

# Fossil to Clean FAQs

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## Questions:

1. [Why is this the right moment for this campaign and action to go from Fossil to Clean?](#)
2. [What is the campaign's vision? Why the focus on government and business?](#)
3. [What did the campaign achieve in 2023?](#)
4. [What about now? We are in a critical window of influence in 2024, to ensure the UAE Consensus in reflected in the next NDCs update in 2025. What is the campaign about in 2024-25?](#)
5. [What does it mean to phase out fossil fuels? Is this not already covered by business' science-based targets?](#)
6. [How can my company get involved in the Fossil to Clean campaign in 2024-25?](#)
7. [My company is unable to sign the letter for \[XYZ reason\]. Can we still support and get involved with the campaign?](#)
8. [What is the value-add for business aligning with the Fossil to Clean principles?](#)
9. [What is your stance on developing countries continuing to produce and consume oil and gas?](#)
10. [How does the campaign define abated / unabated fossil fuels?](#)

Should you have any further questions, please reach out to We Mean Business Coalition at [FFPO@wmbcoalition.org](mailto:FFPO@wmbcoalition.org)

## 1. Why is this the right moment for this campaign and action to go from Fossil to Clean?

**We have seen exponential growth of clean energy solutions, yet emissions continue to rise. This is because we have not dealt with the primary cause of climate change: the burning of fossil fuels.**

If we are to realize the transition to a just, clean, and green economy, we need to put a hard spotlight on phasing fossil fuels out down whilst rapidly phasing in clean solutions.

We are in a unique moment where action is feasible and critical:

- **In 2023**, 80+ nations supported India's call at COP27 to phase out all fossil fuels, and G7 endorsed an accelerated phase-out of unabated fossil fuels
- **In 2024**, through Fossil to Clean, WMBC and its partners mobilized 200+ companies with an annual revenue of over US\$1.5trillion ahead of COP28 to publicly call for a phase out of unabated fossil fuels, tripling of renewable energy capacity and doubling the rate of deployment of energy efficiency. Their voices were heard loud and clear by negotiators and made a difference to the final outcomes
- **By the end of 2024**, the UAE Consensus was agreed, marking the first time we have seen a global agreement to transition away from fossil fuels in line with climate science. It is not perfect, but it is a historic step forward.

For the UAE Consensus to have impact in the real economy, countries need to translate the UAE Consensus outcomes (including on transitioning away from fossil fuels, doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements and tripling renewable energy capacity) into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) due in 2025.

NDCs are climate action plans where countries set targets for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate impacts. Each Party to the Paris Agreement is required to establish an NDC and update it every five years, with the expectation that each update is more ambitious than the last.

**We are in a critical window to influence:** the next update is due in 2025 (pre-COP30 in Brazil), the last opportunity before 2030 when we need to have halved global emissions to stay on track with 1.5°C.

**Later is too late – we need political leadership now. Business has a critical role in sending a clear market signal to phase out fossil fuels that will lead energy suppliers, finance and investment, and government to accelerate the provision of affordable, reliable, and safe alternatives. It is our responsibility to leave behind a world that is safe and liveable for future generations.**

## 2. What is the campaign's vision? Why the focus on government and business?

**Our vision for the campaign is that by 2030, fossil fuel consumption has peaked and declined, and the transition away from fossil fuels to clean solutions continues to accelerate – thereby providing a credible foundation for a well-managed and just transition towards a net-zero future in line with 1.5°C** This would look like this for the following stakeholders:

- **Governments** have implemented policies and regulations that incentivise the phase-out of fossil fuels and phase-in of clean solutions, while protecting people and economies throughout the transition
- **Businesses** are phasing out fossil fuels across their operations and actively advocating for more progressive policies, sending a clear signal to their value chain to phase-out fossil fuels and scale clean solutions faster

All stakeholders have an important part to play, but tackling the environmental, economic, and social impact of phasing out fossil fuels and scaling clean solutions requires a significant transformation across all sectors. This

will not be possible with clear political leadership from **governments** globally and nationally, and with clear, robust policies and regulations to drive the sustainability transition.

Similarly, **business** – i.e. demand, is **the** critical level to jumpstart action across all other stakeholders on fossil fuel. Business has a vital role in taking action on climate change and sending a strong market signal from business to government in support of ambition climate policy. Governments can utilise this strong vote of confidence and advance ambitious policy to provide companies the clarity and confidence to unlock further investment in climate solutions.

