

World
Benchmarking
Alliance

Annual Report
2022



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Our year at
a glance

1,014

of the world's largest
and most influential
companies assessed

4

benchmarks published – 3 of which were first
iterations

4

methodologies
published or updated

95

stakeholders who participated in their development

\$11.97 trillion

in assets under the management
of investors or financial
institutions who are WBA Allies

87

employees

342

Allies

3

Collective
Impact Coalitions

85

stakeholders involved

88

events hosted by
WBA to socialise
our insights

51

speaker invitations

29

WBA recommendations to policymakers
based on our insights

846

media mentions

An exciting year of growth for WBA amidst game-changing developments for corporate accountability

2022 was a positive year of growth and development for WBA. We emerged from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, matured in our operations and expanded our team globally. We launched three new benchmarks in 2022: the Financial System Benchmark – presented at COP27, the Nature Benchmark and the Transport Benchmark. We continued to demonstrate our ability to convene high-level stakeholders and use our data as a focal point for discussions, such as our side events at COP27 and UN Climate Week. We used our 2021 Digital Inclusion Benchmark to provide technical inputs on digital challenges and opportunities for women at the 67th meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women; and we used our 2022 Nature Benchmark to influence the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at COP15.

One of the most exciting developments during the year was seeing our work become even more relevant against a backdrop of significant change in the sustainability reporting space. The recently adopted EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and the ongoing development of global sustainability and climate disclosure standards by the IFRS Foundation demonstrate a clear shift towards more detailed mandatory impact reporting for companies. I see this as game changing for WBA – never before has our work in assessing the most influential companies across seven systems transformations been more relevant. This increased focus on corporate accountability has already generated a significant uptick in recognition for WBA. Companies, civil society organisations and governments are starting to understand the impact we have and how they can



Paul Druckman
Chair of the WBA
Supervisory Board

use our benchmarks and methodologies. We still have a way to go in bridging the gap with wider stakeholders such as media, but we've made some excellent inroads, and as we complete our full set of benchmarks and accumulate more data and insights, we'll have a much stronger story to tell to drive future recognition.

Looking back at WBA's evolution since 2017, the organisation has transitioned from a bright idea actioned by a handful of innovators, navigated the chasm where many good ideas

fall short, and is now traversing the curve of the early adaptors, laying the solid foundations for our future as powerful change agents. There have been challenges along the way, typical of any young, growing initiative. Yet we are strengthened by the collective vision of our thoughtful and dynamic management team, guided by a supportive board, and driven by the passion and dedication of every team member at WBA for enacting positive change.

We have done the groundwork and demonstrated our ability to deliver, and I believe in 2023, with our complete set of benchmarks and our continued focus and determination, WBA will really become that powerful change agent that we aspire to be.



↑ Our Decarbonisation and Energy Transformation Lead Vicky Sins (pictured centre) moderating a panel discussion about corporate human rights and the Paris Agreement Goals at the Denmark Pavilion at COP27.

Scaling, strengthening, and sustaining WBA in 2022

2022 was the first full year in which we worked with our new five-year strategy, 'Closing the Corporate Accountability Gap', which focuses on three pillars: scaling, strengthening and sustaining.

Scaling will essentially enable us to assess 2,000 companies (the 'SDG2000') across seven transformations in a predictable and bi-annual rhythm. In terms of scaling, we have grown the organisation to 87 staff members in 21 countries, allowing us to assess more than 1,500 companies. In addition, we expanded the alliance by 52 new members and the assets under management of our investor Allies grew to USD 11.97 trillion.

Our strengthening pillar is essentially about making the benchmarks more consequential to companies. This requires that the key stakeholders of companies start to act on the outcomes of the benchmark in ways that reward leaders and make laggards more accountable. To this end, we formed our first Collective Impact Coalition, continued our

Communities of Practice, and strengthened our feedback loop to policy makers. In addition, we worked on greater visibility of WBA through a stronger presence during global events such as at COP27, securing more media coverage and partnering with more allies.

Our sustaining pillar is about ensuring corporate accountability becomes an integrated part of the intergovernmental system. We took our first steps towards this ambition in 2022 by ensuring that our work in the various transformations is acknowledged and used by the relevant UN agencies and other intergovernmental organisations such as the G7, World Bank and OECD. At an institutional level, gaining UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) status was an important step, strengthening our connection to the UN system.



Gerbrand Haverkamp
Executive Director

Our new strategy requires long-term funding to support the core WBA mission and our Theory of Change. In 2022, we secured multi-year funding from the Dutch Government and the IKEA Foundation. In addition to helping to deliver our strategy, this core support will help to strengthen our Measuring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) capabilities by creating a new Impact, Learning and Development function that will be fully operational in 2023. This function will enable us to be more agile in our learnings and make adjustments that maximise our impact.

In addition to this core-support, WBA needs strategic partners that will also enhance our credibility within each system. In this context we have been extremely proud to agree a partnership with the French Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME) and Climate Arc to help scale and strengthen our climate work. Similarly, we are partnering with the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on digital inclusion, and with the Generation Foundation on our core social indicators and to help strengthen the way we assess and engage on gender equality.

