

ESG VC Survey: A one-page guide

Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) is becoming an increasingly important topic for businesses of all sizes. With mandatory climate disclosures, the Taskforce for Climate-Related Financial Disclosures and other regulations and bodies emerging there is a need for all businesses, not just large corporations, to understand ESG in their organisations. This is especially relevant as more and more entities are required to disclose climate-related information and hence start to put pressure on suppliers to disclose and minimise climate impacts. ESG reporting is more than just compliance; it's also a strategic opportunity to build long-term sustainable value within a business.

However, it can be confusing to know where to start. In order to support NZ start-ups and scale-ups in taking the first step towards a greater focus on ESG, the NZ VC industry has adopted a global reporting framework for all VC-backed businesses in NZ. The framework – ESG_VC - covers the key areas of ESG relevant to early-stage companies using an Excel survey and dashboard that consists of 53 questions across environmental, social and governance considerations. The survey should take around 1 hour but may later take up to 4 hours depending on the stage, sector, and maturity of your company.

The introduction page of the framework provides a good outline of the tool but there are a couple of important points to note:

- **Column F of the Framework** has a drop-down to select the response that best fits your company. We understand that you may not collect all of the data required to answer every question in the survey. The idea is to answer what you can, and list 'No' or 'No - but we plan to get to this in the next 12 months' as needed. The objective of the survey is to highlight potential risk areas or actions you could consider taking as you grow and scale. Hopefully, it will give a good sense of where you're at, and how we can help with any initiatives you'd like to pick up in the future. You will not be penalised for not having all of the answers.
- **Column G of the Framework** is for any additional notes or comments that you want to record. This aims to acknowledge the fact that the answers are often not as binary as the questions may suggest.
- **Column H of the Framework** provides resources and guidelines for completing the survey. The guidance is a mixture of ESG_VC and New Zealand-specific resources.
- **Impact Information:** As an addition to the ESG_VC Framework, NZ VCs have added an 'Impact Information' worksheet. This section is to acknowledge that many companies are not only making ESG progress within their organisations but also that their organisation's purpose and actions are impact-related and making a positive difference across E, S and/or G. This section is not scored within the Company Dashboard but is recognised as a commitment to better ESG outcomes.

Alongside the ESG Framework, we have provided a simple GHG emissions calculator to help calculate emissions. This calculator is set up as an Excel workbook with tabs to calculate key scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions that feed into a summary. To measure your emissions, enter the relevant data into the yellow input cells – the 'Summary' tab will then output the emission result.

Some key resources are listed below with additional links inside the ESG VC Framework survey.

1. [Ministry for the Environment: Measuring emissions: A guide for organisations: 2023 detailed guide](#) – a comprehensive guide for measuring and reporting emissions in NZ.
2. [ESG VC Notion Website](#) – general information from ESG VC (not all NZ-specific)
3. [Sustainable Business Council Resources](#) – NZ resources, tools and articles
4. [Impact Initiative Toolkit](#) – NZ resources and tools
5. [Climate Action Toolbox](#) – online NZ-specific carbon emission calculator