

# Net Zero at Risk: Just 11% of Sustainability Teams on Track to Meet Short-Term Goals, According to New Leafr Report

*A new survey finds most corporate CSR teams doubt they'll meet sustainability goals, with only 11% confident their organisation is on track.*

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, October 15, 2025  
/EINPresswire.com/ -- Confidence in corporate CSR delivery has dropped sharply, according to new data from over 450 sustainability professionals across UK and European companies.

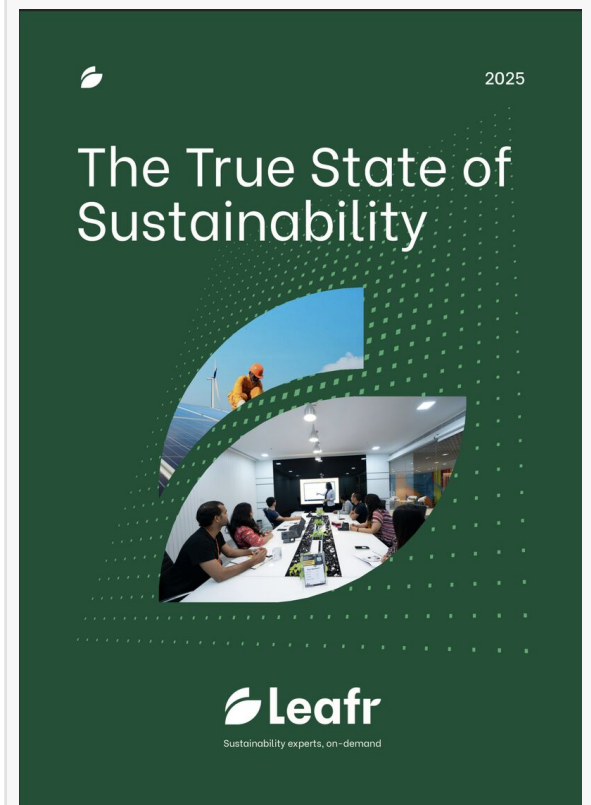
[The True State of Sustainability 2025 report](#), published by UK sustainability network [Leafr](#), finds that nine in ten corporate sustainability teams doubt their ability to meet short- and long-term sustainability goals. The results point to a widening capacity gap as businesses face new ESG disclosure requirements under the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and UK Green Claims Code.

Delivery risk across major employers:

With two-thirds of respondents based in large or enterprise organisations, the findings reflect pressures inside the companies responsible for the majority of corporate emissions and the most demanding disclosure obligations. The data provides a real-time insight into how the UK and Europe's largest employers are managing sustainability delivery when regulatory expectations are rising and investor scrutiny is intensifying.

Headline findings:

- Only 11% of respondents think their organisation is on track to meet its short- and long-term sustainability targets vs 24% in 2024.
- 67% respondents from large or enterprise sized firms.



Leafr True State Of Sustainability Report 2025 Front Page

- 76% reported their team is not adequately resourced.
- 91% said they have been asked to work beyond their formal area of expertise.
- 72% said their remit had expanded.
- 67% said team was same or smaller than last year.
- 62% cited budget constraints as key barrier to progress.
- 42% flagged lack of C-Suite engagement, a figure that has doubled since 2024 report.

#### Quotes from the industry:

Mike Barry, Planeatry Alliance, said: "That just 11% of respondents feel confident about delivering their long and, particularly concerning, short-term targets (25% in 2024) is sobering. Despite the ESG backlash, many companies have retained their public targets but seem to be soft-peddalling on their delivery. The public holding of the sustainability targets line has been important and should not be underestimated in the current

political climate, but the worry grows that the truly transformative action we need to respond to the conjoined and growing social and environmental crises is still stalled at the start line."