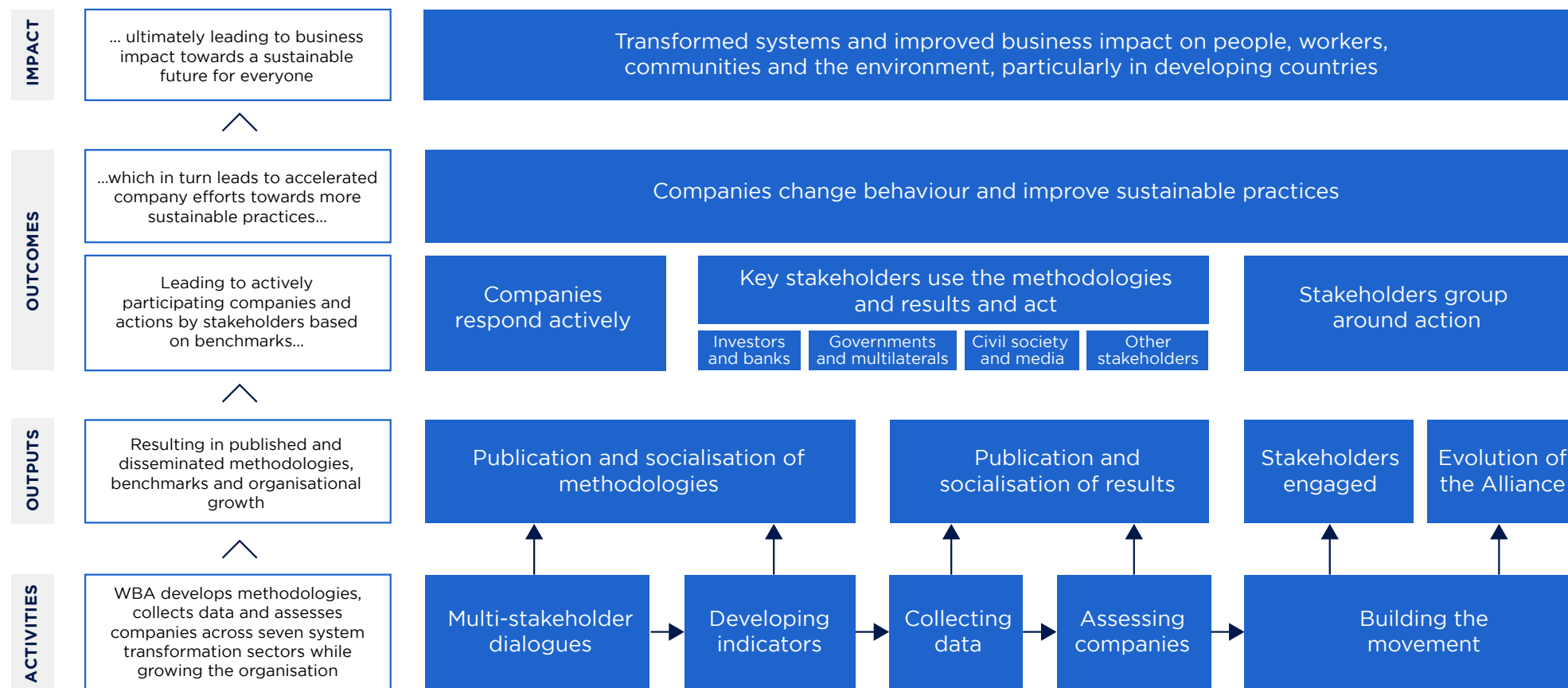
Looking internally, we are working to increase the ethnic and cultural diversity of our workforce, and as a global organisation, we already employ many different nationalities. However, being an ethnically and culturally diverse organisation doesn't guarantee being a truly inclusive organisation so this will be a big part of our focus in 2023.

→ Arnaud Leroy, CEO of ADEME (left) and Gerbrand Haverkamp signing to officiate WBA's partnership with the French Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME) for WBA to become the official host of the Assessing low-Carbon Transition initiative, evaluating companies' performance using the ACT methodologies.



Our Theory of Change

Our Theory of Change sets out how we intend to make an impact and create change. It links our daily activities – developing methodologies and benchmarks and engaging through our Alliance – to changes in company behaviours and practices.



Fine-tuning our data collection approach and optimising inclusivity in our research methods

Research is the core tool that WBA deploys to inspire and empower a movement that drives business to contribute to a sustainable future for everyone. Research staff comprise approximately half of WBA's people and spending. Since our founding, we have published 16 benchmarks that together cover 681 indicators and 2,000 companies across 18 sections of the International Standard Industry Classification. These companies are headquartered in 85 countries with operations in more than 160 countries, and comprise publicly listed, privately held, and state-owned entities.

The scale, depth, methodological and topical variety of WBA benchmarks present both challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, we benefit from economies of scope after having built up in-house expertise in methodology development, data collection,

scoring and ranking. On the other hand, we need to exert additional effort to standardise the data, streamline our processes and simplify our approaches.

In 2022, we started outsourcing more of the initial data collection and we expect this trend to continue into 2023. We found outsourcing to be more cost-efficient and accurate when indicators have binary answers and partners have gained experience from repetition, however, gains are negated by the need for greater data quality control. We hope to further learn from our experiences in 2023, to understand how we can leverage outsourced data collection to free up our internal research staff to focus more on data quality, analysis, insights and company engagement.

Digitisation will also be an important focus area in 2023, and aligns well with



Lourdes Montenegro

Research &
Digitisation Director

our approach to data management and technology which are integral to WBA's research. Our initial approach is to identify easy wins for automation and focus on data management solutions that facilitate ease of use and access to data, both internally and externally. This could mean, for example, that before we develop application programming interfaces for external stakeholders to connect to a data warehouse, we need to first consider the low-tech solution of providing a centralised online catalogue of

all the data, reports, and methodologies that we already share for free. Doing so will be a simple but effective way to scale the impact of our research.

Finally, a topic nearest and dearest to my heart: ensuring our research incorporates the interests and perspectives of the global majority. Such a change begins internally within our own research teams, by ensuring we recruit from more diverse regions, so that internal voices can speak from lived experiences and better understand the context of companies from all corners of the globe. We have made much progress in this regard and have welcomed colleagues from a wide range of cultures and geographies. We will continue seeking to recruit more talent from underrepresented parts of the world going forward.


→ Our benchmark iterations to date.

