Telecoms industry issues call to action on supply chain emissions

Survey shows 93 percent of JAC members have committed to net-zero or science-based commitments, compared to 43 percent of Forbes 2000 members

LONDON, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, June 22, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the telecoms sector issues a new report highlighting its significant action on climate change and net-zero, it has called on its supply chain to implement new best practices for decarbonisation.

Data from the Net Zero Tracker initiative show that nearly seven years on from the Paris agreement, just 57 percent of the world's largest 2,000 companies by revenue have made a commitment to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions. Only 43 percent of those companies have committed to net-zero or science-based targets, which are now understood to be necessary to keep global warming to within 1.5C of pre-industrial levels.

JAC Climate Change Report

But as epi's analysis shows, the telecoms industry is bucking the trend. The Joint Alliance for CSR (JAC), an industry body made up of 26 of the world's biggest telecoms companies, including BT, Vodafone, Deutsche Telekom and Telefonica, has worked to bring the industry into alignment with the latest scientific evidence on the climate and the changes necessary to reduce its carbon footprint.

A 2023 epi survey of JAC members, cited in a recent report, 'Achieving Net Zero in the Telecoms Industry', 93 percent of JAC members have committed to net-zero and science-based targets. JAC members have also worked to extend their commitments beyond directly controlled business emissions, known as Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, to emissions produced across the value chain, known as Scope 3 emissions.

As John Spear, Director at epi Consulting, said, 'This move reflects a recognition of the growing need to address Scope 3 emissions across telecoms.

'The majority of a company's overall carbon footprint falls under Scope 3, making it the single

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largest area of potential impact for companies working to combat climate change.'

Just 31 percent of the world's largest 2,000 companies have set a Scope 3 emissions target. By contrast, 85 percent of JAC members have Scope 3 reduction targets in place.

Dr. Carlo Drauth, Chair of JAC Climate Change Workstream & Head - Sustainability and Responsible Business, Telefónica, said that 'joining forces across the telecoms sector and value chain' was vital to bringing a net-zero future into being.

'As an industry, we have already set ambitious targets and taken concrete measures to reduce our emissions and mitigate climate change,' he said.

'However, most of our carbon footprint lies beyond our direct operations. Our supply chain is a significant contributor to emissions, and to achieve our targets, we must work together to reduce our collective carbon footprint.

'We understand that this transformation will not be easy, but we are confident that with the right mindset and actions, it is achievable.

'JAC is proud to be at the forefront of the fight against climate change and committed to leading the way in our sector.'

Tackling Scope 3 requires companies to identify the primary sources of emissions in their wider value chain in order to approach emissions cuts in a high-impact, targeted manner.

epi works with a number of the JAC membership providing guidance on working with its supply chain partners to reduce their scope three carbon footprints, including through tender scoring, contractual carbon reduction requirements, supplier best practice awards and supplier development programmes aimed at creating and implementing carbon reduction plans.

JAC has now published ten new best practices for decarbonisation for the supply chain to implement:

- Understand your carbon footprint - assess emissions from operations, energy use, and the value chain.
- Develop a carbon reduction plan - set a Net Zero Goal with interim targets and board oversight.
- Align carbon reduction to SBTi standard - establish valid, science-based Scope 1, 2, and 3 targets.

- Analyse supply chain emissions - prioritise areas with significant carbon footprints.
- Maintain LCAs for your products/services - identify major decarbonization opportunities.
- Report emissions reduction activities - use recognized standards like the GHG protocol and ensure external verification.
- Use green energy as available - a simple and effective emission reduction strategy.
- Set power efficiency goals - incentivize employees to improve product and operational efficiency.
- Support your customers' carbon reduction goals - understand and align with them.
- Engage the supply chain - encourage and help them to reduce their carbon emissions.

Spear added, 'These ten best practices are vital for the supply chain. By understanding the data, by understanding our carbon footprint, we can work collaboratively – operator and supply chain – to turn the tide on climate change.

'This report highlights the great work that is happening in the sector, but also the work needed to be done.'

The IPCC's AR6 report, finalised in March 2023, warned that limiting global warming to within 1.5C of pre-industrial levels would require 'rapid, deep and in most cases immediate greenhouse gas emissions reductions.'

Global temperatures are currently at around 1.1C above pre-industrial levels. The IPCC said there was a 'closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable future for all.'

However, if greenhouse gas emissions peak as soon as possible and are then reduced rapidly, it may be possible to avoid catastrophic human and ecological impact.

Consumers, employers and populations are placing rising pressure on companies to take action.

The report can be downloaded here: https://jac-initiative.com/climate-change-report

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