

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action?**

The Belgian Alliance for Climate Action is a platform and/or community for organizations in Belgium that are serious about their climate ambitions and have chosen – or are willing to choose – the path towards Science Based Targets (SBT's).

By adhering to the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action, you commit to act on climate change by signing the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) commitment letter within the first 12 months after joining. This means that, in the subsequent 24 months, you must set “science-based” targets to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that are in line with what the latest climate science says is necessary to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement—to limit global warming to well-below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C.

Illustration of timeline:

- T = date of signing the Alliance Pledge
- T + 12 months = ultimate date of signing the SBTi commitment letter
- (T + 12) + 24 months = ultimate date to submit a science-based target for official validation

This means that signatories of our pledge have one year to get acquainted with the SBT framework and decide on committing to the SBTi, without formally engaging with the SBTi.

- **Does it cost anything to join the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action?**

The Belgian Alliance for Climate Action is a joint initiative from The Shift and WWF and welcomes all organizations. However, as organizing workshops and events has a cost, we ask you to join The Shift, the Belgian network on Sustainability, if you want to participate in the full program and learning network.

Becoming a member of The Shift does require a financial engagement. If you are interested to join The Shift, please send us a message at hi@theshift.be. More information can be found here:

<https://theshift.be/en/take-action/become-a-member>

- **What is the workload involved in defining SBT's?**

The exact workload is hard to predict, this depends upon your organizations' profile, activities, emissions, existing sustainability initiatives and carbon monitoring and/or reporting efforts...

We do promise that you will learn about the journey towards Science Based Targets while interacting with the community and attending our events (e.g. case studies of organizations with approved SBT's regarding their SBTi commitment and the journey of developing and validating climate targets).

For more information regarding SBT's, please refer to <https://sciencebasedtargets.org/faq/>

- **Do I need to commit to the SBTi immediately when joining the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action?**

Organizations that want to adhere to the Alliance must, within 12 months after signing the pledge, formally commit to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), i.e. sign the SBTi commitment letter.

Subsequently, in the following 24 months after having committed to SBTi, you must set and submit climate targets for validation by the SBTi.

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- **What if after joining the Alliance I decide not to define SBT's?**

By signing the pledge, you confirm to formally commit to the SBTi within year one and set climate targets for validation within the following two years.

If after the first 12 months as member of the Alliance, your organisation does not (yet) wish to initiate the SBT route, you are free to leave the alliance. We will not make any public announcement or statement about this. Our aim is to help you get acquainted with and start the SBT journey.

The protocol through which SBT manages expired commitments can be found [here](#).

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- **Will the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action follow up on its signatories?**

The role of the Alliance is to facilitate a network and host a platform for organizations with serious climate ambitions that are willing to drive positive change. We will remind you of this commitment and would hope that you follow up on these. Note that the Alliance will not penalize The Shift members or other invited organizations for not signing the pledge, or not committing to the SBTi.

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- **My group has already set SBT's. If I sign as Belgian subsidiary, do I need to do something extra?**

If your organization, either at local or at group level, already committed to the SBTi, you should ensure your organization sets and submits SBT's for validation by the SBTi within the timeframe of 24 months after having signed the commitment letter.

If your organization, either at local or at group level, has already set and submitted SBT's for validation, you should follow up with the progress towards having approved climate targets.

For organizations currently not adhering to the SBTi yet, it's strongly encouraged to set targets at group level. If a local branch is a legal subsidiary, they can technically set a target, but there is certainly no preference for that.

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- **Is there a deadline to join the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action, or may we join anytime?**

We'd like organizations to act upon their climate ambitions as soon as possible, but there is no deadline after which it will not be possible any more to adhere to this initiative.

In case you would like your organization's adherence to the Alliance to be made public on the official launch the 12th of October 2020, you must sign the pledge by the 15th of September 2020.

- **What are the incentives to join the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action?**

Joining the Alliance has multiple advantages:

- Be part of the movement of leading Belgian organisations recognizing the urgency of climate change and driving positive change by aligning their activities with the goals of the Paris Agreement, to limit global warming to well-below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C.
- Publicly demonstrate ambitious climate goals and be recognized for this
- Exchange information and provide and/or receive guidance regarding the SBT's journey: the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action will link different players facing the same challenges in the process of determining and reaching climate targets
- Inspire others and engage in dialogue on climate action with suppliers, employees, investors and peers and incentivize your partners to join the movement
- Publish and/or receive research/thought-leadership on practical steps to delivering a business model in line with climate science and in support of climate targets;
- Provide and/or receive mentoring or inspiration to/from other adhering companies in meeting the requirements of SBTi and accelerate climate action in your ecosystem

By becoming a member of The Shift, you can participate to the full program and enjoy:

- Knowledge exchange: testimonials, webinars, tutorials, supporting materials on the website + industry-specific workshops, ideation sessions on key sustainability topics, learning sessions on new tools and technologies, PoV's from your peers...
- Networking opportunities: access to a neutral platform to connect with your supply chain, major industry players and innovative start-ups, form partnerships and get in touch with similar international initiatives
- Public visibility: all members of The Shift are displayed on the website and be recognized as part of the Belgian network for Sustainability.

- **I already have set, submitted and/or approved SBT's: why should I join the Alliance?**

The Alliance allows you to:

- Showcase your current initiatives and the rationale behind the decision to set SBT's
- Incentivize your suppliers, business partners and customers to address their emissions through a neutral platform
- Share knowledge and learn from other member organizations

- **I did not set or submit SBT's yet: why should I join the Alliance?**

The Alliance allows you to:

- Learn more about SBT's and why it is relevant for your organization to embark on this trajectory
 - Discover carbon monitoring and reporting tools/methodologies
 - Interact with peers and mentoring organizations to develop your own SBT roadmap
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- **I am a small organization and I see on the website that current SBTi participants are all very big players ... Is the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action something for me?**

The Alliance welcomes all organizations, regardless of size or sector, or their status with regards to SBTi:

- Organizations that have already set SBT's and are willing to share the lessons learned throughout that process
- Organizations willing to set ambitious climate targets, and looking for guidance & inspiration
- Organizations that have committed to set SBTs but are still in the process of defining them

On April 15, 2020, the Science Based Targets initiative launched a special, streamlined target validation route for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs are non-subsiary, independent companies which employ fewer than 500 employees). More details on the SME route can be found here:

<https://sciencebasedtargets.org/faqs-for-smes/>

- **My organization is not a for-profit company. Can I join?**

The Alliance welcomes all organizations, regardless of size or sector. This includes not only for-profit companies, but also other types of organizations such as academic institutions, associations, ngo's... We have decided to not include cities and municipalities as these are better served by the Covenant of mayors initiative (<https://www.covenantofmayors.eu/en/>).