

Climate action plan:
**ACCA's path to
net zero 2025-26.**

Introduction.

Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges of our time. And as champions of sustainability, we have a responsibility to take bold action – not just for the ACCA community, but for wider society. We're committed to playing our part in securing a sustainable future for people, planet and prosperity, and our goal is clear: to achieve net zero emissions by 2045.

Our climate action plan outlines the steps we'll take in the year ahead to reduce our carbon emissions by 50% by 2030, based on a 2019-20 baseline. These actions will lay the foundations for a successful transition to net zero by 2045, not just within our own operations but across our supply chain.

As we continue to refine our approach to measuring and reducing ACCA's carbon emissions, we recognise that the transition to net zero will also mean understanding its evolving impact on how we create and deliver value. As the science and methods for achieving net zero evolve, so will our plans. We'll adapt our climate action plan each year to stay ahead of these changes and lead the way.

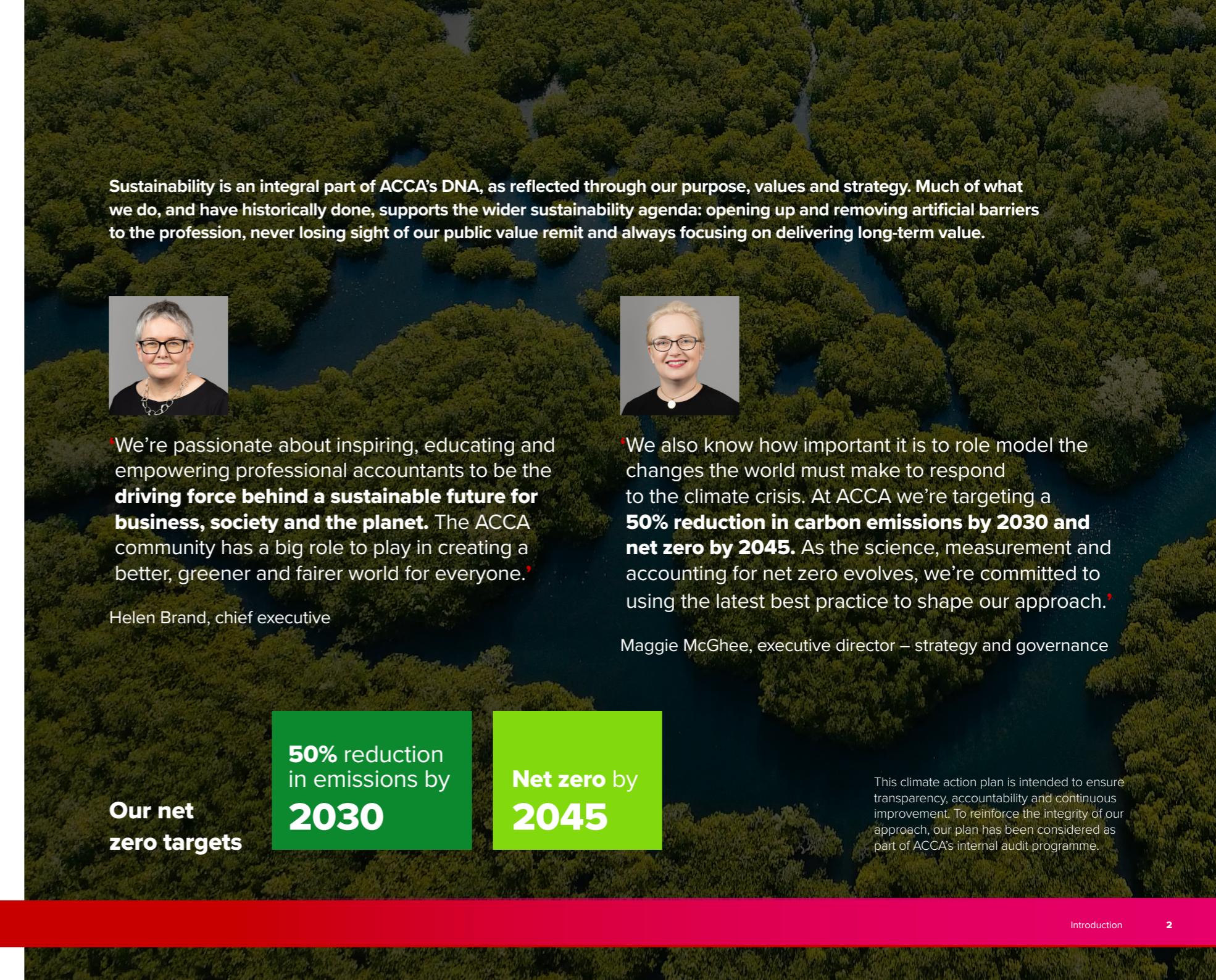
Achieving our net zero targets depends on strong leadership, new ways of working and collaboration. We're confident that we can reach our goals and lead the way in shaping a sustainable future for the global accountancy profession.