 Social


Social Benchmark
Coming in 2024

Corporate Human Rights Benchmark
2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022


Gender Benchmark
2021

 Urban

Urban Benchmark
Coming in 2024

 Financial System


Financial System Benchmark
2022

 Digital

Digital Inclusion Benchmark
2020, 2021

 Nature

Nature Benchmark
2022

 Decarbonisation and Energy

Oil and Gas Benchmark
2021

Electric Utilities Benchmark
2020, 2021

Automotive Benchmark
2019, 2020, 2021

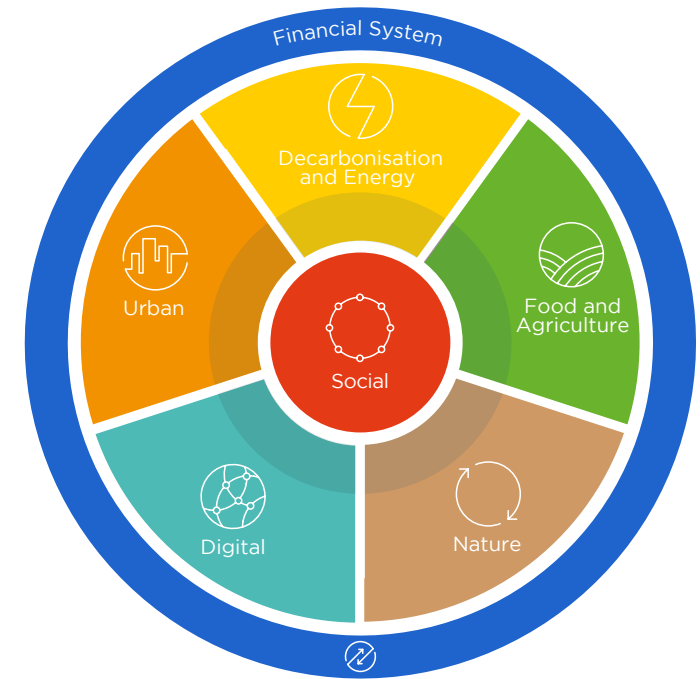
Transport Benchmark
2022

 Food and Agriculture

Food and Agriculture Benchmark
2021

Access to Seeds Index
2016, 2019, 2021

Seafood Stewardship Index
2019, 2021





How our benchmarks
are changing
company behaviour

Intro

WBA benchmarks guide and incentivise companies to improve their impacts for a sustainable future. Our benchmarks enable companies to compare actions and progress over time and against their peers, to identify policies and practices for improvement, and to identify where urgent action is needed to deliver on the SDGs.

Company engagement with our benchmarks continued to increase in 2022. The general improvement on company scores over time is a strong indicator of the impact

and influence that our methodologies, benchmarking and Alliance engagement has on company behaviour. In particular, we have seen examples of companies linking their key performance indicators (KPIs) to their performance in our benchmarks, in some cases linking executive remuneration to the KPIs.

Here, we highlight some examples of global companies changing their behaviours and improving their sustainable practices based on our benchmarks.

Companies improve on topics deemed crucial for food systems transformation

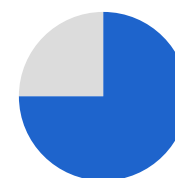


↑ Our Food and Agriculture Transformation Lead Viktoria de Bourbon de Parme speaking at the G7 Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative Side Event at COP27 in November.

WBA's Food and Agriculture Benchmark assesses 350 of the world's most influential food and agriculture companies on their contributions to transforming our global food system. In 2022, WBA was asked to assess annual progress against the pledge made by 22 global food and agriculture companies – the Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (G7 SSCI) – to improve the environmental, social and nutritional impact of their operations and supply chains.

The G7 SSCI was launched in 2021, through close collaboration with the UK government and the other G7 member states. Collectively, the 22 companies involved in the initiative earn over USD 550 billion in annual global revenue, employ over two million people directly, with millions more throughout their supply chains, and represent both upstream and downstream segments of the value chain.

Our [2022 review of the companies' progress](#), using indicators from our Food and Agriculture Benchmark, showed encouraging results. More than three quarters (16 of the 21 companies assessed) improved on



Three quarters of companies

that pledged to improve practices as part of the SSCI have improved on at least one topic since being assessed in the 2021 Food and Agriculture Benchmark.

at least one topic deemed crucial for food systems transformation. Environmental topics saw the greatest improvement – 13 companies improved their performance on various environmental indicators, including targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, eliminating food loss and waste and reducing water use. Eleven companies improved on social topics, namely on eliminating child and forced labour; and nine companies improved on governance and strategy. A smaller number of companies (five) improved on nutrition.

Encouragingly, all companies improved their public disclosure by publishing new and relevant reports and policies on their

sustainability strategies, signalling that embedding corporate accountability into a public initiative helps drive change. We believe these results provide a strong evidence base for future public-private dialogues as well as encouraging more collaboration to identify the wider actions still needed to address global supply chain resilience.

“Transforming agri-food supply chains means moving from commitments to action. We know that what gets measured gets managed, and the collaboration with WBA on the G7 SSCI exemplifies this. WBA's Food and Agriculture Benchmark measures how companies are actually progressing, indicating how the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains is becoming operationalised in global supply chains. This data helps policy makers and business leaders know where the gaps are, hypothesise what the blocks may be, and take steps to make sustainable agricultural supply chains a reality.”



Shivani Kannabhiran
Global Programme Lead,
Responsible Agricultural
Supply Chains, OECD

General Motors improves its practices following recommendations from our Corporate Human Rights Benchmark

WBA's Corporate Human Rights Benchmark (CHRB) examines the human rights policies, processes and practices of the most influential companies in high-risk sectors. US-based multinational company, General Motors, managed to almost double its score in the 2022 CHRB following the recommendations we provided in the 2020 benchmark. These included strengthening its ethical sourcing programme, grievance and monitoring processes and supplier code of conduct.

[During a webinar](#) exploring the 2022 CHRB findings, sustainability representatives from General Motors explained how the CHRB helped the company solidify its human rights responsibility structures and gain

greater management visibility on human rights issues. "GM has long championed human rights issues, but there's been a broad recognition across the company that there were opportunities to do more, and to further align with global standards, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. We've been working with legal teams, human resources, supply chains and labour relations to build the business case for greater transparency, and the CHRB played a pivotal role in helping articulate the business case for this."

