

# CommonSpirit Health 2022 Climate Action Plan

Executive Summary



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# Opening Letter

## Opening Letter

Following through with our commitment to lead the healthcare sector on environmental stewardship, we are pleased to share with you CommonSpirit Health's first Climate Action Plan. This document turns the pledges that we made at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) into specific actions that will be implemented across our 21-state footprint.

Hospitals and the healthcare industry are among the biggest contributors to the climate crisis, making up ten percent of the U.S.'s greenhouse gas emissions total. As one of the nation's largest health systems, we have a duty as leaders to do all we can to protect Earth. By committing to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 and a 50 percent reduction in our operational greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, we are taking bold steps in recognizing environmental protection as an essential part of improving health for all.

This Climate Action Plan is more than a moral imperative. Reversing harmful climate change and protecting our environment are also essential for the sustainability of our business and the health of the people and communities we serve. The marginalized and minority communities we care so deeply about are hurt by climate change more than their fair share. This makes our Climate Action Plan essential to our commitment to advance health equity while aligning with CommonSpirit 2026, our strategic roadmap that calls for a healthier future for all.

With the steps we outline in this plan, we also are responding to The Laudato Si' Action Platform and Pope Francis' call to "walk the path of renewal" and heal "our relationships with God, our neighbors, and the Earth itself."

There is an unbreakable bond between the health of our planet and the health of people. Our humankindness gives us both the responsibility and the opportunity to protect the world around us.



*Lloyd H. Dean*  
*CEO of CommonSpirit Health*

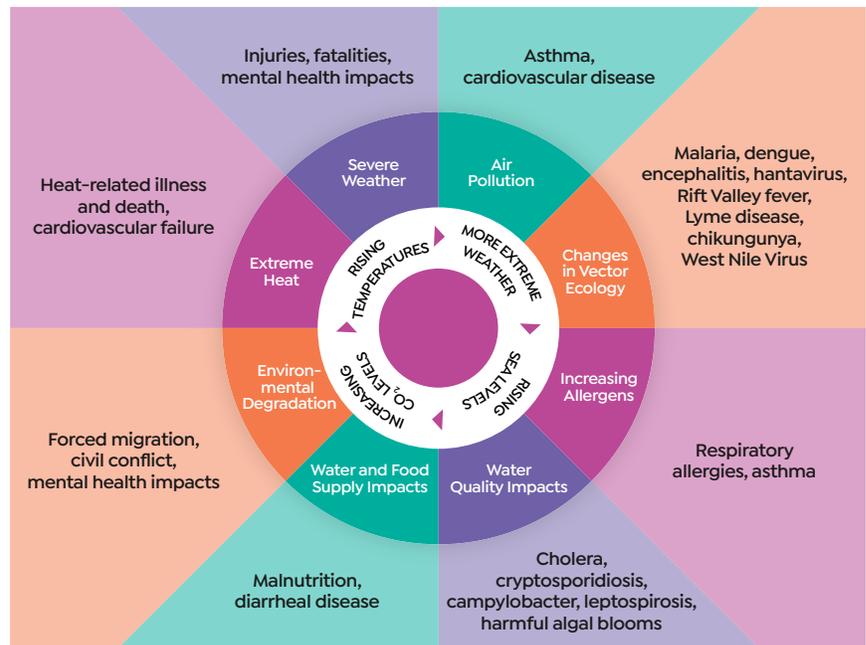


*Shelly Schlenker*  
*EVP Chief Advocacy Officer*

# Executive Summary

# Climate Change Is a Global Health Equity Issue

Climate impacts are a risk multiplier to health and well-being, particularly to the most vulnerable among us.



The health care industry is uniquely placed to lead in climate action and advocacy to promote a healthy planet that will support healthy people.

Climate-smart health care can be achieved through work across three areas:

1. **Leadership:** Leveraging the moral, political and economic influence of the health care sector to change policy and markets
2. **Mitigation:** Reducing the carbon footprint of health care facility operations
3. **Resilience:** Preparing health care facilities for climate impacts and building community health and resilience

## Real Life Stories

The link between health equity and climate is clearly expressed by youth activists in their fight for environmental justice in their communities. One extraordinary leader is [Tonyisha Harris](#), who in this video speaks out about how air pollution impacts her community in South Side of Chicago.



