



Skills
Development
Scotland



**Climate Change
Strategy 2020-2030**

December 2020

Foreword

We are proud to present Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) Climate Change Strategy 2020-30.

As the effects of climate change become increasingly evident in the world around us, it is proving to be one of the defining issues of our age. It has moved up the agenda politically, socially, culturally and economically, with green recovery and the transition to a net-zero economy being a central theme in the Programme for Government.

It is not just the natural environment that is rapidly changing. The way we live, work and travel have been impacted by the disruption of Industry 4.0, the Covid-19 pandemic and political challenges such as the UK's exit from the European Union.

Prior to the global health crisis caused by the pandemic, Scotland had set out its ambition to become one of the most productive, inclusive and sustainable economies in the world. We outlined in our Strategic Plan 2019-22 the importance of resilience in responding to the political, economic, demographic and technological changes we face in the world today.

The rate of change demands a dramatically reshaped skills and employment landscape. As Scotland's national skills agency, we must help our country overcome these global challenges by equipping our people and businesses with the skills to seize opportunities and achieve their full potential.

The Scottish Government first committed to reducing national greenhouse gas emissions through the introduction of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. In 2019, Scotland became the first country to declare a climate emergency and subsequently amended

its national climate change target to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.

At SDS, we recognise the leading role we must play to help achieve this ambition. We have achieved significant progress since the publication of our first Carbon Management Plan in 2012. In the ten years between 2010-2020 we recorded a 55% reduction in our carbon footprint, by introducing measures such as investment in energy efficient technology and behaviour change initiatives.

Through the commitment of our people and engagement with our partners at a local, regional and national level we have already made great strides. However, there is much more we can do to maximise our contribution to Scotland's climate change ambitions.

Our thanks go to our colleagues and stakeholders who dedicated significant time, thought and effort into the development of this Strategy, which sets out at high level, how we will contribute to Scotland's national net-zero target across three key business areas:

- Service delivery
- Our engagement with stakeholders and partners
- Our organisation and people

Our aim by 2030 is to be a lead contributor to a low carbon, inclusive and sustainable economy in Scotland, and on track to becoming a net-zero organisation.

We have the opportunity to design an even better future for Scotland and its people. With this ambition in mind, we will work to meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations.

Frank Mitchell, Chair

Damien Yeates, Chief Executive Officer

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1. Introduction

About Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is the national skills agency in Scotland. Our purpose is to drive productivity and inclusive growth through investment in skills, enabling businesses and people to achieve their full potential. We engage with partners at national, regional and local levels, flexing and shaping our delivery to meet local needs and priorities, while informed by the knowledge of effective practice from across the country and beyond.

We work to help create a Scotland in which:

- All people in Scotland have the skills, information and opportunities to succeed in the labour market
- Scotland's businesses drive productivity and inclusive growth
- The learning and skills system is dynamic and responsive
- SDS leads by example and continuously improves to achieve excellence.

Further details on SDS's strategic approach and operational activities can be found in our [Strategic Plan](#). This ten-year Climate Change Strategy sets out in greater detail the environmental ambition of that plan and details our contribution towards Scotland's 2045 climate change ambitions.

¹ IPCC, Special Report: [Global Warming of 1.5°C](#), 2018.

² Met Office, [State of the UK Climate](#), 2019.

³ Scottish Government, [Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-24](#), 2019.

⁴ Fourth National Climate Assessment, [Reducing Risks Through Mitigation](#), 2018.

⁵ Nature Journals, [Large potential reduction in economic damages under UN mitigation targets](#), 2018.

Climate Change and the Climate Emergency

Climate change is the long-term shift in global climate patterns, including extreme weather events and rising sea levels, linked directly with the warming of the Earth's atmosphere. The world faces a significant challenge to avoid potentially catastrophic environmental, economic and social consequences resulting from climate change. Climatologists agree that the dominant cause is greenhouse gas emissions, primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂) from human activity, causing an increase in average global temperature.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations (UN) body for assessing the science related to climate change, has estimated human activities have caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels. They believe global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate¹. Scientific data confirms that this warming is accelerating at an unprecedented rate. According to the Met Office², the ten warmest years recorded since 1884 have occurred since 2002, with the UK all-time high temperature record broken in 2019. In Scotland it has also been observed that climate change and extreme weather events will continue to impact our natural environment and society if we do not change course³.

In economic terms, it is estimated that unabated carbon emissions would lead to a global economic depression by 2050⁴ while a 2-3°C temperature increase could reduce global economic outputs by 15-25 per cent by 2100⁵. Scotland will not be immune to these effects. The impacts of climate change and its economic consequences will be felt across the country, albeit that they are likely to be unevenly distributed.

As a result of this, climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth are projected to increase with global warming. As with many other societal issues, poorer and more vulnerable parts of society are expected to be the most affected, therefore exacerbating socio-economic inequality.

The growing evidence of climate change and its impacts have led to global commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from nearly all nations. Today, 197 countries have ratified the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change which was established in 1994.

In 2015, further steps were taken at the COP21 UN climate change summit in Paris. A deal to take action to limit the rise in global temperatures to less than 2°C, and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5°C, was agreed, known as the Paris Agreement.

The United Nations Environment Programme warned that the global ‘emissions gap’ – the difference between current emissions and the level required to avoid catastrophic climate change – is widening and shows no sign of peaking in the next few years⁶.

Through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), countries pledge to reduce CO₂ emissions, consistent with national policy and capabilities, as part of global efforts to avoid the worst effects of the climate emergency. Further action is urgently required across all sectors, in particular transport, agriculture and land use, heat, energy transition, waste, and the built environment.

With a rise in environmental protests and warnings from the IPCC that urgent action is required to avert disaster, countries around the world began to declare a climate emergency. The use of the term emergency has affirmed the urgent nature of the issues we face due to climate change.