The benchmark helped General Motors further develop the company's ethical sourcing programme and identify the necessary

elements of a more robust supplier code, which included incorporating a broader range of stakeholder feedback in the code's development. The CHRB also helped the company solidify and improve responsibility structures for day-to-day human rights programme management, including grievance and monitoring processes.

General Motors cited the granularity of the benchmark as being particularly helpful - breaking down performance by indicators, explaining why an indicator was not met and providing details on what and how the company can improve. "The CHRB helped us learn where we are in terms of programme maturity and effectiveness.

It helps us scrutinise our policies, processes and practices – how to get the right stakeholders at the table to break down the silos, include the right voices and build leverage for positive impact.”



66% of food and agriculture companies



65% of ICT companies and

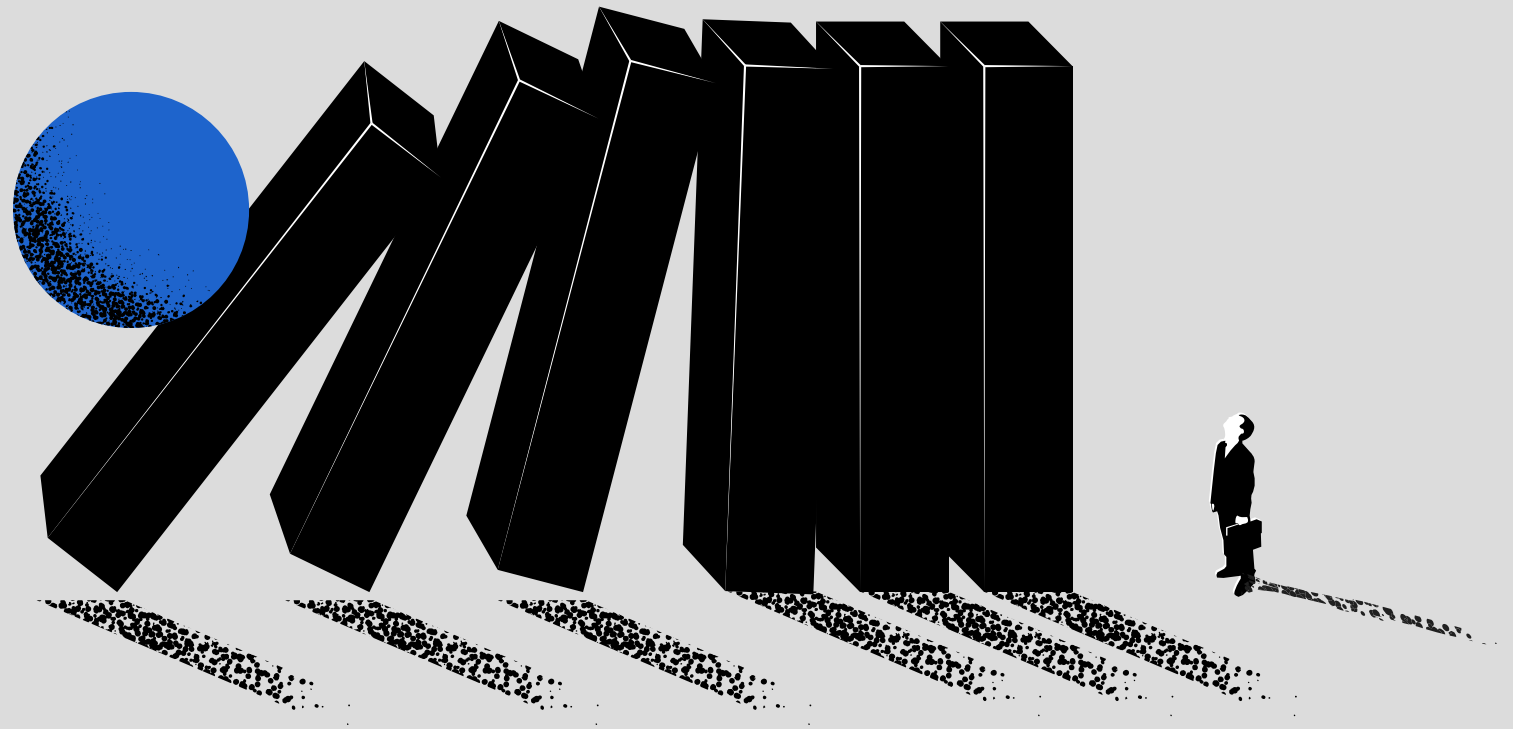


57% of automotive companies

have improved their scores on key human rights indicators since being included in the Corporate Human Rights Benchmark, despite changes to the methodology that have raised the bar in terms of requirement.



↑ General Motors employees at an assembly plant in Spring Hill, Tennessee.



How companies are
actively responding to
being benchmarked

Intro

Engaging companies actively throughout the benchmarking process is a key component of our Theory of Change. We hold dedicated peer learning sessions through benchmark-specific “Communities of Practice” to stimulate company learning. In these sessions we provide a neutral, safe space for companies openly discuss and share best practices and experiences, both positive and negative, and ideas on how to overcome shared challenges. The Community of Practice conversations are based on the insights and learnings from our

benchmarks, which helps raise awareness of the priority areas for action, and how – and where – to raise the entire bar for industries. The ambition is that by discussing learnings, companies feel a shared sense of ownership of this agenda.

A further valuable engagement point for WBA is the contact we have with companies seeking to learn more about their draft assessments during the research phase. This engagement gives us the opportunity to help companies better understand the

requirements of the benchmark and their draft scores, which, in turn, can help them improve their sustainability practices. Company engagement typically increases over time as companies are re-assessed and as they become more familiar with WBA. Engagement is also spurred on by stakeholders increasingly using and referring to WBA benchmarks in their interactions with companies.

