Review of "Later is Too Late" report produced by Potential Energy Coalition (Nov2023)

"The time for action is now. We must move beyond rhetoric to tangible, sustained efforts to secure a liveable future for all." (Potential Energy, 2023).

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Summary for more detailed reading

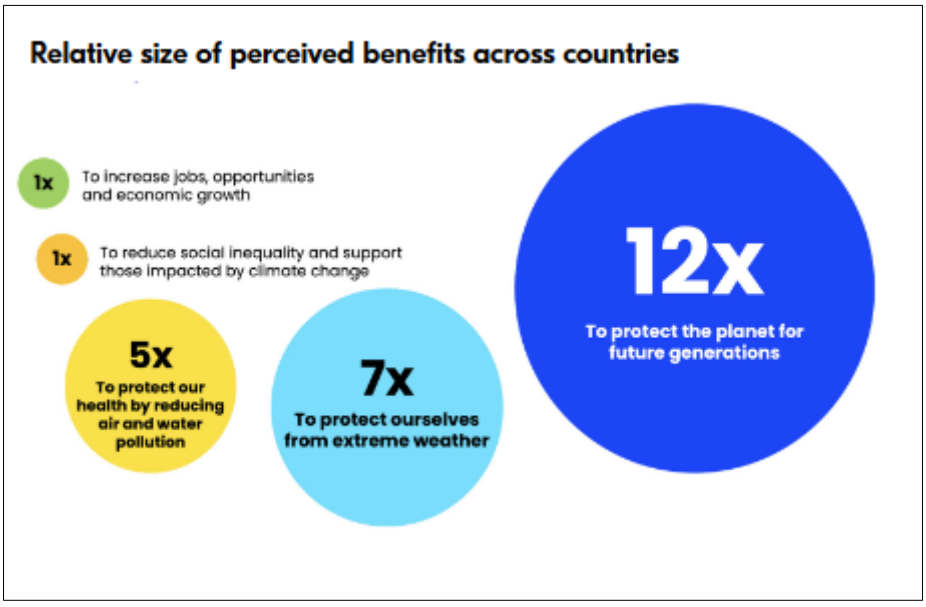
The report "Later is Too Late," authored by Potential Energy, is a comprehensive 114-page document that highlights the critical need for immediate climate action. Findings are derived from an international online survey of adults (18+) conducted by the Potential Energy Coalition, with instrument design and analysis conducted in partnership with the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, The Meliore Foundation (Global Strategic Communications Council), and Zero Ideas. Responses were collected from 23 countries worldwide, from respondents who were part of an online panel and opted into the survey. Fieldwork was conducted between June 12 and August 28,2023.

It addresses the urgency and consequences of inaction, the economic and social impacts of climate change, and provides detailed recommendations for technological and policy solutions.

Below is a detailed review of the report, covering Key Findings and areas that are not addressed.

