' methodology (the

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that result from the uplift in sales generated by advertising). This was developed to enable discussion and fact-based analysis for the advertising industry, to measure and reduce the emissions caused by the consumption their adverts generate.

It can be difficult to assess how "green" a brand or product is, especially with greenwashing. Media companies might therefore utilise tools such as Dayrize to independently assess the environmental and social impact at a product level.

Deloitte suggestions based on Purpose Disruptors' 'Advertised Emissions' framework

Brand category	Suggested medium- term action		
	<i>For ad agencies</i>	<i>For ad-funded broadcasters</i>	<i>For content creators</i>
Red: High carbon brands and industries with little opportunity to re-engineer demand towards low carbon alternatives	Reduce spend and ensure adverts do not involve greenwashing	Reduce ad slots	Reduce product placement
Amber: Established brands and industries that can accelerate the adoption of lower carbon attitudes and behaviours	Transition spend away from high-carbon products and services to lower-carbon alternatives, and ensure adverts for high-carbon products and services do not involve greenwashing	Transition ad slots away from high-carbon products and services to lower-carbon alternatives	Transition product placement away from high-carbon products and services to lower-carbon alternatives
Green: New and emerging brands and industries whose business model is geared to serving a 1.5°C world	Increase spend	Increase ad slots	Increase product placement

Media companies can enhance the impact of their content, and reinforce the sustainability message through intentional and creative collaboration with other organisations.

Case Study | Game Zero

Game Zero was an initiative by Sky, in partnership with Tottenham, to deliver the world's first net zero carbon major football match. Sky (who broadcasted the match) and Tottenham worked to minimise emissions from matchday activity such as energy used to power the game, travel to and from the stadium, and dietary choices at the stadium. Sky's webpage for Game Zero also includes guidance for football fans and viewers to help them understand how they can "#GoZero".

Case Study | ITV Home Planet

ITV Home Planet is an initiative whereby ITV partnered with Quorn to produce an advert encouraging viewers to reduce their carbon footprint by decreasing their meat intake. This is following on from their '**Helping The Planet One Match At A Time**' whereby the advert encouraged viewers to go meat-free on football match days.

Case Study | Plant Britain

The **Plant Britain** initiative by the BBC encourages audiences to plant trees / window boxes, create community gardens and take part in a coastal clean up. Audiences can send in photos / videos of the activity and be featured on the website as a result.



Media companies can also enhance the impact of their content by providing viewers with further information and actionable steps they can take after watching the show or film, for example suggested behaviour changes, causes to donate to and petitions to sign.

Case Study | Pass On Plastic

Sky took their documentary on single-use plastic, 'A Plastic Tide', one step further by launching **Sky Ocean Rescue** and the #PassOnPlastic campaign. This included a website explaining how viewers could get involved in the campaign and helping viewers understand what they can do as individuals to reduce their single use plastic. Sky also partnered with the Premier League to launch a **competition** aligned to the Pass On Plastic campaign to further promote awareness and reduce single use plastic consumption.

Call to action

Leadership and management

Consider the climate impact of your organisation's collaboration and encourage partnering / collaborating with 'green' brands.

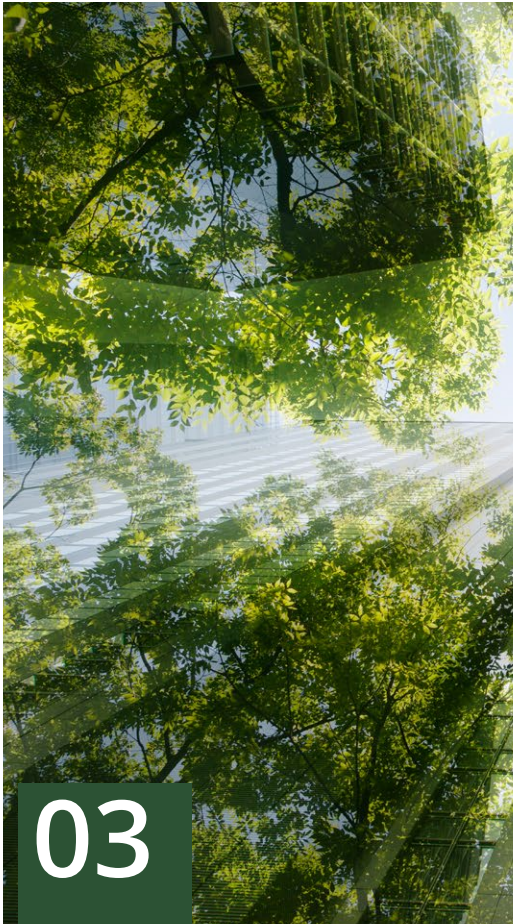
Content creators

Consider what further information and actionable steps you can provide for audiences to take after watching the show or film to encourage sustainable behaviour.