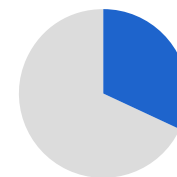
Company responsiveness increases following investor engagement



Investors represent one of the key stakeholder groups for WBA, and we work closely with the Investor Alliance for Human Rights (IAHR) – a collective action platform for responsible investment, grounded in respect for people’s fundamental rights – to amplify our engagement efforts. The IAHR publishes investor statements targeting companies that score zero on all the human rights due diligence indicators in the CHRB and holds webinars for its investors, in collaboration with WBA, to present engagement strategies and escalation approaches based on the benchmark results.

Following the publication of our 2020 Corporate Human Rights Benchmark, the [IAHR drafted a letter](#) for its members to send to investee companies, encouraging them to engage with WBA on their draft assessments for the 2022 CHRB. Over 200 global investors, representing USD 5.8 trillion in assets under management, sent letters

to 106 companies that scored zero on the human rights due diligence indicators of our 2020 benchmark, calling for urgent improvement. As a direct result of this outreach, four companies that we were previously unsuccessful in engaging (Subaru Corporation, SACI Falabella, Kyocera and Yili Group) reached out to WBA to learn



**32% of the
1,014 companies**

benchmarked in 2022 actively responded to WBA during the benchmarking cycle.

more about their draft assessments. All four companies have since provided feedback on their draft assessments.

This was the first time the IAHR contacted companies during the benchmarking cycle; previously it has published statements once the CHRB results have been published. This early-stage investor outreach helped us to engage companies earlier in the research cycle, thereby allowing them to better understand our requirements and provide input before the final results were published.

“Enabling investors to use their collective leverage to encourage portfolio companies to improve their human rights performance throughout their value chains is central to the mission of the Investor Alliance for Human Rights. The CHRB provides our investors with the data and analysis they need to engage companies in a dialogue on how they can effectively manage their human rights risks. In particular, we focus on companies’ scores on human rights due diligence related indicators, recognising that a robust due diligence process is the backbone to meeting the corporate responsibility to respect human rights through systematic and comprehensive risk management. Ensuring that companies adequately fulfil their human rights responsibilities also helps investors

meet their own human rights due diligence responsibilities.

Possible pathways for future collaboration between the WBA/CHRB and the Investor Alliance for Human Rights involve gleaning more from the CHRB data to enable better corporate dialogues and to inform proxy voting decisions at portfolio companies’ AGMs; utilising the benchmark results to push for legislation mandating certain human rights measures for companies; and scaling the collaboration to achieve more systemic positive human rights impacts.”



Rebecca DeWinter-Schmitt
Associate Director, Investor Alliance for Human Rights

WBA invited to dialogues with the Board of Directors of Rio Tinto and APG to discuss benchmark results



↑ Our event launching the 2022 Financial System Benchmark at COP27, where Gert Dijkstra, Senior Managing Director of APG (pictured centre) publicly committed to APG improving its performance.

In 2022, WBA was invited to dialogues with the Boards of Directors of two companies which feature in our “SDG2000” list of the largest and most influential companies globally – APG and Rio Tinto. Both companies face increasing pressure from stakeholders to adapt their business practices to improve their sustainability impacts. Held with a range of civil society organisations, the intention of these dialogues was to discuss (and challenge) the companies’ sustainability strategies and impacts.

By holding these dialogues under Chatham House Rule, we can encourage inclusive and open discussion, and the range of organisations in attendance provides companies with a holistic perspective of stakeholder expectations – from regulators to investors, and from civil society to the scientific community. WBA’s role in

these discussions is to provide a broader, encompassing and independent view, using the findings from our benchmark analyses to shed light on where and how the companies can deliver greater impact or avoid harm in their future activities.

For WBA, the dialogues give us a deeper understanding of the dynamics and challenges within companies as they navigate their sustainability strategies. We learn how Boards are, or want to be, involved in the sustainability performance of their company and what they look for as points of orientation when setting and adjusting their strategy and assessing their performance. These conversations also help position WBA within the company's sustainability strategy and provide a feedback loop for us to understand how our benchmarks can continue to influence company behaviour and hold companies to account on their sustainability commitments.

Following the dialogues, both APG and Rio Tinto decided to deepen engagement with some of their key stakeholders. APG publicly committed to improving its performance

when speaking at the launch of our 2022 Financial System Benchmark at COP27, and Rio Tinto's CEO shared the company's sustainability learnings during our roundtable at Davos in January 2023, and set out intentions to use the assessment of our 2022 Nature Benchmark to inform future activities.

Engaging key stakeholders to drive change

Since WBA was established in 2017, we have been clear on the need for building a movement for systems change, for learning and for collaborative multi-stakeholder action. We have a firm belief that with the right focus from the business community, the right oversight and signalling from governments, as well as attention from civil society, transparency and accountability can be key drivers of progress. Our work with the G7 on the Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative has demonstrated this in action.

Progressing with our strategic priorities in 2022, the need for collective action became ever clearer. We have now benchmarked around two-thirds of the 2,000 most influential companies on their contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the insights we have gained across climate, nature, finance, human rights and other key areas indicate that urgent action is needed if we are to meet the global goals and targets.

Stakeholder engagement is a key driver of change, and in 2022, we hosted our first in-person Allies Assembly since the COVID-19 pandemic, in South Africa, to focus on the way in which the community can incentivise companies and hold them accountable. We also developed Collective Impact Coalitions (CICs), together with our Allies, to drive transformation-led collective engagements, and we formed Communities of Practice to enable peer-to-peer learning discussions on issues such as ethical AI, regenerative agriculture, human rights due diligence and the just transition in energy. Some of our CICs were more successful than others in 2022, but this has also proved a valuable learning point. As we continue to finesse our engagement approaches going forward, we can start to achieve a rhythm and provide greater predictability to our stakeholders.

