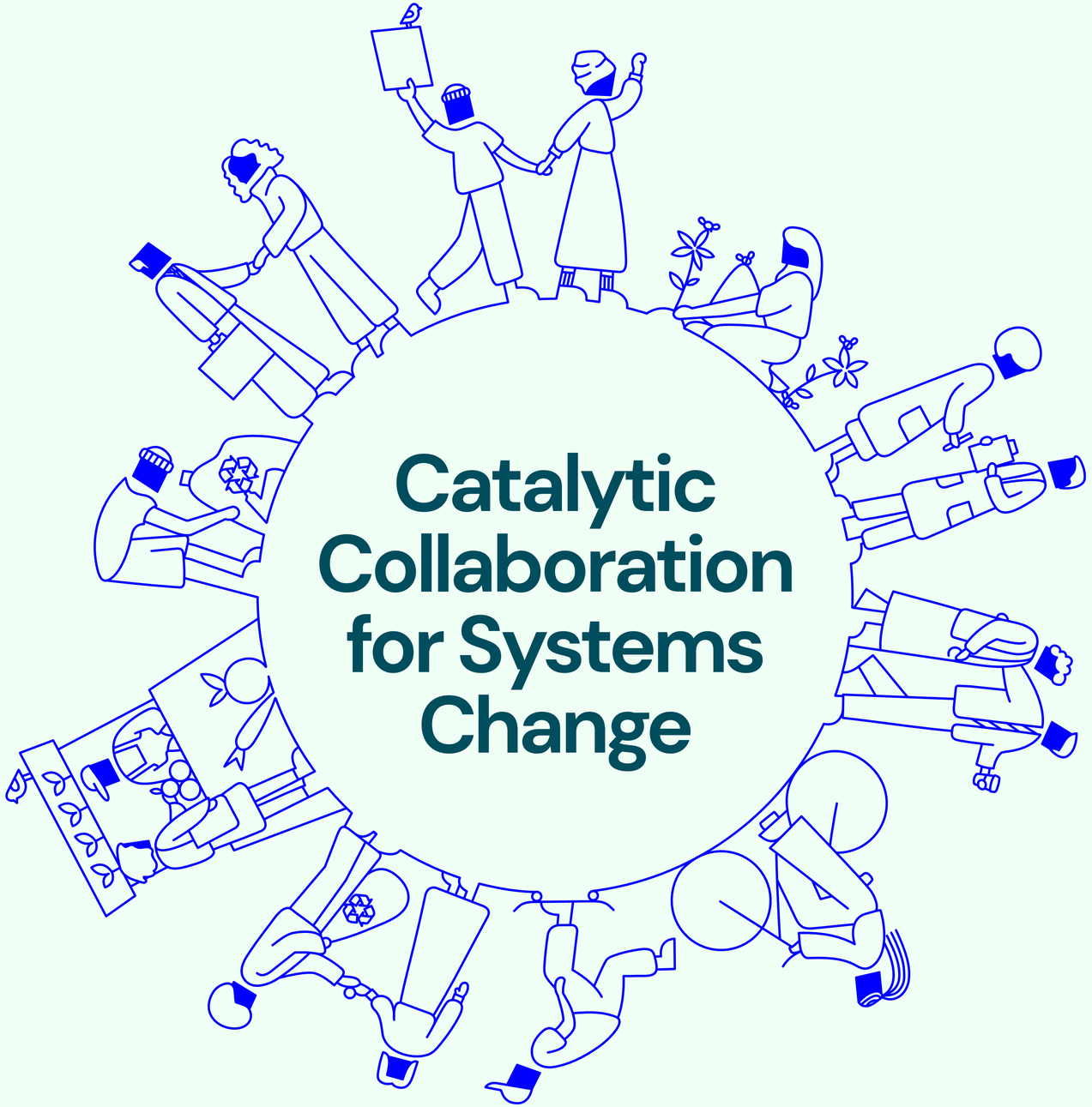
THE DECISIVE DECADE: ORGANISING CLIMATE ACTION



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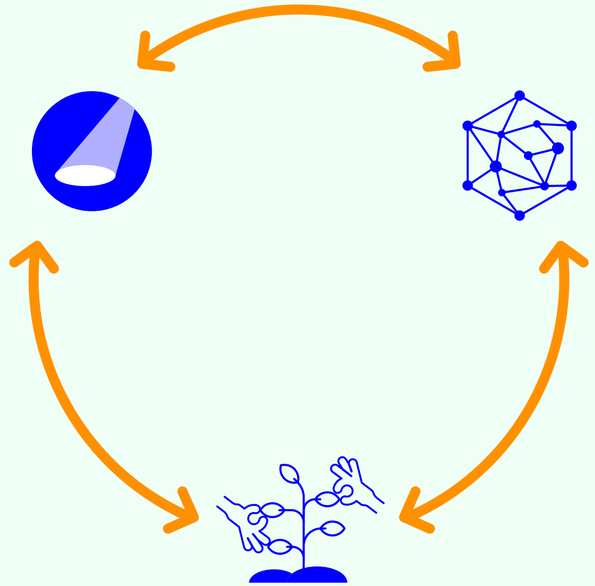
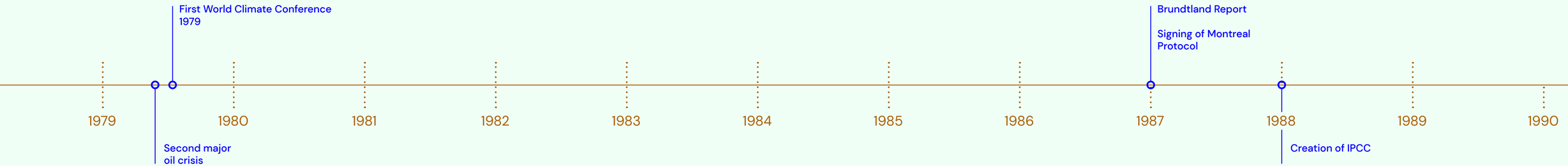
The 2020s are a Decisive Decade for climate action.

Over the next ten years, we have an opportunity to limit global temperature rise and hasten a just transition to a thriving net-zero emissions economy by 2050. Reaching this target, however, will require an exponential increase in engagement and collaboration from businesses, civil society organisations, governments, and individual citizens around the globe. Although overall involvement in climate action intensified in the run-up to the Paris Agreement (2015), it remains fragmented across business, civil society and government. Limited participation from key regions and sectors, as well as different ways of framing the problem and possible solutions, are impeding a coordinated, collective effort.

This report proposes a framework and set of strategies for shifting from incremental to catalytic collaboration in the climate action field. It is based on in-depth empirical research, conducted jointly by the Mission 2020 campaign in its final year and an interdisciplinary research team from the University of Oxford. Adopting an organisational perspective on climate action, we conducted interviews, workshops and focus groups and analysed numerous reports and databases to ascertain the current state of the climate action field and identify strategies that can realise the potential of the Decisive Decade.

Drawing on this unique dataset, and the research team's expertise in organisation and management theory, we identified distinct roles that organisations play in climate action. We demonstrate how such roles can be harnessed to create a virtuous cycle of *catalytic collaboration*. This involves three interconnected processes: **1) highlighting** climate action by creating public awareness and scientific evidence; **2) orchestrating** climate action by curating partnerships, convening actors and allocating resources; **3) operationalising** climate action by developing and implementing solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change.





Launching and sustaining these processes of catalytic collaboration will require active engagement and work from the diverse range of organisations and leaders that are directly engaged in climate action. Our research points to three key strategies for doing so:

Developing a shared narrative: Integrating different ways of framing the climate problem and its solutions, including race to zero, sustainable development and healthy recovery. This will provide a clear story for mass audiences, who may be less familiar with the technical approaches pursued by climate action organisations, and powerfully demonstrate how social and economic systems can be transformed.

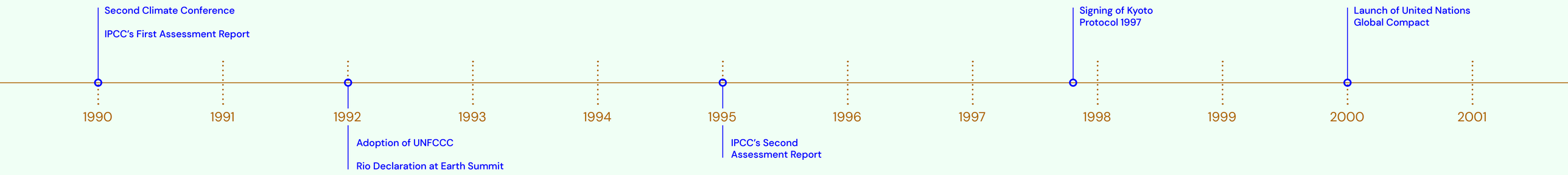
Building trust: Creating opportunities for constructive dialogue and joint engagement amongst the diversity of organisations with a stake in the climate crisis. This will promote open and productive approaches to navigating difficult tensions at the intersection of climate change, development and human rights.

Strengthening accountability: Bolstering frameworks for environmental (and the connected social) performance of organisations, establishing clear targets in the trajectory towards net-zero, and creating feedback mechanisms to link those most responsible for environmental loss and damage with those most affected by it.

Philanthropic funders also have a critical role to play and can support these strategies by:

- Engaging in convening, standards-creation and knowledge-sharing activities to bring disconnected actors together and build trust and accountability.
- Supporting uncertain but potentially high-impact solutions to foster experimentation, innovation and continuous learning.
- Adopting inclusive and collective funding practices to strengthen climate action across diverse sectors and regions.

Taken as a whole, our inquiry offers a call to action for the climate community. Now is the time to work together, across traditional divides, to bridge economic, political and cultural differences, and to build robust partnerships based on mutuality and trust. We must move beyond unhelpful dichotomies toward integrative approaches that advance both the health of people and the planet. Just as new forms of organising propelled the industrial revolution, new forms of collaboration across organisations can catalyse a fast and fair transition to a net-zero emissions, positive-impact economy.