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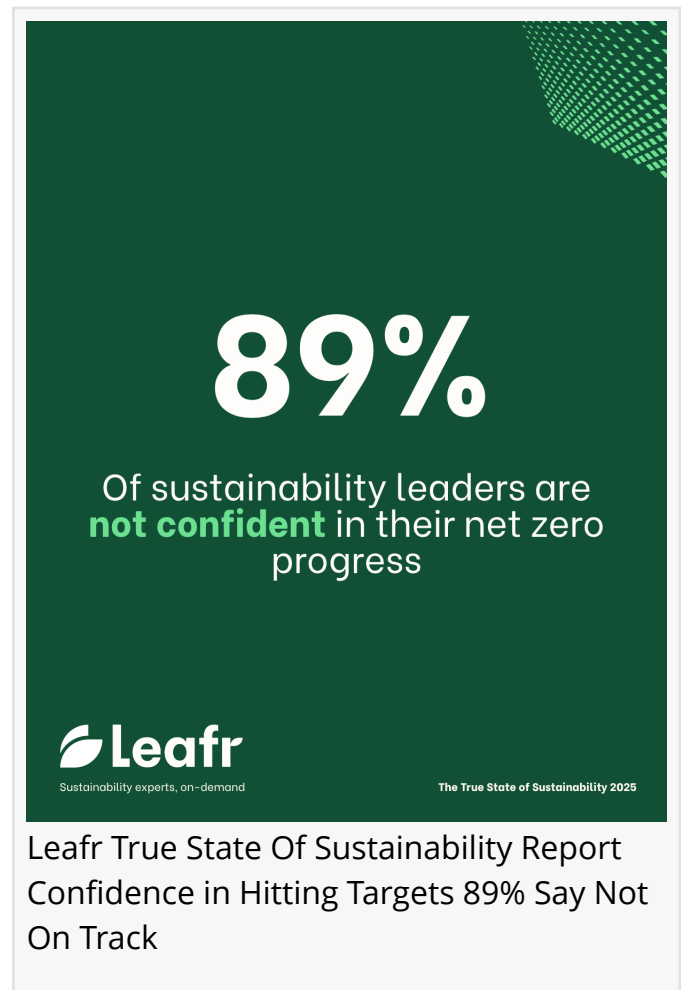
*Mike Barry, Planeatry Alliance*

Mary Johnstone-Louis, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford, said: "Leafr's new report is clear: leaders with a compliance-led approach to sustainability put their companies at risk. In the report's own words: "What's needed is not a minor adjustment, but a radical rethink". Leaders who act on Leafr's recommendations now will be the ones shaping, not chasing, the future."

Gus Bartholomew, Leafr Co-Founder, said: "The data confirms what we hear from our community every day.

Sustainability teams cannot deliver net zero on their own. They are under-resourced, pulled in too many directions, and forced into compliance work at the expense of impact. Unless leadership, regulators, and investors align behind a pragmatic model that values environmental outcomes as much as financial ones, targets will remain out of reach."

Nick Valenzia, Leafr Co-Founder, added: "Boards would never accept financial accounts prepared



by unqualified staff, yet they entrust multi-million-pound sustainability strategies to overstretched and under-resourced teams. If we are serious about delivering commitments, resources must match rhetoric."

#### About the Report:

The True State of Sustainability 2025 report, published by UK sustainability network Leafra, captures how sustainability teams are structured, resourced and operating inside organisations of every size: from SMEs to FTSE-listed multinationals. The findings provide one of the most detailed current indicators of how well major employers are equipped to deliver Net Zero commitments under increasing regulatory and investor pressure.

The full report can be downloaded, here:

<https://www.leafra.com/the-true-state-of-sustainability-report-2025>

#### About Leafra:

Leafra, [www.leafra.com](https://www.leafra.com), is a UK-based sustainability consultancy network connecting organisations with independent experts, data specialists and ESG advisors. With more than 1,000 consultants across the UK, Europe and the US, Leafra helps companies strengthen sustainability delivery and regulatory readiness.

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