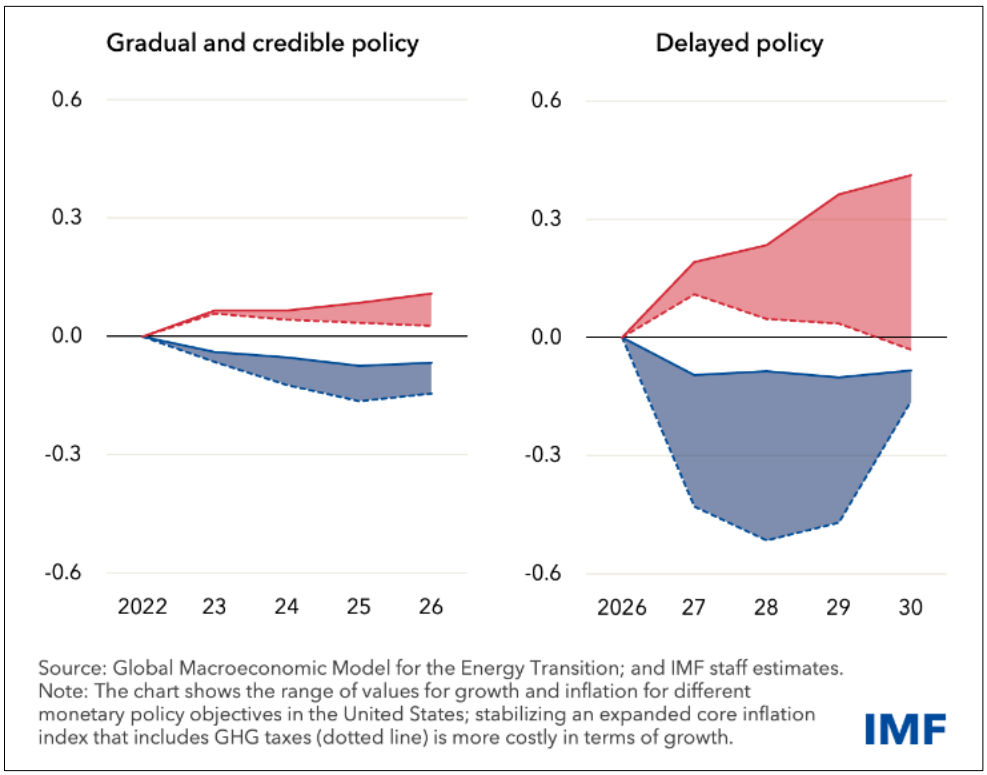
Introduction

The report begins with a powerful message, emphasising the shrinking window of opportunity to mitigate climate change. The introduction sets the tone for the entire report, highlighting the urgency of taking immediate, decisive action to prevent catastrophic outcomes. This study provides evidence that support for climate change is becoming planet and state wide and the primary motivation is less on economic stability and more on preserving a fit place for future generations to inherit (see below)



(Source - Later is Too Late report)

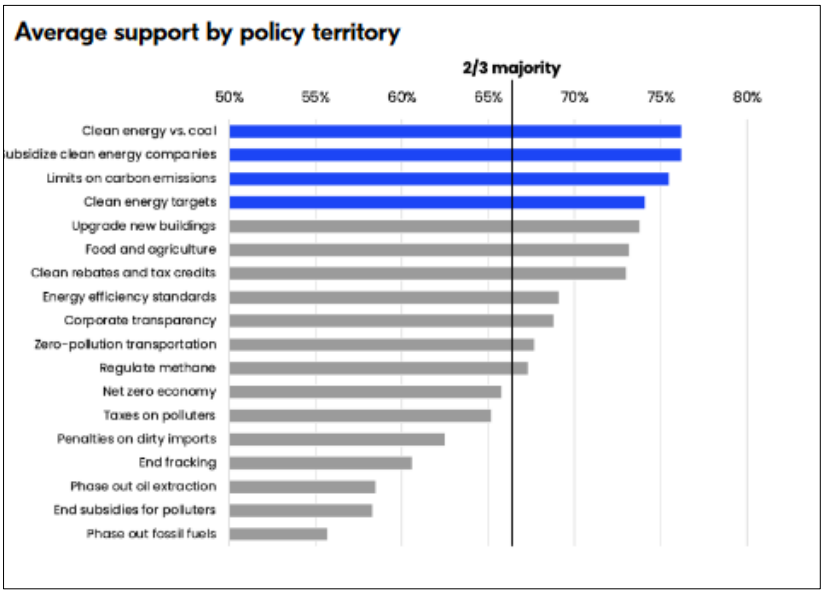
Key Finding: The introduction stresses that we are at a pivotal moment, where the actions taken (or not taken) today will have significant long-term consequences. The report's urgency is underlined by a from the executive summary: “Every year of inaction costs us billions of dollars and brings us closer to irreversible damage.”



1: The Economic Cost of Inaction

"Delaying action will lead to catastrophic costs." This delves into the economic repercussions of inaction, providing detailed projections of the financial impacts of climate change. The report emphasizes that the cost of inaction will far exceed the cost of taking immediate action to mitigate climate change.

Key Finding: The projects that by 2050, climate related disasters, loss of productivity, and health care costs could cost the global economy trillions of dollars annually. A key from this section reads, “The cost of doing nothing is not zero; it is a number we cannot afford.”