Helen Brand
Chief executive



Maggie McGhee
Executive director – strategy and governance



Sustainability is an integral part of ACCA's DNA, as reflected through our purpose, values and strategy. Much of what we do, and have historically done, supports the wider sustainability agenda: opening up and removing artificial barriers to the profession, never losing sight of our public value remit and always focusing on delivering long-term value.



‘We’re passionate about inspiring, educating and empowering professional accountants to be the **driving force behind a sustainable future for business, society and the planet**. The ACCA community has a big role to play in creating a better, greener and fairer world for everyone.’

Helen Brand, chief executive



‘We also know how important it is to role model the changes the world must make to respond to the climate crisis. At ACCA we’re targeting a **50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2045**. As the science, measurement and accounting for net zero evolves, we’re committed to using the latest best practice to shape our approach.’

Maggie McGhee, executive director – strategy and governance

**Our net
zero targets**

**50% reduction
in emissions by
2030**

**Net zero by
2045**

This climate action plan is intended to ensure transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. To reinforce the integrity of our approach, our plan has been considered as part of ACCA's internal audit programme.

ACCA's journey to net zero.

We know that achieving net zero means taking bold, science-led action to reduce emissions across our operations and supply chain.

- A critical part of this journey is our commitment to cutting our Scope 1 (direct) and Scope 2 (indirect) emissions, ensuring we're targeting the areas where we have the most control.
- We're using climate-related scenario analysis to better understand ACCA's exposure to climate risks and opportunities as we work towards compliance with the IFRS standards. We'll report on the outcomes from ongoing scenario analysis in our annual integrated report and future reports.
- We're also working to achieve net zero across our entire supply chain by 2045, reinforcing our commitment to driving sustainability beyond our own footprint and supporting the wider transition to a greener future.

Our targets have been verified by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi)

We're proud to be the first global professional accountancy body to have our net zero targets verified by the [SBTi](#). This validation ensures our targets align with the latest climate science, so we can drive maximum impact while staying transparent and accountable at every stage of our journey.

We carried out our first baseline carbon footprint activity in 2021, and, in 2023, we established our 2019-20 baseline carbon footprint and set our official SBTi goal. We reviewed emissions across our 57 offices worldwide – giving us a clear picture of our starting point and what milestones

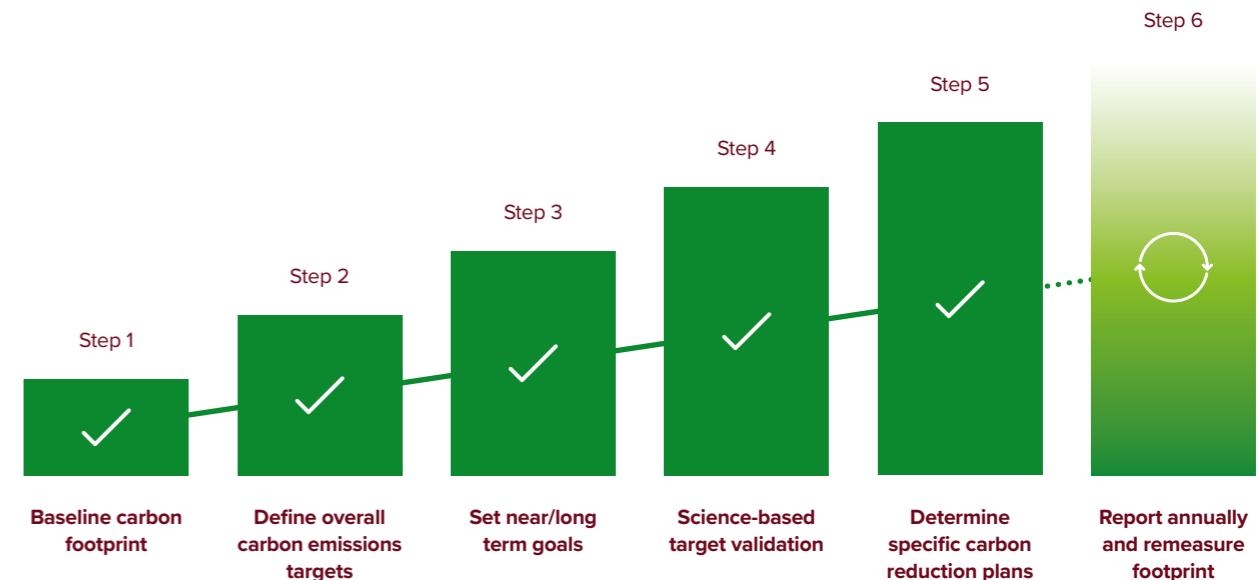
we need to set on the path to net zero. With this solid foundation, we've put clear actions in place to keep us moving forward.

