

Media Climate Pact

Summary of Progress Report

2024

Introduction

As extreme weather events continue to intensify, communities are being affected worldwide, highlighting the need for urgent action. Since the historic 2015 Paris Agreement – which saw 197 countries set goals of reaching net zero emissions by 2050 – global emissions have continued to increase. This is referred to as the emissions gap and remains a critical challenge globally.

Since then, governments, businesses and civil society have faced mounting pressure to accelerate action on climate. In 2024, COP29 brought forward global efforts to address climate change, including ambitions on emissions reductions, the need for increased climate finance for developing countries and for countries to end their dependence on fossil fuels. However, significant challenges remain. With climate tipping points approaching, key sectors – including media – are stepping up to drive awareness, innovation and solutions. The Responsible Media Forum launched the Media Climate Pact on the 9th November 2020, the original start date of COP26. The Pact brings the industry together to drive climate-friendly behaviours up, and emissions down.

Four years on, this report summarises the progress that the six signatories have made. The Pact remains open for new signatories.

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Progress

The Media Climate Pact consists of two commitments: one operational and one focused on content. While we recognise that as global companies we have an operational footprint that we need to tackle, it is through our content that we can make a much bigger difference that will go far beyond our own companies and sector. Sky (a part of Comcast) say that *“We leverage the reach of our programming in multiple ways to spotlight climate challenges facing our world, as well as solutions for a better future”*¹.

After the Flood © ITV Studios



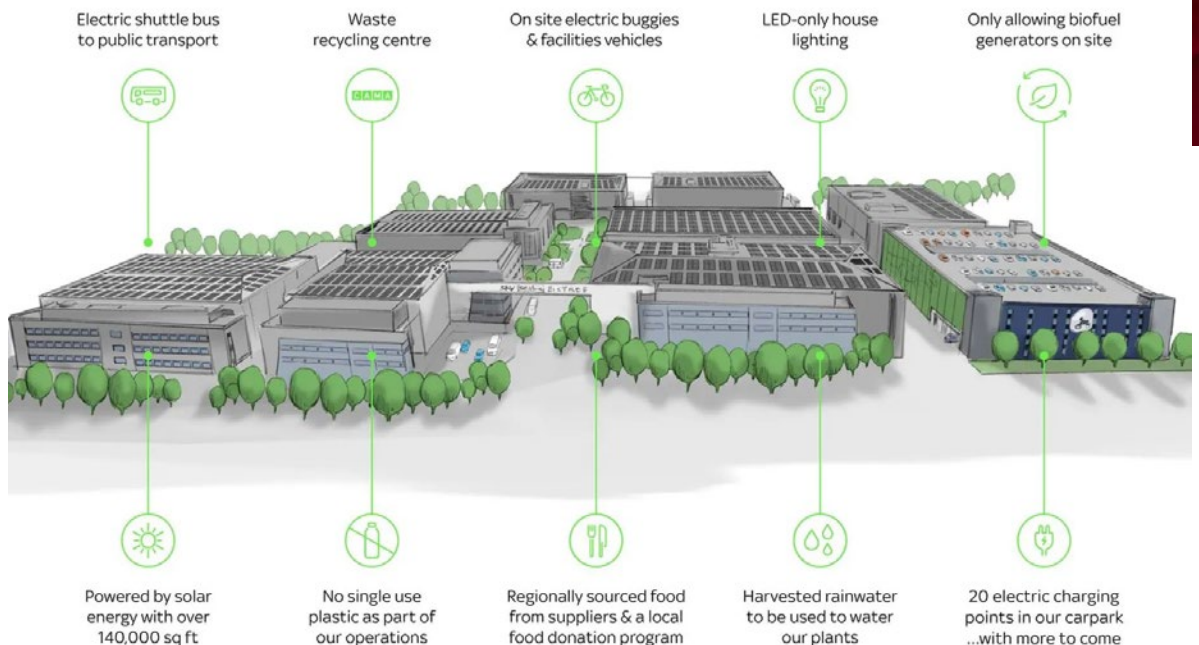
Commitment 1



All six signatories have set a net zero target: Informa and Pearson by 2030; Virgin Media and RELX by 2040; ITV and Sky by 2050. In addition Informa, RELX, Sky, Pearson and Virgin Media are powered by 90-100% renewable energy and ITV has committed to buy 100% renewable energy by 2025. Pearson, RELX and Sky are signatories of the RE100 initiative, aiming to bring businesses together to reach 100% renewable energy. Sky is also a signatory to EV100. Finally, RELX has an internal carbon price launched in 2021 which is payable by all business areas for Scope 1, 2 & 3. The price for 2023 was \$35/tCO₂e and will increase over time.