**This is the ambition loop in action – a positive feedback loop in which bold government policies and private sector leadership reinforce each other, and together take climate action to the next level.**

**The Fossil to Clean campaign seeks to enable this ambition loop by supporting business to advocate and take action to phase out fossil fuels and scale clean solutions, whilst also working with governments to demonstrate strong political leadership and enact progressive policies to accelerate the transition from Fossil to Clean.**

### 3. What did the campaign achieve in 2023?

**We Mean Business Coalition and a network of partners mobilized 200+ companies with an annual revenue of >\$1.5 trillion ahead of COP28 to advocate for fossil fuel phase-out and the scale up of clean energy.**

- At COP27, in 2022, 80+ nations supported India's call to phase out all fossil fuels. We Mean Business Coalition saw that conditions were aligning for historical policy and investment shifts, and that there was a unique opportunity to reach international agreement on fossil fuel phase out at COP28.
- In response to this and a lack of leadership on this crucial issue, We Mean Business Coalition, with support from our partners, developed Fossil to Clean as a science-based, multi-year global campaign.
- We identified the G7 as the first critical milestone that would set the political tone for the year's climate negotiations. The G7 provided early seeding of Fossil to Clean narratives, policy asks, ideas and business engagement. The outcome was strong - the G7 endorsed an accelerated phase out of fossil fuels.
- At New York Climate Week, We Mean Business officially launched the campaign, releasing the Principles for Global Fossil Fuel Phase-Out
- In the run up to COP28, we launched an advocacy letter from business to Heads of State that urged governments to set clear targets and timelines for the phase out of fossil fuels and put in place the policies that would allow clean energy to accelerate. This corporate call for action was heard loud and clear by negotiators and made a difference in the final outcome.
- Over 1.34k articles, with a potential news reach of over 2bn readers across 70 countries and 6 continents, was written about Fossil to Clean, connecting those 200+ businesses' action to the success of the campaign.

**At COP28, We Mean Business Coalition and the campaign elevated the business voice via:**

- Presenting Fossil to Clean to the UN Secretary General, UNFCCC Secretary General, COP President, IEA Executive Director
- Bringing the business voice directly to governments via policymakers' meetings
- Multi-stakeholder ad in the Financial Times at the start of COP bringing together the voice of business with scientists, cities and health professionals to call on government to drive a rapid, just and equitable fossil fuel phase-out
- Compelling video content targeted to policymakers on social media
- Providing policy and messaging updates to business and wider partners throughout COP
- Hosting the Business Pavilion with Fossil to Clean specific events
- Promoting social media assets from business leaders, from CEO/C-Suite quote cards, videos, etc.
- Media relations, with articles/videos from the likes of Financial Times, Reuters, Forbes, etc.

Feedback indicated that the campaign had credibility in policymakers and media engagements because of the Fossil to Clean Principles for Global Fossil Fuel Phase-Out, which underpins the campaign, policy asks and outlines what is required of each key stakeholder and by when.

- This was developed by We Mean Business Coalition with advice from leading experts such as ETC and SBTi, and based on the recommendations of the UN High-Level Expert Group on Net Zero

Fossil to Clean has been recognised for its efforts by being [shortlisted as a finalist](#) for the Purpose Awards (EMEA Region) Best Environmental Cause Campaign from a Charity/NGO.

**This is a reflection of the climate leadership shown by the 200+ business and partners who are advocating for and going from Fossil to Clean. We hope many others will join us in 2024; we need to collectively advocate for and take action to end our dependency on fossil fuel.**

#### 4. What about now? We are in a critical window of influence in 2024, to ensure the UAE Consensus is reflected in the next NDCs update in 2025.

What is the campaign about in 2024-25?

Fossil to Clean has two strategic priority areas that the campaign is specifically interested in seeing change in by 2025:

1. In their 2025 updated NDCs (with 2035) timeframes, countries include specific targets and timelines for phasing out fossil fuels, aligned with 1.5°C pathways and at a minimum as ambitious as what is outlined in the Fossil to Clean Principles
2. Business frontrunners for each key sector are leading the way in phasing out fossil fuels and are vocal in advocating for more progressive policies

**We intend to influence and help work towards this change by:**

- Utilising international moments, such as G7, G20, Bonn Intersessional and COP29 to further the Fossil to Clean messaging with key policymakers and influencers
- Engaging governments and business on what a high quality Nationally Determined Contribution plan is, and what are the key elements to enable company action and investment
- With our national partners, advocating for domestic policies and regulations that will trigger a breakthrough in certain sectors and geographies, unlocking business opportunities in a more immediate timeframe
- Supporting businesses in each sector to take immediate and near-term steps to phase out fossil fuels and scale up clean solutions

**We will do this by:**

- Harnessing partnerships and collaborations
- Mobilising business on international and domestic advocacy
- Amplifying business voices to change the dominant narrative
- Defining and showcasing business leadership
- Supporting business ambition and action through our grants programme

#### 5. What does it mean to phase out fossil fuels?

Is this not already covered by business' science-based targets?