- **In the short term** 2025-26 marks our first in-year directional (%) target for net zero, which is to limit the increase in emissions to 0%-5% year on year. We'll also further refine our methodology for calculating and validating ACCA's carbon footprint, and start to evolve our climate action plan into a full transition plan, aligning with the Transition Plan Taskforce Disclosure Framework.
- **In the medium term** we'll aim for compliance with the [IFRS S1 and S2 standards](#), developed by the International Sustainability Standards Board to demonstrate our commitment to sustainability reporting. Our ambition is to achieve compliance with transition reliefs in 2026 and full compliance in 2027. We will also target a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030.
- **In the long term** beyond 2030, we'll focus on tackling the toughest emissions and finding ways to address any that can't be eliminated as we target net zero by 2045.

Our journey to net zero is unlikely to be linear. In fact, emissions are likely to initially increase as ACCA continues to thrive. It's our intention that the actions we take over the short, medium and long term will address this.

Throughout this process we'll keep evaluating and refining our plans across areas such as our events, exams, operations, supply chain and travel.

Our journey to net zero



'We've made significant strides in refining how we collect and analyse data to work towards an accurate and comprehensive view of our emissions. We recognise there's still a lot more to do – and we're continually improving our approach.'

Dale Burridge, director – global business services

Empowering the profession.

We know we can make the most significant contribution to sustainability by supporting and empowering the ACCA community. We've integrated sustainability in the ACCA Qualification and we offer a broad range of related technical guidance, continuous learning and insights. ACCA's Accounting for a better world initiative is focused on sustainable development and practices. We also work with governments, policy makers and businesses to drive positive change and create a better and fairer future.

Our vision for sustainability

To be the leader of the global profession in inspiring, educating, empowering and ensuring that professional accountants are essential drivers of a sustainable future for business, society and the planet. In realising this vision, we'll also demonstrate ACCA's full commitment as an organisation to building a better and fairer world.

Driving sustainable business through our global policy priorities

Our global policy priorities provide a focus for our work with governments and policymakers around the world. They focus on bridging the accountancy skills gap, driving sustainable business and championing the professional accountant as they make vital contributions to business and society.



Engaging with the ACCA community and key stakeholders through our *Accounting for a better world* initiative and related brand spotlights, one of which is *Driving sustainable business*.



Empowering and upskilling ACCA members through our portfolio of sustainability-related CPD and learning opportunities, including a half-day conference on sustainable business.



Embedding our Professional Diploma in Sustainability across the global marketplace, meeting demand on this critically important agenda.



Leading the discussion on sustainability through our policy and insights, with new insights in 2025 focused on carbon-related instruments, sustainability assurance, sustainability reporting, internal controls over sustainability data, climate technology and responsible investing.



Evolving the ACCA Qualification to reflect the latest sustainability standards, regulations and global insights, giving the ACCA community the tools and expertise needed to lead in sustainability.



Partnering and influencing to deliver public value by positioning ACCA as the sustainability champion of the global profession, strengthening partnerships and policy influence, and convening key stakeholders to drive positive change.

Governance, leadership and individual accountability.

Measuring our approach to net zero

ACCA has robust governance in place to develop, provide oversight and deliver the ACCA strategy in line with our purpose and values. We measure the performance of our strategy using a strategic balanced scorecard approach, which includes three sustainability measures relating to *people, planet and prosperity*. One of these measures focuses on the achievement of our net zero targets and 2025-26 marks our first in-year directional (%) target which is to limit the increase in emissions to 0%-5% year-on-year.

Managing our approach to net zero

ACCA's Council

One of Council's core responsibilities is to set ACCA's strategic direction. In doing so, it receives regular reports on ACCA's performance and prospects, and takes part in strategic workshops (including on sustainability and net zero) to inform ACCA's continuing strategic direction.

ACCA's Council Board

One of the Council Board's core responsibilities is to approve annual targets across ACCA's strategic balanced scorecard, including our net zero target. It also oversees ACCA's strategic performance.