Ensuring that our benchmark insights remain relevant – whether for global fora



Pauliina Murphy
Engagement &
Communications Director

like COP27 or COP15, or the UN General Assembly – sits at the heart of WBA's engagement and policy strategy. With the integration of the engagement and communications teams last autumn, we took a step forward in ensuring that we are communicating effectively and consistently across all stakeholder groups, and that impact storytelling is fully integrated into everything we do. Integrating the teams also serves to drive efficiencies both internally and externally. Together, we can focus on

understanding companies' behaviours, learning what motivates them to take action towards the SDGs.

We also focused our efforts on gaining a better understanding of the components of corporate accountability and explored how developing and strengthening corporate accountability mechanisms can empower companies to develop firm and actionable commitments in support of the 2030 Agenda. These conversations took place at UNGA, COP27 and COP15, and will become a permanent thread of WBA's engagement and communications with Allies and other stakeholders, as we work to facilitate the adoption of accountability, and to embed its function at the UN level to ensure it is central to the global agenda.



↑ Our high-level roundtable at the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Participants were invited to discuss the conditions required in order for corporate accountability to take place on an ongoing basis as part of our global governance system.



How key stakeholders
are using our
methodologies and
benchmarks to act

41 investors used our materials

to inform their engagement
with companies.

WBA methodologies and benchmarks help to close the information gap and help stakeholders, such as companies, investors, banks, governments, multilaterals, civil society and media make more informed decisions. They can be used to compel companies to improve performance on key sustainability topics, or they can be used in more enabling and facilitating ways to encourage change.

We monitor how our benchmarks are being used, and by whom, and a particular highlight in 2022 was the sharp increase

in the number of investors using our materials to inform their engagement with companies. In 2021, just three investors used our materials in direct engagement with companies in their portfolios compared to 41 investors in 2022. This is in part due to the hiring of two investor engagement leads at WBA, helping us focus more resources and attention on this key stakeholder group.

In this chapter, we provide examples of how key stakeholder groups are using our benchmarks to hold companies to account for their impacts.

Investors and banks

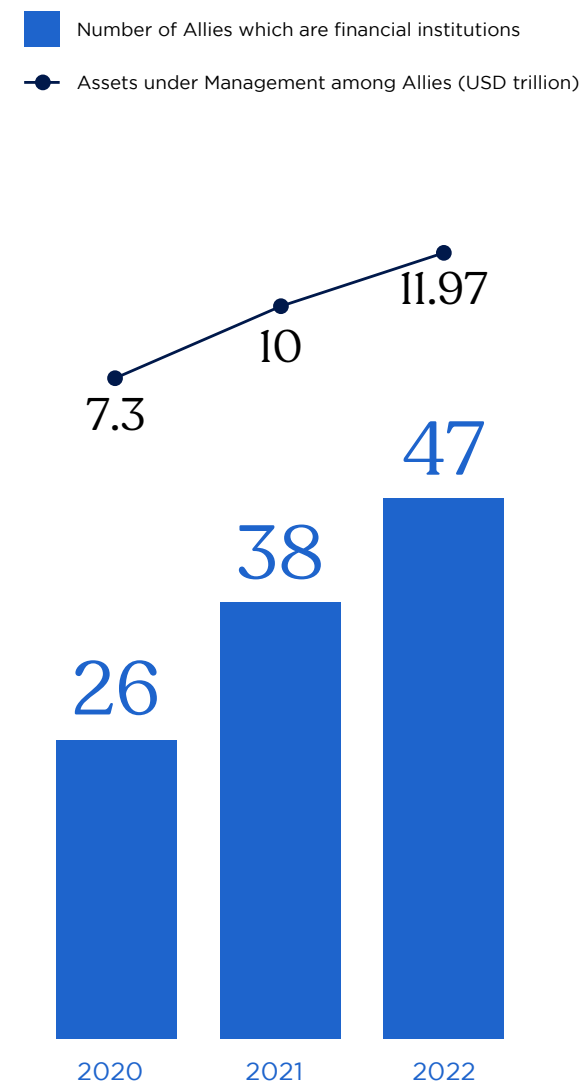
The number of financial institutions actively engaging with our benchmarks has steadily increased since 2020. We now have 47 financial institutions as WBA Allies, representing a total of USD 11.97 trillion in assets.

Using our guidance and benchmarks to assess investment portfolios

To help investors and companies progress on their journeys towards a nature positive future, WBA developed our first [Investor Guidance](#), expanding on the key findings of our 2022 Nature Benchmark. Launched at the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in December 2022, the guidance meaningfully steers the thinking of financial actors in their efforts to assess their own portfolio companies and business relationships in terms of nature positive impacts. The reaction to the guidance has been very positive with some of our investor Allies already stating their intentions to use it in their own stewardship activities.

A further example of our work being used to directly inform investment decisions is the online platform developed by one of our financial services Allies, Matter. The platform aggregates data from WBA benchmarks and from organisations like CDP and Global Canopy to help investors understand and report the sustainability impacts of their investments. It provides an overview of company performance across a variety of topics, using many indicators from our methodologies including our Food and Agriculture methodology. In 2022 we discussed ways for Matter's team to make better use of our scoring guidelines and indicators to optimise the platform.

→ Growth in the number of financial institutions that have become WBA Allies and the total amount of assets they manage



Using our benchmarks to call for increased due diligence on human rights

NorthStar Asset Management used the results of our 2022 Corporate Human Rights Benchmark (CHRB) to urge action by the Board of Directors of TJX Companies to improve its supply chain human rights due diligence. The US-based apparel and home goods retailer, TJX Companies, scored zero points across the human rights due diligence indicators in the 2020 CHRB, and as a result, NorthStar Asset Management filed a shareholder resolution in 2022 and subsequent rebuttal, highlighting the company's poor performance on the CHRB core UNGP indicators. The rebuttal calls on the company to increase due diligence to prevent implications in human rights abuses and to protect shareholder investments.