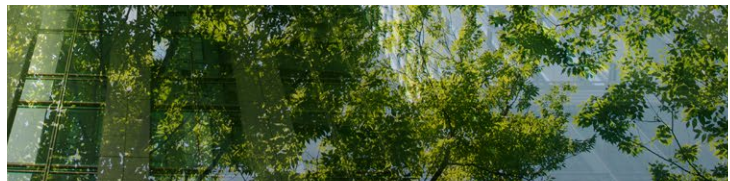
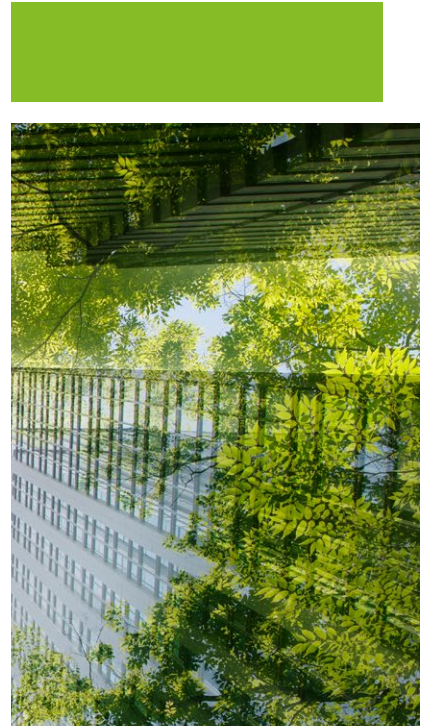
Case Study | Hugh's Fish Fight

'**Hugh's Fish Fight**' is a TV series hosted by celebrity cook Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. The series openly campaigned to ban the industry practice of discarding dead unwanted fish and used a wide variety of people to bring public attention to the issue of overfishing (e.g. NGOs, fishermen, companies and

policy makers). The series encouraged audience activism via an accompanying website, Twitter and e-mails for the issue, and ultimately led to supermarkets updating their sourcing policies and European Parliament MEPs voting to ban discards.



03



How can these actions be achieved?

To achieve such ambitious changes within the media industry and succeed in having the desired environmental impacts, it is important for climate and sustainability to become embedded throughout organisations. Companies that endeavour to create positive environmental impacts through their content should consider how to best measure and manage those impacts. Lastly, we must all remember that no single individual, company or industry can overcome climate change by themselves, and collaboration is therefore crucial in order to achieve this shared goal.

How can this be embedded throughout the organisation?

In order to drive significant, fast and lasting action on climate, sustainability must become important to every single employee and leader, and not just the remit of a separate team.

01 Help everyone in the company understand why this is important, and that it's not too late

A good place to start is educating employees and leaders about the importance of climate action, the power and responsibility of the media industry. Everyone is at a different stage in their climate action journey, and therefore the approach to internal education needs to take this into account (in the same way that media content needs to reach audiences at different stages).

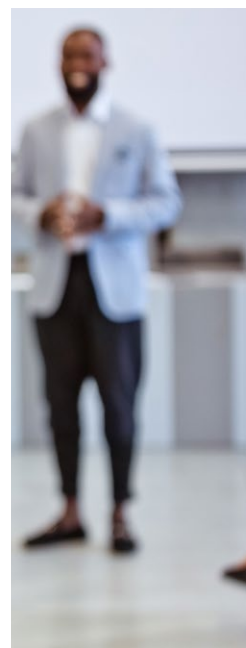
Training courses and materials can help individuals to understand the extent of the task, but education alone is not enough. The real power comes when individuals can personally connect to the challenge and become intrinsically motivated to create change.



One practical exercise is writing a letter from our future self to our future grandchildren about what we did in our job. In their book **Net Positive**, Paul Polman and Andrew Winston explain that a CEO of a large European automaker gave her board this exercise as homework for a strategy session. This provokes people to think about their desired legacy, and the impact they want to have on the world. It also reminds people that future generations (including our own grandchildren) are important stakeholders that will be impacted by our actions today.