It is essential that targets to reduce emissions are fully embedded in national policy with action on multiple fronts. Addressing the climate emergency requires the combination of supportive policies and regulations, alongside technological innovation and behavioural changes from individuals, communities, industry, government and agencies.

Scotland’s Climate Change Ambitions

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 marked a step change in Scottish Government’s efforts to act on environmental concerns, setting formalised targets to reduce carbon emissions in Scotland. Ten years later, Scotland became the first nation to declare a climate emergency, setting a 2045 target date for achieving net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases.

Following this declaration and acting on advice from the UK Committee on Climate Change (UKCCC), the Scottish Government lodged a new Climate Change Bill, which legislated for the net-zero emissions target, through amendments to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The amendments also reflected the aims of the Paris Agreement.

The Scottish Government’s climate change ambitions are embedded and monitored through the sustainability and adaptation principles of the National Performance Framework (NPF) providing a clear framework for measuring progress achieved. Scotland’s NPF sets out an overall purpose and vision for Scotland, aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs seek to tackle poverty, climate change and create prosperity across the world, while the NPF measures Scotland’s progress against those goals at a national level.

Scotland’s greenhouse gas emissions have reduced by 47% compared to 1990, faster than any G20 economy since 2008.

This was primarily through decarbonisation of the power sector which accounted for 65% of the reductions achieved in the ten years up to 2018⁷.

Four fifths of Scotland's carbon footprint is caused by the consumption of goods, services and materials. Recognising the role that resource use has on climate change, the Scottish Government was among one of the first to set out a Circular Economy Strategy in 2016. This Strategy is based on the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems.

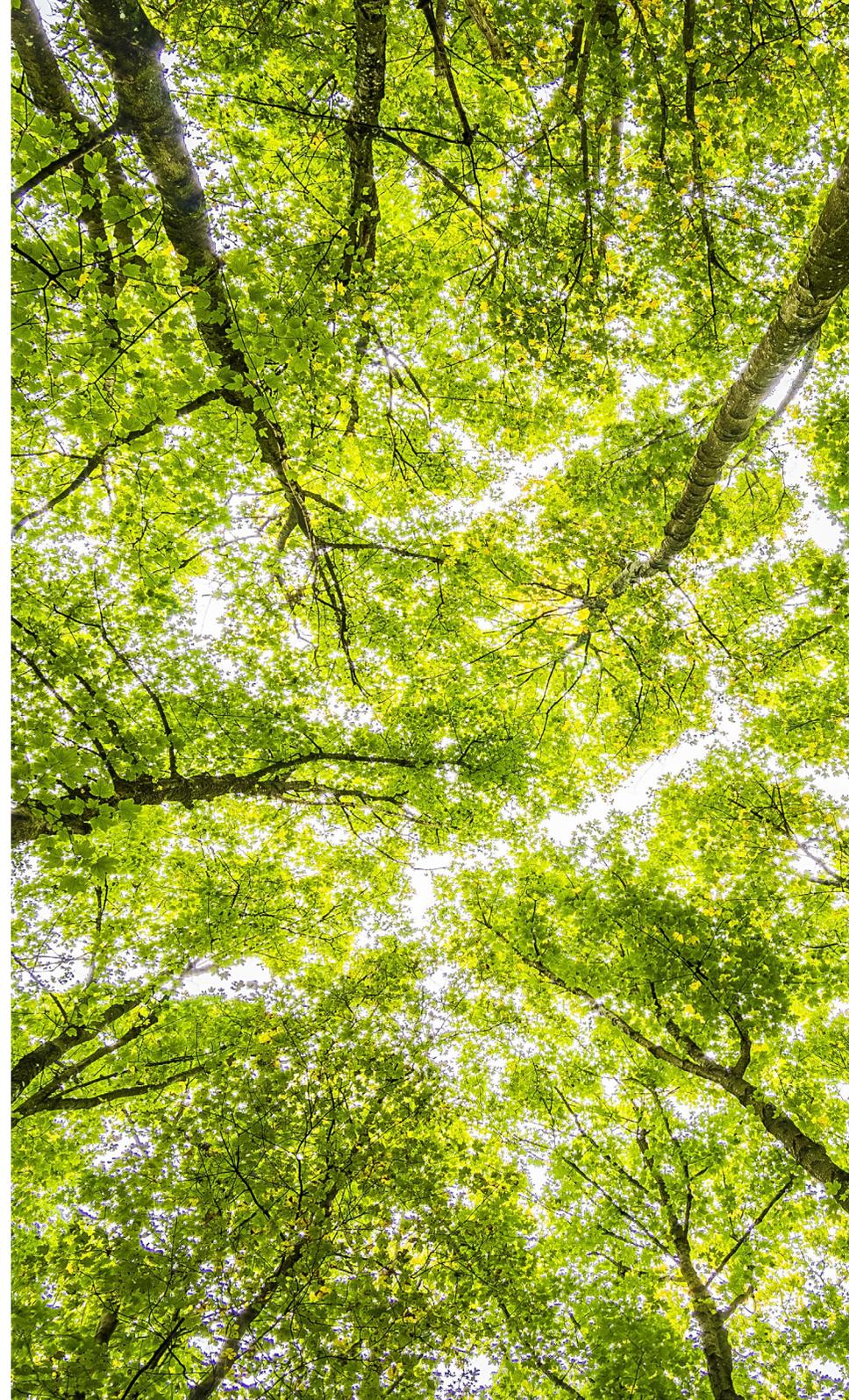
Moving to environmentally sustainable jobs, sectors and economies including the circular economy, will be a key element of achieving the net-zero target. The Just Transition Commission, established in 2018, exists to advise Scottish Ministers on how to plan, invest and implement⁸ this shift in the labour market in a way that also generates decent, fair and high value work. The Commission's recommendations have been reflected across key Scottish Government policy documents, including the Economic Recovery Implementation Plan.