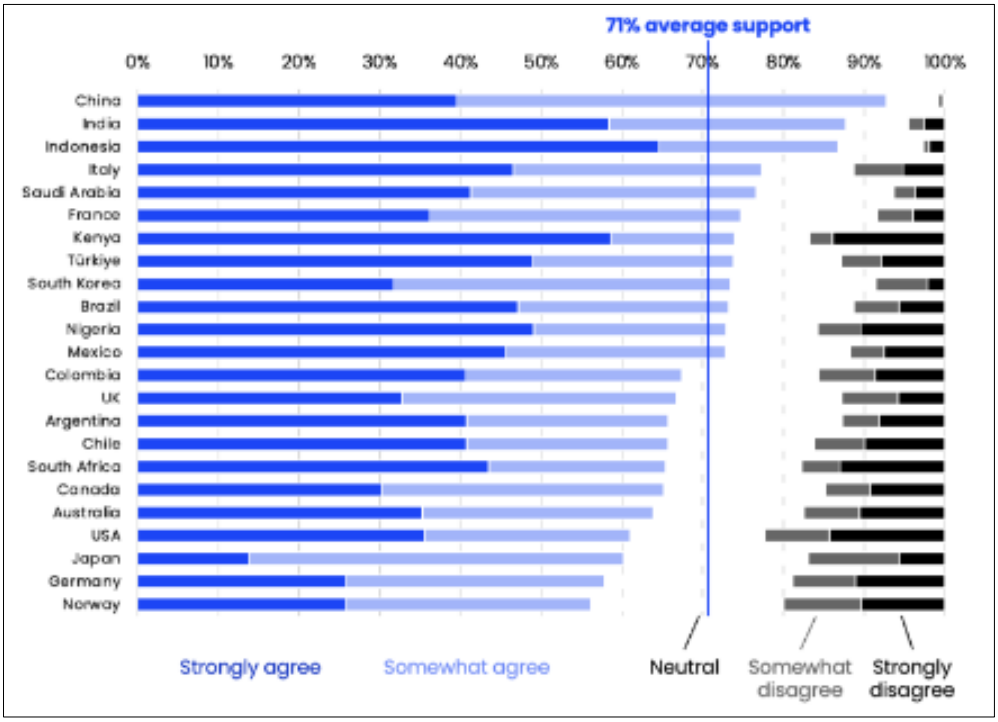
(Source - Later is Too Late report)

Critique: While the provides a comprehensive economic analysis, it could have included more case studies to illustrate the economic benefits of early action. For example, a detailed comparison of regions that have invested in renewable energy versus those that have not could have strengthened the argument.

2: Social Impacts and Equity

"The most vulnerable will suffer the most." The report highlights how climate change disproportionately affects marginalized communities, particularly in developing countries. This explores the social dimensions of climate change, including the exacerbation of existing inequalities and the potential for largescale human suffering.

Key Finding: The report identifies climate-induced migration, food insecurity, and health crises as major challenges for vulnerable populations. A significant point from this states that “Climate change is not just an environmental issue; it is a human rights issue.”



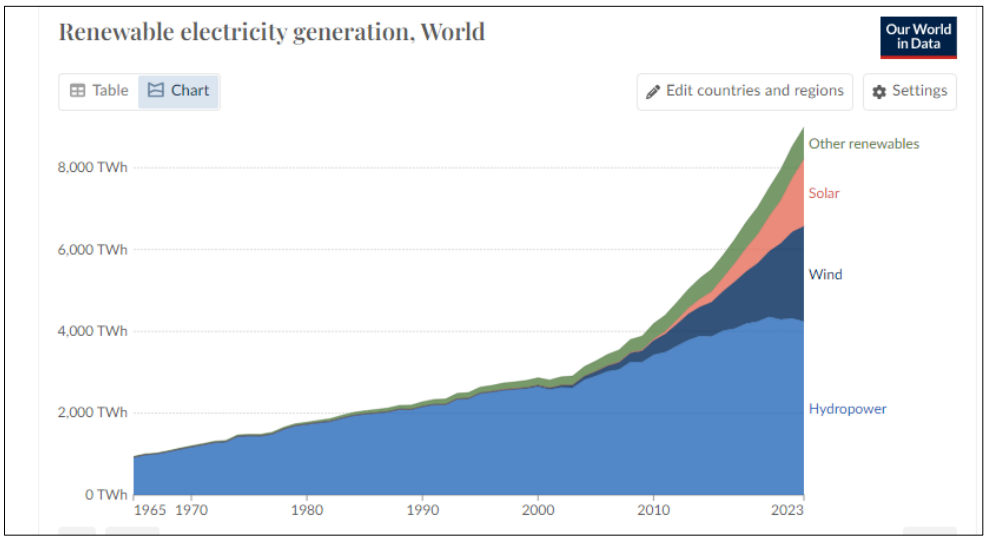
(Source - Later is Too Late report)