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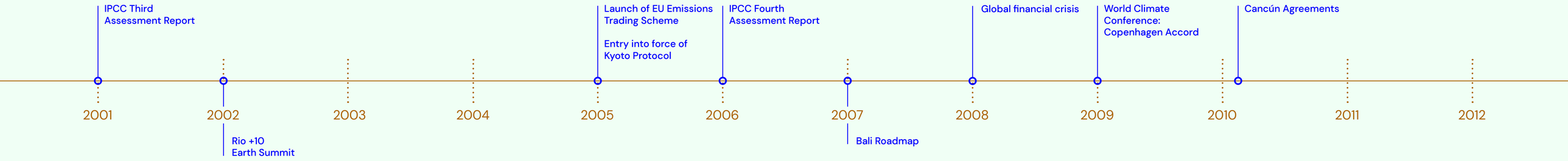


We've reached the climate turning point. Now let's accelerate the transition.

In the midst of the health and economic crisis wrought by COVID-19 in 2020, the world achieved something truly extraordinary in the first year of this Decisive Decade: we hit a turning point in our pursuit of a healthier, safer, more resilient and regenerative world.

That turning point is based on the mental paradigm shift from perceiving climate action as only a burden and a cost, to understanding it as the portal to job creation, public health, equality and economic stability. Such a shift is evidenced by the growing number of countries, cities, regions, businesses and investors setting their sights on a zero-carbon economy by 2050. Steps towards zero-carbon have been backed by near-term goals that will get us there, including ending sales of diesel and petrol cars, scaling-up nascent green hydrogen production, investing in adaptation and expanding regenerative agriculture.

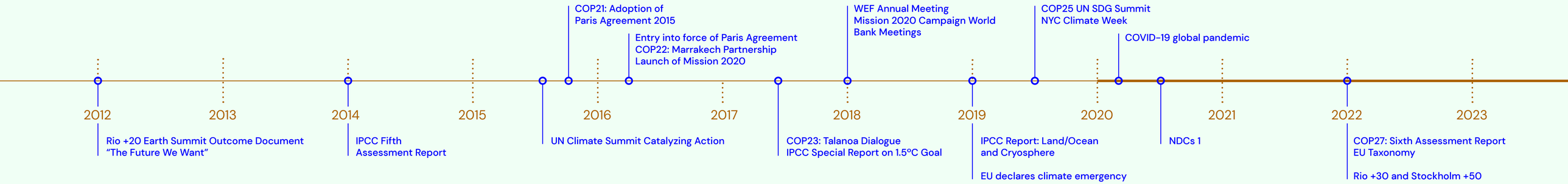
We have entered the 2020s with a deeper acknowledgment of the need for cooperation and care, more technological solutions, greater political and private sector commitment and more public support to realise transformative climate action. The challenge for this Decisive Decade is to turn all those ingredients into a firm descent of emissions. To avert the worst impacts of climate change, science demands that we halve global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. While doing so, there needs to be radical regeneration of forests, mangroves, soils and oceans, in a transition that ensures protection of the most vulnerable and renews the social contract.

It's a tall challenge, but one that we are already confronting because it will secure a better future for us and our children. It will create good, well-paying jobs that support public health and reduce air pollution from fossil fuels, which causes one in five premature deaths per year. It will bring affordable, clean energy to rural communities that lack lighting and refrigerators, lifting them out of extreme poverty. It will help farmers plant abundant crops that can withstand droughts and floods.

Taking up this challenge will unleash the human spirit of creativity and innovation in a way that hasn't been seen for generations, stimulating widespread economic and social change for the better. It's a challenge worth rising to, even without the added benefit of staving-off the climate crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated what humanity is capable of when faced with existential risk: scientists, health professionals, businesses and governments coming together to develop personal protective equipment and vaccines in record time, and millions of people staying indoors worldwide to protect the vulnerable.

Securing the timely reduction of emissions will take greater collaboration than ever before, among individuals, civil society organisations, businesses, investors and policymakers, and across generations. The traditional 'climate community' also needs to better connect its efforts with those working for social and economic change across a broad spectrum of issues, including human rights, public health, education, gender rights, equality and beyond. We need to be more open-minded and more courageous to embrace different views, take bigger risks and scale-up our political will.

Mission 2020's Decisive Decade initiative seeks to build a strong foundation for strengthening climate cooperation ahead of the upcoming United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021 and the ensuing years. The initiative's first publication 'The Prelude to a Great Regeneration', was composed by Mission 2020, with the support of over a hundred contributors. It sets out an inspiring vision and defines 7 'ways of being' to help us succeed individually and collectively as we embark on the effort. The second publication 'Critical Junctions on the Journey to 1.5°C: The Decisive Decade', commissioned by Mission 2020 and written by Climate Strategies, outlines 'Systemic Intervention Points' across industries and key levers. These reports complement this final inquiry, produced in collaboration with the University of Oxford, which focuses on 'how' we work together, by 'Organising Climate Action in the Decisive Decade'.



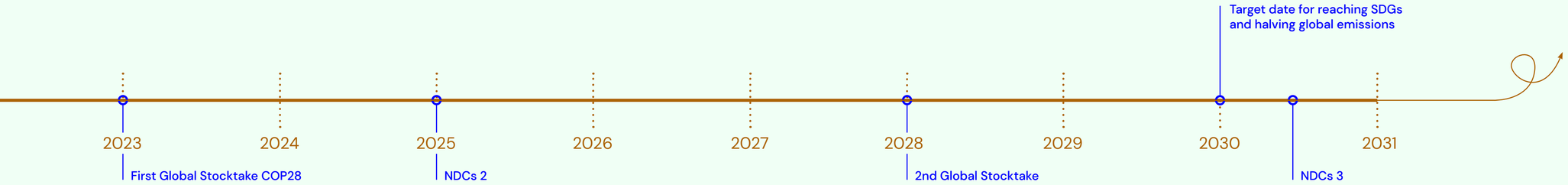
We would like to share our gratitude to the authors and the wider support team at Mission 2020, driving the project since 2018. Special thanks to Rajiv Joshi who has led the Decisive Decade initiative both with the Mission 2020 campaign and during sabbatical as an Executive in Residence, at Oxford University's Saïd Business School, bridging both teams.

The inquiry has been drafted in deep consultation with climate activists, business leaders, investors, artists, researchers, policy makers, donors and thought leaders from around the world, capturing key challenges and opportunities. The practical suggestions offered indicate how – by agreeing a shared vision, building trust and strengthening accountability – we can instigate unprecedented collaboration to drive systemic change.

We are in the Decisive Decade of our generation, from 2020 to 2030. As we consider the mission ahead, let us make history together – with applied hope, ingenuity, optimism and determination.

Christiana Figueres
Convener, Mission 2020

Andrew Higham
CEO, Mission 2020



HUMANITY IS AT THE PRECIPICE OF A GREAT TRANSITION.

An Organisational Perspective on Climate Action

The world is navigating a convergence of interconnected crises. There is clear scientific and political consensus that, to protect our common future, we must limit global warming to 1.5°C by 2050, and this means we must halve global emissions by 2030.[1]

With increasing calls for climate justice, particularly among younger generations, there is also a deep recognition that the transition to net-zero must be fair and equitable. This will require action by all countries, companies and citizens. Although much has been accomplished since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015, as a legally binding instrument to govern climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance, progress remains incremental.[2] The reasons for this are not only political, economic or scientific, they are also organisational.

Due to the nature of the climate challenge, and the scale of change required for current economic and social systems to adapt, organisations cannot drive sufficient progress by acting alone or continuing to use existing models and methods. New approaches, such as regenerative agriculture and distributed, rather than centralised, models for energy production and consumption are required to meet climate and sustainability targets.

As with many other deep-rooted, complex societal challenges, creating truly transformative, systemic change requires catalytic collaboration across different sectors and levels - from local to global. Yet catalytic collaboration is not easy. It would be far simpler to remain in siloes, each group of organisations working with like-minded others. Working together *across swim lanes* requires finding common ground amidst real differences in core values, strategies and practices, as part of an integrated approach to *organising* climate action.

Despite these challenges, there is opportunity for action. Existing players in the climate action field are conscious of the consequences of inaction and the connections between issues, geographies, sectors and perspectives that influence climate change. We can leverage this growing understanding to develop new models of cooperation and problem-solving that trigger transformative, systemic change in our economic, social and cultural systems. Collectively, these challenges and opportunities create the Decisive Decade – a period that will powerfully shape the future of our natural and social world.

The purpose of this report is to provide a framework and set of recommendations for seizing the opportunity for effective change on the journey to 2030. We aim to better understand how organisations in the climate action field can work together and build partnerships to maximise collective impact in tackling climate change. Thus, we focus on collaboration amongst the growing contingent of actors working within and across sectors to redesign how the future can be powered. We harness information from business and civil society organisations that are identifying the problems and root causes of climate change, developing ideas for addressing them, delivering philanthropic capital and other resources implementing solutions.

We assembled an interdisciplinary research team from the University of Oxford, spanning management and organisation studies, geography and environmental science, medicine and engineering, with practitioner experience and leadership from Mission 2020 and the community that helped to deliver the Paris Agreement. Leveraging this broad expertise, we gathered in-depth, systematic data on strategies and practices of organisations engaged in climate action across multiple sectors, including civil society, business, policy, higher education and philanthropy. Table 1 summarizes the data collected.

