

Climate Action Checklist for Manitoba Business

Getting Started

At first glance, taking climate action may seem like a daunting or even insurmountable task, but it doesn't need to be. In Manitoba, business leaders are realizing they can begin simply by identifying their greatest sources of carbon emissions and prioritizing actions to reduce these over time. Additionally, business operators can assess their most critical vulnerabilities and opportunities, both in terms of the physical impacts of climate change and the related market conditions and policy incentives.

Creating a climate action strategy for your business with the aid of an easy-to-follow checklist is a great way to take this challenge and break it down into manageable pieces. At a Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME) Climate Action Forum held in Winnipeg in 2019, Red River College described how they segmented their approach into a “home game” and “away game” to distinguish between internal operations and the products and services their business offered, which is how you'll see the following checklist structured as well.

- Home Game.** These are actions your business can take through the operation of buildings, facilities and vehicle fleets to reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to climate change. For example: increase the energy efficiency of your buildings; capture carbon through tree planting; enhance flood protection for vulnerable facilities; maintain backup power systems etc.
- Away Game.** These are actions your business can take through the types of products and services offered, to realize and incentivize reductions in carbon emissions and boost climate change adaptation. For example: offering low-interest loans for energy-efficient upgrades; providing technical services for renewable energy installations; source and/or produce products that are sustainable and help homeowners and other businesses manage flood and drought conditions etc.

Home Game Strategy

Use this checklist as a guide to creating your *Home Game* strategy for taking climate action through business operations. Adjacent to the checklist items you will see a “More info” link. Clicking on these will automatically take you to the relevant section in the “Supplemental Guidance Notes” at the end of this document for additional information.

Step 1: Discuss the rationale for taking climate action in business operations.

- Discuss** the rationale for taking climate action through business operations with managers and staff and brainstorm on ideas. [More info](#)
- Research** the latest trends and best practices in facility management, building energy efficiency and fleet fuel efficiency.
- Quantify** your energy use and carbon emissions across your operations. [More info](#)

Step 2: Identify ways to reduce carbon emissions in business operations and take priority actions.

- Avoid** creating carbon emissions where possible. [More info](#)
- Reduce** energy use in carbon-intensive operational areas. [More info](#)
- Replace** high-carbon sources of energy with renewable energy alternatives. [More info](#)
- Offset** emissions by purchasing *carbon offsets* where you cannot reduce emissions yourself. [More info](#)

Step 3: Increase resilience to climate change.

- Assess** climate change vulnerability and risk in business operations. [More info](#)
- Mitigate** priority risks and build resilience to climate change. [More info](#)

Step 4: Communicate your climate actions and continually improve.

- Communicate** your climate actions with staff and stakeholders. [More info](#)
- Review** climate actions with managers and staff to discuss lessons learned and make improvements where needed.

Away Game Strategy

Use this checklist as a guide to create your Away Game strategy for taking climate action through the products and services you offer to customers and clients.

- Step 1: Discuss the rationale for taking climate action in products and services.**
 - Discuss** the rationale for taking climate action through products and services with managers and staff and brainstorm ideas. [More info](#)
 - Research** the latest trends and best practices in low-carbon products and services in your sector and learn what your competitors are doing.
 - Quantify** the energy use and carbon emissions of your products and services. [More info](#)

- Step 2: Identify ways to reduce carbon emissions from your products and services and take priority actions.**
 - Avoid** using carbon-intensive materials in your supply chain. [More info](#)
 - Reduce** energy use and carbon emissions from your production and service lines. [More info](#)
 - Replace** high-carbon sources of energy used in your production and service lines with renewable energy alternatives. [More info](#)
 - Innovate** by producing and/or promoting new products and services that have no or low-carbon emissions or that can contribute to the lowering of carbon emissions. [More info](#)

- Step 3: Increase resilience to climate change in your products and services.**
 - Assess** vulnerability and risk to climate change in your products and services. [More info](#)
 - Mitigate** priority risks in your products and services and build resilience to climate change. [More info](#)

- Step 4: Look for new market opportunities resulting from climate change.**
 - Scan** for new market opportunities emerging as a direct or indirect result of climate change and discuss with managers and staff. [More info](#)
 - Leverage** new market opportunities where feasible.

- Step 5: Communicate your climate actions and continually improve.**
 - Communicate** your climate actions with staff and stakeholders. [More info](#)
 - Review** climate actions with managers and staff to discuss lessons learned and make improvements where needed.

Supplemental Guidance Notes

Home Game: Rationale

For more information on the urgency of taking climate action, refer to the Climate Change Primer for Manitoba Business <https://mbchamber.mb.ca/climate-change-action-toolkit-for-manitoba-business/>

Quantify Energy Use and Carbon Emissions in Your Home Game

A simple qualitative mapping of sources of carbon emissions can be conducted through discussions in a regular staff meeting format. For a more rigorous analysis, seek the services of a qualified energy auditor and carbon emissions expert.