Critique: They could have benefited from more detailed examples or case studies of specific communities already experiencing these impacts. Personal stories or testimonials would have added a human element to the statistics and data, making the issue more relatable to readers.

3: Technological Solutions

"We have the tools we need." This focuses on the technological solutions available to combat climate change. The report argues that existing technologies, such as renewable energy, energy efficiency measures, and carbon capture, are viable and can be scaled up to address the climate crisis.

Key Finding: This emphasizes the need for rapid deployment of renewable energy technologies, arguing that they are not only feasible but also economically beneficial in the long term. A key from this section is, “The future is renewable, and the technology is already here.”



Critique: The 's focus on the potential of existing technologies is commendable, but it could have delved deeper into the challenges of scaling these technologies, particularly in developing countries. A discussion of the financial, logistical, and infrastructural barriers to widespread adoption would have provided a more balanced perspective.

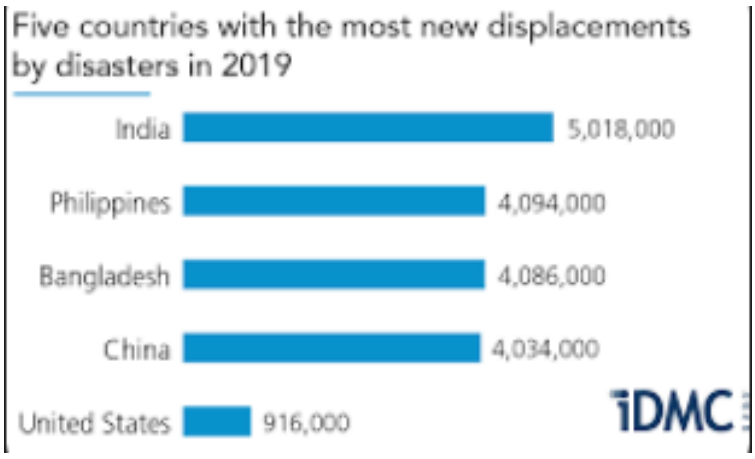
4: The Consequences of Delay

Key Findings:

The report emphasises that delaying action on climate change will exacerbate the already significant impacts on ecosystems, economies, and human health. The costs of inaction are outlined in stark terms, with projections showing a steep rise in climate related disasters, displacement, and economic losses.

“Every year of delay means a steeper hill to climb. The window for avoiding the worst impacts of climate change is rapidly closing.” (Potential Energy, 2023).

The report uses a comparative analysis to show that the costs of inaction far outweigh the costs of immediate and decisive action. For instance, the economic impact of climate related natural disasters in the last decade is estimated at $2.5 trillion, a figure projected to double by 2040 if current trends continue.



(https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/06/climate-refugees-the-world-s-forgotten-victims/)

Areas Not Addressed:

The report does not fully explore the potential social unrest and political instability that may arise from climate-induced resource shortages, particularly in vulnerable regions. This could be a significant oversight given the global nature of these challenges.

