



**Climate  
Majority**  
Project

# Beyond the **climate** **policy** gap

Protecting the UK's  
economic future requires  
louder, coordinated lobbying  
from business

Prepared by **Regulate Us. Better** - a business campaign  
from the Climate Majority Project (CMP)

**Regulate Us. Better** is a campaign from the Climate Majority Project, uniting business voices to put pressure on the Government, to create a level playing field for transition to a low carbon economy.

It's a rallying place for leaders who understand that environmental regulation isn't just an ethical concern - it's a survival requirement for their businesses.

---

This report has been prepared by the **Regulate Us. Better** campaign on behalf of the CMP.

Authors: Helena Farstad  
Nick Hajdu  
Liam Kavanagh  
Editor: Rosie Bell  
Design: Amy Clancy

A special thanks to Sam Bowen, Rupert Read and CMPs financial supporters who made this work possible.

Our research shows it's time  
for business to find its voice  
and lead on climate policy.

"REGULATE US BETTER!"

"LOBBY US LOUDER!"

**UK business leaders say they're  
lobbying for better regulation**

to help companies hit climate targets,  
and stay in business...

**...But MPs aren't hearing them.**

Politicians are still calling for coordinated  
lobbying on pro-climate regulation - the  
kind that can level the playing field for  
truly sustainable business practice.

**Closing this communication gap**

is the key to jump-starting  
decarbonisation and climate resilience.

Between late 2024 and early 2025, CMP and **Regulate Us. Better** commissioned Observant and YouGov to survey attitudes toward climate mitigation, adaptation and regulation.

This report presents views from over 500 business leaders and 100 members of the UK Parliament.

It offers advocates in business and parliament insights and evidence to support their case for better policy and regulation, as a matter of urgency.

## Contents

Summary	page 5
Key insights	page 8
Our results in numbers	page 10
What do MPs want businesses to do?	page 13
Conclusions and Implications	page 16
Join Regulate Us. Better	page 17

# Summary

---

**MPs and Businesses agree that more robust climate regulation is required.** But as warming exceeds 1.5°C, businesses must signal more clearly what they need to remain viable.

Together, business and Parliament hold the power to get serious decarbonisation and climate adaptation going - both vital to protect the operating space for UK businesses amid worsening climate impacts. To find out why it's not happening yet, we polled MPs and business leaders.

What we discovered is a policy disconnect that exposes business to derailment by climate impacts.

---

85% of business leaders believe changes to climate regulations are necessary to achieve sustainable transition.

From economic shocks and supply chain disruptions to property damage and beyond, future-focused businesses know their operating space is under threat from disruptive climate impacts. While perhaps understandably, businesses are optimistic about their own performance, most recognise that industry in general can't deliver the long-term changes needed without stronger regulation. In the current regulatory and policy environment, conscientious companies continue to lose out to less ethical competitors.

When asked if more ambitious policy is needed to meet decarbonisation goals, nearly three times as many MPs agreed (51%) as disagreed (18%). But **a mere 13% reported feeling pressure from business to improve climate regulation.**

MPs strongly suspect that coming climate impacts will rock the economy.<sup>1</sup> But they look to business leaders for cues on regulation. They want to know what business needs - and so far, they can't tell. Businesses may say they're already advocating for climate policy, but without a united voice, MPs aren't hearing them.

Across political divides, politicians are ready to support policy changes, but they aren't hearing a strong, united voice from business demanding science-based regulation.

To protect UK plc right now and in the future, business must lobby Government with a single, powerful voice.

A further 55% of business leaders claim they're already lobbying actively for the change they need.

---

1. MPs demonstrate less certainty than business leaders on this point. In fact, on every comparable question, a higher percentage of MPs, relative to business leaders, declined to express a definite opinion. The percentage of MPs selecting 'unsure' was significantly larger than the equivalent in the business leaders survey. This may reflect MPs' professional tendency towards strategic ambiguity.

The majority of business leaders (85%) in our survey asserted that changes to government regulations are necessary to achieve any serious progress on a science-based transition in their industries.

A further 55% of business leaders claim they're already lobbying actively for the change they need.

**But only 13% of MPs reported feeling pressure from business to improve climate regulation.**

# Key Insights

---

## 1. **There's a gap between lobbying intention and reality**

Not only do businesses want better regulation to support their sustainable future - 55% of UK business leaders claim that they are already advocating publicly for better climate and environmental policy. However, only 13% of the MPs polled suggest that they are feeling pressure from the business community to advocate for more effective policies and regulations on climate. **If the message is being transmitted, it isn't being received.**

## 2. **Business attitudes to climate costs reveal doublethink**

The business community views the climate threat as more serious than our MP cohort, expressing greater concern about missed targets and calling more strongly for adaptation measures. In general, business leaders show a strong sense of responsibility, and appetite to drive meaningful change.

