



SCIENCE  
BASED  
TARGETS

DRIVING AMBITIOUS CORPORATE CLIMATE ACTION

# Complaints Procedure

Version 1.0

January 2025

## ABOUT SBTi

The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) is a corporate climate action organization that enables companies and financial institutions worldwide to play their part in combating the climate crisis.

We develop standards, tools and guidance which allow companies to set greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions targets in line with what is needed to keep global heating below catastrophic levels and reach net-zero by 2050 at latest.

The SBTi is incorporated as a UK charity, with a subsidiary SBTi Services Limited, which hosts our target validation services. Partner organizations who facilitated SBTi's growth and development are CDP, the United Nations Global Compact, the We Mean Business Coalition, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

## VERSION HISTORY

Version	Change/update description	Release date
Version 1	Policy published	8 <sup>th</sup> January 2025

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# 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Complaints Procedure (“**Procedure**”) outlines the procedures for handling complaints made against the Science Based Targets initiative (“**SBTi**”) by stakeholders, including members of the public, donors, partners, and beneficiaries, regarding any aspect of the SBTi’s operations, activities, or conduct.
- 1.2 The Procedure also describes the process that will be followed by the SBTi to respond to and manage complaints.
- 1.3 SBTi’s trustees view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has made the complaint. Our policy is:
  - 1.3.1 to provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
  - 1.3.2 to publicize the existence of our complaints procedure on our website so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint;
  - 1.3.3 to make sure people within the organization knows what to do if a complaint is received;
  - 1.3.4 to make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired; and
  - 1.3.5 to gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

# 2. Scope

- 1.4 This procedure applies to complaints which relate to SBTi members of staff and any other parties working with or on behalf of the SBTi, including volunteers and those who perform work for or represent the SBTi through consulting or other services.
- 1.5 This procedure does not cover:
  - 1.5.1 Complaints relating to the development, revision, content or any other aspect of SBTi standards or standardized instruments. For such complaints, please refer to the complaints procedure outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure for Development of SBTi Standards.
  - 1.5.2 Complaints relating to SBTi Services Limited, the subsidiary of the SBTi. For such complaints, please refer to the Standard Operating Procedure: Complaints SBTi Services Limited.
  - 1.5.3 Complaints from SBTi’s employees, who should refer to SBTi’s internal grievance policy.

# 3. What Constitutes a Complaint

- 1.6 A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, about the work, actions, or lack of action of SBTi or its representatives.

1.7 As a charity, SBTi has to use its resources to best effect. As a result of this there will, occasionally, be circumstances in which we will not respond to a complaint. Examples include:

- 1.7.1 where a complaint is about something with which SBTi is not directly connected;
- 1.7.2 where an individual unreasonably pursues a complaint to which we have already responded under this procedure;
- 1.7.3 where the individual making the complaint behaves in a way which is prejudiced or offensive or we consider amounts to harassing a member or members of SBTi's staff;
- 1.7.4 where the complaint is incoherent or illegible;
- 1.7.5 where the complaint relates to matters which are alleged to have occurred over 12 months prior to the date of the complaint being made;
- 1.7.6 where it is apparent that a complaint has been sent to us and numerous other organizations.

In such situations we will choose whether or not to reply.

1.8 We are unable to respond to anonymous complaints, but we may investigate them and reflect on any points that arise from our investigation.

## 4. Confidentiality and Data Protection

1.9 All submitted complaints and supporting evidence will be treated in strict confidence by the staff responsible, to ensure that the identities of involved parties are protected.

1.10 The SBTi will ensure confidentiality, by:

- 1.10.1 Not distributing or disclosing the information to any party outside of those directly involved in the assessment of the complaint.
- 1.10.2 Exclusively using the information provided to process the complaint and identify which aspects should be assessed.
- 1.10.3 Not using the information in any way that may allow identification of the individual(s) involved, or any associated NGOs or companies.

1.11 All complaints will be handled in accordance with relevant data protection requirements.

## 5. How to Make a Complaint

1.12 The concerned party or organization should contact SBTi in writing by emailing [compliance@sciencebasedtargets.org](mailto:compliance@sciencebasedtargets.org). The Compliance Team will be responsible for handling potential complaints once received, for performing or monitoring the required assessment or review and for communicating with the complainant.

1.13 Complainants should include as much detail as possible in their complaint, including the following where available:

- 1.13.1 Concerned party information (name, position, email address, telephone number);
- 1.13.2 Relevant dates (date/time/location of the issue or events relating to the complaint);
- 1.13.3 Where relevant, personnel involved (names, positions, entities and other relevant information);
- 1.13.4 A narrative description of the complaint, including any relevant background;
- 1.13.5 Any other relevant information relevant to the complaint, including whether the person or organization wishes not to have their identity disclosed during its processing.

## 6. Complaints Handling Process

- 1.14 **Acknowledgement:** We will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within ten (10) business days.
- 1.15 **Assessment:** The complaint will be assessed by a designated member of SBTi staff who is not connected to the subject matter of the complaint. We may request further information from the complainant to enable us to make an informed assessment of the complaint. In the event that a complainant does not respond to a request for information within ten (10) business days, the complaint will be paused . If the complainant does not respond to a request for information within thirty (30) business days, the complaint will be considered closed and the complainant will be required to resubmit their complaint.
- 1.16 **Response:** We will endeavor to provide a full response to the complainant within forty-five (45) business days of the complaint being received. If the complaint cannot be dealt with within this timeframe, we will inform the complainant and provide an updated timeline.
- 1.17 **Appeal:** If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision made on the complaint, they may submit an appeal. The appeal will be escalated to more senior individuals who are not connected with the subject matter of the complaint and who were not involved in the original assessment of the complaint. The appeal must be made within 3 months of receiving the initial decision on the complaint. A final decision will be communicated within sixty (60) business days of the appeal being lodged. If the appeal cannot be dealt with within this timeframe, we will inform the complainant and provide an updated timeline.
- 1.18 Whether a complaint is upheld or not, the response (at first instance and on appeal) will describe (a) the action taken to assess the complaint, (b) the conclusions from the assessment, (c) any action taken as a result of the complaint, and (d) the form of redress to the complainant which the assessing party considers appropriate (if any).

## 7. Monitoring and Review

- 1.19 SBTi will monitor complaints to identify trends and areas for improvement. This Procedure will be reviewed every two years or following any significant change in

regulatory requirements or operational procedures. The Board reserves the right to vary the procedure set out in this policy for good reason.





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