Through its policies, Scottish Government has tasked the enterprise and skills agencies, including SDS, with driving green jobs, fair work and a sustainable and inclusive economy. In doing so, we will help to ensure that Scotland's transition to a net-zero emissions economy is of benefit to its environment, people and prosperity.

While Scotland has made good progress in reducing its emissions over the last decade, the success in fully transitioning to net-zero will be dependent on all of Scotland's industries and employers, including the public sector, increasing their own organisational focus and action on decarbonisation.

⁷ Committee on Climate Change, [Reducing emissions in Scotland Progress Report to Parliament](#), 2020.

⁸ [Just Transition Commission](#), Scottish Government.



Building a Green Recovery from the Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has significant social, political, and economic implications around the world. This new context for policymaking could have a lasting impact on the way we live, work and travel. The overall environmental impact is less clear. While some responses to the pandemic have encouraged individuals and businesses to adopt more climate-positive behaviours, such as reductions in printing and travel, other aspects, including the move to more remote working, will likely increase energy use.

Global emissions are expected to fall by a record 5-10%⁹ in 2020 as a result of the vast shutdown of economies necessary to fight the spread of the coronavirus. The fall in Scotland may be even larger. While this reduction is anticipated to be temporary, it has helped to form political consensus that a greener, more equal economy could emerge post-pandemic.

The potential reduction in emissions is set against substantial economic and societal costs. It is anticipated that the pandemic will result in unprecedented levels of unemployment and redundancies. Scotland entered into a recession in the first half of 2020 – with a fall in GDP of 21.4% between Q4 2019 and the end of Q2 2020.¹⁰ The Institute for Employment Studies estimated that around 650,000 people in the UK are facing the prospect of losing their jobs in the second half of 2020.¹¹ Young people are known to be particularly impacted by recessions. IPPR (2020) forecasts that youth unemployment could reach over 100,000 in Scotland, a higher level than during the 2008 financial crash.

⁹ Committee on Climate Change, *Reducing emissions in Scotland Progress Report to Parliament*, 2020.

¹⁰ Fraser of Allander, *Economic Commentary*, 2020.

¹¹ Institute for Employment Studies, *Estimating the impact on redundancies of the Covid-19 crisis*, 2020.

Achieving a green recovery will be equally dependent on economic stimulus and decarbonisation. An opportunity exists to restart the economy and create jobs by supporting net-zero and climate resilient employment. This approach will have profound effects on Scotland's labour market and skills needs, with increasing support required to grow the different types of 'green' jobs, identified as:

- **New and emerging jobs directly related to the transition to net-zero**, e.g. hydrogen cell technicians
- **Jobs affected by the transition to net-zero now requiring enhanced (both technical and non) skills or competencies**, e.g. architects
- **Existing jobs that will be needed in greater numbers**, e.g. loft insulators

Reflecting recommendations from the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery and the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board Sub-Group, the 2020 Programme for Government (PfG) includes measures designed to start this journey to a green recovery. It outlines a substantial package of policy measures related to a 'Green New Deal' to protect biodiversity, create green jobs and accelerate a just transition to net-zero. It includes:

- a £100 million Green Jobs Fund;
- a £25 million National Transition Training Fund with a focus on the 'provision of green skills';
- a Young Person's Guarantee for 16-24 year olds; and
- the use of public procurement to build low carbon supply chains.



These measures complement the Scottish Government's pre-existing commitment to a £62 million Energy Transition Fund. The Fund is designed to support businesses in the oil, gas and energy sectors over the next five years as they grow and diversify, with that investment focused on the North East.

While positive, these measures alone may not be sufficient to ensure Scotland's people are resilient to the impact of labour market shifts towards emerging green jobs and sectors. As new jobs are created which align with a net-zero economy, a more flexible skills system will be required which encourages lifelong learning, upskilling, and re-training for existing workers and new entrants to the labour market alike.

In December, Scottish Government will publish a Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan and a revised Climate Change Plan. These plans will set out how to maximise opportunities for people to gain the skills needed in a green economy, working with learning providers, including colleges and universities, business and industry, and trade unions to equip the population with the skills of the future.

A summary of the Scottish Government's policy commitments to 2045 is on the next page.



Route to 2045

Scottish Government policy commitments

- 2020** ▶ £500 million investment in active travel projects over five years, £500 million to improve bus priority infrastructure and £9 million Scottish low emission bus fund.
 - ▶ £62 million Energy Transition Fund and £34 million Scottish Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (SIETF) launched.
 - ▶ £1.6 billion Heat in Buildings fund announced, to be invested over the next Parliament.
- 2021** ▶ Legislation to restrict supply of specified single-use plastic items comes into force.
 - ▶ £70m fund to improve local authority recycling collection infrastructure established.
 - ▶ Energy Strategy Update published.
 - ▶ Hydrogen Action Plan published.
 - ▶ Low Carbon Manufacturing Challenge Fund launched.
- 2022** ▶ Updated Electricity Generation Policy Statement (or “Clean Power Plan”) reviewed and published.
 - ▶ Carbon Capture and Utilisation Challenge Fund initiated, concluding in 2024.
 - ▶ Implementation of Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for single-use drinks containers.
- 2023** ▶ Regional Land Use Frameworks developed.
 - ▶ Bioenergy Action Plan published.
 - ▶ Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies launched across all local authorities.
- 2024** ▶ 18,000 hectares of new woodlands created annually.
 - ▶ New Build Zero Emissions from Heat Standard.
- 2025** ▶ Food waste reduced by 33% from 2013 baseline and 70% of all waste recycled. Landfilling of biodegradable municipal waste has ended.
- 2030** ▶ 75% GHG emissions reduction target.
 - ▶ Need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans phased out and car mileage reduced by 20%.
 - ▶ All renewable energy in Scotland accounts for the equivalent of 50% of our energy demand across electricity, heat and transport.
 - ▶ At least 250,000 hectares of peatland restored.
 - ▶ At least 50% of Scotland’s building stock is heated using zero emission systems.
- 2035** ▶ Scotland’s passenger rail services fully decarbonised.
- 2040** ▶ 90% GHG emissions reduction target.
 - ▶ Eliminate emissions from heating and remove energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.
 - ▶ World first net-zero aviation region.
- 2045** ▶ **Net-zero emissions in Scotland.**



2. Our Journey to Net-Zero

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 mandates that public sector bodies, including SDS, must contribute to emissions reduction targets, support adaptation programmes and exercise their functions in a sustainable manner.