Our research is unique in its focus on the organisational dynamics that underpin climate action and that will be critical to realising the opportunity of the Decisive Decade. We focus on models and processes for collaboration, consensus-building, framing, and goal setting within and across organisations, drawing from and building on an extensive body of academic research in organisation studies.[3]

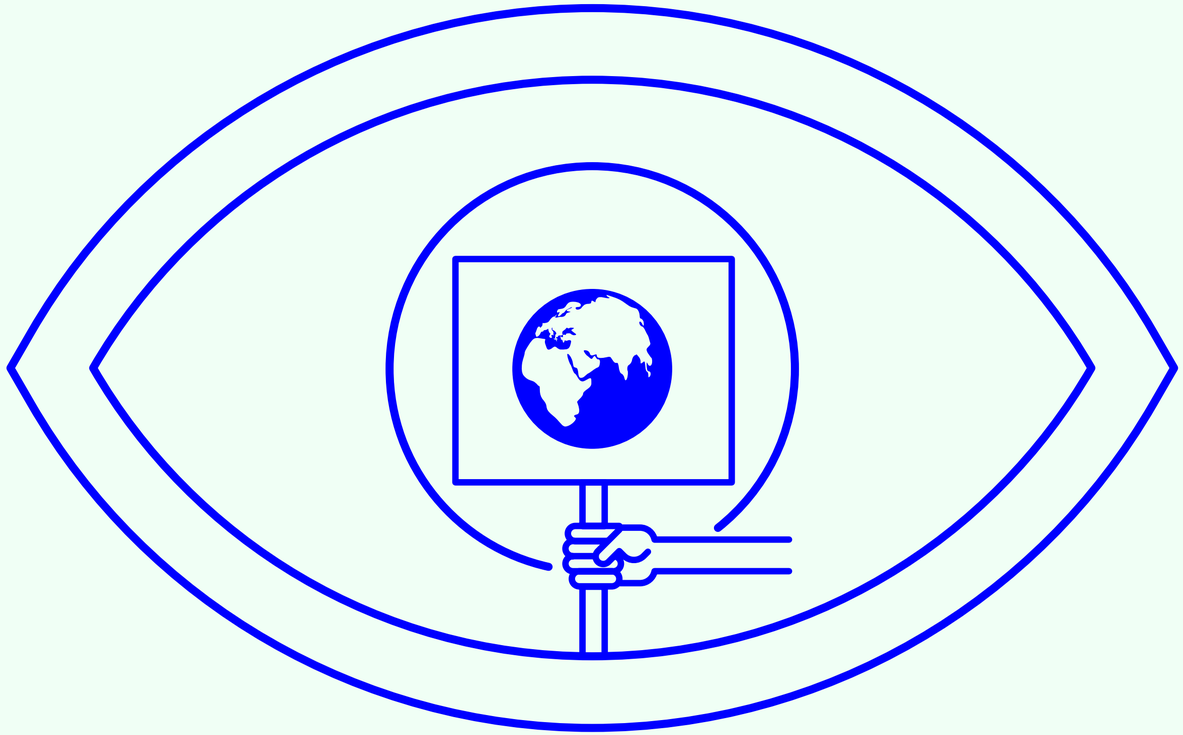
This distinctly organisational approach complements the political, economic and natural science perspectives that have dominated climate action discussions to date.[4] In contrast to research on policy options that focuses on the role of nation states and inter-governmental organisations, our research explores the critical role of businesses, non-profit organisations and cross-sector partnerships.

Distinct from studies of technical practices and scientific innovations that focus on the substantive impact of particular solutions, our research explores the organisational dynamics that enable their emergence and implementation. Our approach allows us to offer fresh insight into the critical knowledge gaps identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): we explain how diverse actors can work together to combat the fragmentation of initiatives, such that civil society and business can support and complement the core operating principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities' and unleash the capacity within us all to restore our common future.[5]

Table 1: Data Collected

Primary data	Secondary data
50 formal research interviews with representatives of more than 40 organisations	More than 100 official publications from 80 organisations
Reports, website text and archival notes collected from 80 organisations	External databases such as Bloomberg, Eikon, NAZCA, InfluenceMap and Carbon Tracker
Notes and observations from four workshops on the future of finance and health with more than 60 participants	Grant databases, presentations, briefs and documents from all major climate-related philanthropic funders

TAKING STOCK OF THE CLIMATE ACTION FIELD



1.1 The Opportunity

Recent efforts to address the climate emergency illustrate the potential for exponential progress. Since the landmark Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015, and then signed by 194 countries, emissions in some key sectors have fallen, and there is evidence that the global emissions curve is bending.[6] The US and other major economies have outlined targets to more than halve their emissions by 2030. In a recent report commissioned by the UK government as hosts of the 2021 G7 Summit, Sir Nicholas Stern has called for the G7 to invest one trillion US dollars per year, noting that 'the transition to a zero-emissions and climate-resilient world provides the greatest economic, business and commercial opportunity of our time.'[7]

At the same time there is cause for concern. The COVID-19 pandemic has created significant economic losses and spread fear and anxiety in many quarters, jeopardizing the momentum built over the preceding five years in addressing climate change and sustainability. There is a risk that the trillions of dollars being injected into the economy to build resilience and drive a global recovery in the face of COVID-19, may have the unfortunate effect of locking-in support for carbon-intensive sectors, instead of hastening a just transition toward a vibrant net-zero emissions economy.

In this context, the start of the Decisive Decade is marked by a number of high-profile events. Following the UK's presidency of the Group of Seven (G7), the country will host 26th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), or 'COP26', in Glasgow in early November 2021. While Italy, the UK's co-host for COP26, will chair the Group of Twenty (G20) just a few weeks prior in Rome. China is hosting COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which will set global targets to prevent mass extinction and agree a global deal to restore nature. This meeting is also set to agree on a new target to designate at least 30% of the Earth's surface with conservation status by 2030.

Alongside the commitments and leadership of key nations, several moments across 2021 offer opportunities for strengthening engagement and making significant progress on climate action. The year 2021 marks the 10th anniversary of the endorsement by the UN Human Rights Council of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. In September, the United Nations will meet to review progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Perhaps most significantly for the purposes of this inquiry, COP26 will be a capstone for the climate action field in 2021. At this landmark summit, countries will review progress towards net zero ambition since the Paris Agreement and respond to the requirement that each party increase their climate commitments every five years in the form of a 'Nationally Determined Contribution' (NDC). This five-year cycle of updates, beginning with the next 'Global Stocktake' in 2023, is the 'ratchet mechanism' that lies at the core of the Paris Agreement's ability to increase ambition to meet targets for limiting temperature targets to 1.5°C.

Taken together these developments, already delayed by a dangerous pandemic, mark the start of this Decisive Decade, one that offers a once-in-a-generation chance to prevent catastrophic damage to the biospheres' ability to sustain human life.

THE SCALE AND SCOPE OF CLIMATE ACTION HAS EXPANDED DRAMATICALLY.

1.2 The Challenge

Seizing the opportunity of the Decisive Decade will require bringing together the diverse range of business, non-profit, community and governmental organisations involved in creating and solving the climate crisis and associated impacts. Organisations that focus on economic transformation, gender and racial equity, health, finance and other issues have become more aware of the intersectionalities and inequalities exposed by climate change and are increasingly taking action. Collectively, they comprise a coherent field of activity, which we refer to as the 'climate action field.'[8]

Climate action organisations often adopt varied strategies to address the question of how humanity can thrive within the boundaries set by nature, with some focusing on the natural environment and others attending to issues of development, human rights or emergency preparedness. This diversity offers significant potential, but it also makes coordinated and focused action harder to achieve.

Our research identified three specific ways in which the current state of organisational activity in the climate action field creates challenges for realising the opportunity of the Decisive Decade:

Fragmented and uneven involvement. There is fragmented and uneven participation of actors across sectors, regions and levels of activity. As the Decisive Decade begins, the corporations that are actively working to transform systems via 'net-zero' pathways only account for about 20% of global emissions. To reach universally agreed climate action goals, we need a radical expansion in the scale and scope of corporate engagement in climate action, such that firms across all sectors see their own activity as part of the global effort to confront the climate challenge.

Moreover, existing climate action partnerships primarily include only businesses and civil society organisations that are already committed to 'racing ahead' towards a solution. Involvement of many groups critical to the endeavor remains limited. In particular, there is insufficient engagement from businesses operating in sectors that disproportionately contribute to climate destruction, such as fossil fuel, mining and heavy industry, and from firms in finance, policy health and other sectors that sit at leverage points with the potential to contribute breakthrough solutions.

Equally important, amongst civil society organisations, there has not been sufficient involvement and inclusion of grassroots organisations. These actors represent regions and communities that stand to suffer the most from climate destruction, such low-income countries outside of Europe and North America, and indigenous peoples, racial minorities, women, workers and other groups that are often disenfranchised from decision making. Involving these constituencies is critical as they bring attention to often-neglected social and economic dimensions of the climate crisis.

The Climate Ambition Alliance operating under the banner of the 'Race to Zero' campaign illustrates this challenge. Hosted by the UNFCCC, this alliance is a diverse group of organisations involved in setting science-based targets to reach net-zero by 2050. As of mid 2021, the alliance has mobilised over 1,100 businesses, 45 investors and 549 civil society organisations around the world in support of net-zero emissions by 2050.[9] While these organisations account for 20-30% of the global carbon footprint, this falls well short of enlisting the group of actors that make-up 70-80% of global carbon emissions. Moreover, involvement has been concentrated in a handful of sectors and regions, with only limited participation from businesses and civil society organisations in key geographic regions, like the Global South, as well as firms in key sectors, such as aviation, shipping, heavy industry and food.

As a result of fragmentation, the perspectives of critical constituencies are not fully represented and connected across the climate action field, hampering our ability to seize the opportunity of the Decisive Decade.

Competing Frames. Existing partnerships adopt different ways of characterizing the climate problem and the related solutions, such as 'net-zero', 'healthy recovery' and the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This creates competing frames and hampers the development of a shared agenda. Figure 1 illustrates the diversity of terms currently circulating in the climate action field.

