Developing Your Plan

You can refer to this document at any stage in the development of your plan. With your results gathered and presented to the wider organisation, you will now be able to prioritise a set of actions for your Climate Action Plan. These actions will need to be translated into a concrete plan, with a vision, aims, and themes, a risk register, a communication strategy, and a monitoring framework. Below is our advice on first using co-design to develop your plan, thinking about the scope of your plan, and some general tips to keep in mind throughout the development process.

Co-design Principles

Co-design is a term that is often taken to merely mean a collaborative process. However, there is more to the concept than that. Co-design is not just getting people around the table but is also an ethos and a mode of practice that centres equality of voice, care and relationships, and the distribution of power. Here are some principles to ensure you are making use of a co-design process:

1. **Inclusivity**: engaging a diverse group of stakeholders – this might include stakeholders not within the organisation, through a public consultation or workshop series for example.
2. **Collaboration**: Encourage a sense of shared ownership, responsibility, and camaraderie by ensuring open communication and full collaboration among participants.
3. **Equal participation**: Every participant should have the opportunity to have their voice and particular concerns heard, regardless of their status within the organisation
4. **Empathy**: The facilitators of the process should seek to foster an environment where the needs and desires facing various stakeholders are met with understanding, informing the design of the process itself.
5. **Flexibility**: Allow for adaptability to evolving circumstances, insights, and requirements. Take an iterative approach that adjusts based on continuing monitoring and feedback.
6. **Transparency**: Ensure all decision-making processes are communicated clearly and that trust is maintained throughout.
7. **Fairness**: Ensure as far as is possible that no-one is left behind or unfairly disadvantaged. Action is a trade-off. But any transition must seek to be fair and to avoid building in challenges, especially for those least equipped to adapt.

The process will not always work perfectly. However, by building these principles into the development of your Climate Action Plan, you will be able to harness the diverse skills and collective intelligence of your stakeholders, which will ultimately lead to a more relevant, concrete, and successful plan.

Scope:

- Be realistic about what your organisation can and cannot do. The plan should be ambitious; however, it is important to recognise those places where ambition meets reality.
- Acknowledge that climate change is a global, complex problem; the impacts of climate will be felt in all aspects of our lives, and cannot be 'fixed' by a single, simple solution.
- **NetZeroNI**: Be clear about the scope of your net zero target - Which gases are covered - CO_2, all greenhouse gases, or a subset? When will net zero be reached? And is the intention to reduce, remove or offset the emissions?
- **NIAdapts**: Be clear about your adaptation goals - Which risks are covered? What are the timelines for these risks, and the associated actions which will help your organisation be more prepared for these impacts?

Tips for writing your plan:

- **Joint Mitigation and Adaptation Action –** wherever possible, any mitigation goals or actions should take climate risks and adaptation plans into account, as this will increasingly impact your organisation's operations in the coming years.

  Likewise, any risks considered should account for the potential impact on your organisation to mitigate its emissions, and emissions from adaptation actions should be accounted for and weighed up as a trade-off.

  It is likely that there will be cross-over in staff working on both mitigation and adaptation, but even so it is important to keep channels of communication open between the two areas.

- **Staff commitment** – Consider how to engage and educate employees on the need for a Climate Plan and collective delivery of that Plan should be included, such as workshops or training sessions (i.e. Carbon Literacy).

  This is particularly true for senior leadership, and it can be useful to specifically consider how to inform and engage future programmes and strategies through this work.

- **External stakeholder communication** – A communication strategy for external stakeholders should also be incorporated, including how specific concerns can be addressed and ensuring vulnerable or marginalised communities are not excluded.
- **Risk register** – Risks both to achieving the required emission reductions, and for the success of individual actions, should be considered and potential solutions suggested. Though your adaptation plan is already oriented around risk, at this point consider internal, institutional risks towards achievement of desired adaptive actions.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** – Incorporate a robust and flexible framework for monitoring and reporting on progress, with regular communications to build trust and transparency. Try to make this as detailed and specific as possible. Consider how the actions in your plan could fill gaps in existing knowledge.
- **Adaptability** – Endeavour to stay up to date on any new emerging regulations, policy, best practice, or advancements in climate science. Make sure to adjust your plan during according to these changes during periods of review.
- **Ambition** – Make your plan as ambitious as possible while still being realistic and science-based. Even if you can't pledge to do every action you need to at this stage, can you lay out a path for how it should be done?