We have achieved significant progress since the publication of our first Carbon Management Plan in 2012, and submitted annual reports since 2015 to Scottish Ministers, detailing our compliance with the climate change duties and our greenhouse gas emissions. To date, we have focused on reducing our direct carbon footprint. In the ten years between 2010-20 we recorded a 55% reduction in our carbon footprint, through measures such as investment in energy efficient technology and behaviour change initiatives.

While we will continue to work on reducing our footprint, we will also embed environmental considerations across everything we do.

Our aim by 2030, is to be a lead contributor to a low carbon, inclusive and sustainable economy in Scotland, and on track to becoming a net-zero organisation.

This Strategy sets out how we will progress towards this over the next ten years to 2030, as a milestone towards the 2045 net-zero target for Scotland.

Defining what Net-Zero means for SDS

Using the Science Based Target Initiative's absolute-based approach, we have identified a need to reduce our carbon footprint by 67%¹² against our 2019/20 baseline by 2030 to be on track to achieve net-zero by 2045.

There is no hard definition of what emissions sources must be included in an organisation's net-zero emissions target, but direct emissions, known as Scope 1 emissions, as well as indirect emissions from electricity generation, known as Scope 2 emissions, are expected to be included as a minimum. SDS is also including some other indirect emissions, known as Scope 3 emissions. Figure 1 shows the emissions sources currently considered within the scope of our net-zero target.

Over the life of this Strategy, we will continue to expand our Scope 3 emissions accounting to take responsibility for measuring and reducing our indirect carbon footprint beyond the sources currently in scope of our net-zero emissions target. This will include our supply chain, commuting and energy from home working.

Achieving net-zero first requires focusing on reducing absolute emissions, but ultimately SDS will need to offset unavoidable emissions to become net-zero. Offsetting does not form part of our immediate action to deliver this Strategy, although this may be introduced over time.

¹² Scottish Government has set a 75% reduction target, based on a 1990 baseline.