Other powerful questions for individual reflection and discussion include:

- If you were designing the media industry or our company from scratch... What might you change?
- If all of our stakeholders were equally represented on our Board (e.g. our planet, future generations, etc.)... What might we do differently?



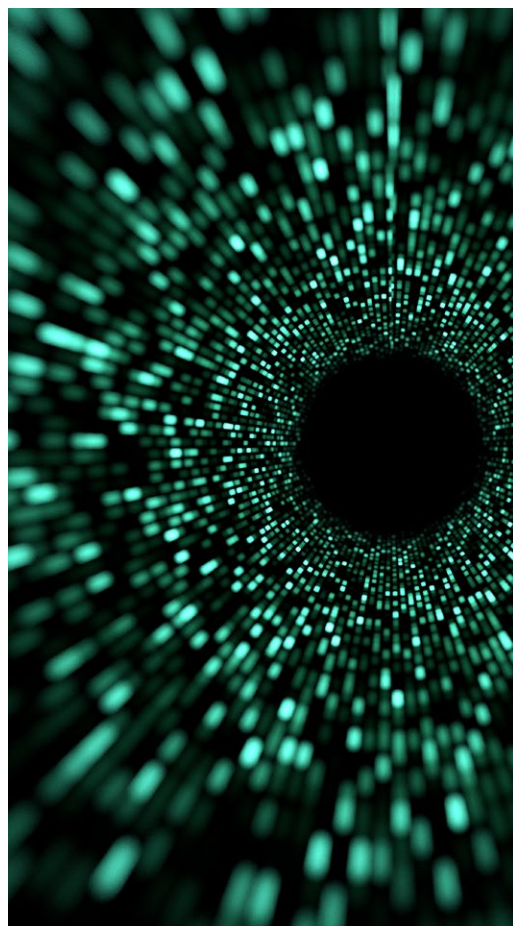
02 Update your vision, strategy and objectives to incorporate sustainability

Once everyone in the organisation, especially the Board, better understands the importance of climate change and their power and responsibility to take action, the company's vision, strategy and objectives should be updated to ensure the company's direction aligns with the motivations of those within the company. This is where leaders (with inputs, encouragement and pressure from employees) must honestly and authentically determine what their organisation stands for, and therefore what they aim to achieve.

Case Study | Unilever

Unilever decided to return to the company's "core" i.e. its original reason for being founded, which was making hygiene commonplace in Victorian Britain (where one in two babies didn't make it past year one). Reflecting on this in the context of today's needs led to their new purpose – "to make sustainable living commonplace".

Bold new entrants into the industry are challenging typical models and demonstrating new ways of operating. For example, **We Are 8** has changed the relationship between consumers and brands through ads via a unique business model where customers receive payment in exchange for watching ads, which customers can donate towards a sustainability-related charity straight from the We Are 8 app. Media companies should be inspired by such disruption and feel empowered to embrace innovative models in order to achieve their vision.



03 Embed your updated vision, strategy and objectives throughout your organisation

To achieve real impact and avoid the risk of appearing as greenwashing to stakeholders, the updated vision and strategy must be accompanied by organisation-wide actions.

Case Study | BP

BP knew that their organisation would be required to fundamentally **transform** (i.e. a new structure, a new leadership team and new ways of working) in order to achieve their new purpose – of “reimagining energy for the people and our planet”. As an especially carbon-intensive company that has made public claims about its new “greening” ambitions, BP inevitably faces significant scrutiny from various stakeholders to hold it to account and ensure these changes materialise.

As with any strategy refresh, meaningful objectives must be set that will enable the organisation to achieve its vision. Further, all individuals within the organisation should clearly understand these objectives and how their work contributes, and be held accountable for achieving them e.g. incorporated into team objectives, individual objectives and performance management.

The board is not exempt from this, as **executive compensation is increasingly including climate-related measures**.

Although it's important to note that extrinsic values, including wealth, shouldn't be the main method for driving climate action, as **intrinsic values are much more effective for motivating environmentally-conscious behaviours**. Regardless, organisations should ensure that individuals aren't incentivised to act in ways that are harmful and at odds with their new strategy.

