

Carbon Jargon

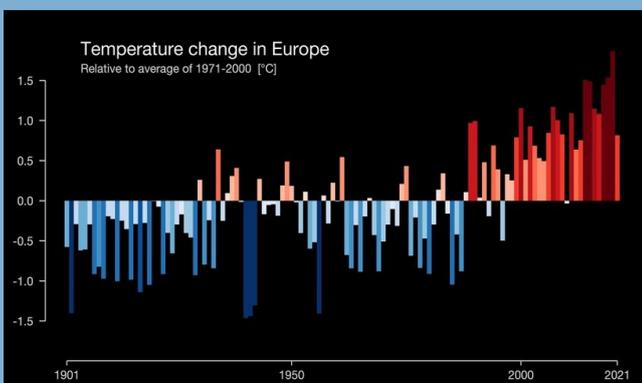
Introduction

The Mayor of London declared a climate emergency in 2018 and set a target for the city to reach net zero by 2030. Getting there will require the entire London economy to play a part.

This is a guide to help businesses taking part in the Business Climate Challenge understand the terms they will come across as they work to reduce their energy consumption.

Temperature change in Europe

The pace and scale of climate change will have a serious impact on the natural environment and humanity. This has led to declarations of 'climate emergency' to emphasise the need to reduce emissions.



[Institute for Environmental Analytics](#)

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Mayor's Business Climate Challenge

Climate Change

Climate change is the long-term shift in temperatures and weather patterns. We're having hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters. We're also having extreme weather like heavy rainfall and heat-waves more often. Most scientists agree that this is caused by human actions that emit greenhouse gases (GHG) like carbon dioxide. If GHG emissions remain high, summer temperatures in London could be 5.4°C hotter by 2070.

Net zero

As defined by the United Nations, "*net zero means we are not adding new emissions to the atmosphere. Emissions will continue, but will be balanced by absorbing an equivalent amount from the atmosphere*".

[United Nations - The race to zero emissions and why the world depends on it.](#)

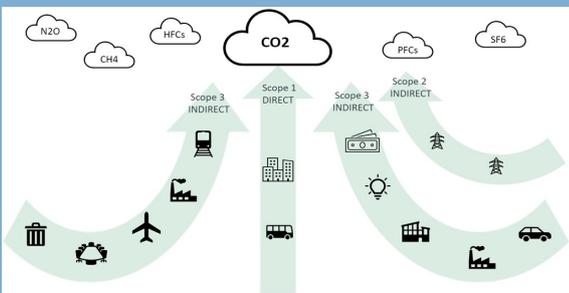
Carbon Footprint

A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases that are generated by business operations and activities.

Scope 1: direct emissions from the controlled assets (e.g. gas boilers) and owned vehicles (e.g. diesel engines).

Scope 2: indirect emissions from the consumption of electricity or heat generated elsewhere (e.g. coal power stations supplied to the property).

Scope 3: all other emissions that the company has no direct ownership or control over (e.g. purchased materials and services for a supplier).



The Business Climate Challenge focuses on Scope 1 and 2 emissions associated with the building.

Carbon offsetting

This is a financial transaction where a business funds another organisation to compensate for their carbon emissions. Offsetting should:

- be in addition to reducing emissions relative to your business.
- fund schemes that remove carbon from the atmosphere by natural processes such as tree planting, or through engineering processes like Carbon Capture Storage.
- deliver wider sustainability outcomes.
- be verified and certified by a reputable third party.

Carbon

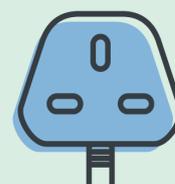
This is a colloquial term referring to carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases (GHGs). Having a common unit makes calculations and comparisons easier. Emissions from all GHGs can be converted into carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_{2e}).

Decarbonisation

The reduction of carbon emissions and other greenhouse gasses.

Reduce energy bills

MAYOR OF LONDON



Cut carbon emissions

Greenhouse Gas

This is a term that refers to a range of gases that contribute to global warming and climate change. These include methane (e.g. from agriculture); hydrofluorocarbons (e.g. from refrigerants); nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases.



Greenwashing

This is the act of presenting misleading information to describe favourable environmental and sustainability credentials. Instances of greenwash include:

- Making unsubstantiated claims that are not backed by evidence or can not be verified.
- Using ambiguous and subjective terms like environmentally friendly and climate positive.

Where to find more help

[Jargon Busting Climate Action Terms - Heart of the City](#)
(theheartofthecity.com)

[Home - SME Climate Hub](#)

[Science Based Targets - Jargon Buster](#)

Carbon Neutral

To become carbon neutral, the amount of greenhouse emissions produced is balanced by the equivalent amount being offset. Typically, this is accomplished through the purchase of offsets rather than through lowering emissions. This is viewed as an insufficient way to combat climate change as it does not actively reduce emissions produced.

Energy Terms

kW: kilowatt is a unit of power - the higher the kW, the greater demand the appliance/equipment has.

kWh: kilowatt hour is a measure of how much energy your business is using.

Renewable energy: refers to energy sourced from renewable sources e.g. wind, solar, hydro.

Energy efficiency: refers to reducing energy waste and using equipment and appliances for optimal energy use.

Base load: refers to the lowest demand on energy - typically when the building is closed.

Peak load: refers to the highest demand on energy during the day.