WBA Ally, Robeco, has integrated resources from our CHRB into its social voting policy. The investor has an expectation that companies facing human rights issues conduct due diligence to adhere to human rights. For companies that are not taking



↑ Our Investor Engagement Lead Nikki Gwilliam-Beeharee speaking on a panel with representatives from PRI, AllianceBernstein, Shift and AP2 on the topic of advancing investor action on human rights and social issues at the event 'PRI online and in-person' in December.

adequate steps to mitigate their human rights impacts, as reflected poorly across CHRB indicators and if linked to social controversies, Robeco would vote to oppose annual meeting agenda issues most appropriate to human rights or oppose the nomination of board members who are responsible for human rights.

Using our Social Transformation Framework for investment research and capital allocation

In December 2022, WBA signed an MoU with a large state-owned investor, detailing the investor's use of our Social Transformation Framework in its sustainability assessments of portfolio companies. Over time, the investor plans to assess thousands of companies on the WBA framework. This is the first instance where an investor is using a WBA methodology or framework across its equity portfolio to inform its responsible investment efforts, including reporting, risk monitoring and stewardship processes.

Governments and multilaterals

Our benchmark methodologies and results can help steer government policies aimed at incentivising business to contribute more towards a sustainable future. Over the past year, we have advocated for consistent policies related to the sustainability performance and disclosure of companies and financial institutions, in line with the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, through various methods and activities outlined here.

The EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

In June 2022, the European institutions adopted the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), which marks a significant step up from the former EU Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD), with more detailed reporting elements including social and employment matters and environmental topics that extend beyond climate. The new directive, which will be implemented in 2024, included several of the recommendations that WBA has been advocating for over the past 18 months through consultation responses, joint letters, events and direct engagement with EU policy

makers. The intention of the new directive is to facilitate more consistent, comparable reporting on sustainability impacts in Europe, likely spilling over to other jurisdictions, and it represents a vital step for increasing corporate transparency – a key driver of sustainability.

The EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive

In December 2022, the European Council adopted its position on the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), which finally included the recommendation that financial institutions should take responsibility for the human rights and environmental impacts of their

financing activities. This decision follows our recommendations based on the results of our Financial System Benchmark, which found that just 37% of the 400 largest and most influential financial institutions globally have set group-level net zero financing targets, and only 2% have set absolute interim emission targets. The benchmark also found that 33% of the financial institutions commit to respecting human rights, yet only 7% disclose their processes to identify human rights risks and impacts within their own operations, and less than 3% within their financing activities. We used this evidence to make recommendations to the EU member states on how the CSDDD could help to close that gap.

More broadly, the CSDDD includes a due diligence obligation for large companies in the EU (not limited to financial organisations), covering their own operations and value chain, and also includes references to directors' duties and a transition plan regarding climate impacts. WBA advocated for many of these inclusions through consultations and continuous engagement with Parliament and the Commission, using our Social Transformation Framework and Corporate Human Rights Benchmark data. One such example is a presentation that WBA gave to the European Parliament's Sub Committee on Human Rights in October 2022, highlighting learnings from the CHRB to help inform the Parliament's policy discussions. We also delivered a briefing based on WBA data to Commissioners in collaboration with our Ally, Oxfam, in the final stages before the publication of the CSDDD proposal. European Commission officials have recognised that WBA insights were an essential contribution to the proposal, which has already had ripple effects of increased engagement on due diligence beyond the EU.

The US National Action Plan on Responsible Business Conduct

The current US National Action Plan (NAP) on Responsible Business Conduct, published in 2016, does not include strong action points and guidelines on due diligence, despite the concept sitting at the heart of the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights. WBA and Allies – representing investors, companies, civil society actors, worker organisations and academics – co-hosted a consultation roundtable in Washington, DC in 2022, to inform updates to the US NAP. The main objective was to call for stronger guidance and action from the US government to encourage companies to take more systemic approaches to human rights and environmental due diligence in line with policy and legislation trends from other world regions and countries including the EU and Japan.

The event was organised together with Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), Rights CoLab, the Investor Alliance for Human Rights (IAHR) and the Keough School of the University of Notre Dame. Around 100

people attended, including representatives from the US Government Department of State, Department of Labor, Department of Defense, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the General Services Administration.

WBA recommended two key actions: to include a call for human rights due diligence legislation, and to ensure the NAP does not only address the extraterritorial scope but also issues that take place within the US. We based these recommendations on our analysis of data from our 2022 Social Baseline Assessment of 1,000 companies, which found that 84% of the 409 US-based companies assessed scored zero on human rights due diligence, compared with 59% of companies from other G7 countries. The [full recommendations are published here](#).

The updated NAP is yet to be published; however, the roundtable provided a strong signal to US bodies and others present that there is clear need, concern and interest to advance corporate due diligence in the US.

Engagement at COP15 to influence the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework

With biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation occurring at an unparalleled rate, it is imperative that society and the economy take a nature-positive approach

to all future activities. The adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in December 2022, represents a vital step towards this and has been hailed as an historic milestone for the international community. The Global Biodiversity Framework establishes a

globally shared vision, mission, goals and targets on biodiversity, steering the actions of governments and other stakeholders to put biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030 for the benefit of planet and people. It includes an ambitious target 15, which requires that governments take measures to ensure companies assess and disclose their impacts on biodiversity.



WBA worked on several influencing activities in the run up to COP15, contributing insights from our benchmarks to help shape international policy processes and to provide a feedback loop to governments and multilateral organisations. Prior to COP15 we published [a position paper on corporate accountability](#) in relation to the Global Biodiversity Framework, held bilateral meetings with specific governments, organised a pre-briefing session for governments and multilateral organisations on the 2022 Nature Benchmark results, and

← Our Social Transformation Engagement Lead [Sofía del Valle](#) speaking at a roundtable that we co-hosted in Washington, DC in order to inform updates to the US National Action Plan.

held various other events. WBA was also on hand to respond directly as the framework negotiations at COP15 progressed, sharing additional targeted data and insights with specific negotiators and advocacy partners.