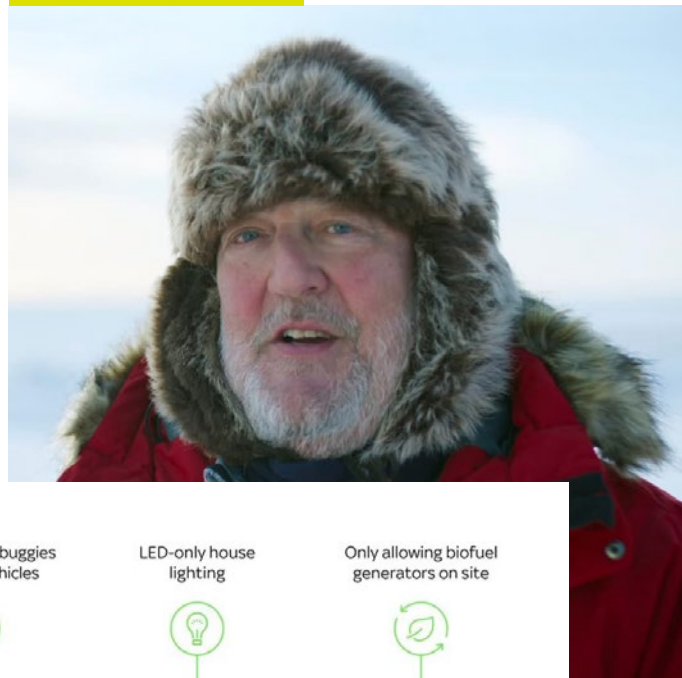
Companies are continuing to progress on and set further goals that are specific to their business. For example, Informa are making good progress on their 'FasterForward Commitment' where they aim to save its customers more carbon than Informa emits as a business by 2025. 190,000 flights are estimated to have been saved from this project, across a small sample of 15 events by helping people connect more efficiently and save on travel by bringing specialist communities together.

Sustainability at Sky Studios Elstree © Sky Studios Elstree



Opened in 2022, Sky Studios Elstree has been named as the 'world's most sustainable film and tv studio' by albert in their Studio Sustainability Standard Report 2024. In 2023, 94% of ITV's shows produced achieved albert sustainability certification. Across all broadcasted shows, this figure was 64%. This has helped them reduce their overall footprint and drive the wider industry forward.

A Year on Planet Earth © ITV Studios



When these targets are met, at least 1.9m tonnes of CO2 equivalent will have been reduced and 2.5m tonnes balanced by carbon removals – the equivalent of taking over 3m cars off the UK's roads.²

² Calculation based on the Carbon independent.org Emissions from cars calculator, providing the average emission per car in the UK: <https://www.carbonindependent.org/17.html>

Combined, the six Signatories have reduced total Scope 1 and 2 (market-based) GHG emissions by over 90,000 tonnes between 2020 and 2023 (the most recent full year for which data is available). This equates to the annual emissions of roughly 60,000 cars (in the UK).



Commitment 1

Operational

We will commit to implement science-based targets on climate and drive actions that are consistent with a 1.5-degree pathway to achieve net-zero as close to 2030 as possible, and by 2050 at the latest.



Level 2: commit to set science-based targets validated by the Science Based Targets initiative, to be implemented within the SBTi's two-year window.



Level 1: commit to set science-based targets aligned with climate science (but not validated by the Science Based Targets initiative) within two years.



Commit to offset any remaining emissions through verifiable programmes.



100% renewable energy across own operations with the ambition to incentivise implementation of renewables across our value chain by 2030. Where it is impossible or prohibitively expensive to source renewable energy, we will buy renewable energy certificates to compensate.



Commitment 2

Content

We will help drive behaviour change towards climate-friendly lifestyles through our content.



We will train & educate at least 80% of colleagues with content responsibilities on the latest climate science and mitigation strategies.



We will aim to increase the reach and availability of climate-related content to ensure it is front and centre of local, national and global conversations; and



We will track and report consistently on our climate change-related content and the impacts we are having through our content.

Definitions:

Content: any kind of multimedia material, including print, audio and video, distributed by a committed company. This includes academic articles, radio shows, newspaper articles, advertising campaigns, literature, TV programmes, films, series, exhibitions and events.

Climate-related content: content that references climate change. This could be a news article about the latest climate science, a documentary about climate change's impacts and/or solutions, an advertisement campaign for a product or service that helps the customer reduce their climate impacts, or the placement of climate-friendly behaviour in a TV programme.

