

CASE STUDY 4

COOPERATION IS THE PATH TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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CASE STUDY 4

Cooperation is the path to sustainable development

Faced with alarming climate change projections, organizations around the world must take decisive action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. However, awareness of challenges does not always translate into effective action. In this context, the London Declaration is a key step taken by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the British Standards Institution (BSI) to accelerate progress towards a sustainable world.

The case study shows how the London Declaration is driving change at a standards level, engaging society and organizations around the world, and what results have already been achieved.

One of the key reasons for establishing cooperation in the form of a declaration is the finding that the world is not on track to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. This is an ambitious plan that requires the work of many entities and at various levels of action.

In the face of the looming climate catastrophe, the world faces a number of challenges that require immediate action by governments, businesses and society. The current state of the situation is worrying. Less than one in four of the largest companies are on track to meet climate change targets. This is the imperfect performance of companies that are key players on the global stage. The 2021 report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provides even more disturbing predictions. The global limit of 1.5°C will be achieved by 2040, but only if emissions are significantly reduced. IPCC reports clearly show that time is running out and drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are necessary to avoid exceeding the key temperature limit.

Governments and businesses must act quickly to avoid a climate catastrophe. The UN appeal is a clear call for immediate and effective action. Environmental protection is becoming an imperative that requires commitment at all levels. Human activity affects the climate in irreversible ways, but disaster can be avoided by immediate action. The UN scientific report warns against irreversible effects, while emphasizing that conscious and decisive actions can prevent the worst-case scenario.

CASE STUDY 4

As part of the above-mentioned challenges, the need to create the London Declaration as a formal document for cooperation and action arose. A commitment to actively integrate climate science into standards development. This is an innovative approach that responds to the need for quick and effective action. Implementing standards consistent with the latest scientific knowledge is becoming a key element in the fight against climate change.

Adopted by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 2021. Signature by ISO underlines the international recognition of the Declaration, sending a strong signal to companies and governments around the world.

Faced with the growing challenges of climate change, the British Standards Institution (BSI) has made an ambitious commitment to revise as many as 5,000 national standards. This decision is based on the belief that industry standards play a key role in shaping the attitude of companies and society towards ecology. This commitment is a movement that connects climate science with practice, bringing real benefits to sustainable development.

The review of standards is a response to the global challenges facing the world. Phenomena such as climate change, environmental degradation and pressure on natural resources require innovative solutions. In this context, BSI understands that standards must evolve to effectively respond to contemporary challenges, especially those related to climate change. The aim of the review is to adapt the standards to the latest achievements in climate science. BSI recognizes that this science is dynamic and that new discoveries can contribute to a better understanding of the impact of human activities on the climate. Standards review is therefore a process that is open to new information and adjustments to standards as scientific research progresses.

CASE STUDY 4

BSI's Standards Review Commitment is a concrete action to adapt standards to contemporary challenges, with particular emphasis on climate change. The transition from general standards to more precise and ecologically oriented standards is a key aspect of this process. Modern standards must take into account not only traditional aspects of quality and safety, but also the impact of activities on the environment. The review of standards allows for the introduction of specific adaptations in terms of emissions, consumption of natural resources, as well as the promotion of practices consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

BSI does not treat standards review merely as a bureaucratic procedure. It is a strategic tool that is intended to influence the attitudes of companies, society and institutions. Adapting standards to climate realities is a step towards creating a framework that supports sustainable development on many levels. The decision to review the standards is also a departure from the traditional concept, where standards are only technical regulations. BSI focuses on innovation and flexibility, which makes the standards a tool that can support pro-ecological innovations and contribute to reducing the negative impact on the climate.

The review of standards by BSI also opens up cooperation with the international community. Including different perspectives and experiences allows us to create standards that are appropriate for different markets and cultures. This is added value for companies operating globally, which can benefit from uniform, ecological standards. As a result, BSI's commitment to review standards becomes an important element of the global response to the challenges of climate change. It is not only about adapting technical documents, but also about building the foundation for sustainable and responsible development on an international scale.

CASE STUDY 4

Any decision regarding new standards is based on current scientific findings. Including climate science in decision-making is a key element of an effective approach to sustainable development. Delivering net zero targets across a wider range of sectors and disciplines. This is the practical implementation of the assumptions of the Paris Agreement, which is an important step towards a global sustainable future. Organizations around the world working together to accelerate action in line with the Paris Agreement. The London Declaration contributes to building a common platform for organizations enabling effective cooperation to reduce climate change. Participation of civil society and those most vulnerable to climate change in the standards development process. It is the involvement of society at every stage that makes the standards reflect the real needs and challenges of society. As a result, the London Declaration becomes not only a declaration of commitment, but also an effective tool that drives progress towards sustainable development, while creating a global community committed to protecting our planet.

The London Declaration is a landmark commitment to integrate climate science into standards development. This commitment brings numerous benefits, significantly impacting global sustainability efforts.

- The London Declaration makes climate science a key part of the standard-setting process. Integrating this perspective enables a more precise understanding of the environmental impact of activities. The standards, developed based on the latest scientific findings, are an effective tool in the fight against climate change.

CASE STUDY 4

- Net zero targets, key to curbing global warming, are becoming a reality across a wider range of sectors and domains, thanks to the London Declaration. This commitment accelerates effective action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, supporting global efforts for a sustainable future.
- The Paris Agreement, which is the foundation of the global fight against climate change, is gaining effectiveness thanks to the cooperation of organizations around the world. Engaging in partnerships accelerates efforts, guided by shared goals and supporting international coordination.
- Including civil society and those most vulnerable to climate change in the standards development process ensures that standards are balanced and take into account the diverse needs of local communities. This approach promotes effective environmental protection and effective counteracting the effects of climate change.

The London Declaration, as an innovative approach to developing standards, has become a key tool in the global fight against climate change. Engaging ISO and BSI in reviewing standards and actively incorporating climate science are steps that have a real impact on achieving sustainability goals. These actions not only accelerate progress towards a sustainable world, but also engage society and organizations around the world to fight together for the future of our planet.

Case study prepared based on data from:

<https://www.bsigroup.com/pl-PL/O-BSI/Brytyjski-krajowy-komitet-normalizacyjny/deklaracja-London/>



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QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS:

1. What challenges do organizations face in achieving sustainable goals development in the light of climate change forecasts?
2. How does the London Declaration influence the standards development process i why do you think incorporating climate science is crucial in this context?
3. What are the main threats posed by the climate catastrophe, and why is action by governments, businesses and society necessary to address these challenges?