



Working Principles for Corporate Climate Resilience Leadership



Overview

To establish a foundational and shared vision for corporate leadership on climate resilience, C2ES, Resilience Rising, and Resilience First, have engaged cross-sector stakeholders—including businesses, NGOs, and resilience-focused organizations—to develop guiding principles that reflect how companies can demonstrate leadership in advancing resilience to the physical impacts of climate change.

The partners developed a first draft of leadership principles by drawing on stakeholder input gathered between July and September 2023 and existing resilience principles designed for other audiences such as those included in the United States National Climate Resilience Framework and the Living Guide to the Principles of Climate Change Adaptation.

We collected feedback on two iterations of draft principles throughout November and December 2023. The principles below reflect the written and verbal feedback provided by fourteen leaders within companies and relevant NGOs. They reflect a current view of the role of companies in advancing climate resilience and the definition of leadership, particularly for major corporations. As we anticipate that more engagement and discussion in this space will generate additional insights and clarity to incorporate into future iterations, they represent an initial set of “working” principles.

The working Principles provide an organizing frame to guide our work and to establish a global framework for corporate leadership on climate resilience. They are designed for broad endorsement and use by private enterprises around the globe to assert a common view that companies leading on climate resilience are science-based and proactive; transparent and accountable; work to safeguard and enhance/strengthen communities and ecosystems; strive for inclusive and equitable decision-making; and enable systems-wide transformations.

C2ES, Resilience Rising and Resilience First would like to thank our sponsors and partners for their gracious support of this work. As fully independent organizations, C2ES, Resilience Rising and Resilience First are solely responsible for the content of these principles.



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Companies leading on climate resilience are:

1 SCIENCE-BASED & PROACTIVE

Companies acknowledge and assess the acute and chronic risks presented by the physical impacts of climate change and implement best practices in their planning and investments that enhance resilience across the value chain.

Explanation: As physical climate impacts increase and compound across interconnected systems, risks to private sector activities are rising and present the need for proactive and science-based risk management. Resilience-focused companies recognize the latest scientific consensus articulated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other leading scientific studies that demonstrate the effects of climate change on every region across the globe. In tandem with efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and manage transition risks, companies integrate physical risk assessment and reduction approaches across corporate activities and investments to enhance resilience to these impacts.

2 TRANSPARENT & ACCOUNTABLE

Companies regularly measure and report assessed climate risks, adaptation actions, and their impacts in a consistent and transparent manner.

Explanation: Companies can improve awareness of systemic risks, inform best practices, and enable collaborative action by appropriately measuring and disclosing their material and non-material physical climate risks, sharing their resilience activities, and proactively participating in voluntary reporting regimes where reporting regulation is less advanced.

3 SAFEGUARDING & ENHANCING

Companies employ practices that safeguard against maladaptation and increased vulnerability to physical climate hazards and strive to enhance the adaptive capacity of communities and natural ecosystems.

Explanation: Resilient communities and natural ecosystems are a necessary input to sustainable economies and thriving businesses. It is incumbent on companies to ensure that their business practices do not reduce the resilience of communities and ecosystems; instead, corporate activities should seek to protect and enhance the health and adaptive capacity of these systems.

4 INCLUSIVE & EQUITABLE

Companies strive to collaboratively engage value chains and local communities to understand and improve decision-making, contribute to systemic needs and priorities, and drive the implementation of equitable climate adaptation and resilience investments.

Explanation: A climate-resilient system is built on healthy and thriving communities and ecosystems. By embedding principles of inclusivity and equity across corporate resilience planning and operations, companies can more fully understand their climate risks and opportunities and assess a broader set of strategic options with internal and external stakeholders. These practices will enable companies to design and develop solutions that create shared value and co-benefits for a broader spectrum of stakeholders and promote more just outcomes.

5 TRANSFORMATIVE

Companies support and pursue climate adaptation solutions that enable positive systems-level transformations within their organizations, industry sectors, and value chains, and in communities and natural ecosystems.

Explanation: The private sector is uniquely positioned to develop, adopt, and deploy innovative solutions and services at scale. Companies can support transformative change by engaging in radical collaboration, creating new business models, and pursuing net positive and regenerative outcomes.