ACCA's Executive Board

The Executive Board, led by Helen Brand, is responsible for the delivery of ACCA's agreed strategy and leading ACCA's operations. Maggie McGhee is the member of the Executive Board with overall responsibility for ACCA's approach to sustainability and chairs ACCA's sustainability steering group.

ACCA's Audit Committee

The Audit Committee reviews ACCA's annual integrated report, which the Council Board and Council subsequently approve. The Audit Committee holds responsibility for confirming that ACCA's external reporting is presented in accordance with the <IR> Framework. It also provides oversight of ACCA's consolidated financial statements and approach to corporate risk. We anticipate that, over time, the role of the Audit Committee will expand to ensure ACCA's external reporting complies with IFRS S1 and S2.

ACCA's sustainability steering group

ACCA's sustainability steering group is made up of leaders from across ACCA's employee network. It provides a central point of oversight for the delivery of ACCA's integrated sustainability plan.

ACCA's sustainability strategy lead

Our sustainability strategy lead works with teams across ACCA to encourage integrated thinking and decision making, enabling the delivery of every element of ACCA's integrated sustainability plan.

Employee accountability

Every employee plays a role in our journey towards net zero. Our actions this year to engage and empower our people will include:

- embedding climate and carbon consciousness into our working culture
- updating our sustainability e-learning and signposting relevant ACCA Learning resources to employees
- providing practical guidance to support informed, sustainable decisions in everyday work.

This year, we're holding sustainability workshops to ensure that those involved in managing our approach to net zero are strongly placed to enable ACCA to become a more sustainable organisation.

In late 2024, the Executive Board approved ACCA's integrated sustainability plan. This is an internal document which sets out how we'll drive the sustainability agenda forward across every part of the ACCA strategy.



Net zero actions in 2025-26.

We're looking at all our activities with net zero in mind

We plan to build on the momentum we achieved between 2019 and 2023, when we achieved a 37% reduction in emissions. We've adopted a science-based approach: our focus is on emissions reduction, not carbon offsetting. In 2025-26 we're testing and learning to reduce emissions.

As well as strengthening our governance and leadership, and embedding climate and carbon consciousness into our working culture, our biggest net zero actions in 2025-26 will focus on reducing emissions in five key areas:

Events

In recent years we've moved a number of our major events online, embracing our digital-first approach, while also maintaining high-quality engagement with the ACCA community.

Key actions for 2025-26:

- strengthening event principles and policies to ensure reducing emissions is a key consideration
- working with suppliers to continue delivering high-quality digital events with reduced emissions
- phasing out merchandise and printed materials
- prioritising sustainable venues for in-person events.

Exams

In recent years we've moved away from paper-based exams, evolving our approach while maintaining the integrity we're known for.

Key actions for 2025-26:

- pinpointing the main sources of emissions in our exam delivery model to validate where we will take action
- taking a longer-term approach to ensure our exam emission reductions are sustainable as ACCA student numbers grow.

Operations

We're taking targeted short-term actions to lay the groundwork for lasting emissions reductions.

Key actions for 2025-26:

- prioritising renewable energy and more energy efficient equipment across our global network of offices
- minimising office waste and adopting sustainable disposal practices.

Supply chain

We're collaborating with our supply chain to cut emissions.

Key actions for 2025-26:

- partnering with suppliers to reduce emissions and drive cost efficiencies
- strengthening sustainability criteria in our procurement policies to align with our net zero targets
- updating employee guidance to reflect sustainability and foster stronger collaboration with partners and stakeholders
- sharing knowledge with our supply chain to drive collective action.

Travel

The world of work is changing, and ACCA thinks ahead. For several years our work has been digital-first and we prioritise virtual collaboration.

Key actions for 2025-26:

- strengthening travel principles and policies to drive clarity on how, why and when to travel for work
- drawing on and enhancing the data we capture to drive more informed business travel and commuting choices.



'In 2023-24 we began to transition ACCA's market investments into sustainable funds, moving 15% of our holdings into appropriate products currently in the investment marketplace. In 2024-25, this has risen to just under 40%, and we'll keep raising the bar in 2025-26.'

Raymond Jack, executive director – finance and operations

This year, we're conducting a full emissions assessment.

This will enable us to better understand our emissions and identify actions for 2026-27 and beyond, so we can progress our net zero commitments effectively.

[Read more about how we remodelled our London office to reflect greener ways of working.](#)



[Read more about how ACCA is delivering on sustainability in our annual integrated report for the year ending 31 March 2025](#)

We're committed to making the most of green energy to reduce our carbon footprint and the impact of our products and services.

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