Underpinning the campaign are the [Fossil to Clean Principles for Global Fossil Fuel Phase-Out](#), developed by We Mean Business Coalition with advice from leading experts such as ETC and SBTi, and based on the recommendations of the UN High-Level Expert Group on Net Zero.

- The principles provide clear guidance and timelines for phasing up clean solutions and phasing fossil fuels down and out for key stakeholder groups: business, investors, energy producers and governments.
- These have been designed to inform the transition plans and strategies of fossil fuel producers, consumers, and finance—and the policy choices made by governments.
- They are an essential ambition-setting tool and alignment with the principles will send a strong market signal to ensure we can rapidly decarbonize the global energy system by the 2040s. Companies are encouraged to take action in line with the principles.

**Over 13,000 organisations have set a science-based target and/or joined the Race to Zero, but few have explicitly set a target for fossil fuel phase out.**

- Despite the myriad resources for companies to take climate action, clear guidance – which is rooted in science – on how and when fossil fuels need to be phased out is largely missing
- The Fossil to Clean Principles address this gap in guidance, and helps translate business’ climate action in an explicit, robust demand signal to go from fossil to clean – the critical missing piece to date

**Without an explicit demand signal on fossil fuel phase-out, there remains hesitation and hedging on the longevity of fossil fuels.**

- Companies are encouraged to take action in line with the principles and incorporate the timelines within their transition plans; having a clear date for fossil fuel phase out in their operations and supporting their value chain to do similar will provide an explicit market signal to governments, energy providers and finance to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels and towards clean solutions
- An explicit demand signal will undercut one of the strongest arguments provided by fossil fuel producers for the continued production of oil and gas: that the demand is there and that without new exploration and production, the supply-demand imbalance will cause significant and damaging volatility.
- It also gives certainty to the market on the need and timescales to invest in clean solutions and provides governments the confidence to put in place the enabling policies to help companies transition at speed and scale.

***Please note: the principles are a complementary guidance to setting a net zero carbon target and developing a decarbonization pathway; it does not replace the need for business to set credible net zero commitments.***

## 6. How can my company get involved in the Fossil to Clean campaign in 2024-25?

There are four main ways a company can get involved with the Fossil to Clean campaign in 2024-25:

1. Sign the Fossil to Clean policy letter
2. Engage in one of the 2024-25 workstream opportunities
3. Provide communication support
4. Take action in line with the Fossil to Clean principles

Further details are provided below – for any further queries relating to these opportunities, please email [FFPO@wmbcoalition.org](mailto:FFPO@wmbcoalition.org)

## 1. Sign the Fossil to Clean policy letter

This is an open business to government letter which the campaign will use over 2024-25 to:

1. Signal to the global energy system the growing demand signal for the phase-out of fossil fuels
2. Mobilise business and partners to speak out with one loud, unified voice on fossil fuel phase-out

**Business can [sign the letter here](#), and signatories are accepted on a rolling basis.** All businesses who sign the Fossil to Clean letter will automatically be part of our exclusive signatories' network and email list – this provides signatories first sight of campaign updates and opportunities to get more involved.

Opportunities may include:

- **Advocacy** – e.g. engaging directly with policymakers via WMBC-hosted meetings or events
- **Communications** – e.g. being a spokesperson for the campaign in media interviews and events
- **Networking** – e.g. networking opportunities with like-minded peers at WMBC-hosted events. This previously included the WMBC-hosted Business Pavilion at COP29.
- **Taking Action / Best practice** – e.g. showcase best practice case studies, or take part in signatories-only roundtables to share opportunities / challenges, or develop best-practice guidance under Chatham House rules

## 2. Engage in our delivery plans for 2024/25

Business can engage in our delivery plans for 2024/25 through multiple routes, such as:

- Help to amplify policy asks among G7 / G20 countries ahead of key moments by engaging in our advocacy campaigns that demonstrate business support for the policies required in the fossil to clean transition [see below for communications opportunities]
- Use our messaging, advocacy tools and guidance to inform your own communications [shared with signatories and supportive business]
- Help us understand how you are approaching NDCs and how specific signals may inform your own business and investment decisions
- Share with us the key domestic policies/regulations (national or sub-national) your company is either watching or actively engaged on, and in what markets
- Share any economic, social, or environmental analysis related to these regulations that can be used to educate policymakers on impact and strengthen the advocacy narrative
- Collaborate with us to create business case studies that highlight how your company is taking action in alignment with the Fossil to Clean principles
- Share your company's announcements of Fossil to Clean-aligned action and investment with WMBC to help signal evidence of momentum