Research from Virgin Media O2 and Global Action Plan reveals that 1 in 4 young people are holding back from talking about the climate crisis for fear of judgement by their peers – while education can give people more confidence to discuss the issues, conversations about climate should be encouraged within organisations. Safe spaces enable individuals to ask questions about things they don't understand or want to learn more about, which is vital if all employees are expected to play a part in the organisation's sustainability journey and will be personally measured against it.

Additionally, safe spaces and open forums can enable leadership to understand any concerns about the organisation's new sustainability goals or their potential impact. This is an opportunity to reinforce

the messages about the impact that media companies can have, and reassure people that it's not too late to make a difference. Such forums can also provide a valuable source of crowdsourced ideas – as employees are on the front line of operations, they can be the first to spot opportunities or improvements. This also aligns with the motivations of employees – according to a **2016 study**, 88% of millennials (the **largest generation in the US workforce since 2016**) say their job is more fulfilling when they have a chance to make a positive impact on social and environmental issues.



Call to action

All individuals within media

Start educating colleagues, teams and leaders, and helping leaders to understand the benefits of authentically updating the organisation's vision, strategy and objectives to incorporate sustainability.

Leadership

Such a strategy refresh can only be effective if it is driven from the top down, therefore it's vital for leadership to be fully bought in and willing to invest in the required transformation.

Leadership and management

If your organisation has already incorporated sustainability into its strategy, consider whether this has been embedded throughout the organisation. Do individuals understand this updated strategy and are they being incentivised to achieve the new objectives? Might your organisation benefit from some open, safe forums for conversation?

How can the impact of content be measured?

The next stage of delivering transformative media content is to successfully measure its effectiveness. Sophisticated impact measurement involves moving one step beyond reporting the reach and views of media, to measuring the behaviour change and overall benefits that the media delivers to society. There are a variety of measurement methodologies in the industry, driven by the challenging nature of tangibly measuring behaviour change. Therefore, simplistic measurement frameworks have been developed to support creators in the industry, such as through the following structure:

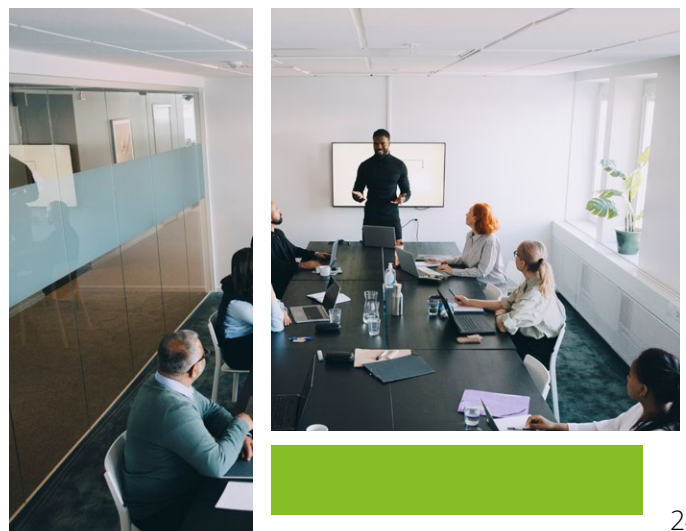
1. Identifying and articulating impacts,
2. Quantifying the impacts, and
3. Monitoring and managing the impacts.

01 Why do you need to measure the impact of content?

It is insufficient to subjectively discuss the impact of content in transforming societal behaviours. Content creators must invest in sufficient impact measurement practices to quantify their impact and provide tangible evidence of their role in the industry. Suitable measurement practices and methodologies will enable industry leaders to track and assess their progress, engage with audiences, adjust ineffective content, and communicate their goals and successes.

An important aspect of accurate measurement practices is enabling content creators to measure their levels of success when reaching their audience. This will enable them to continuously improve via valuable feedback loops, to learn which content is landing the best with their audience to drive behaviour change, and to find and address problematic or ineffective content.

Another fundamental advantage of impact measurement is the ability to communicate the benefits delivered to stakeholders, including employees, investors, audiences, ecosystem partners and even competitors. Transparently communicating the qualitative and quantitative impacts delivered by content will enable media companies to further benefit from the long run benefits, for instance, the positive reputational impact in the industry or the ability to react to negative outcomes and learn quickly.