Figure 1: SDS Emissions Currently Within Net-Zero Scope

Key

--- Net-Zero Target Boundary

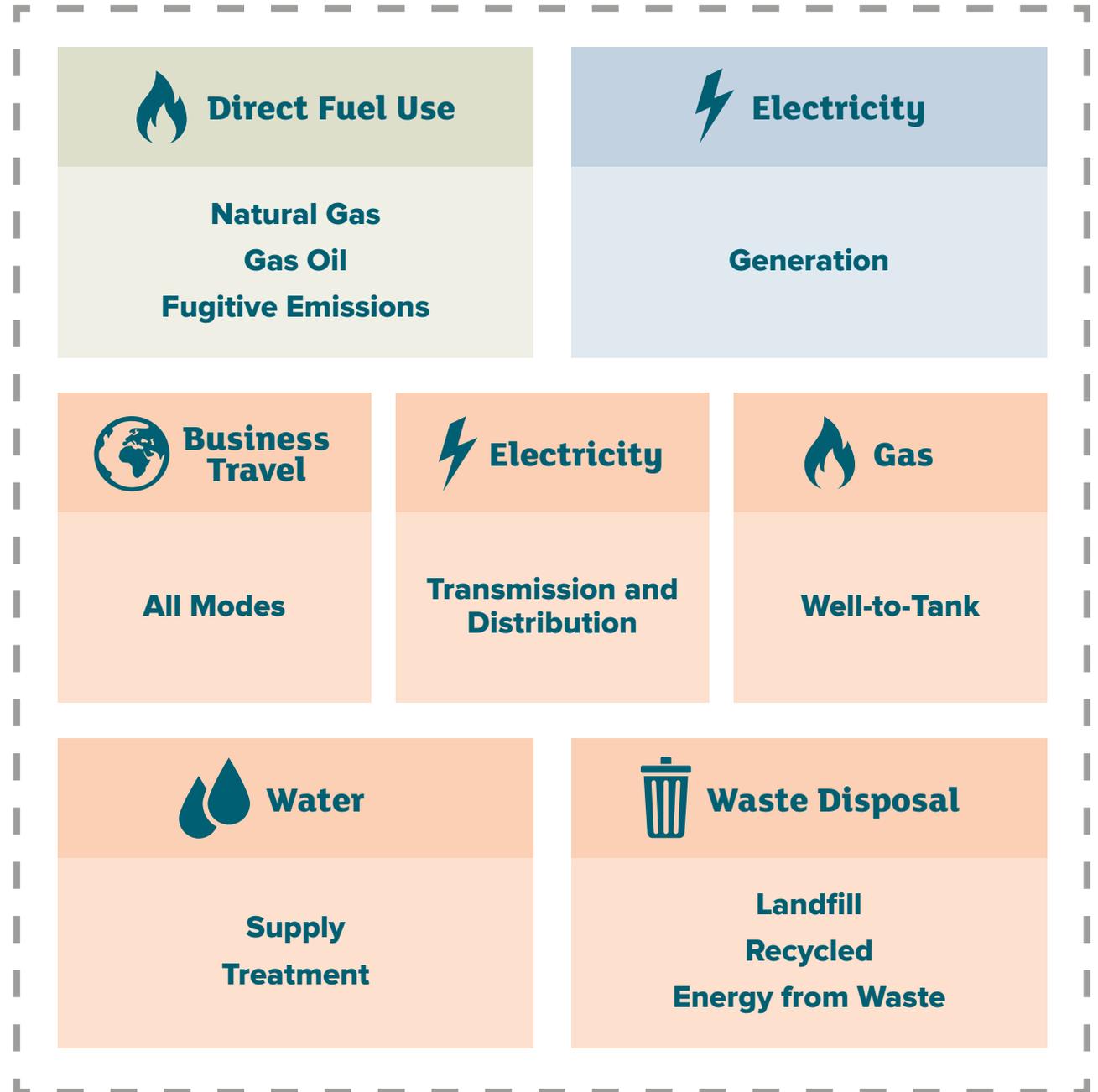
Scope 1

Scope 2

Scope 3

Out of Net-Zero Target Scope:

- Commute travel
- Supply chain
- Home working energy
- Hotel stays
- SDS events



Developing our Climate Change Strategy

We know that the challenges of climate change are complex, interconnected and cross-sectoral, and that tackling these challenges requires a strategically coordinated and collaborative approach.

Development of this, our first Climate Change Strategy for 2020-2030, has been an iterative and adaptive process. Over the past year, we have undertaken substantial colleague consultation to understand the ways in which SDS can maximise its contribution to Scotland's climate ambitions. This consultation identified that we can create positive influence in three key business areas:

- **Our service delivery** – through the services and products we deliver to our customers, including individuals and businesses
- **Our engagement with stakeholders and partners** – working collaboratively nationally, regionally and locally to ensure that the learning and skills system meets the needs of a low carbon economy
- **Our organisation and people** – leading the way internally to achieve excellence, effectively modelling the changes we want to see across the Scottish landscape

Our Strategy aims to identify and prioritise the actions which will make the greatest contribution to the environment, while being cautious not to negatively impact other priority concerns, such as equality and inclusivity. Ideas generated by colleagues, combined with our research, experience and understanding of government policy, helped us to identify four workstreams across which we aim to deliver our environmental ambitions. They are:

 **Supporting a green economy**

 **Digital capability**

 **Business processes**

 **Organisational culture**

The key business areas and workstreams are cross-cutting and interdependent.

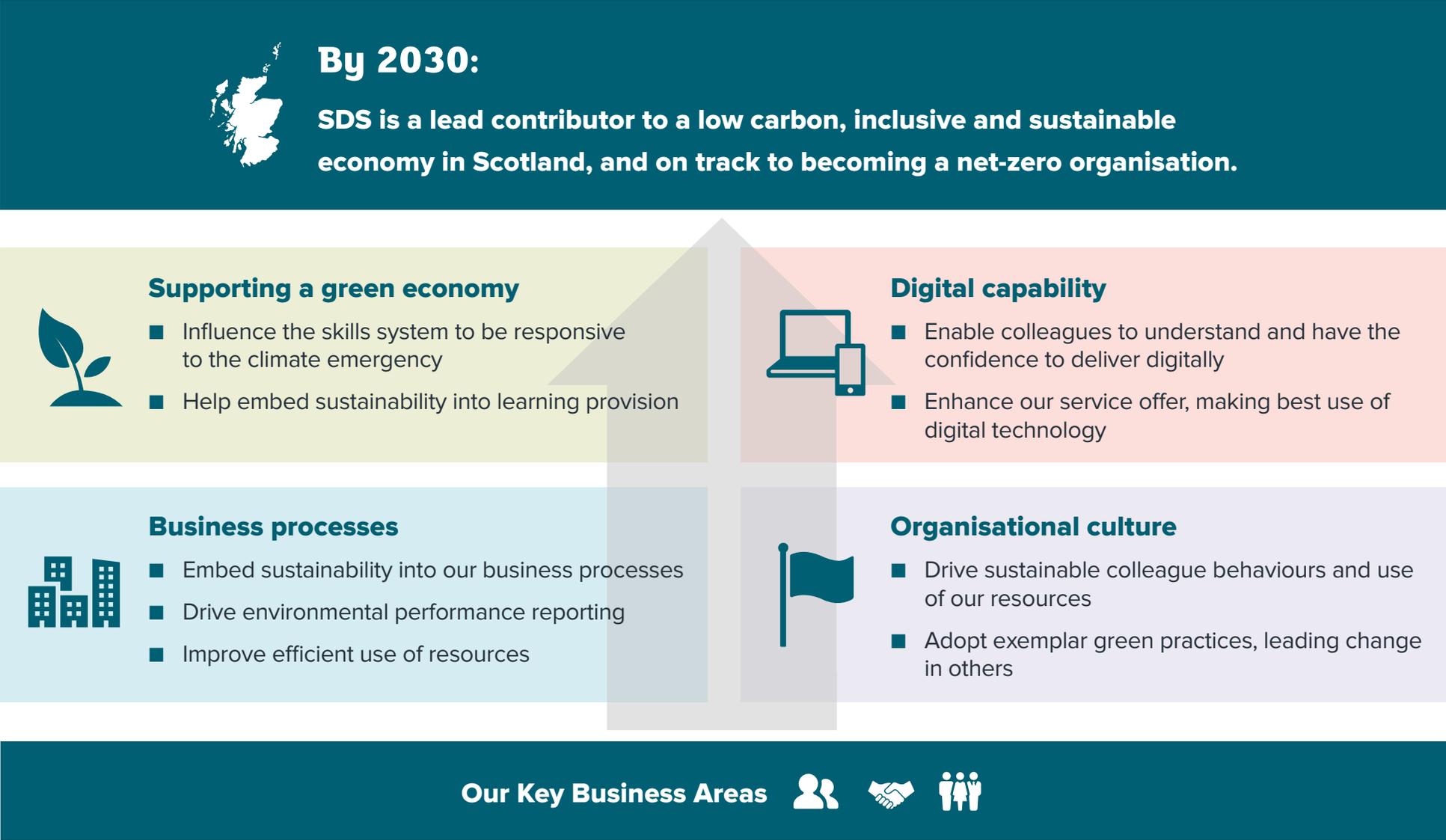
In the following section, we set out at a high level how we intend to deliver our contribution to Scotland's climate change ambitions over the next ten years. We detail each of our four workstreams in turn and, using the icons shown below, indicate which of our three key business areas are influenced by delivering each action.

