

October 2024

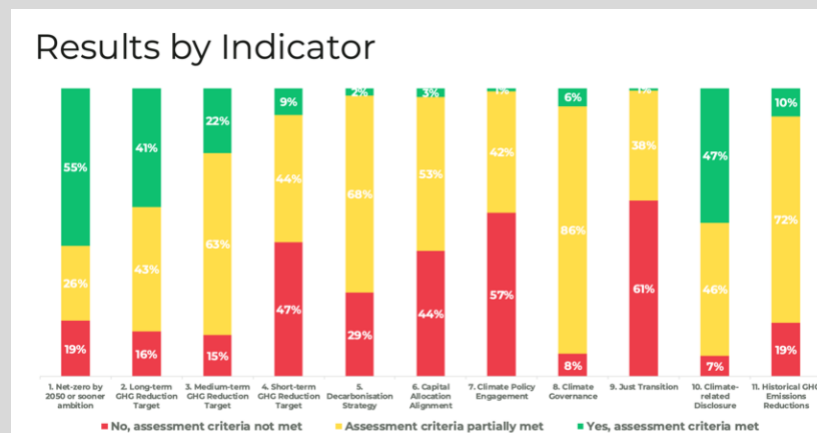
Net Zero Benchmark Reveals Mixed Progress

[Climate Action 100+](#), an investor-led climate initiative, [released](#) this October updated Net Zero Company Benchmark assessments for 168 companies. The Benchmark evaluates corporate progress on governance, emissions reduction and climate disclosures, focusing on alignment with 1.5°C temperature increase goals.

The assessments evidence mixed progress. Most assessed companies have established 2050 net-zero targets, implemented board-level climate oversight and committed to TCFD-aligned disclosures. While emissions intensity is improving and the companies are increasingly transparent about decarbonization plans, the pace of actual emissions reduction falls short of 1.5°C pathways. Key challenges include:

- Declining short-term target setting since 2023, despite maintained medium and long-term commitments;
- Limited concrete implementation plans for net-zero goals;
- Insufficient alignment between company policies and Paris Agreement objectives; and
- Inadequate capital allocation to low-carbon solutions, particularly in oil and gas sectors.

Some sectors show stronger progress than others, with airlines, automotive and utilities demonstrating notable improvements in emissions reduction intensity. However, the assessments emphasize the urgent need to bridge the gap between climate commitments and actual implementation through stronger short-term targets, aligned policies and actionable strategies. A summary of results can be found [here](#), and the full data set can be accessed [here](#).



Hong Kong Develops Strategic Agenda to Lead in Sustainable Finance

On October 21, 2024, the [Hong Kong Monetary Authority \(HKMA\)](#) [released](#) a comprehensive [Sustainable Finance Action Agenda](#), setting ambitious climate targets for banks, with additional goals for the Exchange Fund and Hong Kong's financial market development. For banks, the agenda mandates net-zero targets with clear timelines: operational emissions must reach net zero by 2030 while financed emissions have a 2050 deadline. To support this transition, HKMA will introduce climate risk disclosure requirements aligned with international standards, provide tools and guidance for measuring and managing transition risks and implement a "comply or explain" approach for transition plans starting 2030. The agenda extends beyond regulation through four strategic pillars:

- Banking for net zero: Supporting banks' transition to sustainable practices;
- Investing in a sustainable future: Greening the Exchange Fund portfolio through renewable energy and infrastructure investments;
- Financing net zero: Creating incentives for green bonds and sustainable financing; and
- Making sustainability inclusive: Improving data accessibility and climate-related skills development.

New Principles Clarify Sustainable Trade Finance

On October 21, 2024, the [International Chamber of Commerce \(ICC\)](#) [launched](#) its Principles for Sustainable Trade Finance (PSTF). Developed with input from financial institutions and corporates, the PSTF provides specific guidance for sustainable trade finance, covering green trade finance, sustainability-linked trade finance and sustainability-linked supply chain finance. The PSTF aim to standardize definitions and reduce greenwashing risks in trade finance due to their "flow" nature rather than project-based structure. ICC includes a list of green activities in the appendix. For more details, view the [full document](#).