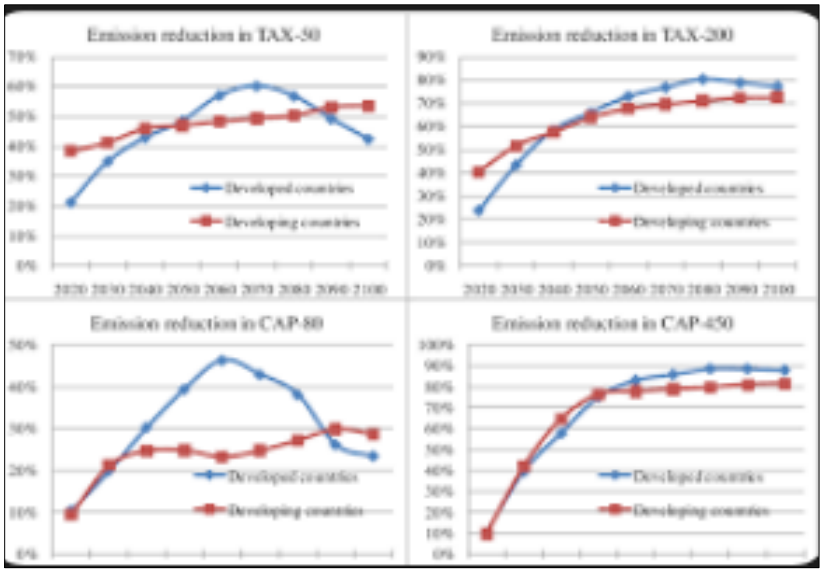
5: The Path Forward – Immediate Actions Required

Key Findings:

The report outlines a series of urgent actions needed to mitigate the most severe impacts of climate change. These include aggressive emissions reductions, transitioning to renewable energy, and significant investments in climate adaptation strategies.

“The science is clear: immediate and sustained efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are essential if we are to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.” (Potential Energy, 2023).

The highlights successful case studies from countries that have implemented bold climate policies, demonstrating that it is possible to decouple economic growth from carbon emissions.



Comparison of Emission Reductions Across Different Policy Scenarios.

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Emission-reduction-under-different-scenarios-compared-to-CO-2-emissions-in-the-REF_fig4_228701513

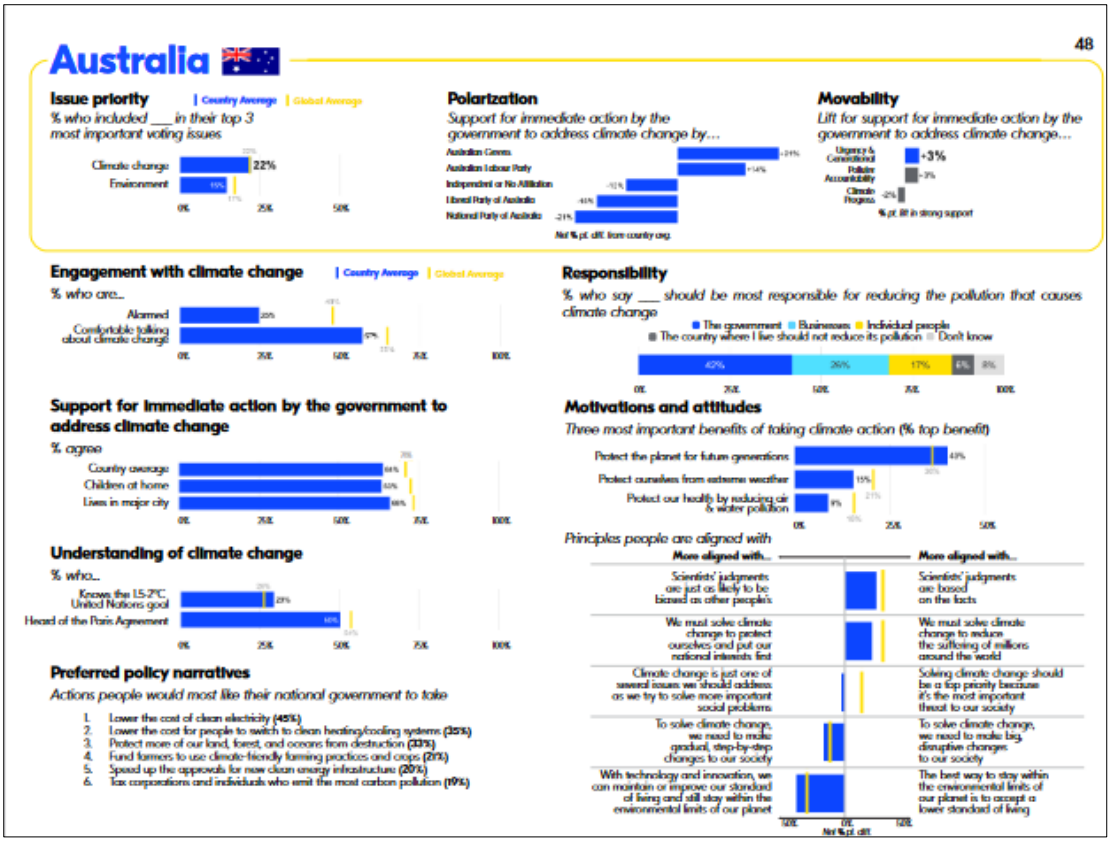
Areas Not Addressed:

There is limited discussion on the role of emerging technologies such as carbon capture and storage (CCS) and geoengineering. While these are contentious topics, their potential to contribute to climate solutions warrants more thorough consideration.

6: The Role of Governments and Policy

Key Findings:

Governments at all levels play a crucial role in the fight against climate change. The report argues for stronger international cooperation and more ambitious national policies, emphasizing that current commitments under the Paris Agreement are insufficient.

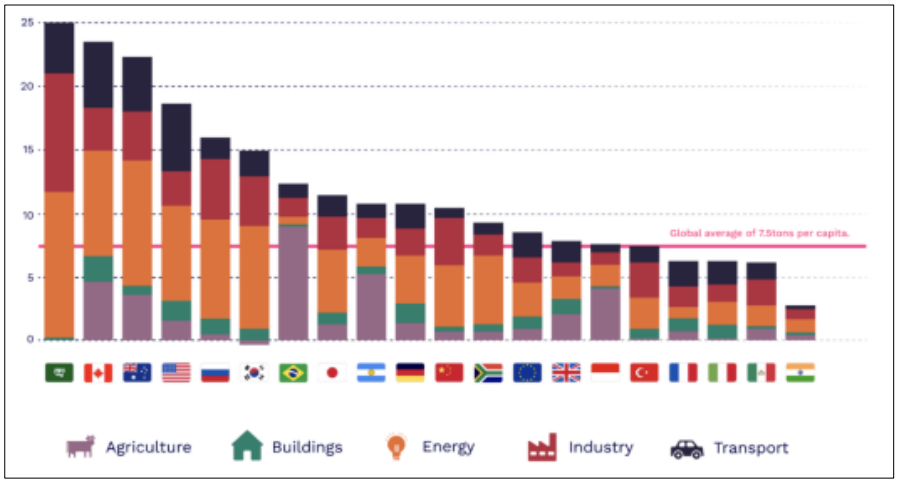


“National governments must step up their ambitions and implement policies that align with the latest climate science. Failure to do so will result in catastrophic consequences.” (Potential Energy, 2023).

They also discussed the need for more robust enforcement mechanisms to ensure that countries meet their climate commitments.

Areas Not Addressed:

The report does not delve deeply into the challenges of political will and the influence of powerful interest groups that may oppose stronger climate policies. This is a significant omission, as these factors often hinder progress.



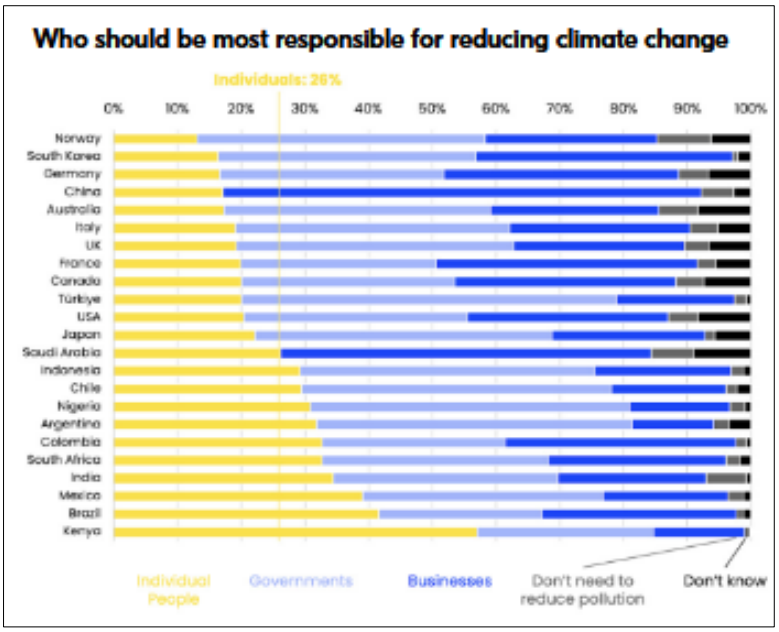
Current vs. Required Emissions Reductions by Country.