For guidance see: <http://carbonfootprintmanagement.com/roadmap-carbon-neutral-business/>

For training and certification on the basics of organization GHG accounting: <https://ghginstitute.org/product/201-basics-organizational-ghg-accounting/>

For technical support, training and certification see: <https://climatesmartbusiness.com/how-it-works/>

Home Game: Avoid

Avoid creating carbon emissions from buildings, facilities and vehicle fleets where possible, including by recycling or reusing materials, eliminating the use of carbon-intensive materials, and/or using electric vehicles.

Home Game: Reduce

For guidance on how to reduce energy use and carbon emissions see:

<https://wbcspdpublications.org/integrated-energy-strategy/>

<http://carbonfootprintmanagement.com/roadmap-carbon-neutral-business/>

For technical support, training and certification on reducing energy use and carbon emissions see: <https://climatesmartbusiness.com/how-it-works/>

Home Game: Replace

For guidance on replacing carbon-intensive sources of energy with renewable alternatives see: <http://carbonfootprintmanagement.com/roadmap-carbon-neutral-business/>

For technical support, training and certification see: <https://climatesmartbusiness.com/how-it-works/>

Home Game: Offset

For an explanation of the basics of offsetting carbon emissions visit: <https://davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/carbon-offsets/>

For additional guidance see: <http://carbonfootprintmanagement.com/roadmap-carbon-neutral-business/>

For technical support, training and certification see: <https://climatesmartbusiness.com/how-it-works/>

Increasing Climate Resilience: Home Game

Assessing your business's vulnerabilities to climate change and the risks your business faces can be accomplished by addressing the following questions:

- A. What are the business activities, systems and facilities in use across your value chain?
- B. Which climate parameters can directly affect your business activities, systems and facilities? How might climate change indirectly affect your business activities, systems and facilities, i.e., through changes in policy, consumer preferences or market prices?
- C. For potentially affected business activities, systems and facilities, what is the potential degree of risk?
- D. For high-risk areas, what adaptation actions can be taken now and which could be triggered later to mitigate the risk?

For a simple qualitative assessment of vulnerability and risk, ask the above questions in a series of meetings. For a more rigorous and quantitative assessment of risk, seek out the services of a qualified climate change resilience specialist/risk assessor who can facilitate your internal discussion and arrange for the necessary expert climatological analyses.

For International Standards on Risk Management: <https://www.iso.org/iso-31000-risk-management.html>

For more information and technical support on climate resilience, risk and adaptation visit:

- www.iisd.org/topic/climate-change-adaptation
- <http://prairieclimatecentre.ca/>
- <https://novelfutures.com/climate-resilience-%26-risk>
- <https://www.risksciences.com/sector/climate-change-adaptation/>

Communicate

For communicating climate action within your business and with external stakeholders, refer to the Manitoba Climate Action Communications Guide for Business <https://mbchamber.mb.ca/climate-change-action-toolkit-for-manitoba-business/>

For additional guidance see: <http://carbonfootprintmanagement.com/roadmap-carbon-neutral-business/>

For technical support, training and certification see: <https://climatesmartbusiness.com/how-it-works/>

Away Game: Rationale

For more information on the urgency of taking climate action, refer to the Climate Change Primer for Manitoba Business <https://mbchamber.mb.ca/climate-change-action-toolkit-for-manitoba-business/>

Quantify Energy Use and Carbon Emissions in Your Away Game

Carbon life cycle assessment and analysis is a methodology that can be used to quantify the carbon footprint of a product or service offered. For more information and guidance, refer to the following:

- <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/carbon-footprint-vs-life-cycle-2878059>
- <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/productlifecycle.html>

- <https://www.myclimate.org/get-active/corporate-clients/product-carbon-footprints-pcf-and-life-cycle-assessments-lca-myclimate/>
- <https://www.agri-footprint.com/life-cycle-assessments-carbon-footprints/>

Away Game: Avoid

Avoid creating carbon emissions through the products and services your business offers, including by recycling or reusing materials, eliminating the use of carbon-intensive materials in your product and service lines.

Away Game: Reduce

In many cases, you may discover that your products and services are already contributing to carbon reductions. If so, great, communicate and brag about this to your employees and stakeholders (see the Manitoba Climate Action Communications Guide for Business, <https://mbchamber.mb.ca/climate-change-action-toolkit-for-manitoba-business/>). In cases where your products and services result in increased carbon emissions, brainstorm with staff on ways in which such products and services could be made carbon-neutral, for example through: technological changes, using recycled or reusable materials in your manufacturing line, providing guidance to customers on more efficient use of products, offering loans or investments that incentivize carbon reductions, incorporating renewable energy options, or on purchasing carbon offsets.

