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For questions related to the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi), please refer to <https://sciencebasedtargets.org/faq/>

Science-based targets = SBTs
Belgian Alliance for Climate Action = BACA

Joining BACA

What is the Belgian Alliance for Climate Action?

The Belgian Alliance for Climate Action (BACA) brings together more than 100 Belgian organizations with genuine climate ambitions. Uniting forces from the corporate, academic, and non-profit sector, we actively build a community of climate frontrunners. Together we believe that now is the time to walk the talk and work towards a carbon neutral society.

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.

More information on The Shift membership fees can be found here:
<https://www.theshift.be/s/join-us>

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.

I did not set or submit SBTs yet: Why should I join the Alliance?

BACA allows you to:

- Learn more about SBTs 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
-

I already have set, submitted and/or approved SBTs: Why should I join the Alliance?

BACA allows you to:

- showcase your current initiatives and the rationale behind the decision to set SBTs

- incentivize your suppliers, business partners and customers to address their emissions through a neutral platform
 - share knowledge and learn from other member organizations
-

I am an SME 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?

BACA welcomes all companies, regardless of size or sector, or their status with regards to SBTi:

- Organizations that have already set SBTs 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-subsidiary, independent companies which employ fewer than 500 employees). More details on the SME route can be found here: [FAQs-for-SMEs.pdf \(sciencebasedtargets.org\)](#)

Within BACA, we designed a collection of resources for SMEs that are committed to act on climate change. They can be found on our website: [Climate toolkit for SMEs | Belgian Alliance for Climate Action](#)

My organization is not a company. Can I join?

The SBTi currently only assesses targets for **large companies and small and medium-sized companies**. This means that only companies can have validated SBTs.

For **academia and non-profit organizations** there is no specific guidance on science-based target setting to date, nor is there a streamlined route for target validation. Academia and non-profit organizations are expected to develop science-based reduction targets using the SBTi methodology (scope 1, 2 and 3) and validate them through a peer validation process with a selection of fellow BACA members. More information about the peer review process can be found in the *BACA Membership Protocol*.

For **cities, local governments and public sector institutions**, no validation procedure is currently in place and so we cannot assure follow-up of any target setting commitments. This is why we will not encourage these organization types to join BACA¹. However, we do encourage them to consider SBT setting methods detailed in the *SBTi Corporate Manual* (<https://sciencebasedtargets.org/resources/files/SBTi-Corporate-Manual.pdf>). Cities and municipalities can also find support via the *Covenant of Mayors* initiative

(<https://www.covenantofmayors.eu/en/>) and on the website of the [Science Based Targets Network](#).

Which profile of my organization is best positioned to take part in BACA activities?

Ideally this would be your CSR lead (i.e. the person responsible for corporate social responsibilities, sustainability, environmental matters etc.) – but you can always involve/include other relevant people from your organization, depending on the sessions' subject (e.g. public affairs, communication and PR managers).

What is the workload involved in defining science-based targets (SBTs)?

Depending on your organization type, you can take 1 to 3 years to define and validate climate targets following the SBT methodology.

We do intend on making all workload involved worthwhile. Not only will you learn more about how to develop a business case around setting science-based-targets; you will also be able to exchange with a dynamic and ambitious BACA community while attending our events.

Have a look at the *BACA Membership Protocol* to know more about what the SBT-trajectory might look like for your organization.

The process of setting science-based targets

What kind of emissions are taken into consideration when setting science-based targets?

When developing science-based emission reduction targets, [three types of emissions](#) are taken into consideration:

- Scope 1 emissions are those the organization emits directly, the ones it owns. These may come from infrastructure or company vehicles, for example.
- Scope 2 emissions are those linked to the consumption of energy needed to produce the organization's product or deliver its service.
- Scope 3 emissions refers to the organization's indirect emissions, those emitted throughout the supply chain. Dealing with scope 3 emissions therefore requires a joint effort, together with suppliers and consumers, who must also set up measures

to reduce their own scope 1 and 2 emissions. For most organizations, scope 3 represents more than 90% of their total emissions.

The target setting methodology is different depending on the size of your organization.

- Large organizations (>500 employees) must set targets covering (at least a part) of the three emission scopes.
- Smaller organizations (<500 employees) must set targets covering scope 1 & 2 and are encouraged to include Scope 3, to the extent possible.

For more information about the development of Scope 3 targets, make sure to consult SBTi's '[Best Practices in Scope 3 Greenhouse Gas Management](#)', [the GHG Protocol's Scope 3 Standard](#) & [Technical calculation guidance](#).

Are there different emission reduction target types and how do they work?

The [Science Based Targets initiative](#) offers companies the option to either set near-term science-based targets or targets following the 'Net-Zero Standard'.

- Near-term targets must cover a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 10 years from the date the target is submitted to the SBTi for official validation.
- Targets that cover more than 10 years from the date of submission are considered long-term targets or net-zero targets.

Companies that want to take their action radius to a next level by choosing to align with the Net-Zero Standard must first set near-term science-based targets. The next step is to set a long-term science-based target to reduce emissions by at least 90% by no later than 2050, using the SBTi Net-Zero standard.