https://www.brookings.edu/articles/tracking-emissions-by-country-and-sector/

7: The Role of the Private Sector

Key Findings:

The private sector is identified as a critical player in the transition to a low carbon economy. The report calls for increased corporate responsibility, highlighting the importance of integrating sustainability into business models.



“Businesses have a moral and economic imperative to lead the charge towards a sustainable future. Those that fail to adapt will be left behind.” (Potential Energy, 2023).

The provides examples of companies that have successfully adopted sustainable practices, demonstrating that profitability and environmental stewardship can go hand in hand.

Areas Not Addressed:

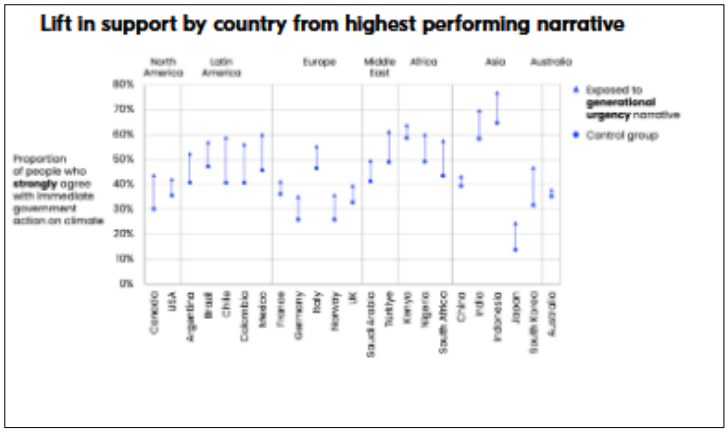
The report does not sufficiently address the need for systemic changes in global financial markets, such as the integration of climate risk into investment decisions. This could be a critical lever for accelerating the transition to a sustainable economy.

8: The Role of Individuals and Communities

Key Findings:

The report emphasizes that while systemic change is essential, individual actions also play a significant role in combating climate change. It highlights the power of grassroots movements and community-led initiatives in driving change from the bottom up.

“Individual actions, when multiplied across millions of people, can have a profound impact. The fight against climate change starts at home.” (Potential Energy, 2023).



The emphasise here is squarely on the critical importance of education and public awareness in fostering a culture of sustainability.

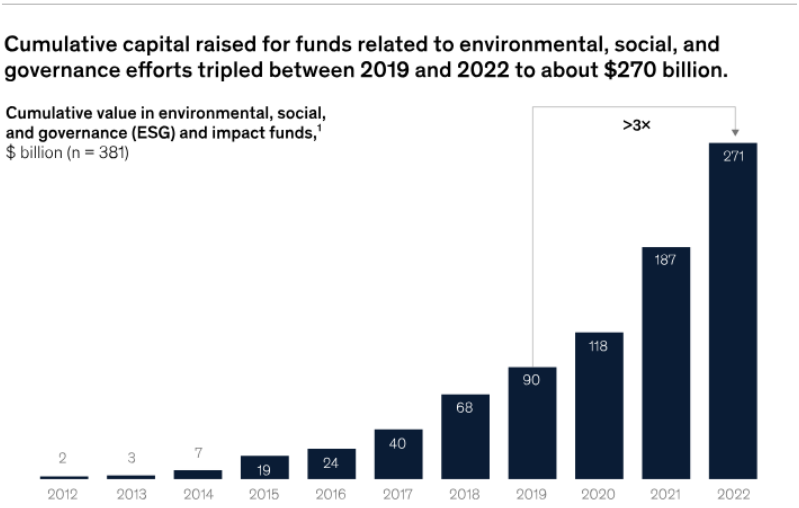
Areas Not Addressed:

The report could benefit from a more detailed exploration of how to overcome the barriers to individual action, such as lack of access to sustainable products or the higher cost of green alternatives.