 **Our service delivery**

 **Our engagement with stakeholders and partners**

 **Our organisation and people**

Figure 2: Our Climate Change Strategy Summary



3. Our 2020-30 Workstreams



Supporting a Green Economy

The Scottish Government is clear in its commitment to a net-zero target, while also recognising the risks and opportunities for economic development. The transition to a green economy will rely on Scotland's workforce developing new skills and knowledge, aiding their employers to decarbonise and accelerate progress towards net-zero.

The response to climate change will have implications for jobs at all skill levels and across all occupational groups. Core competencies for a wide range of jobs will need to be more directly relevant to meeting the needs of a low carbon, circular economy. For example, car mechanics will need to learn to work on electric vehicles, while accountants will need to learn carbon accounting. The learning system in Scotland will need to increasingly deliver these skills to address market and employer demand and ensure a just transition.

One in ten jobs in Scotland already relates to the circular economy¹³. While some new and emerging skills requirements, such as those in line with technical innovations, will be obvious, much of the skills impact will be less visible and rely on the adaptation of existing skillsets. With a majority of the 2045 workforce currently in employment, Scotland's primary challenge is to encourage and support employers and employees to upskill and retrain.

The climate emergency is a defining challenge. However, it is happening in parallel with the fourth industrial revolution, with employment and skills being dramatically reshaped by digitisation and automation. These disruptive forces create a strong incentive to build new collaborations between government, business, learning providers, trade unions and workforces to ensure the inevitable change is a positive force.

¹³ Zero Waste Scotland, [The Future of Work](#), 2019.

What SDS will do

Across our work, we will support Scotland's ambitions for a green economy.

— This will include, but is not limited to:

- Driving the creation of a strong and robust evidence base on the skills investment needed to secure a net-zero economy; including the implementation of Scotland's Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan.



- Ensuring our work-based learning programmes support employers and individuals to harness the skills needed in a low carbon, circular economy, by providing the associated training for young people, and opportunities for reskilling, upskilling and lifelong learning.



- Encouraging the effective development and embedding of career management, green and meta-skills across education and Scotland's workforce to support future labour market needs, as sectors and businesses decarbonise and accelerate progress towards net-zero.



- Integrating 'green' conditions into our contract management and commissioning processes for delivery partners, so that products and services are more sustainable.



- Ensuring that our all-age, impartial and independent career information, advice and guidance, equips learners and workers to understand and recognise opportunities that exist through Scotland's transition to a green economy, and make informed learning and career choices in response.



- Together with industry and employers, influence the curriculum of all learning and skills provision, ensuring it delivers the skills Scotland needs to achieve its climate ambitions.





Digital Capability

A continued shift in the use of digital technology by organisations will be required to meet Scotland's climate change ambitions and increase its economic resilience, while reducing emissions.

Digitisation continues to gather pace – leading to increasingly flexible workplaces. Digital connectivity facilitates remote working, reduces the need to travel, and can increase productivity. It also improves access to jobs in rural and remote communities which otherwise face the threat of workers leaving to find employment.

By enhancing their digital infrastructure and capability, organisations across Scotland are providing services while realising greater efficiencies, environmental improvements and enhanced capacity to adapt to potential climate risks. Upskilling and retraining the workforce in new digital skillsets will drive Scotland's journey towards digitisation and decarbonisation. Training will be fundamental to providing employees with the skills they need to maintain the effective operation of services.

Through improved digital capability and use of technology, organisations can provide their customers and stakeholders with better products and services, promoting accessible and inclusive engagement options.

Technology, Equality and Accessibility

In some cases, the use of digital technology can broaden the reach of our services, for example, allowing customers in remote and rural communities to receive services they couldn't otherwise access, or those in work to gain information and advice outside of our centre opening times. However, the diverse nature of our customer groups means there will always be circumstances where face-to-face, non-digital engagements are necessary or preferable in order to deliver the best support for the individual. This could be due to a range of factors, including digital poverty, disability, a need for comprehension or language support or a lack of digital skills.

For this reason, all of the commitments in this Strategy which relate to the delivery of our services assume an ongoing need for a blended, rather than digital-only approach to engaging with our customers. This will also result in an ongoing need for some travel and maintaining adequate physical premises and resources to deliver that support.

What SDS will do

We will continue to enhance our digital capability, in line with technological advancements, to support our wider sustainability ambitions.

— This will include, but is not limited to:

- Enhancing the digital capability of our staff and system users, through the delivery of an ongoing comprehensive training programme on our tools and services.



- Extending the reach of services in a resource efficient way through building and maintaining our online self-service platforms, ensuring all our customers can access information and advice on a 24/7 basis.



- Maximising our digital capability, making best use of existing technology and resources, and seeking out new solutions where necessary, to reduce our carbon footprint.



- Continuing to develop digital approaches to delivery of our person-led services where possible, such as one-to-one video calls, or web-based group engagements, to ensure equality of access across geographies and customer groups.





Business Processes

Scottish employers will face new responsibilities and challenges as a result of the impacts of climate change, however, there are also opportunities associated. Across Scotland, sustainability and carbon reduction targets are moving from business sidelines into core mainstream activities.