At the same time, most underestimate the implications of current climate trajectories for their existing business models. This was particularly clear in their conservative assessment of the structural change necessary to achieve environmental responsibility and their optimism about the financial implications of transitioning their own business in line with Paris targets. Furthermore, 71% claimed they were prepared to cut emissions by 50% by 2030 - a figure far from the current reality, with emissions cuts drastically behind schedule.

## 3. **As warming breaches 1.5°C, adaptation is a priority for all**

As global overheating exceeds the 1.5°C Paris limit with no sign of slowing, 77% of business leaders believe that adaptation to environmental issues represents a significant challenge. Likewise, 66% of MPs see an urgent need for strategic planning and preparation for climate impacts. Lobbying and policy creation in the business transition space must take adaptation seriously.



# The Paris Agreement

---

At the 2015 Paris climate summit, global leaders agreed to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, and well below 2°C, to prevent catastrophic, irreversible impacts. Carbon emissions would need to peak before 2025 and reduce by **50% across economies by 2030** (compared to 1990 levels).

Ten years later, emissions are still rising.

# Our results in numbers

---

**Business leaders know Paris targets are lost;**

**60%** of business leaders agreed that it is now too late to reduce emissions in time to meet the targets laid out in the Paris Agreement (only 26% disagreed).

**MPs aren't as sure.**

In contrast, **more than half (53%)** of the MPs surveyed are uncertain, with only 26% agreeing that it's too late to meet Paris targets.

**Either way, most see adaptation as an urgent priority.**

While climate mitigation remains an urgent focus for both groups, **77%** of business leaders also believe that **adaptation** to environmental issues now presents a significant challenge to their industry currently, or in the next 5-10 years.

**66%** of MPs agreed that we need strategic planning to prepare for climate impacts that are already inevitable - only 5% disagreed.

**Business leaders see themselves as advocates for climate regulation**

**81%** of business people say they feel comfortable advocating for regulation measures strong enough to achieve Paris targets.

**76%** of business people feel morally responsible and obliged to publicly advocate for changes to climate regulation.

**MPs don't sense much advocacy on transition policy from the business sector...**

Only **13%** of MPs report feeling pressure from the business community to advocate for more effective policies and regulations on climate.

**...but they believe that advocacy would have a positive impact.**

**Six times** as many MPs agreed (62%) as disagreed (10%) that 'increased pressure from the business community would help deliver more effective climate policies and regulation'.

**In fact, MPs depend on the business community to make the case for transition policy...**

Nearly **three times** as many MPs agreed (46%) as disagreed (17%) that 'business is uniquely positioned to achieve more effective policies and regulations on climate compared to any other group'.

“Businesses which are at the forefront of the green industries need to be more proactive in local communities so that politicians are not the sole message carriers. Anti Net Zero sentiment is growing in some areas, fuelled by bad science shared on social media. Businesses could help by sharing key learning resources e.g. facts and stats about why offshore wind is more environmentally friendly than oil and gas.”

- Labour MP

# What do MPs want businesses to do?

---

## 1. Spell it out for us

Above all, MPs expect businesses to be proactive in identifying how climate change will impact their sector — and communicating clearly what regulatory or policy interventions are needed to enable a fair and sustainable transition.

MPs asked for clear, evidence-based communication from trusted sources. They want concrete examples, cost-effective mitigation strategies, and a better articulation of the short-, medium-, and long-term impacts of both action and inaction. Importantly, they urged businesses to request specific, practical policy measures. In short, MPs are open to stronger collaboration, but want businesses to do the groundwork in defining both problems and solutions.

“Tell us what measures would be most impactful...”

“Clear asks of what they want and what they can reasonably deliver....”

Labour MP

## 2. Make the economic case

Second, MPs called clearly on businesses to frame the regulatory need in economic terms. They want to see the risks and opportunities of climate action expressed through tangible financial data, with cost benefit analysis of proposed policies and regulations, breaking down the broader economic implications for UK businesses and the public.

The need to link climate measures to national and local economic outcomes is consistent across party divides. Politicians want to hear about cost-effective strategies and growth opportunities.

“Articulate clearly the economic cost or benefit of proposed regulations.”