9: Financing the Transition

Key Findings:

The report identifies financing as one of the major hurdles in the fight against climate change. It calls for a significant increase in both public and private investment in climate solutions, emphasizing the need for innovative financial mechanisms.



https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/sustainability/our-insights/climate-investing-continuing-breakout-growth-through-uncertain-times

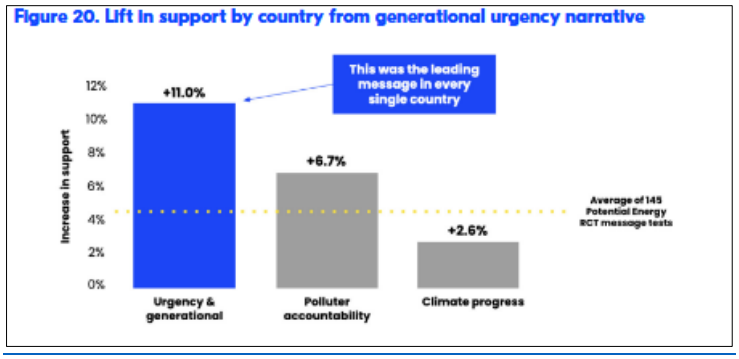
“The scale of investment required to combat climate change is unprecedented. We need bold and creative financing solutions to meet this challenge.” (Potential Energy, 2023).

The discusses the role of green bonds, climate funds, and public/private partnerships in mobilizing the necessary resources.

Areas Not Addressed:

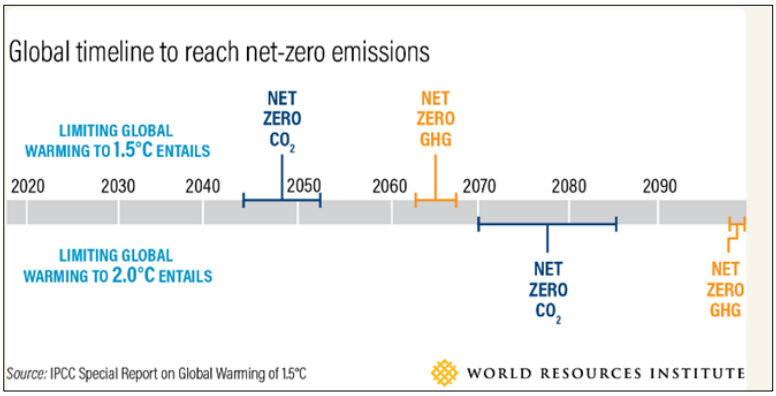
The report does not fully address the challenges of redirecting subsidies from fossil fuels to renewable energy, a crucial step in aligning financial flows with climate goals.

10 Cause for Hope (HOPE)



Key Findings:

The final of the report reiterates the urgency of immediate action and the need for a coordinated global response. It calls on all stakeholders — governments, businesses, and individuals — to take responsibility and act decisively to prevent the worst impacts of climate change…



https://plana.earth/academy/what-does-net-zero-emissions-mean-how-to-achieve-it

Glossary

Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHGs): Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere, contributing to global warming and climate change.

Carbon Footprint: The total amount of greenhouse gases produced directly and indirectly by human activities, measured in units of carbon dioxide.

Paris Agreement: An international treaty adopted in 2015, aiming to limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius, with efforts to keep it below 1.5 degrees.

Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS): A technology designed to capture and store carbon dioxide emissions from industrial processes, preventing them from entering the atmosphere.

References

1. Potential Energy. (2023). *Later is Too Late: Urgent Action Needed to Combat Climate Change*. Potential Energy. https://potentialenergycoalition.org/guides-and-reports/global-report/
2. IPCC. (2022). *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/
3. UNFCCC. (2015). *The Paris Agreement*. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Our world in Data https://ourworldindata.org/renewable-energy