# Driven by Core Values, CommonSpirit Has a Legacy of Acting on Climate

Climate action is aligned with CommonSpirit’s history and core values.

1. **CommonSpirit’s mission** is to improve the health of the people and communities it serves while advancing health equity. The health of the planet is critical to this work.
2. **The Women Religious** who founded many of CommonSpirit’s hospitals saw the commitment to the environment as an extension of Catholic social teaching.
3. **Health care institutions** are among the largest contributors to climate change, with the U.S. health care system accounting for 10% of the nation’s carbon emissions and 9% of harmful non-greenhouse air pollutants.
4. **The marginalized and underserved communities** CommonSpirit cares so deeply about are also the ones most likely to be affected by extreme climate events. This makes our Climate Action Plan essential for the sustainability of CommonSpirit’s business and the communities it serves.

For the past decade, CommonSpirit has been a leader in advocating with partners for climate action at all levels of society.

## U.S. Government & Corporations:

CommonSpirit is a co-chair of **America Is All**, the most expansive coalition of leaders assembled in support of the Paris Climate Agreement, including thousands of U.S. cities, states, tribal nations, businesses, schools, and faith, health and cultural institutions.

## Capital Markets:

CommonSpirit partners with non-profit **Ceres** and their policy network of leading corporations (**BICEP**) to advocate for government market policies that accelerate the decarbonization innovations needed to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

## Health Care Industry:

CommonSpirit is part of **Practice Greenhealth** and the **Health Care Without Harm’s** Climate Council, which leverages the health care sector’s expertise, purchasing power, political clout and moral authority to create a healthy planet. CommonSpirit has also joined the **Catholic Health Association** in the *We Are Called* pledge to combat racism through advancing health equity.

## Communities:

**Healthcare Anchor Network** was cofounded by CommonSpirit member hospitals with other health systems to build on the natural role of hospitals as anchor institutions in their communities and use all their assets – hiring, purchasing and investment – for equitable, local economic impact.



# Committed to Net-zero Emissions by 2040, 10 Years Ahead of the Paris Climate Accord

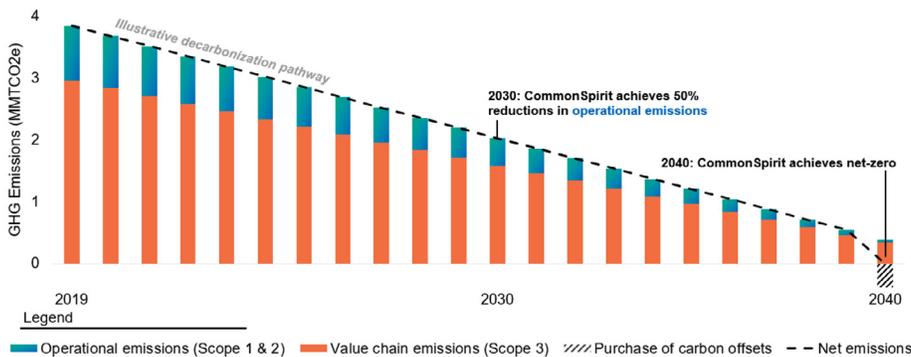


## What is Net-zero?

Net-zero by 2040 aligns with the Paris Climate Accord goal of limiting global temperature rise <math><1.5^{\circ}\text{C}</math>, to stave off the worst impacts of climate change. It is a call to action for the all corporations and governments to:

1. Implement a robust climate action plan, not just an aspiration.
2. Publicly report progress to drive accountability and inspire others.
3. Focus on reducing emissions, using carbon offsets only for residual emissions.

In 2019, CommonSpirit's GHG footprint was **3.8 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent**.



## CommonSpirit's path to net-zero

will be achieved with a combination of direct reductions of operational emissions (e.g., energy efficiency, renewable energy) and by influencing value chain partners to set their own net-zero targets.