For guidance on how to reduce energy use and carbon emissions through your product and service lines see: <http://carbonfootprintmanagement.com/roadmap-carbon-neutral-business/>

For technical support, training and certification on reducing energy use and carbon emissions see: <https://climatesmartbusiness.com/how-it-works/>

Away Game: Replace

For guidance on replacing carbon-intensive sources of energy with renewable alternatives see: <http://carbonfootprintmanagement.com/roadmap-carbon-neutral-business/>

For technical support, training and certification see: <https://climatesmartbusiness.com/how-it-works/>

Away Game: Innovate

For guidance on business innovation for climate change see:

- <https://www.wbcd.org/Overview/News-Insights/Insights-from-the-President/Business-needs-to-do-what-it-does-best-to-innovate-and-set-up-action-plans-to-get-to-a-1.5-degree-world>
- <https://www.nbs.net/articles/how-can-businesses-tackle-the-climate-change-catastrophe>
- http://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/ghgp/Product%20Innovation%20Standard_%20concept%20note%20May%202014.pdf
- <https://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2011/10/18/how-hp-daimler-jci-alstom-are-leading-low-carbon-innovation>

For guidance, training and certification see: <https://climatesmartbusiness.com/how-it-works/>

Increasing Climate Resilience: Away Game

Assessing the vulnerability of your products and services to climate change and the risks your business faces can be accomplished by addressing the following questions:

- A. Which climate parameters can directly affect your products and services (i.e., extreme rainfall, flooding, drought, snowpack, ice thickness, etc.)? How might climate change indirectly affect your products and services, i.e., through changes in policy, consumer demand or market prices? For more information on potential physical risks of climate change and indirect risks due to changing market conditions, see the Climate Change Primer for Manitoba Business <https://mbchamber.mb.ca/climate-change-action-toolkit-for-manitoba-business/>.
- B. For potentially affected products and services, what is the potential degree of risk?
- C. For high-risk areas, what adaptation actions can be taken now and which could be triggered later to mitigate the risk?

For a simple qualitative assessment of vulnerability and risk, the questions above can be asked in a series of regular staff meetings. For a more rigorous and quantitative assessment of risk, seek out the services of a qualified climate change resilience specialist/risk assessor who can facilitate your internal discussion and arrange for the necessary expert climatological analyses.

For International Standards on Risk Management: <https://www.iso.org/iso-31000-risk-management.html>

For more information and technical support on climate resilience, risk and adaptation visit: www.iisd.org/topic/climate-change-adaptation; <http://prairieclimatecentre.ca/>; <https://novelfutures.com/climate-resilience-%26-risk>; <https://www.risksciences.com/sector/climate-change-adaptation/>

Once actions have been identified for adapting to climate change, it is then possible to identify those climate actions that can reduce carbon emissions while at the same time helping your business adapt to climate change. These types of actions are referred to as co-benefits. You can search for these types of carbon reduction and climate adaptation [co-benefits](#) in your business by cross-referencing your carbon reduction priorities on the one hand with your key vulnerabilities and risks to a changing climate on the other.

Scanning for New Market Opportunities Resulting From Climate Change

There are a variety of methods and techniques to scan for emerging issues and opportunities, including [foresight and scenario analysis](#), [SWOT](#) analysis, [STEEP](#) Analysis, [CATWOE](#) analysis, etc.

For more information on potential market opportunities resulting from climate change refer to the Climate Change Primer for Manitoba Business <https://mbchamber.mb.ca/climate-change-action-toolkit-for-manitoba-business/>.

For guidance on foresight and scenario planning visit:

<https://www.iisd.org/foresightgroup/>
<https://novelfutures.com/foresight>

About This Tool

This checklist tool is part of the Climate Action Toolkit for Manitoba Business, a partnership between Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and the Winnipeg-based International Institute for Sustainable Development. The aim of the initiative is to connect with SMEs across the province to raise awareness of the opportunities and risks that climate change poses to businesses, explore the types of climate action that can leverage opportunities and reduce risk, and to break down the barriers that businesses are experiencing in taking climate action.

For more information about this initiative and this tool, visit the Climate Action Toolkit online at <https://mbchamber.mb.ca/climate-change-action-toolkit-for-manitoba-business/>.

About the Partners

The Manitoba Chambers of Commerce was established in 1931 and is the umbrella organization for Manitoba's chamber movement. With a membership comprised of local chambers of commerce as well as direct corporate members, the MCC is Manitoba's largest business lobby, representing more than 10,000 businesses and community leaders. Its mission is to champion sustainable economic growth leading to greater prosperity for business and communities in Manitoba.

 mbchamber.mb.ca

 [mbchambersofcom](https://twitter.com/mbchambersofcom)

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is an independent think tank championing sustainable solutions to 21st-century problems. Our mission is to promote human development and environmental sustainability. We do this through research, analysis and knowledge products that support sound policy-making. Our big-picture view allows us to address the root causes of some of the greatest challenges facing our planet today: ecological destruction, social exclusion, unfair laws and economic rules, a changing climate. IISD's staff of over 120 people, plus over 50 associates and 100 consultants, come from across the globe and from many disciplines. Our work affects lives in nearly 100 countries. Part scientist, part strategist—IISD delivers the knowledge to act.

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