This is not an exhaustive list; we will be circulating specific opportunities as and when available with our signatories' network, and where appropriate, with our wider Fossil to Clean newsletter community. If you would like to talk about opportunities to engage in further detail, please contact [FFPO@wmbcoalition.org](mailto:FFPO@wmbcoalition.org)

## 3. Provide communications support

Business can support the campaign on a rolling basis via one/more of these communication tactics:

- **Provide a CEO/C-suite-level supportive quote\*** – this may be used in social media graphic, on website and shared with journalists
- **Use Fossil to Clean content and messaging** in your communications and across channels (social media, newsletter, website, in-store, internal comms)
- **Participate in a business leader video\*** – a short video statement for social media with targeting to policy audiences and other businesses
- **Collaborate on a thought leadership article\*** – co-create compelling content to pitch to media
- **Be a spokesperson\*** – for media interviews and events

*\*These opportunities are limited to letter signatories only.*

#### 4. Take action in line with the Fossil to Clean principles

Business can take action in line with the Fossil to Clean principles and begin to incorporate the associated timelines and targets within their own climate plans or transition plans. This will be a longer-term action, but we encourage all business to start now. This will be complemented by the sector-specific checklists of actions that once established, will support business to take steps in the next 2-5 years to transition away from fossil fuels and scale clean energy, and transition their operations and value chain to a future in line with 1.5°C.

The We Mean Business Coalition and its wide network of partners offer a wealth of initiatives, resources and support for companies looking to decarbonise their business and supplier operations:

<https://www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/business/>

#### 7. My company is unable to sign the letter for [XYZ reason]. Can we still support and get involved with the campaign?

**Yes, you can.**

We encourage all businesses to sign the Policy Letter where possible, as this is a critical, overarching advocacy tool which will be used to clearly demonstrate to governments, finance, fossil fuel producers, etc. the growing and strong market demand for fossil fuel phase out. It sends a message that business are taking action to phase out fossil fuels and phase in the deployment of clean solutions, but that business can go even further with strong political leadership and clarifies the policy asks that would enable and accelerate this transition from fossil to clean.

However, engagement with the campaign is not contingent on signing the advocacy letter – there are other routes in which a company can show support, and get involved, including (but not limited to): providing business case studies, sharing key barriers to progress in their sectors, and advocating for the campaign and policy asks via their own communication channels (to the extent that is possible).

Reach out to the Fossil to Clean team at [FFPO@wmbcoalition.org](mailto:FFPO@wmbcoalition.org) if you would like to discuss this further.

#### 8. What is the value-add for business joining the Fossil to Clean campaign?

**Business joining the movement to go beyond fossil fuels and set a clear end date for their use will shape the markets of tomorrow, and the transition to net zero emissions economies.**



Those that are aligning their strategies, products, services, and supply chains to 1.5°C-aligned pathways are winning customer loyalty, new market share, price premiums, lower cost access to capital and engaged employees.

Wider co-benefits of climate action include cleaner air / reduced pollutions, creation of green jobs, improved public health, biodiversity protection, health and wellbeing, etc.

## 9. What is your stance on developing countries continuing to produce and consume oil and gas?

**Each country needs to develop a credible roadmap and policies for scaling renewable energy, electrification and energy efficiency and phasing out all fossil fuels.**

- *Developed countries* should be first movers and phase out fossil fuels faster while providing support to developing countries to ensure their fair and fast transition to 1.5°C-aligned policies and investment

**In many developing countries, the energy story is less about transition and more about economic development.**

- Some developing countries are currently heavily dependent on the fossil fuel industry for tax revenues and employment
- Both due to climate change imperatives and the resulting demand uncertainty, governments of those countries must seek to balance the opportunity of developing fossil fuels against the longer-term risk of stranded assets or low return assets.
- The plans and policies put in place should look to diversify their economies, alongside economic and employment policies for a just transition

**However, as these countries often lack the fiscal space to do so at the speed required, they should receive financial support from developed countries.**

## 10. How does the campaign define abated / unabated fossil fuels?

When talking about abated fossil fuel use, we follow the definition laid out by the IPCC: “*interventions used in conjuncture with fossil fuels that substantially reduce the amount of GHG emitted throughout the life cycle, for example capture rates of CO<sub>2</sub> must be well over 90% from power plants or 50-80% of fugitive methane emissions from energy supply.*”

Storage must be on a geological timescale.