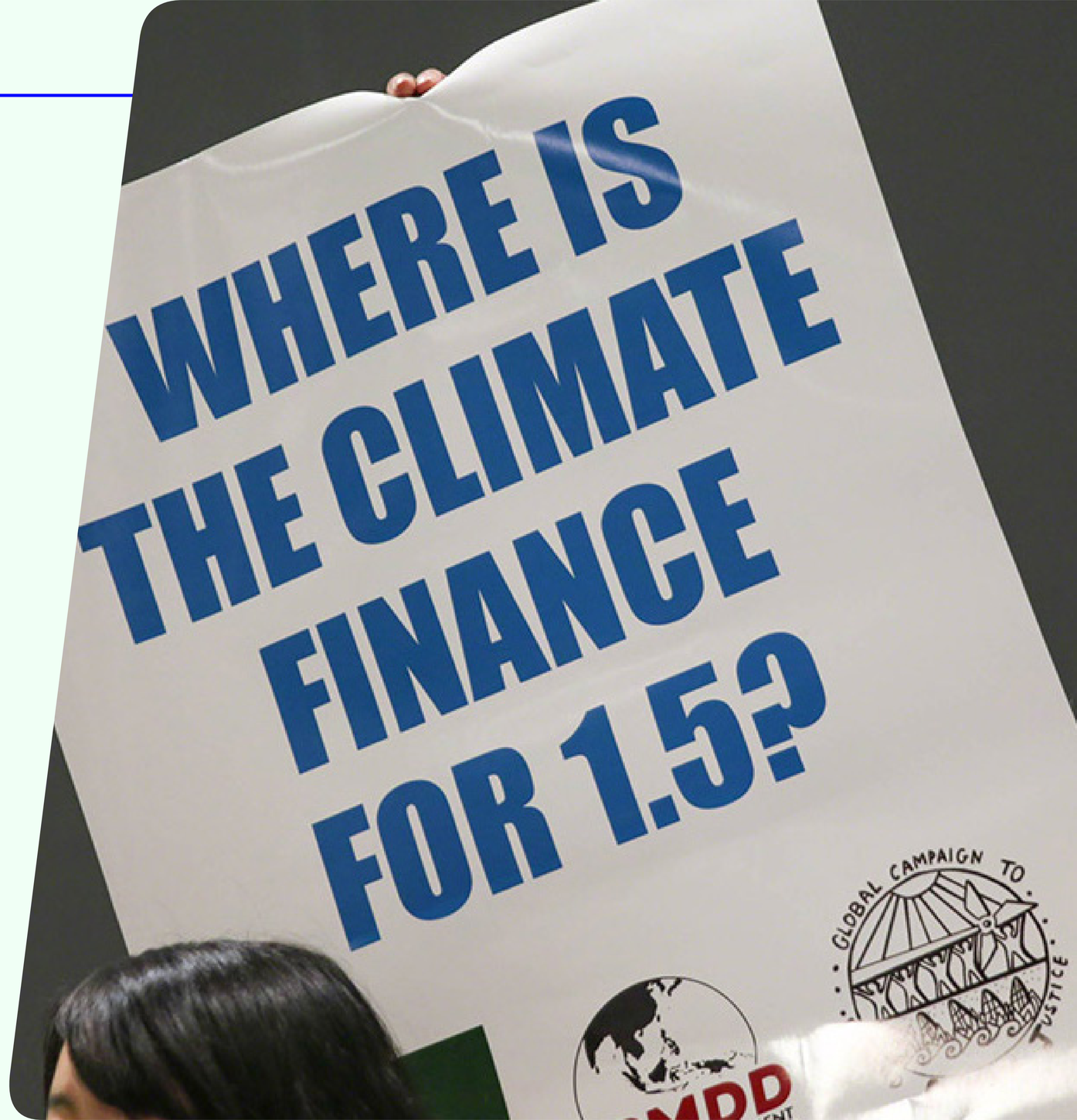
The diversity of frames can be valuable, as it supports the co-existence of multiple theories of change, but it is also problematic because it can create artificial silos between businesses, civil society organisations and communities that ultimately must rely on one another to accomplish their shared objectives. Despite recent efforts to adopt the term and principles of 'climate justice',[10] which aims to reflect the social and ethical dimensions of climate change, there remains a significant gap in language and framing between the fields of business and finance, development, climate action and human rights. Moreover, many frames remain grounded in technical issues, failing to capture the public's imagination and mobilise the level of support that will be required to shift human behaviour. They also miss an opportunity to build on the potential for change as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exposed the challenges of fostering collaboration in the face of collective action problems.

Figure 1: Competing Frames in the Climate Action Field

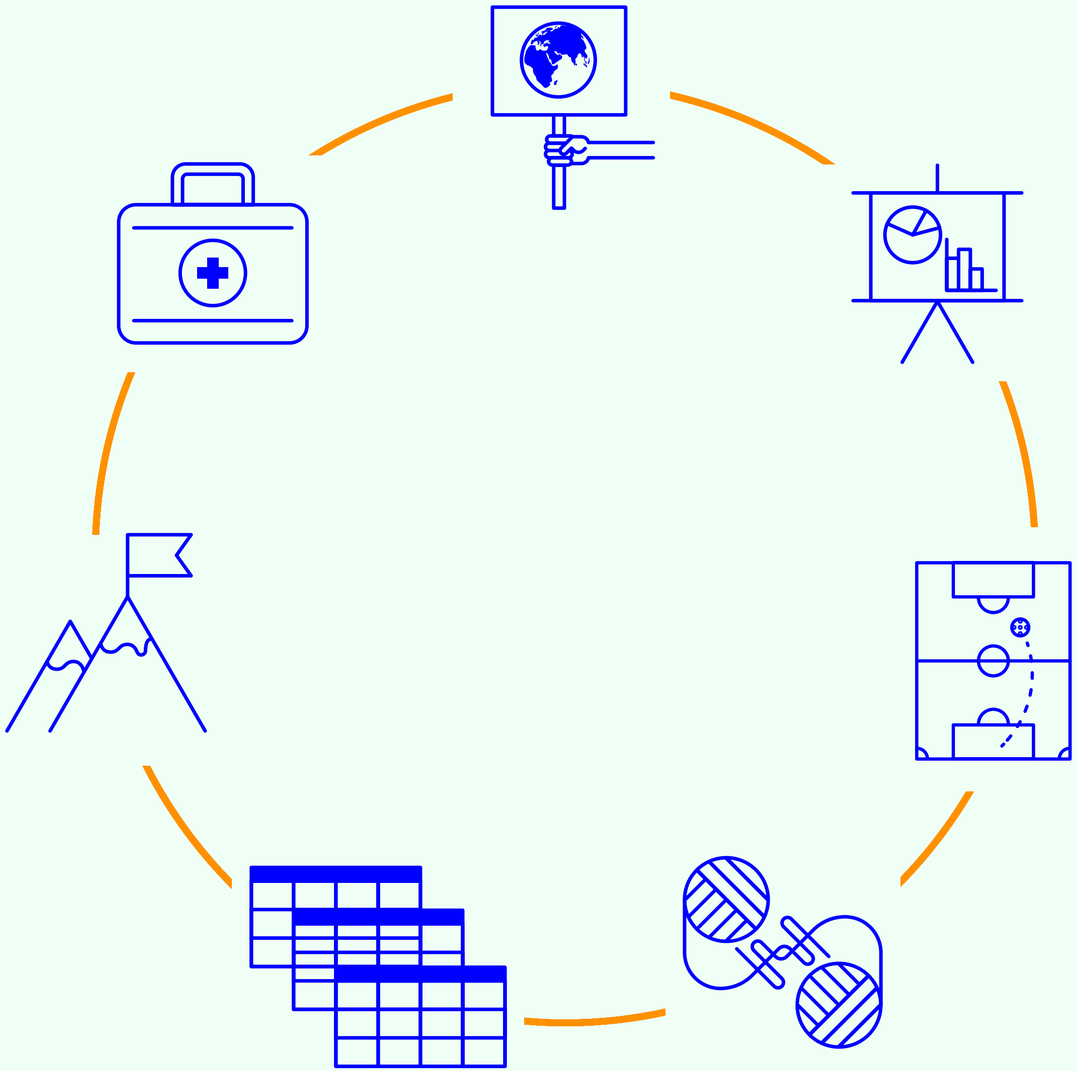
Narrow and Short-Term Funding Practices. The challenges of fragmented, uneven involvement and competing frames are compounded by relatively narrow, detached and short-term approaches to funding. By funding single entities rather than groups, often through closed-round invitations that favour incumbents and with average grant terms of less than 12 months, current philanthropic practices foster competition and short-termism. This serves to separate rather than connect organisations and issues, limit diversity of participation in climate action, and reinforce the 'Northern bias' of climate funding. Even some of the largest and most well-established philanthropic foundations are struggling to find ways of broadening their focus and time horizons to address intersectional, intercultural and intergenerational issues, such as climate action and racial justice.

Recent estimates of capital for climate mitigation range from $5 to 9 billion annually, representing just 1-2% of global philanthropic funding out of a total potential of $730 billion (prior to the emergence of new entities, such as the Bezos Earth Fund).[11] Yet the sheer amount of funding is just one piece of the problem. Equally, if not more, important is the way in which funding practices may unintentionally undermine trust and impede the kind of collaboration that is needed in the Decisive Decade.

More than half of our interviewees reported competition for funding, as well as a lack of funder transparency and limited opportunities for open, honest dialogue. These factors undermine collaboration and trust, particularly amongst under-represented groups who, in some cases, feel there is an institutional bias within the system. As a result, current funding practices may unintentionally limit participation from affected populations, disincentivise the sharing of solutions and perpetuate a lack of diversity within the climate action community. This in turn can hamper efforts to reduce emissions in countries central to addressing the climate crisis, as climate action strategies may lack cultural sensitivity or fail to fully engage groups working on sustainable development. Yet these communities could help unlock additional resources and establish viable development pathways that support a halving of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.



THE DECISIVE SEVEN FRAMEWORK



The Decisive Seven Framework

Why has collaboration to date been fragmented and incremental? How can the climate action field overcome these challenges to seize the opportunity of the Decisive Decade? Answering these questions requires recognising the different roles that organisations play, or could play, in climate action and how they interact.

Our research points to seven key roles, the Decisive Seven (D7), that together contribute to **highlighting**, **orchestrating** and **operationalising** climate action, as depicted in Table 2.[12] Some organisations fulfil just one of these roles, while others play multiple roles simultaneously and/or sequentially.

Differences in how each role approaches climate action contribute to the challenges of fragmented and uneven involvement, competing frames and narrow funding practices. At the same time, organisations representing the D7 roles can work together to overcome these challenges and shift from incremental to catalytic collaboration.

Table 2: The Decisive Seven Framework: Key Activities and Roles in the Climate Action Field

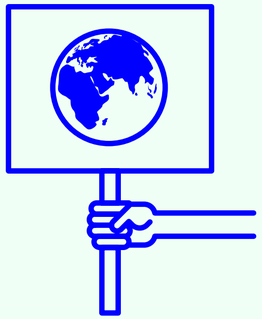
Activity	Highlighting		Orchestrating			Operationalising	
Role	**Shakers**	**Analysts**	**Playmakers**	**Weavers**	**Frameworkers**	**Pioneers**	**First Aiders**
Key Objectives	Raise public awareness and advocate for action	Generate scientific evidence	Provide financial support for diverse forms of climate action	Convene organisations across sectors to shape public and corporate policy	Develop accountability systems for goals, standards and pathways	Develop and deliver climate solutions	Deliver services to directly address climate-related emergencies
Primary Partners	Media and civil society organisations, individual citizens	Academic institutions, think tanks, informal networks of scientists	Philanthropic foundations, professional experts	Business and civil society organisations, governments	Professional experts, business and civil society representatives	Academic institutions, businesses	Professional experts, local communities
Main Funding Sources	Private donations, in-kind support	Government and philanthropic grants	Endowments, private donations, government and philanthropic grants	Government and philanthropic grants	Government and philanthropic grants, project service revenues	Product and service revenues, government and philanthropic grants	Membership fees, government and philanthropic grants, private donations

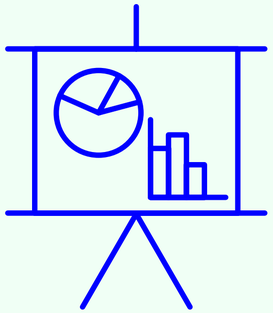
2.1 Highlighting

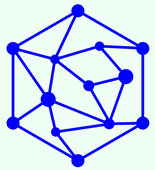
Highlighting involves creating awareness and providing compelling evidence of the climate change challenge, as well as pointing to potential solutions. This occurs when organisations serve as *Shakers* and *Analysts*.