Do different sectors apply different setting methodologies?

Yes. In an effort to acknowledge the differences between business areas, sector-specific guidances are being developed by SBTi. A good starting point to figure out which type of guidance is best suited for your company, have a look at the [SBT How-To Guide](#).

Who validates the climate targets?

Depending on the organization type and sector as well as on the target type (near-term or net-zero), you can submit your targets for validation:

1. via the Science Based Targets initiative (for companies)

The actual validation process is performed by a team of technical experts. They will validate your targets against their science-based criteria and communicate their decision with in-depth feedback (including one-on-one calls). Each target assessment requires that a technical expert familiarizes him/herself with a company's inventory and activities to meticulously validate the submitted target against SBTi criteria. Each reviewer's technical recommendations are then cross-checked by other experts in the team for quality control. More information about the SBTi's validation protocol can be found [here](#).

2. through peer review within the BACA community (for NGOs and academic institutions)

More information about the peer review process can be found in the [BACA Membership Protocol](#).

For large companies (> 500 employees): My company is SBT committed or has validated SBTs at group level. 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 but does not yet have approved climate targets, you should ensure your organization sets and submits SBTs for validation by the SBTi within the timeframe of 24 months after having signed the SBTi commitment letter.

If your organization, either at local or at group level, has already set and submitted SBTs for validation, or has its climate targets approved, you should follow up with the progress and apply the required emission reduction measures to work towards these targets.

Do I need to commit to SBT as a group or can I start with one entity only?

For companies 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 no preference for that.

Do we always need a consultant to help us define targets?

Not necessarily. The SBTi and other partners provide free guidance documents, webinars and other resources to support science-based target setting (click [here](#) for an overview of the available tools). In addition, BACA's activities, events and online [available resources](#) will also help organizations throughout the process of setting science-based targets.

That said, it cannot be denied that developing these climate targets (especially for large organizations) requires a considerable effort and a data-driven approach, which is sometimes easier to go through with the support of a professional services partner. Yet, this depends on the wishes and capacity of each individual organization.

Is there a list of relevant “SBT consultants” in Belgium?

In case you are actively looking for a consultant to assist your organization in setting SBTs, please contact baca@theshift.be for a detailed mapping of the different providers active in this field on the local market.

What is the cost of committing to the SBTi and when is this due? Is it a one-off fee?

The cost of validating your science-based targets depends on your organization as well as your target type (near-term or net-zero).

- For large companies
 - o SBT commitment is free of charge.
 - o near-term science-based target validation costs USD 9,500 (+ applicable VAT), which includes an initial screening, review against SBTi criteria and in-depth feedback. This service also includes a second submission at no additional cost for validations that are not accepted and are re-submitted within six months.
 - o who choose to align with the Net-Zero Standard must first set near-term science-based targets. The next step is to set a long-term science-based target to reduce emissions by at least 90% by no later than 2050. Apart from the validation criteria applied, both services follow the same procedure. They can be performed separately at a cost of USD 9,500 each, or as a package against prices starting from USD 12,750.

- For SMEs (< 500 employees) there is no need to go through the standard target validation process (SMEs can immediately set SBTs by choosing from predefined options). Please note that a one-time target validation fee of USD 1,000 (+ applicable VAT) applies, regardless of target type.

More detailed pricing information can be found [here](#).

When will there be deep-dive sessions into my specific industry?

We understand every sector has its own specifics in terms of climate-related processes, technologies, challenges, and opportunities. Therefore, we believe it can be very useful and enriching to connect with competitors/colleagues on these matters. That’s why BACA is organizing sector-specific round tables to facilitate these ecosystem discussions. You can always reach out to baca@theshift.be to propose a specific industry prioritization, or to check whether it’s already on our radar. Alternatively, keep a close eye to our [events page](#).

Our expectations

What if after joining the Alliance I decide not to define SBTs?

If your organization does not (yet) wish to continue using the SBT methodology after joining BACA, you are free to leave BACA. We will not make any public announcement or statement about this.

If your company is mentioned on the SBTi website , the [SBTi way of working](#) applies. More info about non-compliance can be found in the [BACA Membership Protocol](#).

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

We will get in touch well before the end of each stage of your target setting trajectory, to remind you of your commitment and follow up on your progress.

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. We do however believe that it is in the interest of your organization to assess the risks and opportunities of climate changes for your organization and act upon it in the short term.

More info about our follow-up provisions can be found in the [BACA Membership Protocol](#).

What about offsetting carbon emissions?

The SBTi requires that companies set targets based on emission reductions through direct action within their own boundaries or their value chains. Offsets are therefore not considered as part of your science-based target strategy. Avoided emissions are also not counted towards SBTs. More info [here](#).

The long-term [SBTi Net-Zero standard states that](#) companies must reduce emissions by >90% before neutralizing the final <10% of emissions with permanent removals. This position is in line with the United Nations' High Level Expert Group on Net-Zero.