02 What impact measurement is already happening in the industry?

Content creation is already having a noticeable influence on changing the climate-related behaviour of its audience. While behaviour change is naturally a challenging concept to measure, industry giants have begun to act and measure their content's ability to change the behaviours of its audiences via numerous methods.

Deloitte conducted a '[Subtitles to Save the World](#)' study in collaboration with the albert Group in 2020. The research analysed content subtitling scripts to measure the frequency of mentions in relation to climatic issues and solutions. The research revealed that there were 12,715 mentions of climate change on platforms such as the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and Sky. This was in comparison to 286,626 dog related mentions, 90,885 mentions of the NHS, and 1,688 mentions of biodiversity. This form of direct measurement is a simple way to quantify the output of content; the next challenge will be to quantify the outcome and impact on consumers' climate related behaviour.

The [BBC Audience Research team](#) uses a range of methods to understand the impact of content – including regular surveys (for example, asking audience members about the impact a piece of

content had on them), examining search patterns and social media conversations, and tracking helpline contacts, pledges and app downloads.

For more rigorous impact measurement, the industry is increasingly turning to scientific methodologies and academic partnerships. The University of Oxford's Zoology Department conducted a scientific analysis to [evaluate the impact of Blue Planet II on viewers' plastic consumption behaviours \(ox.ac.uk\)](#). The findings were the first to use a form of experimental design along with measuring observed behaviours to test a hypothesis. The study utilised questionnaires to assess the knowledge and attitudes of the audience towards plastic usage across 2 separate control groups. They also measured the actual behaviour change by assessing the audience members' preference for snacks and refreshments with plastic or paper packaging, both before and after watching the documentary.

The scientific analysis contradicted the popular hypothesis that Blue Planet II reduced viewer's preference for plastic. However, the research discussed the significant impact Blue Planet II had for increasing conversations around ocean plastic pollution, allowing the topic to become more politically palatable. The documentary therefore had a direct influence in **changing legislation** and **public engagement** in the topic, showing that the impact of content can be broader than the direct effect on audience behaviour.

There is no perfect set of standardised methodologies or metrics. The challenge will be to evaluate the factors around climate and wider ESG metrics that need to be addressed, and to tailor measurement methodologies to individual pieces of content or wider campaigns.

03 What methodologies are available to measure the impact?

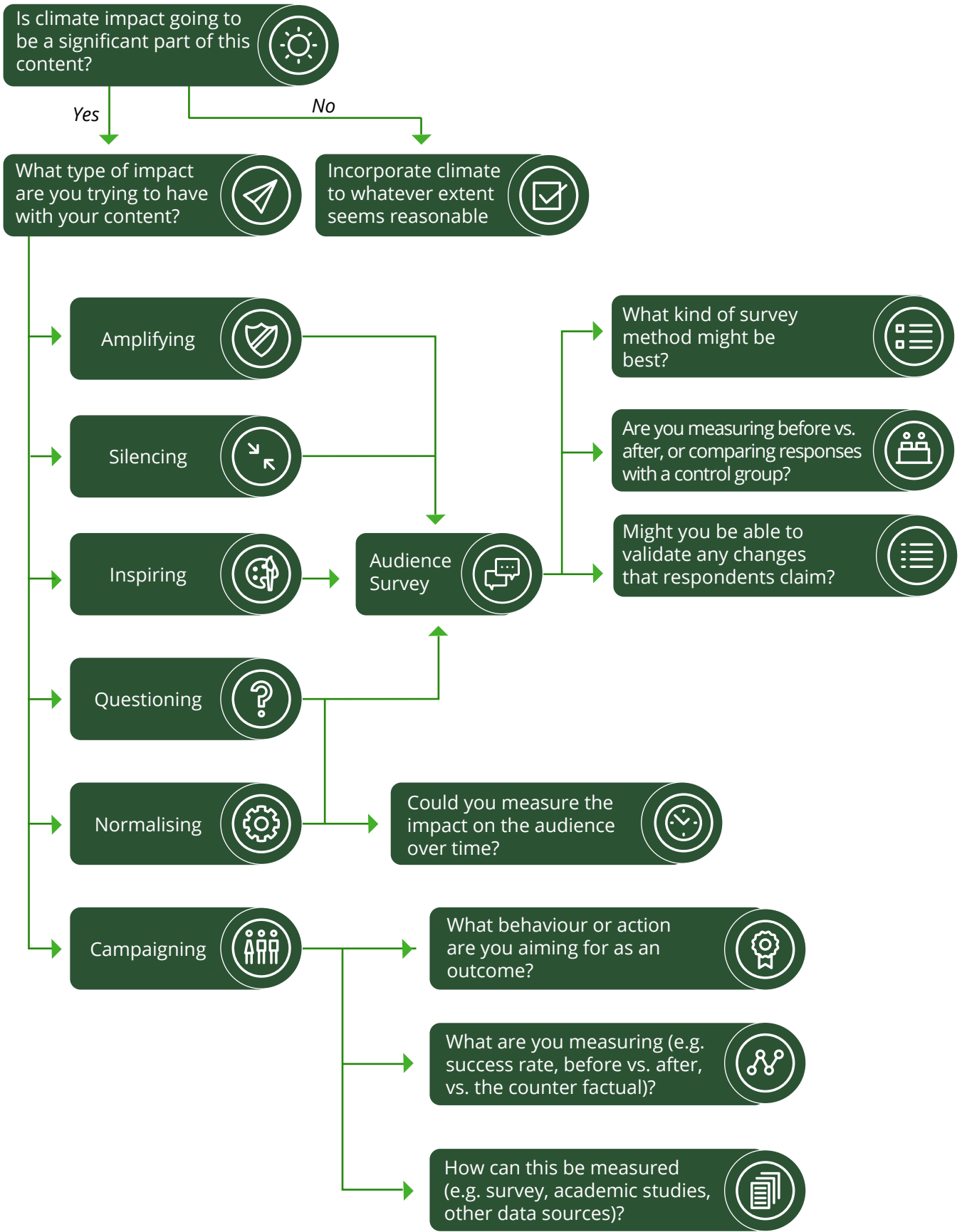
As mentioned, there is a lack of standardised measurement in this field, and the measurement of behaviour change is particularly challenging – especially if a company is not able to invest significant resources in measurement practices and viewer surveying or research methods.