Shakers bring public awareness to climate-related issues, communicating with the public and mobilising citizens. They represent civil society at the global and national levels, advocating high climate ambitions and major policy changes from government and demanding climate action from private firms. As illustrated by the varied activities of organisations such as Fridays for Future, Greenpeace, Extinction Rebellion, Avaaz and Action Aid, Shakers collectively adopt a broad view of climate action: they not only to advocate for ecosystems but also for human rights. They do this by amplifying the voices of diverse communities, including youth populations, indigenous peoples, and low-income countries. The role of Shakers is vital for remedying the limited involvement of those most vulnerable to climate change and for applying pressure on those most responsible for ensuring emissions reductions.

Analysts advance scientific knowledge to support climate action decisions. Using rigorous independent research processes, they gather and analyse data and create evidence-based metrics and policy recommendations that can support decision-making. Examples include academic researchers and professional communities working in formal organisations, such as the IPCC, and in informal networks and communities of experts sharing data and intelligence. Analysts' work helps to identify and measure the impacts, dependencies and pathways that inform climate action decisions across different sectors and governance levels.







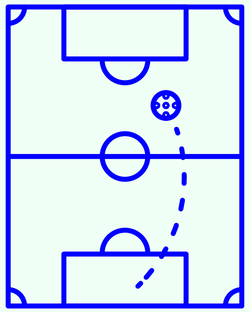
2.2 Orchestrating

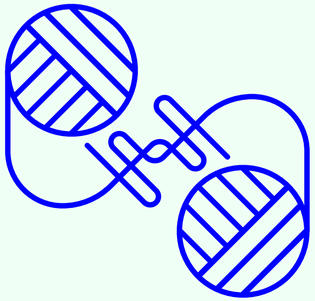
Orchestrating involves convening diverse actors, curating partnerships and allocating resources to address climate change. This occurs when organisations serve as *Playmakers*, *Weavers* and *Frameworkers*.

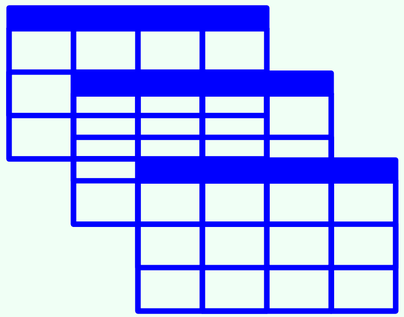
Playmakers focus on creating and scaling-up impact by allocating financial and other resources and convening different actors across the field. They include philanthropic funders – foundations, high net worth individuals and funding agencies – as well as professional service firms and companies that manage funders' capital and contracts and provide the infrastructure for their operations. Some Playmakers directly allocate endowment funds while others delegate entities to host initiatives or enlist third-party professional services firms to manage and allocate resources. Many operate in close partnership with other organisations and individuals to deliver impact. For example, the ClimateWorks Foundation and regional re-granters, such as the European Climate Foundation, pool resources of donor consortia and larger foundations, while the Climate Leadership Initiative mobilizes new funds for climate action by approaching high net worth individuals who are not currently investing in the field.

Weavers coordinate action and spread ideas and practices across businesses, civil society organisations and governments, working to generate common guidelines for climate action. To promote policy adoption, Weavers often serve as advisors to states, the COP, the High-Level Champions and the UN Climate Action Team, and increasingly engage in orchestration activities among businesses and civil society organisations. Weavers knit together partnerships across a diverse array of otherwise disconnected actors, who have mutual but distinct interests, to create common understanding and drive action. Mission 2020, Action for Sustainable Development and We Mean Business illustrate the role Weavers can play in orchestrating change.

Frameworkers develop climate action targets, pathways and reporting standards to strengthen accountability across businesses, civil society organisations and governments. They often work closely with Analysts to ensure methodological rigour, and they collaborate with Weavers to increase general acceptance among stakeholders. Examples include specialist partnerships, such as the Science-Based Targets Initiative, the Race to Zero and the Race to Resilience, as well as the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action. The standards emerging from these and other partnerships contribute to the emergence of policies and regulations at the global, national and sectoral levels, creating a level playing field that can help businesses, civil society organisations and governments deliver on their climate commitments.







2.3 Operationalising

Operationalising involves developing innovations as well as generating and implementing solutions. This occurs when organisations serve as *Pioneers* and *First Aiders*.

Pioneers champion innovation by developing, supporting and/or delivering novel on-the-ground solutions to climate action challenges. They can include investors, businesses, leadership collectives, professional services firms and social entrepreneurs. Some Pioneers build small, experimental groups within a specific sector to develop breakthrough innovations, as illustrated by the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, which pioneered a Low Carbon Technology Partnership initiative. Others, such as the members of the We Mean Business Coalition, serve as Pioneers by setting sector-specific climate targets and collectively adapting their business models to meet them. A third group of Pioneers focuses on developing and delivering climate-resilient products and services innovations, for example, by installing solar panels, implementing sustainable business practices or building capacity for climate resilience. Collectively, these various types of Pioneers have the potential to raise ambition and shift policies, markets and technology adoption across sectors. In doing so, they can create change at multiple levels and provide pathways to climate action for emissions-intense sectors that are not yet fully engaged.

First Aiders focus on decreasing harm by providing direct interventions and emergency responses to address immediate challenges of climate adaptation and resilience as well as climate justice. Often rooted in the development, humanitarian, human rights and medical communities, First Aiders operate at the international, regional, national and local levels to design, coordinate and deliver preventative and rapid response operations to climate-related impacts. They include international agencies working in the economic and sustainable development fields as well as medical and professional organisations, such as Healthcare Without Harm, Medact and the International Federation of the Red Cross/Crescent. First Aiders' proximity to local communities and on-the-ground impacts affords them a vital role in ensuring stakeholder inclusion across different geographic regions and communities.

FOSTERING CATALYTIC COLLABORATION: THREE KEY STRATEGIES

Fostering Catalytic Collaboration: Three Key Strategies

By linking and integrating the core activities of highlighting, orchestrating and operationalising, organisations filling the D7 roles can organise more collectively for the Decisive Decade, shifting from incremental to catalytic collaboration. But this process is not automatic. In the absence of a concerted effort by organisations across the climate action field, the challenges of fragmented and uneven involvement, competing frames and narrow funding practices will continue.

To move forward, three key strategies are needed: **1) developing a shared narrative** to motivate collective action; **2) building trust** amongst diverse actors despite differences in perspective, power and resources; and **3) strengthening accountability** across sectors, governance levels and geographic regions. As shown in Figure 2, together these strategies can unlock a virtuous cycle of catalytic collaboration.

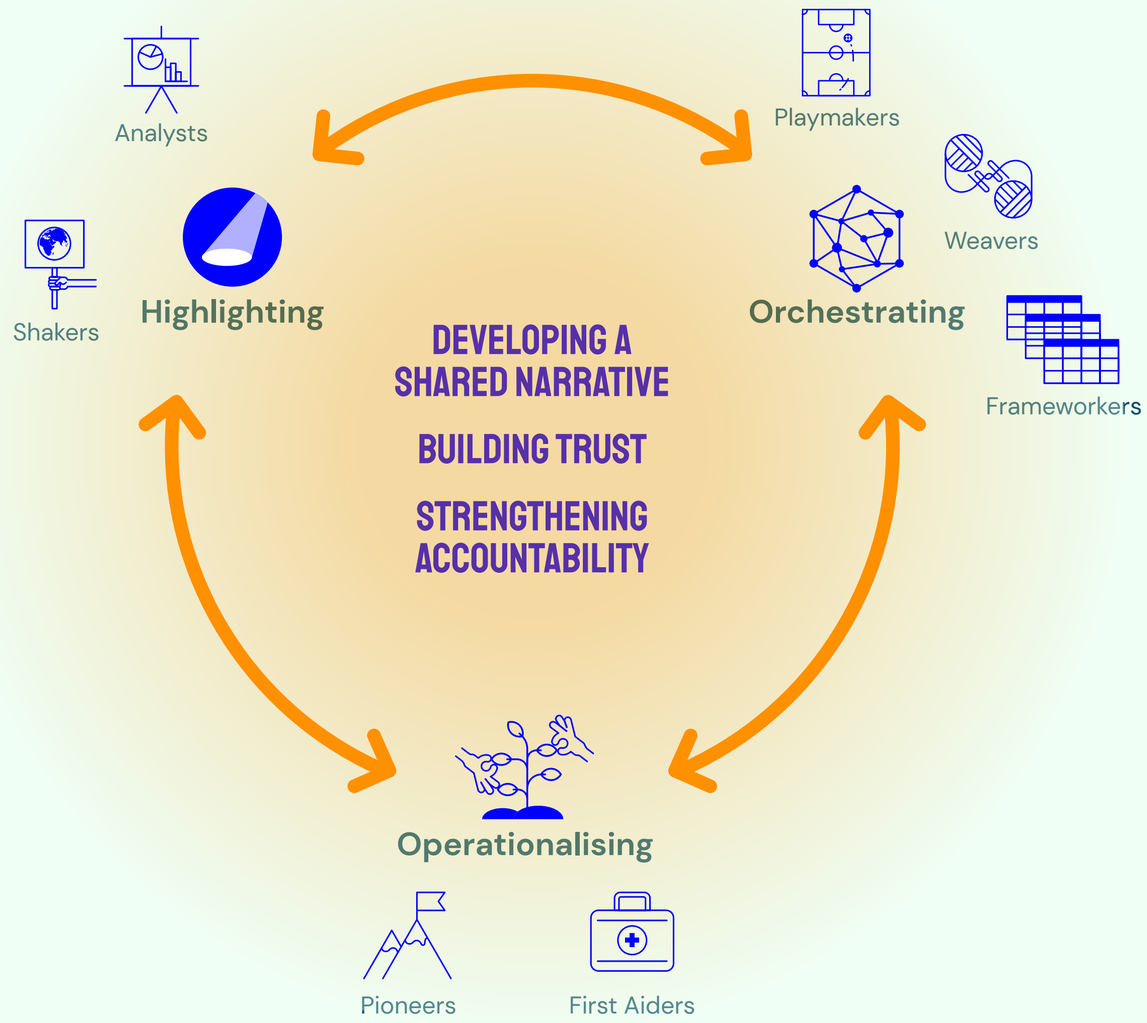


Figure 2: Fostering Catalytic Collaboration

3.1 Developing a Shared Narrative

One of the biggest challenges to collaboration in climate action is the lack of a widely shared vision of the alternative system that must be created to successfully address climate change. There are diverse, and sometimes competing, ways of framing goals and objectives, including phrases such as 'net-zero',[13] 'healthy recovery',[14] 'green and just recovery',[15] 'just transition'[16] and the 'Sustainable Development Goals' or 'Global Goals'.[17] Each of these frames consists of a mental model developed around a set of assumptions and political considerations.[18] While these distinct frames are valuable, motivating coordination action at scale will require linking existing frames and goals within an overarching narrative and compelling vision that, built on mutual understanding, is able to drive unprecedented cooperation.