Net-zero emissions will be achieved when total GHG emissions equal the amount of emissions that are removed from the atmosphere. This can be done through a variety of actions, such as reducing emissions, using high-quality carbon offsets and continuously revising its strategy to adhere to best practices. An illustrative depiction of the journey is shown above. Note that reductions in emissions will vary year to year.

# Climate Action Plan Strategy Framework: Pillars and Enablers

In order to deliver on the net-zero goal by 2040, CommonSpirit has developed a comprehensive strategy with three core pillars that sit atop the foundation of three key enablers.

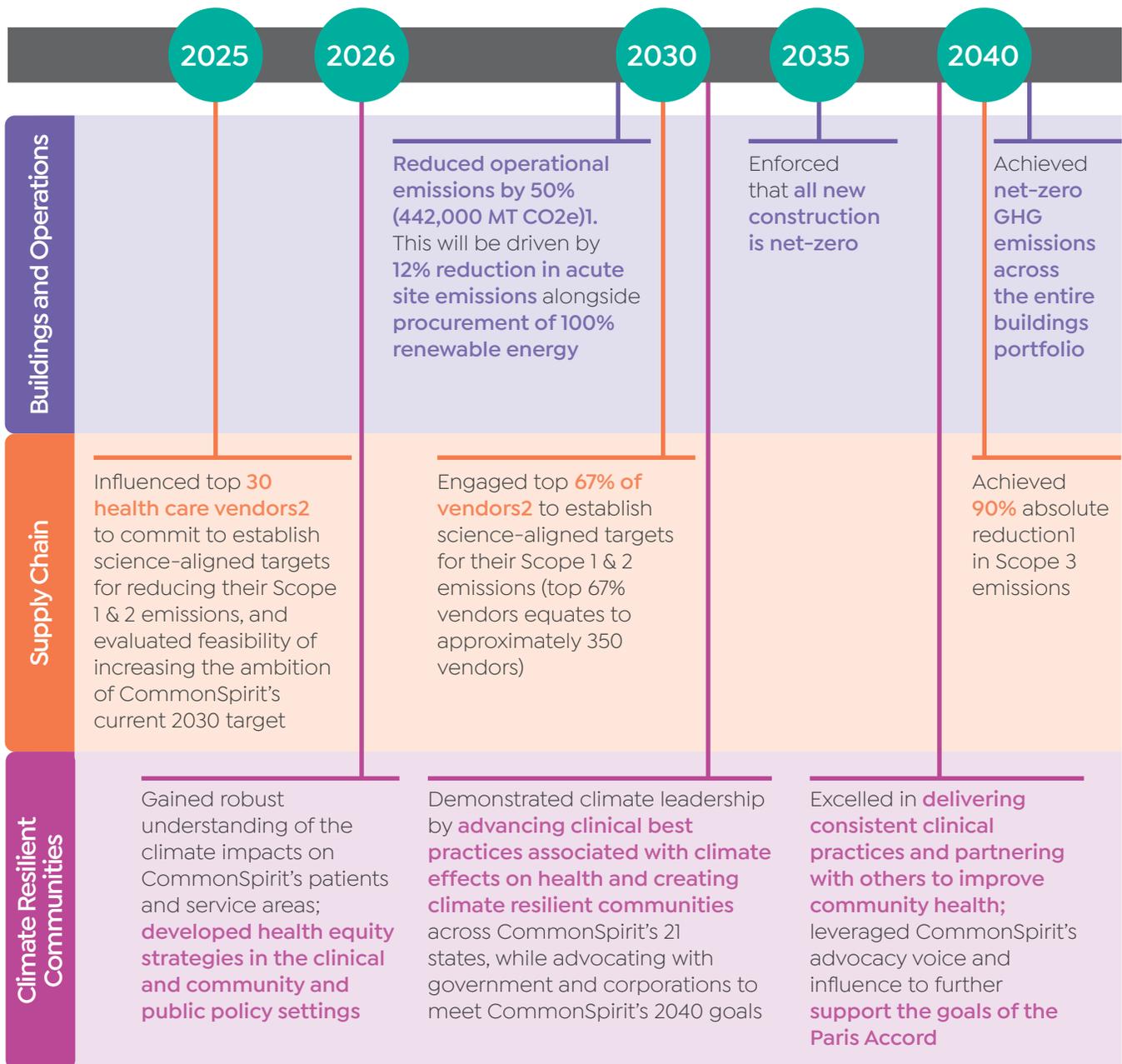
<b>I. Buildings and Operations</b>	<b>II. Supply Chain</b>	<b>III. Climate Resilient Communities</b>
<p>Reduce emissions across CommonSpirit’s entire facilities portfolio through energy efficiency and renewable energy, with a focus on acute care facilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Building Performance:</b> Improve the energy efficiency of existing real estate assets</li> <li><b>2. New Construction and Major Renovations:</b> Eliminate emissions associated with the additions to the physical footprint</li> <li><b>3. Renewable Energy Strategy:</b> Switch to renewable sources of electricity using a variety of energy contracts to achieve pace and scale</li> </ol>	<p>Influence CommonSpirit’s value chain partners in setting their own net-zero targets, with an initial emphasis on procurement vendors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Internal Assessment:</b> Identify CommonSpirit’s top-emitting vendors and evaluate their climate goals and strategies</li> <li><b>2. Direct Vendor Engagement:</b> Through existing procurement processes, to encourage them to set net-zero emission targets</li> <li><b>3. Collaboration with Stakeholders Beyond Vendors:</b> Including establishing CommonSpirit as a leader in health care supply chain decarbonization through standard-setting and partner collaboration</li> </ol>	<p>Develop clinical best practices in the prevention and management of diseases amplified by climate change, and establish community partners to build climate-resilient infrastructure and programming</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Population Health:</b> Focusing on addressing climate change’s acute and chronic impacts on patient populations</li> <li><b>2. Community Health:</b> Focusing on meeting the health needs of communities impacted by climate change</li> <li><b>3. Advocacy:</b> Focusing on furthering CommonSpirit’s position as a climate advocacy leader through legislative and shareholder advocacy</li> </ol>