Regardless of the impact measurement methodology chosen, there are some important considerations for media companies that can be used as a high-level framework.

Firstly, media organisations should actively consider whether climate impact is going to be a significant objective of their content. It is a crucial step to acknowledge from the onset of content creation in order to plan and achieve the desired result, and determine how sophisticated any impact measurement should be.

If climate impact is a significant content objective, media organisations should consider the type of impact they intend for the content to have (i.e. amplifying, silencing, inspiring, questioning, normalising or campaigning). The desired outcome will affect the creation of content, and will determine the most appropriate impact measurement tools and analysis.

A simple framework to support the impact measurement of climate-related content



Audience surveying consistently arises as the strongest measurement tool of audience behaviour change, with potential for personalisation through the type of survey and survey engagement strategy. A distinct advantage of surveying is it can be utilised across numerous platforms, such as embedded within streaming platforms, or provided online through audience targeting.

Media companies using surveys to measure the impact of content might consider surveying control groups to compare responses with those of the audience, for instance groups with similar demographics that did not watch the content, or even groups that started watching the content but did not watch until the end.

The access to audience data has meant that surveys are one of the most viable tools that should not be ignored. For instance, the **Government Communication Service** (GCS) is the public behavioural measurement service to support ministers in measuring their impact across society. The GCS's framework and **behavioural measurement guidance**, in relation to marketing, is a useful resource for this.

Survey methodology is a challenging topic across all industries. In the case of ESG, surveys must be designed carefully to reduce the risk of respondents overclaiming.

Therefore, it is likely that media companies will need to work with consumer research experts to develop such surveys and get a true gauge of behavior change.

Given the challenge, complexity and potentially limitless nature of impact measurement, there is a benefit to keeping impact objectives and measurement simplistic. For example, targeting a specific measurable area of impact related to climate change, such as water or plastic usage. Once basic impact measurement processes have been well established, more complex methodologies can be introduced.

Furthermore, media companies will need to carefully manage resources given the time intensity of impact measurement. One method for utilising resources effectively could be launching multiple pieces of content as part of an overarching media campaign which targets a single measurable objective, such as reducing water usage. This enables impact measurement for the campaign overall rather than on a per-content basis, which may be more labour and cost efficient. However, this does reduce the organisation's ability to evaluate the effectiveness of each piece of content individually.