Narratives allow people and organisations to make sense of the world. By telling and retelling a story, narratives orient people and thereby can stabilise collaboration, while also facilitating change.[19] In the climate action field, a new shared narrative has the potential to both connect organisations currently operating with competing frames and also to re-energise the movement. This will likely mobilise new actors not yet engaged in the climate action field, including a wide range of individual citizens, communities, businesses, civil society organisations and governments.

Some current initiatives offer glimmers of what will be required, but they remain partial and fragmented. For instance, the IPCC's 'climate-resilient development pathways' links multiple frames by combining temperature pathways with the SDGs. The primary focus on technical aspects of climate action, however, does not fully motivate action across the political spectrum. Facing a similar challenge, actors working to fight endemic forms of pollution developed the frame of 'closing the Ozone hole' to drive bipartisan efforts for environmental protection through the Montreal Protocol in the late 1980s. In the climate action field, the WHO's Manifesto for a Healthy Recovery from COVID-19 offers a frame that moves beyond technical goals, such as a specific temperature or reduction target, to instead prioritise resilience across sectors through health equity, professional leadership, scientific expertise and financial investments.

Various civil society groups are also making a significant effort to develop new narratives and frameworks. New social movements have formed, including Extinction Rebellion and the Sunrise Movement.[20] There are also initiatives and collectives emerging around the world to secure a 'Green New Deal' and a 'New Social Contract',[21] including recent efforts by groups in the Global South in the wake of COVID-19. Each are calling for the G7, G20 and COP26 to spark a recovery that is healthy, green and just.

Local efforts to influence education, policy, legislation, municipal budgets and business behaviour are flourishing as well, with mounting calls for countries and companies to declare a climate emergency. Similarly, the media and the entertainment industries are increasingly offering possible narratives through news stories, feature films inspired by science and documentaries detailing impacts on populations and ecosystems.

Building on these efforts, a compelling narrative is needed to crack the current crises, one that powerfully captures how social and economic systems can be transformed. Such a narrative would provide a clear story for mass audiences who are less familiar with the technical approaches pursued by climate action organisations. Our research points to three characteristics that this narrative should possess in order to motivate broad participation and collaboration:

Emphasising opportunity: We need a narrative that excites and energises people around a positive agenda, rather than weighing them down. One that activates a mindset of abundance, not scarcity, and helps people to see the potential that can arise from joining in and joining together. While the language of common responsibility is helpful, the new narrative must go beyond this to emphasise collective opportunity, integrating immediate questions around education, jobs and security. The approach taken by young leaders who organised 'Fridays For the Future' illustrates the power of positive frames that focus on opportunities rather than problems.

Integrating climate, development and health perspectives: We need a narrative that brings together multiple perspectives and components of the opportunity that stands before us in the Decisive Decade. It cannot be about climate or development or health in isolation. It must combine all three and show their deep interconnections.

Supporting local, distributed action: While the new narrative needs to resonate broadly, it must also allow and encourage diverse strategies for putting climate action into practice in different contexts, amongst different constituencies and across generations. We need a narrative that inspires and supports creative, innovative solutions tailored to their local settings, not one that calls for a one-size-fits-all approach.

3.2 Building Trust

To combat the challenges of fragmented and uneven involvement and move from 'weak' to 'strong' ties amongst actors who collectively possess the capacity to drive progress, we need to strengthen trust. Yet there is currently limited investment in convening, mentoring and creating safe spaces for dialogue, experimentation and collaboration. These investments are especially critical for building trust amongst businesses, civil society organisations and communities that differ in the power, perspective and resources that they bring to climate action. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this problem, as it is especially difficult to build trust without face-to-face interactions and direct facilitation and ideation.

Recent activity at the intersection of the climate action and health fields illustrates the importance of building trust across organisations representing different D7 roles to create a virtuous cycle of catalytic collaboration. Frontline medical professionals often operate in high-pressure, under-resourced environments, with high demands from the communities they serve. Connecting the field of health to climate action therefore requires enormous investment in relationship building so that the benefits and opportunities of engaging in climate action for improved long-term health outcomes are clear, while respecting the ongoing demands and emergencies health workers face. Our research reveals several key steps that businesses, civil society organisations and initiatives working at the intersection of health and climate action have taken to addresses these issues.

Some organisations, such as the Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change, worked to create a shared understanding and narrative to express the links between climate and health risks as well as the co-benefits of jointly managing these risks. Others, such as the EveryBreathMatters campaign, Doctors for Extinction Rebellion and those involved in the Health4Climate Strike, have shifted the public mindset by using powerful memes and tactics, including art installations of air pollution pods at the United Nations, to create a sense of responsibility and advocate for potential solutions.

Experimental funding programmes, such as the Climate and Health Funders Network and the Global Climate and Health Alliance, have enabled engagement and connections between experts and decision-makers. In tandem, organisations such as Healthcare Without Harm working through their Global Green and Healthy Hospitals initiative, have engaged medical professionals to develop best practices, shifting both informal norms and formal practices to minimise environmental impact and build resilience against climate risk. The WHO and other organisations, serving as Weavers, are translating these efforts into policy frameworks that integrate climate change and health. Figure 3 depicts these interconnected activities and shows how together they lay a foundation for catalytic collaboration at the intersection of climate and health.

While these efforts at the intersection of the climate action and health fields are promising, trust is not widespread or firmly developed across and within the full range of fields critical for transformation in the Decisive Decade.[22] In particular, there is limited space to openly and productively navigate difficult tensions at the intersection of climate change, development and human rights - at a principal and working level.

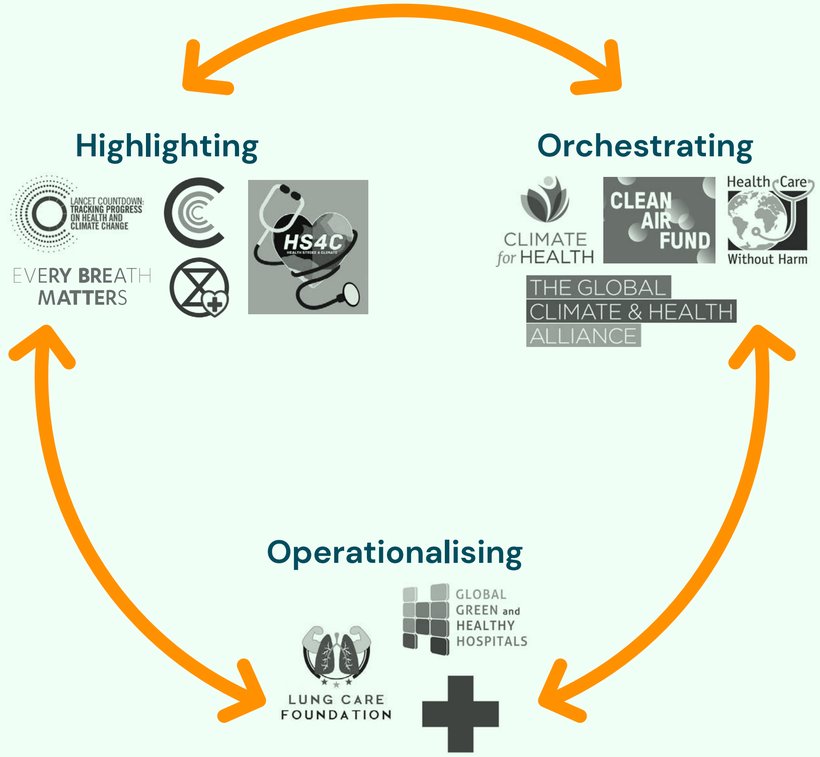


Figure 3: Catalytic Collaboration at the Intersection of the Climate and Health Fields

Our research points to several critical practices for moving forward and strengthening trust across a diverse range of businesses and civil society organisations. While it is tempting to see these practices as the responsibility of Playmakers and Weavers, who may engage in Orchestrating activities, all the D7 roles have the potential to contribute. Equally important, these practices require contributions from organisations across geographies and must be thoughtfully facilitated and cognisant of emerging theories of change. This will guard against the risk of a Northern and Western institutional and cultural bias dominating approaches to problem-solving and potentially undermining trust-building efforts. Inclusion is also important to ensure distributed, not just centralised forms, of organising and to allow for a healthy dose of competition, not just cooperation, to support innovation and accountability.

