

## FAQ Science Based Targets initiative

Here are answers to some frequently asked questions about the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi):

### 1. What is the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi)?

The SBTi is a globally recognized framework that helps organizations set greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets in line with climate science. It's a collaboration between CDP, the United Nations Global Compact, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). SBTi-aligned targets ensure companies contribute meaningfully to limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

### 2. Why should my organization set science-based targets?

Setting science-based targets positions your organization as a sustainability leader. It enhances transparency, builds investor and stakeholder trust, improves operational resilience, and supports long-term profitability in a low-carbon economy. Our team will help understand the criteria and select the best approach for your business – whether using cross-sector methods or sector-specific guidance.

### 3. How does the SBTi define a science-based target?

Science-based targets are GHG reduction goals aligned with what the latest climate science deems necessary to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement —limiting warming to well below 2°C, with an ambition for 1.5°C.

### 4. What are the benefits of SBTi validation?

An SBTi-approved target demonstrates that your climate commitments are robust, measurable, and science-aligned. This boosts confidence among customers, investors, and regulatory bodies. With DEKRA's audit and verification expertise, you can ensure a smooth and credible path to validation.

## 5. Is setting science based targets mandatory?

No, SBT participation is voluntary, but increasingly expected by stakeholders, especially in supply chains and investment portfolios. Companies that act now gain a competitive edge and can better prepare for future regulations. Additionally, setting SBTs can help improve your CDP score and support regulatory reporting requirements such as CSRD.

## 6. Who is eligible to set science-based targets?

Any company (excluding those in the fossil fuel sector) can commit to science-based targets, regardless of size or industry. Sector-specific guidance is available to tailor your targets to your operations.

## 7. Can small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) participate?

Yes. The SBTi provides a simplified process for SMEs, defined (as of 2024) as companies with:

- Fewer than 10,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in Scope 1 and location-based Scope 2 emissions,
- No classification in the Financial Institutions or Oil & Gas sectors,
- No mandatory sector-specific guidance (except for FLAG sectors).

DEKRA can support SMEs with readiness assessments and gap analyses to ensure smooth onboarding.

## 8. Can financial institutions set science-based targets?

Yes. The SBTi has developed specific methodologies for financial institutions to set targets related to their financed emissions. DEKRA offers audit solutions that are aligned with financial sector requirements.

## 9. How do I begin the SBTi journey?

Start by submitting a commitment letter to the SBTi. From there, you have up to 24 months to develop and submit your targets for validation. Our experts are here to help at every stage—from readiness to implementation and reporting.

## 10. What are the key steps for setting and validating a science-based target?

- **Commit:** Sign the SBTi commitment letter.
- **Develop:** Define near- and/or long-term targets in line with SBTi criteria.
- **Submit:** Send your targets to SBTi for validation.
- **Communicate:** Publicly disclose your approved targets.
- **Track:** Monitor progress and report annually.

## 11. What's the difference between near-term and long-term targets?

Near-term targets cover 5–10 years and represent immediate steps to reduce emissions. Long-term targets, often part of net-zero strategies, reflect your end goal of reducing emissions to near-zero by 2050 or earlier.

## 12. What is the difference between absolute and intensity-based targets?

- **Absolute targets** aim to reduce total GHG emissions, regardless of business growth.
- **Intensity-based targets** aim to lower emissions per unit of output (e.g., per product or dollar of revenue).

DEKRA can help assess which approach fits your operations and reporting requirements.

## Need support with your SBTi strategy?

DEKRA offers independent assurance, pre-validation checks, and tailored support for organizations at any stage of the SBTi journey. [Contact us](#) to learn how we can support your path to verified climate leadership.

**Learn more about DEKRA's sustainability services**

[www.dekra.us/en/audit/sustainability](https://www.dekra.us/en/audit/sustainability)