Call to action

All individuals within media

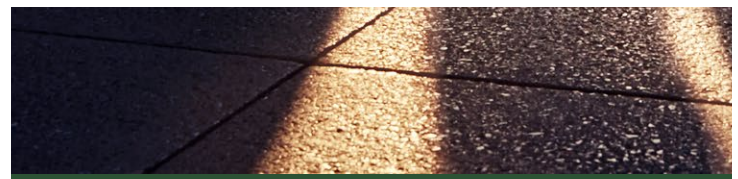
Start engaging in active impact measurement through numerous methodologies to demonstrate the impact that content is having in society.

Leadership

Proactively invest in impact measurement strategies, experts, and technologies to bring climate to the forefront of content creation. Impact measurement will allow leaders to leverage their content as a competitive advantage in the market in addition to improving the power of content to help create a more environmentally secure world.

Management

If your organisation is looking to embed impact measurement expertise, consider your target result to understand the necessary skills and methodologies you will require to demonstrate your impact. Might your organisation benefit from bringing in impact measurement expertise? Do you have the governance and strategy available to implement new impact measurement activities into the heart of your organisation and content?



How can organisations collaborate?

No single company can drive sustainable behaviour across the industry alone. To create real progress on this shared goal and maximum impact amongst audiences, strong collaboration is required both across companies and industries.

One way to achieve collaborative impact is to partner with organisations and industry bodies already offering help in this space. For example, TV and film companies can use [albert's 'carbon calculator'](#) and attend their [free sustainability courses](#), while advertisers can utilise [Purpose Disruptors](#) to get expert advice, attend events and access research.

There is significant scope for industry leaders to collaborate with smaller companies to offer them support on steps they can take towards sustainability. Examples include hosting knowledge share sessions and intentionally including others in the supply chain in large campaigns.

Furthermore, much can be gained from cross-industry gatherings to discuss progress on common goals, share knowledge and identify collaboration opportunities. Such groups can evaluate the industry's overall sustainability strategies across production, content and other areas. This includes determining whether any important areas or messages are not being represented on-screen, and collective agreements about production standards and criteria e.g. limitations around working with "non-green" suppliers or brands.

Case Study

12 broadcasters and streamers, representing over 70% of time audiences spend watching TV and Film in the UK, have signed the ['Climate Content Pledge'](#), committing to using their content to help audiences understand what tackling climate change might mean for them, as well as inspire and inform sustainable choices. The signatories include: BBC, BBC Studios, Britbox International, Channel 4, Channel 5 / ViacomCBS, Discovery UK and Eire, ITV, RTE, S4C, Sky, STV, UKTV. This is a step in the right direction for the 'next stage' of collaboration across the industry, with a commitment to learn from and inspire each other, share relevant industry and audience insights and develop relevant metrics together, and work together to improve impact measurement.

Call to action

Leadership and management

Consider and scope out opportunities for strategic collaborations both across companies and industries to determine how you can work together to achieve common goals towards a more sustainable future.

Conclusion

A potential course of action for media organisations is outlined below:



How we can help

Media organisations need to rapidly transform without sacrificing their creativity or alienating their audiences. This requires courage, imagination and collaboration.

Deloitte's Sustainability Services give clients the capability and confidence to drive real change, build competitive advantage and to make climate-smart choices, so that they can succeed in a low-carbon future. Our team is at the cutting edge, supporting clients across industries to make clear choices for a sustainable future.

Our specialist Technology, Media & Telecoms (TMT) Practice serves clients across the Technology, Telecoms, Media, Entertainment and Sports sectors globally. Our aim is to help our clients seize the growth opportunities which digital and multi-platform offer, and succeed in the rapidly changing markets in which they operate.

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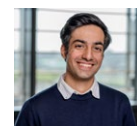
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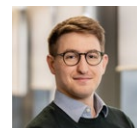