Environmental considerations are beginning to be embedded into business processes. This helps to ensure business as usual activity will deliver green commitments, develop new and innovative climate solutions and drive sustainable decision making. As a result, environmental and economic imperatives, such as cost, efficiency, and quality, are beginning to receive equal consideration.

Scotland's public, private and third sectors increasingly recognise the importance of organisational carbon reporting in providing a roadmap for emissions reduction. By setting targets and monitoring progress against them, organisations can effectively manage reduction of both direct and indirect emissions.

New ways must be found to align our climate change ambitions with our key priorities through our business processes – mainstreaming our ambitions into organisational plans, policies and procedures – and becoming part of all our business-as-usual activity.

What SDS will do

We will continuously improve our business processes so that they better support our environmental ambitions.

— This will include, but is not limited to:

- Embedding environmental impact assessments into our service development processes, to be completed for initially new, but eventually all existing products and services.



- Regularly reviewing our contract management and procurement practices and procedures to ensure they promote and encourage sustainable behaviours through our supply chain.



- Ensuring our environmental ambitions are clearly articulated through our strategic and annual business planning processes, to drive ownership amongst colleagues.



- Making improvements to the SDS estate and facilities which drive energy efficiency and encourage environmentally conscious behaviour.



- Improving our ability to internally monitor and report our progress towards becoming a more climate conscious organisation, allowing this data to increasingly drive decision making.



- Pursuing opportunities for collaboration and co-location with other public sector organisations and/or delivery partners which have the potential to provide a positive environmental impact.



- Increasing the transparency of our performance towards key carbon reduction milestones, and against identified measures to ensure our accountability as a public body.



- Reviewing, as contracts allow, the overall size and utilisation of the SDS estate, ensuring it continues to meet the needs of our customers and colleagues and reflects changes to the way we work.





Organisational Culture

Scotland's ability to meet its net-zero 2045 target requires the public sector to demonstrate strong leadership, and to promote a workplace culture of radical thinking and innovation. Put simply, Scotland's green transition is reliant on culture change in the workplace, extending to every aspect of how an organisation functions.

By first identifying small, incremental cultural changes, organisations will help to build momentum towards achieving the country's long-term, net-zero target.

Central to building an environmentally conscious culture is engaging all individuals, so that they understand and take ownership of their contribution towards climate change. Continuously challenging default behaviours and assumptions will ensure that the response to climate change is ongoing and adaptive.

Demonstrating and recognising leadership at all levels is also key to making successful culture change happen. A strong, proactive approach from senior leaders will encourage us all to be agents of change, helping to promote a shared vision of inclusive, organisation-wide thinking on environmental issues.

What SDS will do

We will help our people to consider their existing work practices and embrace more sustainable ways of working.

— This will include, but is not limited to:

- Maintaining strong leadership, within SDS and across the learning and skills system, in relation to our ambition to support a net-zero economy.



- Considering the option to adopt a new organisational value for SDS, that reflects our commitment to working in a more sustainable way.



- Significantly reducing our business-related travel through smarter ways of working and promoting the use of more sustainable methods of transport where travel is essential e.g. to reach our customers.



- Supporting an active and engaged workforce through internal communications, regular campaigns, learning opportunities and empowering colleague-led activity.



- Encouraging our colleagues to adopt more environmentally conscious decision making at work, ranging from individual choices to recycle or print documents, to significant choices around project design or delivery.



- Building environmental consideration into our recruitment, on-boarding and performance management practices, to reinforce that every colleague within SDS can help achieve our goals through their choices and actions.



- Understanding and monitoring the influence that flexible and remote working can have on our environmental impact, as part of the wider evolution of our work practices.



- Ensuring our meetings and events are planned and delivered in an environmentally conscious way, becoming paperless and digital by default.



4. Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Given its long-term nature, how we monitor and report our progress and performance over the ten-year period will be critical to whether we deliver this Strategy's aims.

A monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed to track the delivery of our Strategy, ensuring we report accurately and transparently on progress achieved. The framework includes a series of short and long-term outcomes that we will use to monitor delivery of our Strategy commitments and the difference that they are making. A summary of the framework can be found on page 23.

In addition to our commitments under Scotland's Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting Duties, throughout the life of this Strategy, we will publish a biennial progress report. It will detail the actions we have taken in that period, and the progress we have made towards the anticipated outcomes outlined in this Strategy, including our journey towards becoming a net-zero organisation. A summary of actions we expect will be covered in the first two years of this Strategy is included in Appendix 1.

We will establish an SDS Climate Change Strategy Implementation and Monitoring Group. Convening bi-annually, it will hold responsibility for monitoring activity and progress made against this Strategy, and for meeting both internal and external reporting requirements. This group will ensure that our Strategy remains a live document, with an ongoing profile and prominence within SDS.

Taking into account the evolving nature of climate change science, as well as changes to government policy and legislation, we acknowledge that elements of this Strategy may require updating or refocusing within its life span. When necessary, these will be identified by the Monitoring Group and detailed in the biennial external publications.

The ongoing ambitions of this Strategy will be reflected in new iterations of our Strategic Plan and Annual Operating Plan when published. Related SDS documents such as our Environmental Policy and Disposals Policy will also be developed, reviewed and updated as required.

To ensure our actions make a positive contribution to national and international climate change ambitions, we have aligned our anticipated outcomes to both the National Performance Framework and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Figure 4 (page 24) shows how our Climate Change Strategy aligns to both the NPF and SDGs.