Commitment 2



Signatories are significantly progressing towards training and educating 80% of colleagues with content responsibilities on the latest climate science and mitigation strategies. 94% of ITV's colleagues have completed the mandatory climate action training. Pearson have developed a climate awareness training programme, which can be taken by any Pearson employee. At Informa, internal training programmes have been created and aimed at different teams internally to help colleagues understand the 'Better Stands' programme (which tackles single-use, disposable exhibition stands) including how they can talk about it with customers or appointed contractors. The School of Sky Zero is a digital training course that supports Sky employees to create positive climate-related behaviour changes and inspires them to play their part.

Signatories have increased the reach and availability of climate-related content by launching new programmes, advertising campaigns, partnerships and formats across 2022 and 2023. For example, RELX's SDG Resource Centre provides open access globally to the latest science, law, business, events and more that can help drive forward the SDGs. Since 2017 they have made over 1,800 journal articles and book chapters free to access, with a 65% increase in unique users since 2021.

Virgin Media O2 have curated content into collections of programming on the Virgin TV platform (e.g. content produced by Sky and BBC). This kind of content is highlighted to customers during key moments in time, for example to celebrate international e-waste day. They have also used their promotional channel to produce animations to raise awareness of issues like e-waste.

Pearson continue to deliver learning for sustainability and credentials as they recognise



Pearson learning for sustainability

the crucial role they play in the achievement of sustainable goals. This includes accrediting accounting professionals with the Fundamentals of Sustainability Accounting (FSA) Credential® created in partnership with the IFRS Foundation. They also work with UK schools through a Sustainability and Climate Change route in their Extended Project Qualification, to help shape future generations of sustainably minded, global citizens. At Informa, Taylor & Francis' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Online collection supports individuals in education on how to approach the world's most critical issues. It's currently accessible to 104 institutions and growing year on year.

The two broadcasters have grown their portfolios further to integrate climate-related content. One example of this is Sky's sports channels. During the U.S. Open and Cricket World Cup, Sky Sports featured sustainability stories and promoted campaigns like Green Football Weekend and Sky Sports Summer of Sustainability, which urged fans to go by foot, bike, ride-share or take public transportation to sporting events. Additionally, Sky Zero partnered with the World Wildlife Fund to offer an online hub of resources and activities related to wildlife from the documentary for families to engage.

RELX's SDG resource centre



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After the Flood © ITV Studios

ITV weaves sustainability content throughout their Programming. ITV Studios' documentary, A Year on Planet Earth with Stephen Fry focused on wildlife around the globe across all seasons, whilst also urging viewers to consider the threat of climate change. Further examples include featuring a recycling bin character in The Masked Singer, exploring small changes to diets with Lorraine and setting a story around an extreme weather event in their thriller series After the Flood. ITV continue to integrate climate content creatively through their 'commissioning green team' and use a climate action content tracker to monitor the climate-related themes being integrated. Another example is ITV's Love Island x eBay partnership. In 2022, eBay partnered with the hugely popular dating show to become its primary sponsor to bring second-hand fashion into mainstream conversation and reach audiences who aren't engaging with second-hand shopping. ITV measured the impact of this partnership through a survey and eBay sales data, finding that the audience's awareness of second-hand fashion and behaviour change towards it was positive. This partnership has continued and strengthened throughout the 2023 and 2024 series.

Signatories have successfully demonstrated progress in integrating climate-related content across their portfolios and continuing to grow this area. That said, reporting on it publicly remains a challenge due to the lack of standardised metrics and ability to quantify impact. The broadcasters – ITV and Sky – are committed to integrating climate-related themes in their programmes and actively working with content creators to reflect the climate in their storytelling.

Informa's FasterForward programme commits to embed sustainability inside 100% of its brands by 2025, providing climate-related content to all its customers and wider. Virgin Media O2 is raising awareness of climate change by highlighting climate content on its programming. Pearson is creating and accrediting more climate-related content for businesses and schools and RELX is providing open access to those wanting to educate themselves on the climate and sustainability related topics.

eBay x Love Island partnership © ITV Studios



Conclusion

The six signatories are making significant strides in implementing ambitious net zero targets and decarbonisation initiatives and putting climate at the heart of editorial and creative decisions, using their platform to influence behaviour change and raise awareness amongst society. While taking different approaches individually, all signatories are integrating climate content into their portfolios, and educating colleagues with content responsibilities. Reporting on content and measuring its impact is still a developing area, due to the challenges of quantifiable and standardised metrics. Examples are however steadily growing.

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The RMF (and Media Climate Pact community specifically) will continue supporting media companies to learn from each other, as well as others, and maximise the impact they can have on the climate crisis through decarbonisation as well as content.

Sky Studios Elstree © Sky Studios



Join the Pact

responsiblemediaforum.org/pact

The Media Climate Pact is a coalition of companies in the media sector (advertising, broadcast, educational publishing, entertainment providers, exhibitions & events, news publishing and scientific publishing) that is committed to ensuring that the media sector contributes to tackling climate change.