Conservative MP

## 3. Lobby, lobby, lobby

Finally, MPs urged businesses to raise a united and loud, clear and consistent voice in support of climate policies; engaging more actively in lobbying and advocacy, both individually and through collective industry bodies. Answers stressed the importance of visibility in Parliament; highlighting the need for business people to step forward as vocal champions for effective climate regulation.

“...Industries banding together with one voice as often as possible.”

Labour MP

---

# Reading between the lines:

---

The answers our respondents gave were not without contradictions - revealing hard work ahead for advocates in this field.

The business space must establish and communicate a coherent view of evidence-based reality regarding climate impacts, their cost, and the need for a sustainable transition. Only then will it be clear to all that joined-up regulation to reward fair play is the only way to protect the business space.

---

## Counterproductive “exceptionalism”

59% of business people are in favour of stricter environmental regulations that would support widespread decarbonisation. Around the same number are concerned about failing to meet climate mitigation targets at a global level, and believe adaptation should be part of the picture. However, 71% reported feeling prepared to cut their emissions in line with Paris targets, and 70% felt optimistic about the financial impact on their own business should they attempt to do so unilaterally, without improved regulation holding competitors accountable. Again it seems that many leaders are realistic about the predicament of industry as a whole, but fail to realise what this means in practice for their own business. This disconnected thinking may begin to explain why their lobbying is currently too quiet to be heard.

---

## Attachment to symbolic commitments

While 75% of business leaders felt their organisations shared their sense of urgency about climate breakdown, real-world progress on emissions tells a different story. Intent may align with leadership values, but implementation is falling short. To meet decarbonisation goals, businesses must move beyond symbolic commitments and lobby for stricter rules.

---

## Joining the dots between climate breakdown and severe business disruption

Current trajectories of climate breakdown lead to multiple systems failure that could shatter the UK economy. But those business leaders who don't support environmental regulation told us they don't see its relevance to the performance of their business, shareholder ROI or bottom line. What's more, 76% of businesses trust the accuracy of media reporting on climate - despite very little coverage of long term systemic impacts.

# Conclusions & Implications

---

Our results suggest that coordinated lobbying is one of the most important ways business can respond to the climate crisis.

As global warming enters overshoot, a critical opportunity exists for businesses to step up and drive the decarbonisation and adaptation agenda, to protect their operating space and the UK plc.

In general, businesses demonstrate significantly greater awareness of serious climate threats than MPs - despite, on our analysis, underestimating the level of action required to decarbonise and adapt, and overestimating their own preparedness. This contrast points to a responsibility for the business community to speak up.

MPs seem less informed about the seriousness of the climate threat and its implications for business. They want to do what's best for UK plc, and they're willing to believe that this means more ambitious climate and environmental policy and regulation. But they won't go ahead without clearer signals from the business community that this is desirable.

## **It's now a survival priority for UK business leaders to take the lead:**

- **articulating the level of threat to their business model**
- **demanding the regulation they need to decarbonise and adapt for the impacts that are coming, without going under.**

Most importantly, isolated calls for regulation in different sectors are not being heard - suggesting an urgent need to coordinate advocacy, in order to speak with a louder, more coherent voice.



# Join the campaign!

---

**Businesses can't act effectively to prevent or prepare for the environmental crisis without better regulation to hold all players accountable.**

**Regulate Us. Better** is a campaign from the Climate Majority Project, uniting the business community to put pressure on the Government to create a level playing field so business can transition to a low carbon economy.

It's a rallying place for leaders who understand that environmental regulation isn't just an ethical concern - it's a survival requirement for their businesses.

## **Our ultimate goal:**

Persuade UK-based business leaders—those with a majority stake in UK operations—to publicly affirm the need and actively lobby for government intervention, to deliver the regulation and policy that business truly requires to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

## **Our immediate objectives:**

- Normalise the need for policy and regulation in order to adequately decarbonise the UK economy, and adapt for impacts already locked in.
- Build advocacy and momentum around the need for better science-based policy and enforceable regulation in the UK.
- Facilitate collaborative and brave spaces for leaders, in order to create a united front to effectively influence and lobby for the right policies and regulation.



# **Regulate Us. Better.**

To find out more, visit:

[\*\*https://climatemajorityproject.com/regulate-us-2\*\*](https://climatemajorityproject.com/regulate-us-2)

or get in touch directly:

[\*\*helena@climatemajorityproject.com\*\*](mailto:helena@climatemajorityproject.com)