Figure 3: Summary of our Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

SDS Climate Change Strategy: Anticipated Interim Outcomes

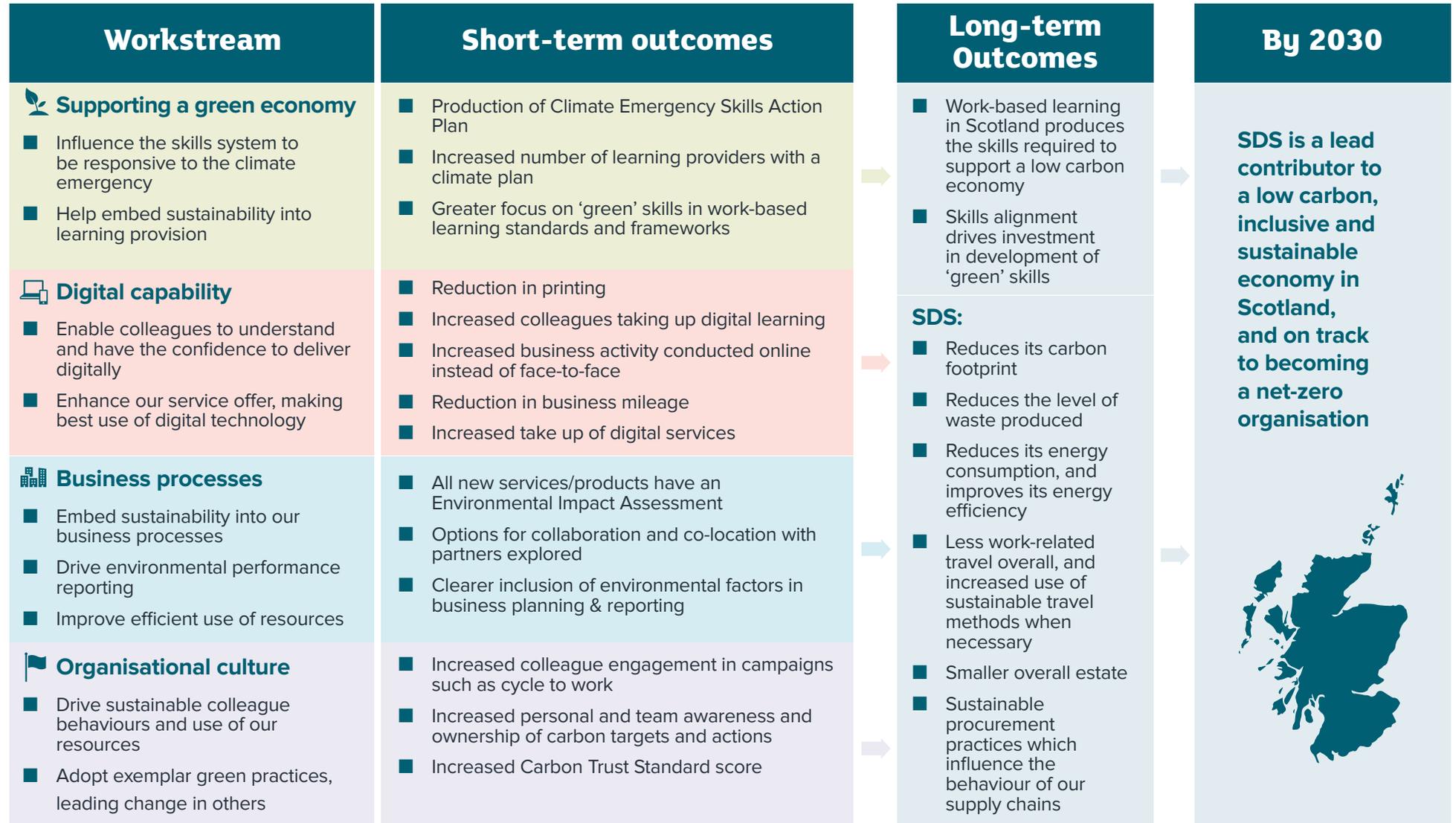


Figure 4: Our Contribution to National and International Performance Frameworks

Workstream	Key Business Area	National Performance Framework Outcomes						UN Sustainable Development Goals								
		Economy	Education	Environment	Fair Work & Business	Human Rights	Children & Young People	SDG 4 Quality Education	SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy	SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth	SDG 9 Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure	SDG 10 Reduce Inequalities	SDG 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities	SDG 12 Sustainable Production & Consumption	SDG 13 Climate Action	
We will support Scotland's ambitions for a green economy		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	
		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
			✓	✓	✓				✓				✓	✓		
We will continue to enhance our digital capability, in line with technological advances, to support our wider sustainability ambitions			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	
			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
We will continuously improve our business processes so that they better support our environmental ambitions			✓	✓								✓	✓		✓	
			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
			✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
We will help our people to consider their existing work practices and embrace more sustainable ways of working			✓	✓				✓							✓	
		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	

Appendix 1: Anticipated Action to be taken in the first two years of this Strategy

Workstream	Action
 <p>Supporting a Green Economy</p>	Implement SDS specific actions from the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan
	Support implementation of the Scottish Government’s Climate Change Plan 2018-2032
	Develop work-based learning sustainability materials
	Implement actions from Learning for Sustainability Action Plan
 <p>Digital Capability</p>	Improve collaborative working technology in offices
	Continuously develop and deliver digital training for SDS staff
	Introduce greater usage of technology including digital signatures for contract management processes
	Conduct a smart building controls feasibility study
 <p>Business Processes</p>	Develop an Environmental Impact Assessment process for new and existing activities/projects/policies
	Introduce environmental actions and measures into team annual work plans
	Improve environmental data reporting
	Identify supply chain carbon emissions hotspots and develop a reduction strategy
	Conduct an Emissions Reduction Scenario exercise
 <p>Organisational Culture</p>	Review our corporate values alongside the development of our new Strategic Plan
	Publish a new Business Travel Policy
	Deliver additional climate change learning to colleagues involved in leading the delivery of workstream actions
	Encourage greater individual responsibility and ownership of the Strategy through CPD and performance management
	Calculate and monitor home working and commuting emissions

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