## Enablers

- A. GHG Data Reporting:** Develop data systems that integrate energy and carbon data to enable emissions measurement, management, and reporting
- B. Partnerships and Advocacy:** Advocate for government and corporate climate policies that accelerate both CommonSpirit and society’s decarbonization
- C. Finance:** Invest capital to reduce operational emissions and position CommonSpirit as an ESG leader on climate in the capital markets

# Key Pillar Goals Needed to Reach Net-zero by 2040

Achieving net-zero will require significant transformation in the way that CommonSpirit runs its operations and engages its value chain. In light of this, CommonSpirit has set a series of short- and medium- term goals, to keep on track for 2040.



1. All reduction percentages will be compared to the 2019 baseline.  
 2. By GHG emissions

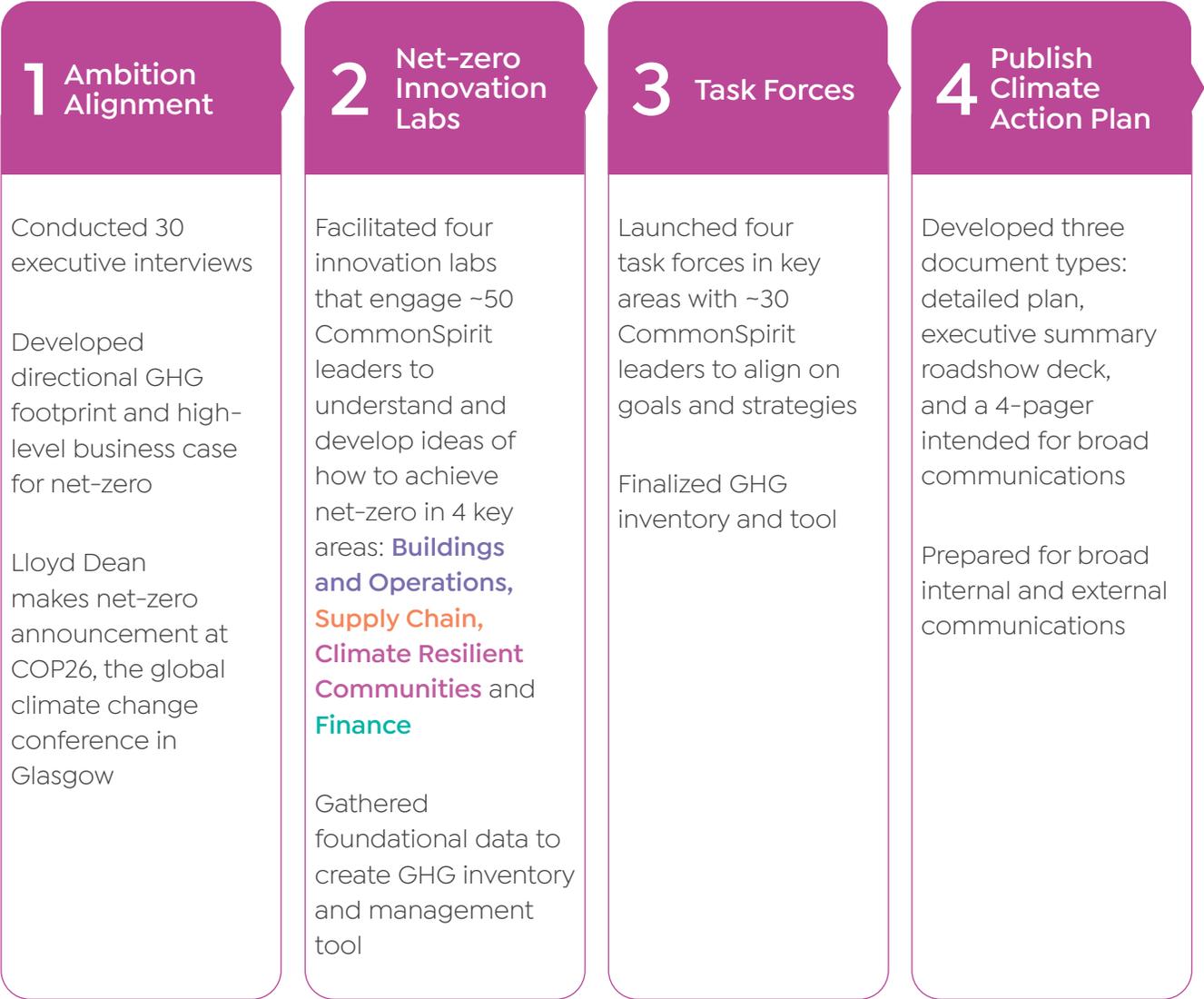
# FY 2023 Priorities to Build Momentum Towards Net-zero

This CAP report outlines CommonSpirit's high-level climate action strategies through its target net-zero year of 2040, while providing more detail for near-term initiatives. Below are the priorities for FY 2023 across all three pillars and the associated enablers.

<b>I. Buildings and Operations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Project Design Guidelines:</b> Integrate energy efficiency and renewable energy ready requirements into the system-level real estate design guidelines for maintenance, replacements and new construction</li><li><b>2. Energy Efficiency:</b> Implement identified set of high-payback efficiency projects (e.g. LED lights) and identify more projects for FY 2024</li><li><b>3. Renewables 2030 Road Map:</b> Develop a 100% renewable energy strategy that optimizes the type, timing, quantity, quality and economics of renewables at the system-level. Pursue quick-win, on-site opportunities</li><li><b>4. Utility Renewable Programs:</b> Scan utilities across the portfolio to identify green retail and tariff programs that are low-cost, simple to implement and provide quick wins</li></ol>