Creating space for open dialogue: Physical or virtual spaces can bring together businesses and civil society organisations with different perspectives, positions and resources, in order to create opportunities for open dialogue and mutual understanding to develop.[23] To realise these opportunities, such spaces must provide psychological safety, where people feel comfortable raising concerns and voicing alternative points of view. They also require thoughtful modes of facilitation to assist in exploring unknown possibilities that could lead to breakthrough innovations and partnerships.[24]

Developing 'both/and' leadership practices: Individual leaders powerfully shape the contexts in which trust can develop – or flounder. To be effective in building trust, leaders must strike a delicate balance between recognising and honouring different perspectives that diverse organisations bring to the table, while also drawing out their shared interests. This requires shifting from an 'either/or' to a 'both/and' approach, reflecting an integrative mindset that embraces the co-existence of multiple, seemingly competing, approaches and seeking integrative solutions rather than win-lose trade-offs between them.[25]

Offering opportunities for experimentation: While spaces for dialogue and a 'both/and' approach to leadership are critical, they must be complemented by opportunities for action. Trust emerges from 'learning by doing', as diverse individuals and organisations collaborate to solve complex problems - each bringing distinct skills and practices to the collective effort. Both those who are new to climate action and those who are longstanding members of the field need opportunities to try out novel approaches, learning and adapting from failures as much as from successes. Allowing for this kind of experimentation creates opportunities for new, unlikely relationships to form in a low-stakes environment, allowing trust to develop over time through joint action.[26]

3.3 Strengthening Accountability

We need to significantly strengthen frameworks for holding businesses accountable for their environmental and social performance. Trust alone is not enough for overcoming the challenges of fragmented and uneven engagement between and within key sectors. It is particularly critical to bolster accountability among businesses that exert substantial influence on the natural world and those with the resources to harness opportunities.

Despite numerous pledges and commitments to net-zero and other climate goals, mechanisms for enforcing commitments remain underdeveloped. In addition, while there are a number of regional, national and international frameworks that offer opportunities for linking climate goals with sustainable development and human rights, few firms are engaged in or linked to these efforts.[27]

Unless change happens now, emissions will significantly overshoot targets. The accompanying social fallout is likely by the end of the Decisive Decade, as broken climate action promises undermine public trust and confidence in the ability of firms and other non-state actors to address negative impacts on the biosphere.[28]

Across the climate action field, there are glimmers of initial progress in strengthening systems to support enhancements in accountability. Some approaches, such as the Climate Action Methodologies Data and Analysis (CAMDA) community and Climate TRACE (Tracking Real-time Atmospheric Carbon Emissions), focus on tracking and evaluating climate action through open data sharing and expert review. Meanwhile, investors are increasingly focused on environment, social and governance (ESG) indicators. Others focus on mandatory disclosure and regulatory standards, as illustrated by recent efforts of the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) as well as EU legislation that emphasises the importance of companies conducting environmental and human rights due diligence.[29] There are also emerging efforts to create standards around 'corporate purpose' and evolution in global accounting practices to capture the 'triple bottom line'.[30] However, new measurement methods and reporting standards are far from being generally accepted. The 'valuation gap' is, in essence, a 'translation gap' between social-environmental impact measurement models on the one side, and financial and economic valuation models on the other.

Current activity at the intersection of the climate action and finance fields illustrates efforts to strengthen accountability. While social movements, such as Extinction Rebellion, engage in 'financial disobedience', momentum is building within the business sector to develop stronger standards and targets for achieving net-zero emissions. Some organisations are working to set reporting standards for climate-related disclosures, green bonds and other frameworks that require verification at the firm level. Examples include the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board, the Global Reporting Initiative and the Taskforce on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures. More recent additions include the Sustainability Standards Board of the International Financial Reporting Standards Foundation, the Value Reporting Foundation and the Value Balancing Alliance.

Another set of organisations are creating targets and establishing best corporate practices for meeting them. Examples include the United Nations Environmental Program Finance Initiative and Principles for Responsible Investment, who together convened the Net Zero Asset Owner Alliance in partnership with World Wildlife Foundation and Mission 2020/Global Optimism. Foundations such as Bloomberg Philanthropies and initiatives such as Climate Action 100+ and the UNEP Finance Initiative are supporting these efforts by convening investors, regulators and standard setters. To establish the legitimacy of these standards, targets and best practices, many of these initiatives are drawing on scientific research, such as that produced by the Grantham Institute at the London School of Economics. Figure 4 depicts the interconnections amongst these organisations and initiatives.

Figure 4: Catalytic Collaboration at the Intersection of the Climate and Finance Fields

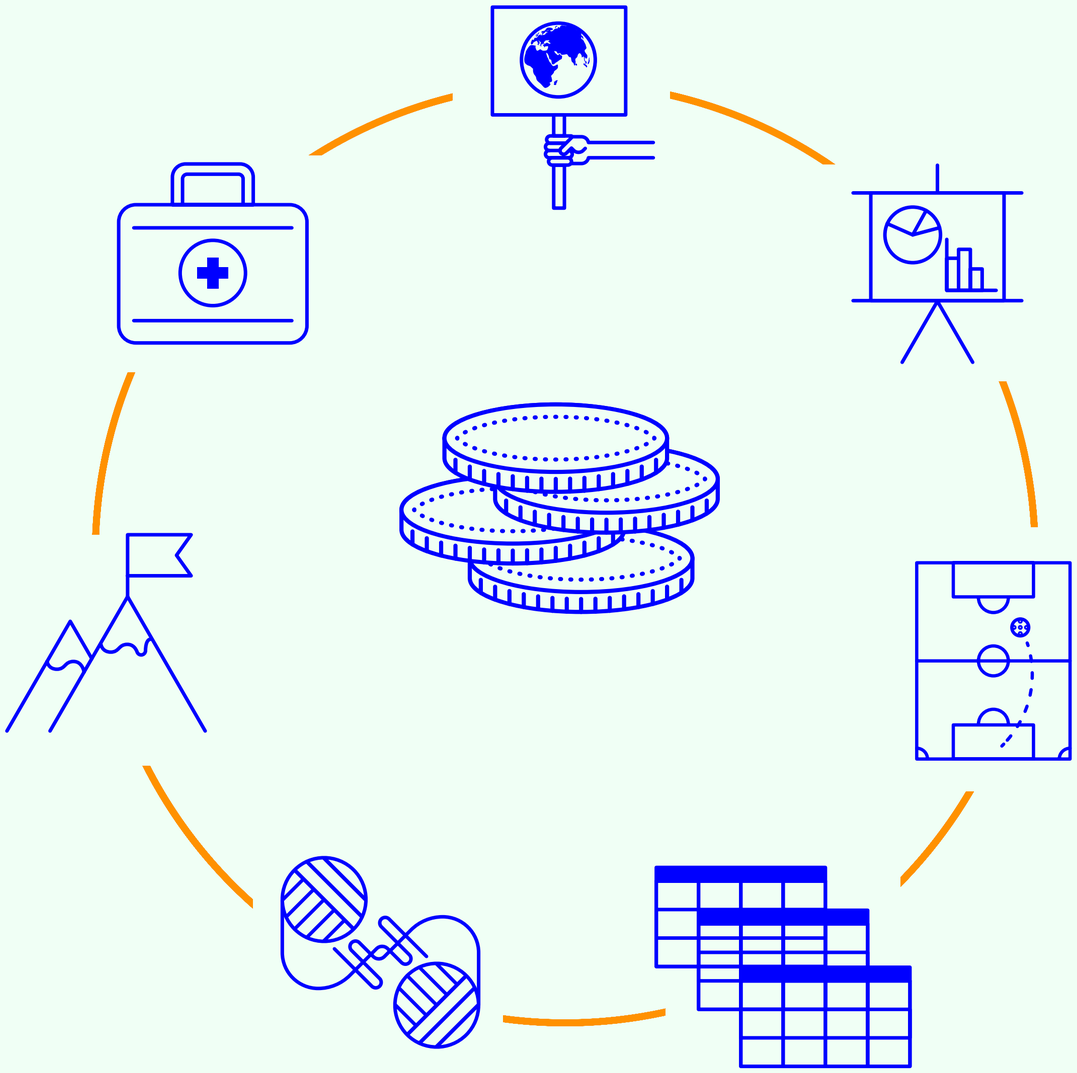
Our research revealed three leverage points that will be critical for further bolstering accountability:

Creating feedback mechanisms: The virtuous cycle between highlighting, orchestrating and operationalising activities needs to be strengthened by new standards of accountability and participatory governance. To trigger the behavioural change required for a just transition toward a thriving net-zero emissions economy, deeper connections must be established between those responsible for environmental loss and damage and those most affected by it. These connections are critical because those who are deeply affected by climate change, when properly supported, can be powerful agents of accountability for corporations and other organisations whose operations cause environmental harm. This is particularly important for minimising negative impacts of businesses in hard-to-abate sectors, such as energy, food, steel, aviation and transport. Similar connections are needed with businesses in clean energy industries, in order to ensure their solutions do not have unintended consequences for people and the planet. This is especially critical in low-income economies, where meaningful dialogue and collaboration amongst citizens, communities and corporations, can help to ensure the voices of those closest to the solutions are heard and that a positive response can be devised.[31]

Building organisational guardrails and regulations: Translating climate commitments into concrete and scalable targets is critical for strengthening accountability. Corporate action needs to be connected with states' nationally determined contributions to legally binding multilateral climate treaties and regulatory approaches that work across jurisdictions. Concrete targets function as 'guardrails' - they create boundaries within which firms must operationalise climate action, while providing flexibility in how they go about meeting their targets. Corporations should be held accountable in pursuing their targets with mechanisms that provide checks and balances on their social license to operate and on provisions for access to capital or government procurement. Firms joining alliances and initiatives should meet minimum membership criteria that are independently reviewed to ensure high climate ambition and accountability to avoid perceptions of 'greenwashing' or 'SDG washing', with a greater focus on the substance behind commitments and announcements.[32]

Redesigning measurement systems: Transparency and performance evaluation will need to become mandatory, with Frameworkers helping to develop standards of accountability in close collaboration with Analysts. This also includes investment in scientific research and education to improve understanding of cross-sector climate partnerships for clean and green R&D, developing new standards and systems of accounting and models for verification.[33] Measurement systems that integrate the perspectives of all stakeholders, including investors, regulators, communities, consumers and employees, can better support organisations fulfilling different D7 roles. While many businesses have practised triple bottom line accounting to consider environmental and social impacts, macro-economic indicators, such as GDP, have yet to catch up. Ultimately, we need a common framework for measuring human progress in the Decisive Decade, linking the 2030 Agenda, and its 17 Global Goals and 169 indicators, with the Paris Agreement.[34] To be embedded effectively within existing governance systems, new metrics have to be professionally and technically sound and also politically and culturally acceptable to a wide range of stakeholders.

