

Assessment Task 1: Corporate motivations

This assignment addresses the following unit learning outcomes:

1. Acquire an understanding of climate change mitigation with respect to political, environmental, regulatory and economic impacts on business in the Australian and global context.
3. Evaluate the supply and demand side aspects of industries that are the principal GHG emitters and their capacity to mitigate such emissions.
5. Acquire practical research skills including the ability to work in groups of diverse cultural and social backgrounds and investigate academic, institutional and public media sources.

Background

The Paris Agreement entered into force on the 4th of November 2016. This commits countries who have signed and ratified the Agreement to:

“Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change” (UNFCCC, 2015, pg. 3).

This agreement builds on global momentum for nations, companies and individuals to take action on climate change and reduce their emissions.

Companies are increasingly making public commitments to take action on climate change. Platforms such as We Mean Business (WMB) provide opportunities for companies to disclose and publicise their commitments.

For example, as of 09/06/2021, 2,537 companies had pledged to take action under one or more of the WMB initiatives. Commitments include:

- Adopting a science-based emissions reduction target
- Committing to 100% renewable power
- Committing to electric vehicles and charging infrastructure
- Removing commodity-driven deforestation from all supply chains by 2025
- Putting a price on carbon

Task

Overview of the task:

*Your task is to choose a company that has made significant public commitments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and analyse **ONE** of their commitments in more detail.*

Step 1: Choose your company

It is recommended that you choose a company listed on We Mean Business or another commitment platform, but you can choose any company that has made significant public commitments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions through the media.

Step 2: Provide a brief overview of your company and their commitments to reduce emissions

You are required to provide a very brief overview of the company (i.e. industry, location and main areas of operation, size (no. of employees, revenue etc.)) and the commitments they have made to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. You will also need to briefly explain why the commitments they have made are significant.

Step 3: Provide a critical analysis of ONE of the commitments your company has made

You are required to provide a critical analysis of one of your company's commitments. For example, your company may have committed to 100% renewable energy by 2040, to switch to electric vehicles by 2025, and to commit \$20M to carbon forestry projects. For Step 3, you would choose ONE of those commitments to analyse. For example, if you chose the company's commitment to switch to electric vehicles by 2025, this section would analyse only that commitment in detail.

The analysis of the commitment should consider:

- What is likely to have motivated your chosen company to make this commitment
- If and how the company has put this commitment into operation and/or incorporated it into their business strategy
- What opportunities and risks your company may face from making and pursuing this commitment
- Whether the company is on track to fulfil their commitment; and
- How your company compares to others in their sector in terms of their commitment and action to address climate change.

To undertake your analysis it is strongly suggested that you look at publicly available information such as company reports, media reports and published analysis of business action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in addition to background reading provided via Moodle.

Assessment requirements and available marks

Assessment Requirements	Questions to consider in your response (you do not have to answer all of them)	Available Marks
Summary description of your chosen company and their public commitments to reduce emissions, including briefly explaining why these commitments are significant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does your company do?• Where are they located? Key inputs/supply chains?• What commitments has your company made?• Why are they significant? (first in sector, big emitter, hard to abate sector, influential, scale of commitment)• Do they align with the commitments of the Paris Agreement?	5
Discussion of the likely business motivations behind the specific commitment you are choosing to interrogate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What drivers (financial, regulatory, reputational) have motivated your company to make this public commitment?• Please note, it is expected that you outline the business motivations that are likely to have influenced your company to make the specific	20

	commitment. This will require that you look beyond media announcements and corporate statements.	
Identification and analysis of opportunities and risks the company may face by making and pursuing this commitment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the risks and opportunities small or large? • What action is being taken to manage these risks or embrace opportunities? 	20
Analysis of how the company has (or has not) put this commitment into operation and/or incorporated the commitment into their business strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this commitment being translated into concrete strategy and action? 	15
Analysis of the company's progress towards fulfilling this commitment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What action are they taking? • Have they made progress? • Are they on track? 	10
Discussion of how the company compares to others in their sector on their commitments and action on climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do your company's commitments compare to similar companies' commitments? • Would they be in a leadership position within their sector? Are they falling behind their competitors? 	20
Presentation, structure and referencing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is your essay clearly presented and structured logically? • Have you properly referenced all your sources? 	10

Key information

Type	Individual
Word Limit	1250 words not including reference list
Weighting	15% of total unit mark
Due Date	11:55pm (23:55) Thursday, 19 August 2021
Submission	Through submission link on Moodle. Assignment must be submitted with the assignment cover page. Please keep a copy of the assignment for your records.
Extensions	Must be approved by the subject coordinator (Holly Dillabough) no later than Monday, 16 August. Extensions may be granted after this date in exceptional circumstances.
Penalty for late submission	10% of the mark awarded will be deducted for each 24 hour period or part thereof after the due date/time

Reference List

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 2015, *Paris Agreement*.

Available via:

http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

We Mean Business, 2021, *About*. Available via: <https://www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/about>