<b>II. Supply Chain</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Direct Vendor Engagement:</b> Begin engagement with first set of vendors</li><li><b>2. Collaboration with Partners:</b> Engage with Premier, Group Purchasing Organization (GPO) and Health Care Without Harm to support vendors</li></ol>
<b>III. Climate Resilient Communities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Population Health and Community Health:</b> Conduct climate vulnerability mapping across CommonSpirit's 21 states to prioritize Climate Resilient Communities strategies</li><li><b>2. Community Health:</b> Include climate vulnerability questions in the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)</li><li><b>3. Advocacy:</b> Build broader advocacy infrastructure that will be used to grow both climate and other ESG advocacy priorities</li></ol>
<b>Enablers</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. GHG Data and Reporting:</b> Customize GHG data platform to support National Real Estate Services (NRES) team in measuring the impact of operational emission reductions and enable reporting. Prepare to submit to Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) starting in January 2023</li><li><b>2. Partnerships and Advocacy:</b> Continue to strengthen calls to climate action in society through our partnerships with America is All In, Ceres BICEP, Health Care Without Harm, Practice Greenhealth and Healthcare AnchoR Network</li><li><b>3. Finance:</b> Continue financing energy efficiency improvements and stakeholder advocacy. Identify specific ESG metrics for reporting. Engage potential philanthropic sources specific to the CAP.</li></ol>