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Endnotes

#	Name and link	Name of source	Year
1	Future of the sustainable workplace in the age of COVID-19 and climate change	Unily	2020
2	2020 survey from Global Action Plan	Global Action Plan UK	2020
3	The Media and Climate Change	CMS	2020
4	Global ESG 2021 Midyear Outlook	Bloomberg	2021
5	"Companies proactive on sustainability have competitive edge"	Eco-Business	2015
6	2021 Survey: Sky's Behaviour Insight Team	Sky	2021
7	The Mirrors and Movers study	Carnstone	2013
8	Common Cause Handbook (2011)	PIRC	2011
9	Mass media campaigns reduce the incidence of drinking and driving	Evidence-based Healthcare and Public Health	2005
10	50 years of truly shocking drink-driving adverts	BBC	2014
11	Screen New Deal	albert	2020
12	ITV outlines range of measures to deliver climate action commitments	ITV	2021
13	Big-budget movies mean blockbuster CO2 emissions, but they can clean up their act	Proactive	2022
14	Production Handbook: Production Tools	albert	2022
15	Green Screen	Green Screen: Europe	2022
16	ITV outlines range of measures to deliver climate action commitments	ITV	2021
17	Ad Net Zero	Ad Net Zero	2022
18	Mirrors Or Movers? Framing the debate about the impact of media content	Carnstone	2013
19	The Superpower of Media - Mirrors or Movers II: managing the societal impacts of content	Carnstone	2020
20	Is your favourite show green on screen?	Goldsmith's University	2022
21	Soaps unite to help highlight climate change	BBC	2021
22	David Attenborough: A Life On Our Planet	albert	2020
23	The Daily Climate Show	Sky	2022
24	Leave 'em laughing instead of crying: Climate humor can break down barriers and find common ground	The Conversation	2019
25	Frankie Boyle's New World Order: Episode #5.3	IMDB	2021
26	Beasts of the Southern Wild	albert	2012
27	Are the Wombles really the best children's characters to tackle the climate crisis?	The Guardian	2021
28	Planet Placement	albert	2022

29	Good Energy: A Playbook for Screenwriting in the Age of Climate Change	Good Energy	2022
30	Supercharging the climate conversation: Engaging the next generation with climate change	Virgin Media	2020
31	Mirrors Or Movers? Framing the debate about the impact of media content	Carnstone	2013
32	Global Action Plan: Flickers of the Future	Global Action Plan	2020
33	Is your favourite show green on screen?	Goldsmith's University	2022
34	'Don't Look Up' Inspires Powerful Conversations About the Climate Crisis	Netflix	2022
35	The Seven Climate Movies (And The One We Need Next)	Forbes	2022
36	Editorial: Temple	albert	2019
37	Six ways to change hearts and minds about climate change	Onroad media	2020
38	How does the advertising industry take full responsibility for its climate impact?	Purpose Disruptors	2019
39	Dayrize	Dayrize	2022
40	Game Zero	Sky	2022
41	Sky unveils range of climate focused content for COP26	Sky	2021
42	New Sky Kids original series Obki aims to help children understand climate change	Sky	2021
43	ITV Home Planet	ITV	2022
44	'Helping The Planet One Match At A Time'	Quorn	2022
45	Plant Britain	BBC	2020
46	Sky Ocean Rescue	Sky	2022
47	Premier League Primary Stars Plastic Pollution Challenge	Premier League	2022
48	'Hugh's Fish Fight'	River Cottage	2022
49	Net Positive	Net Positive	2022
50	Former Unilever CEO Paul Polman Says Aiming for Sustainability Isn't Good Enough—The Goal Is Much Higher	Harvard Business Review	2021
51	Reimagining Energy	BP	2022
52	We Are 8	We Are 8	2022
53	BP sets ambition for net zero by 2050, fundamentally changing organisation to deliver	BP	2020
54	How climate change can be addressed through executive compensation	We Forum	2021
55	The common cause handbook	PIRC	2012
56	2016 Cone Communications Millennial Employee Engagement Study	Cone	2016
57	Subtitles to Save the World	albert	2021
58	The Superpower of Media - Mirrors or Movers II: managing the societal impacts of content	Carnstone	2020
59	'50:50 The Equality Project'	BBC	2021
60	Evaluating the impact of Blue Planet II on viewers' plastic consumption behaviours	University of Oxford	2020
61	Has Blue Planet II had an impact on plastic pollution?	Science Focus	2019
62	How The 'Blue Planet Effect' Is Driving Demand For Sustainable Packaging	One Four Zero	2019

63	Government Communication Service	Government Communication Service	2022
64	Behavioural measurement guidance	Government Communication Service	2022
65	albert's 'carbon calculator'	albert	2022
66	albert's free sustainability courses	albert	2022
67	Purpose Disruptors: Get Involved	Purpose Disruptors	2022



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