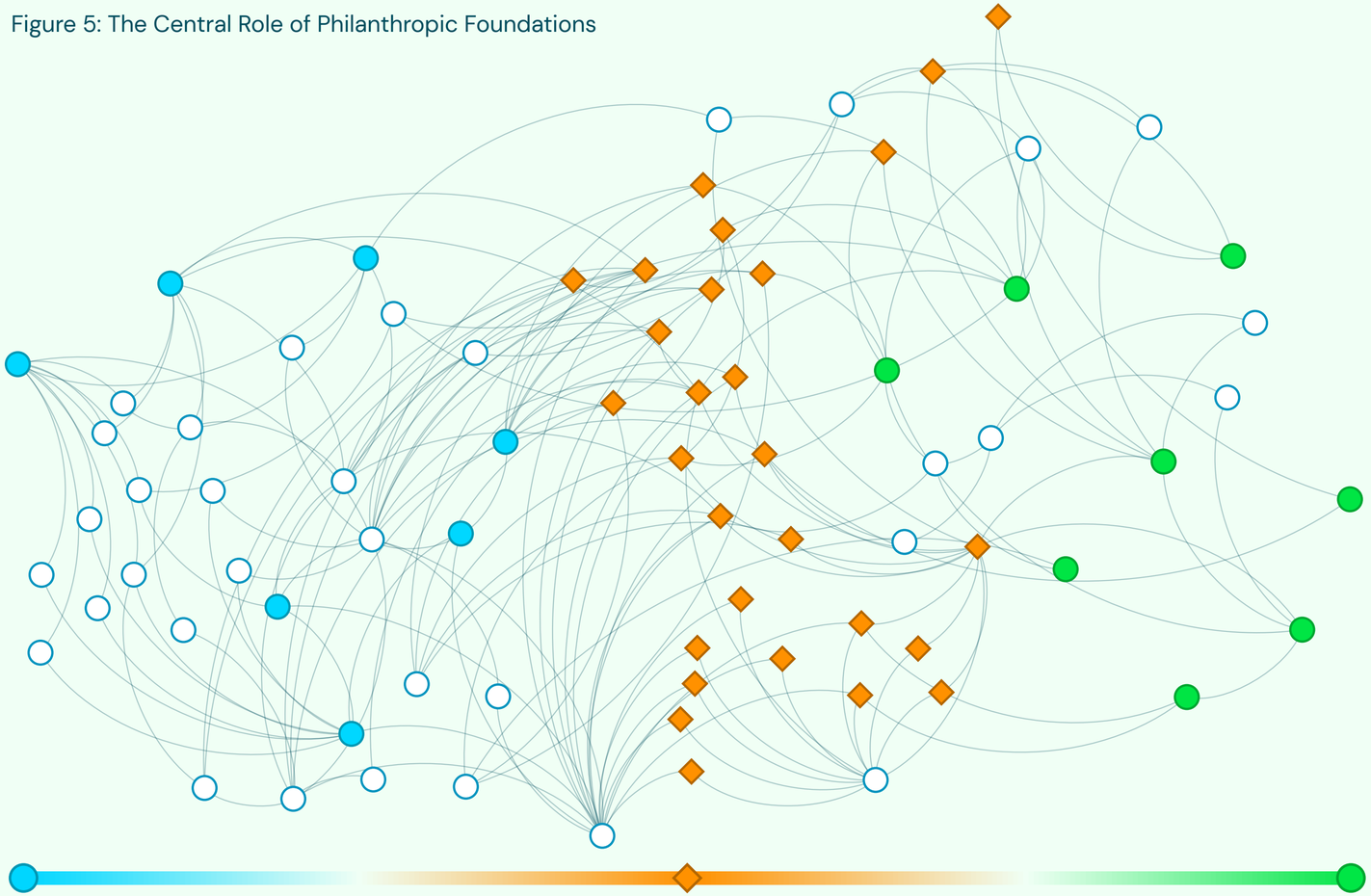
IMPLICATIONS FOR FUNDERS



Implications for Funders

Funders are especially well-positioned to help foster a virtuous cycle of catalytic collaboration. By serving as Playmakers who orchestrate relationships and resource flows across the field, they can strengthen connections across organisations playing different D7 roles. Figure 5 illustrates this potential by showing funders' central position in the network of initiatives and organisations working on climate action in the health and finance fields.

Figure 5: The Central Role of Philanthropic Foundations



Note: Climate initiatives and philanthropic foundations were identified based on interviews, workshops and document analysis conducted by the research team. Ties determined based on resource flows and common membership in climate initiatives, identified through analysis of grant databases and information from publicly available annual reports, websites, media releases and other communications. The figure was constructed using Cytoscape with nodes clustered using a prefuse force directed layout and ties treated as symmetrical and unweighted.

- Philanthropic foundations
- Climate finance initiatives
- Climate health initiatives
- Initiative members with at least two ties

Our research identified three key ways in which funders can leverage their central position to support the strategies described in Part 3. These approaches resonate with recent calls for 'catalytic capital' that operates over longer time horizons and involves 'greater patience, tolerance, concessionality and flexibility than conventional investing.'[35]

Invest in orchestrating to build the D7 ecosystem: Philanthropic foundations are uniquely positioned to bridge disconnected actors. By convening organisations across the D7 roles, funders can move beyond the traditional grant-maker-and-seeker relationship and create opportunities for building trust. By focusing on convening and building connections between those holding the most resources and those who are most impacted by climate change, funders can also help to strengthen accountability. At the same time, funders are not the only organisations with the potential to engage in orchestrating. Weavers and Frameworkers are also critical. Yet they often struggle to realise their potential as orchestrators, because restricted, project-based funding makes it difficult to engage in the kinds of activities that are most needed for strengthening the climate action field. By dedicating non-restricted funds to orchestrating activities, funders can help to support Weavers and Frameworkers in this capacity.

Foster experimentation and continuous learning: Support for uncertain but potentially high-impact solutions will be critical in unlocking the potential of the Decisive Decade. By investing in new, experimental approaches, funders can support the operationalising activities of Pioneers and First Aiders who have the potential to develop breakthrough innovations, test novel solutions and deliver them on the ground. Moreover, funding these activities over a longer time horizon will enable Pioneers and First Aiders to develop much-needed organisational capacity. It can take years, if not decades, to build-up and maintain the capacity for direct action. Planning horizons of multiple decades are needed to create a robust innovation ecosystem. This approach is evident in conservation and place-based finance, where 'bold bets' over long time frames are relatively common, but it is rarely found in the climate action field. Even though climate action organisations are also tackling long-term intersectional challenges, they tend to have limited runway for planning, alignment, design, development and deployment of organising strategies.

Adopt inclusive and collective funding practices to support climate action across diverse sectors and regions: More inclusive funding practices are needed to ensure support for organisations in key geographies, especially those in the Global South and other areas with under-represented populations. Such practices are important in themselves and can help drive innovation and novel solutions. To realise this potential, funders need to be open to a plurality of theories of change, grounded in diverse local knowledge bases, and to ensure grants are accessible to vulnerable populations and those most affected by climate change. Equally critical are collective funding practices that support cross-organisational and cross-sector partnerships, rather than individual organisations. By bringing together organisations with different approaches and capabilities, collective funding practices create productive tensions that can facilitate innovation. Moreover, once proven solutions are identified, collective approaches allow for scaling. To improve the incentives for collaboration, funders can develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that measure partnership, not just organisational, success.

A Call to Action

Every generation faces a moment when the world stands at a crossroads. In the 1980s initial efforts for climate action came to an abrupt end when climate change was reframed from a scientific fact requiring urgent action into an uncertain and divisive political question.[36] In the 2020s we have the potential to choose a different future.[37]

Opportunities for systemic interventions exist across our economy, from the design of our energy and transportation systems to the future of our food and dietary systems, as well as in heavy industry, housing and even within the solutions inspired by nature, which hold the key to some of the most practical and regenerative approaches. We can realize these opportunities by highlighting positive examples, orchestrating partnerships and operationalising action.

While the road is uncertain, the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 demonstrated that unprecedented collaboration amongst medical scientists, doctors, businesses, culture-shapers, civil society organisations, local communities and government leaders, while often halting and fragile, is possible. We do have the capacity and the tools to mobilise global collective action.

Looking ahead to the challenges of the Decisive Decade, it is clear that the only way to power the future is by learning from history, honouring what the fossil fuel era has given us as we grieve all that has been lost, while working together to forge a new direction. To do so, we must evolve and reinvent our current ways of working, and being, as individuals, organisations, communities, nations and regions, to unleash a virtuous cycle of catalytic collaboration. We hope this report offers both the inspiration and strategic direction needed to seize this opportunity and organise in new ways, now and for generations to come.

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Organisations and Initiatives in our Research Sample

Civil Society	Business & Finance	Professional & Scientific	Philanthropic	Intergovernmental
350.org	2 Degrees Investing Initiative	Climate and Clean Air Coalition	Bloomberg Philanthropies	International Federation of the Red Cross
BSR	Carbon Disclosure Standards Board	Columbia University Earth Institute	Childrens' Investment Fund Foundation	International Labour Organisation
Carbon Disclosure Project	Climate Bonds Initiative	Columbia University Mailman School	Clean Air Fund	LIFE Programme of the European Union
Carbon Tracker Initiative	Financial Sector Guidance on Science based Targets	Ecohealth Alliance	ClimateWorks Foundation	Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure
Ceres	Global Investor Coalition on Climate Change	Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health	David and Lucile Packard Foundation	United Nations Development Programme
Climate Strategies	Global Reporting Initiative	Health and Environment Alliance	European Climate Foundation	United Nations Environment Programme - Finance Initiative
Environmental Defense Fund	International Integrated Reporting Council	Healthcare without Harm	Ford Foundation	World Bank
Extinction Rebellion	Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation	World Health Organisation
Fridays for Future	Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials	Global Climate and Health Alliance	Growald Family Fund	World Meteorological Organisation
Global Footprint Network	Principles for Responsible Investments	Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change	Health and Climate Fast-Start Fund	
Greenpeace	Sustainability Accounting Standards Board	Lancet-Rockefeller Commission on Planetary Health	Health and Environmental Funders Network	
International Trade Union Confederation	The B Team	Medact	IKEA Foundation	
Mission 2020	The Investor Agenda	Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health	KR Foundation	
Natural Resources Defense Council	World Business Council for Sustainable Development	Stockholm Resilience Centre	MacArthur Foundation	
Oxfam		Lung Care Foundation	Oak Foundation	
Race to Zero Campaign			Rockefeller Brothers Fund	
Rocky Mountain Institute			Rockefeller Foundation	
The Nature Conservancy			Wellcome Trust	
World Resources Institute			William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	
World Wildlife Fund				