# Four Steps CommonSpirit Took to Create the Climate Action Plan

More than 100 CommonSpirit leaders and numerous external partners were involved in the development of the Climate Action Plan.



# Appendix

# Acknowledgements

CommonSpirit's CAP could not have been completed without the help of dozens of employees across all CommonSpirit departments and divisions, as well as multiple external partners. The CAP Core Team would like to acknowledge and thank everyone who took the time to make sure that this report will set CommonSpirit up for success in achieving its climate action goals, which are of crucial importance to the health of the planet and its people.

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Laura Humphrey, *ENGIE Impact*  
Andrew Knox, *Premier*  
Brandon McNamara, *ENGIE Impact*  
Soumi Saha, *Premier*  
Jessica Wolff, *Health Care Without Harm*  
Kevin Zheng, *ENGIE Impact*

# Common Terminology in the CAP

A more exhaustive glossary can be found in the Full CAP.

- **Carbon dioxide equivalent:** unit of measurement used to compare the emissions from various greenhouse gases on the basis of their global-warming potential, by converting amounts of other gases to the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide with the same global warming potential. In this report, it is abbreviated as CO<sub>2</sub>e and expressed either in metric tons (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e) or millions of metric tons (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e)
- **Climate change:** long-term shift in global or regional climate patterns - refers specifically to the rise in global temperatures from the mid-20th century to present, under the effect of greenhouse gas
- **Decarbonization:** refers to the reduction or elimination of carbon dioxide from energy sources, i.e., avoiding the combustion of fossil fuels to reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere
- **Greenhouse gas (GHG):** gas that contributes to the greenhouse effect by absorbing infrared radiation, hence responsible for global warming and climate change
- **Net-zero:** the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere
- **Scope:** subcategories in GHG accounting
  - **Scope 1 emissions** refers to direct emissions, i.e. emissions from fixed or mobile installations located within the organizational perimeter (= sources owned/controlled).
  - **Scope 2 emissions** refers to indirect emissions associated with the production of electricity, heat or steam imported from the organization's operations.
  - **Scope 3 emissions** refers to other emissions indirectly produced by the organization's activities that are not accounted for in 2 but which are related to the entire value chain, such as the purchase of raw materials, services or other products, or employee travel.

# Links to Related CAP Documents

## Internal and External Summary

### CAP Documents

[Full CAP Deck](#)

[Executive Summary](#)

[Executive Summary \(Presentation deck\)](#)

[4 Page Public CAP Overview \(Tuft\)](#)

[Inventory Management Plan](#)

[Greenhouse Gas Dashboard](#)

### Net Zero Labs

[Buildings and Operations Lab Pre-Read](#)

[Buildings and Operations Lab Presentation](#)

[Buildings and Operations Lab Breakout Synthesis](#)

[Climate Resilient Communities Lab Pre-Read](#)

[Climate Resilient Communities Lab Presentation](#)

[Climate Resilient Communities Lab](#)

[Breakout Synthesis](#)

[Finance Lab Pre-Read](#)

[Finance Lab Presentation](#)

[Finance Lab Breakout Synthesis](#)

[Supply Chain Lab Pre-Read](#)

[Supply Chain Lab Presentation](#)

[Supply Chain Lab Breakout Synthesis](#)

## Pillar Supplemental Documents

[Supply Chain: CAP Vendor Engagement](#)

[Tracking Excel](#)

[Supply Chain: Vendor GHG Footprints](#)

## Other

[Sustainability 101](#)

[CAP Peer Benchmarking Outputs](#)