We firmly believe that business and finance must be included in robust implementation, monitoring and accountability mechanisms accompanying the Global Biodiversity Framework to avoid greenwashing and to ensure real progress by business. We will continue our advocacy in this area to ensure the necessary robust corporate accountability mechanisms are put in place for the framework.

How WBA has been giving inputs to policy makers

Informing and steering climate action through the Global Stocktake

The Global Stocktake (GST) is the official accountability mechanism within the UNFCCC to monitor progress in addressing climate change. It has various components related to mitigation, adaptation and finance,

and its overall aim is to inform the revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of governments to collectively raise global ambition on climate and to meet the Paris Agreement target. The GST will occur every five years, in line with the timeframe for revision of the NDCs, with the first GST cycle currently underway and set to conclude at COP28.

WBA has been engaging in the Global Stocktake on multiple fronts, and we believe our climate and energy benchmarks, together with the climate components of our Financial System Benchmark, can serve as important accountability mechanisms for companies and financial institutions as part of the GST. We have been working on a number of submissions, publications and workshops for 2023, which will help shape and influence the recommendations of the GST, and we plan to maintain a high level of engagement in this space, given the importance it has in shaping the next NDCs, and ultimately, global progress on climate action.

Providing recommendations to the Commission on the Status of Women for increasing digital inclusion

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The priority theme of the 67th meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67) was on innovation and technological change, and how education in the digital age can help achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

WBA used our 2021 Digital Inclusion Benchmark results to provide technical inputs on opportunities, challenges and gaps in the digital inclusion space. For example, women make up just 23% of the technical workforce of the 150 largest digital technology companies assessed in our benchmark - a clear indicator that more needs to be done to ensure equality in the digital space. Along with insights, we also provided a set of policy recommendations,

which included strengthening community programmes dedicated to women and girls without overlooking internal retention of women in tech companies; harmonising normative definitions of women in technical roles and making public reporting mandatory; and implementing national regulations when voluntary frameworks do not have the intended impact.

If adopted in the UN Secretary-General's report, these recommendations could go a long way in ensuring that digital technology companies do more to ensure commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment through various programmes.

Sharing insights from our benchmarks for the UN's Financing for Sustainable Development Report

The Financing for Sustainable Development Report, developed by the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development and the Financing for Sustainable Development Office of the UN, provides an annual update on the progress of financing sustainable development with analysis and policy

recommendations to overcome the 'finance divide' and enhance developing countries' access to financing for recovery and productive and sustainable investment.

WBA provided data and insights from our 2022 Financial System Benchmark, 2022 Transport Benchmark, 2022 Social Baseline Assessment, 2021 Electric Utilities Benchmark and 2021 Gender Benchmark to the report drafting team to evidence the need for greater corporate accountability towards achieving the SDGs. In addition to sharing data, we held in-person conversations with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs team in New York and met the team drafting the report. Going forward, we are looking to further supporting the discussions and outcomes of the wider Financing for Development process.

Conducting national assessments of human rights policies and practices

During 2022, different organisations from civil society and academia used the Corporate Human Rights Benchmark

(CHRB) Core UNGP Indicators to conduct country 'snapshots' – national assessments of the human rights policies and practices of companies in six different countries, with technical guidance from WBA's Social Transformation team:

Chile: In June, WBA trained a group of researchers from the Programme for Corporate Sustainability of the Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile (PSC UC) on the Core UNGP indicators. Following the training, PSC UC conducted a snapshot of 29 publicly listed companies in Chile, published in January 2023.

Scotland: In June, the Centre for Social and Environmental Accounting Research (CSEAR) from the University of St Andrews published a snapshot of the human rights policies, processes, and practices of 15 publicly listed Scottish companies.

Kenya: In August, WBA trained researchers from the Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) on the Core UNGP indicators. In collaboration with WBA Ally, the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), the KNCHR is conducting an initial assessment of the human rights processes and practices of approximately 30 Kenyan companies. Among other uses, the findings of the assessment could inform the Kenyan National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. Publication is planned for 2023.

Denmark: In October, the DIHR, published its second snapshot of the 30 largest companies in the country, developed with guidance from WBA.

Spain: In December, WBA Ally, ECODES, conducted its second assessment of the 40 most influential Spanish companies, following their first snapshot published in 2021. ECODES also translated the

CHRB Core UNGP Indicators to conduct this study, enabling the development of similar assessments in other Spanish-speaking countries.

Colombia: Similar to the assessment for Kenyan companies, the DIHR is collaborating with the Ombudsman's Office in Colombia to conduct an assessment of Colombian companies regarding their human rights policies and practices. Publication is planned for 2023.

To date, nine snapshots have been conducted using WBA's Core UNGP methodology. View the full list [on our website](#).

Conducting national assessments of food and agriculture businesses

WBA also launched a national benchmark initiative at the start of 2022 with one of our Allies, Food Foundation, to guide and support organisations in conducting national assessments of food and agriculture

businesses in India based on the WBA Food and Agriculture methodology. [Following a successful pilot with the Food Future Foundation](#) which assessed a further 53 companies using our full methodology, we have signed an agreement with our Ally, GAIN, to mirror this work in Bangladesh. Further projects for Pakistan and South Africa are also in discussion.



Civil society and media

Civil society organisations and academia use our methodologies to assess companies beyond our scope and can extend our work far beyond the 2,000 companies we have set out to assess in our annual or biannual benchmark iterations. Acting together helps to achieve an impact far greater than what we could achieve on our own. The same is true for media – this important body of stakeholders can help to shine much needed light on the actions of companies and help to push for a redirection of focus. Here we highlight some of the ways these stakeholder groups used our benchmarks and methodologies in 2022.

How the media are using our benchmark results

Historically, independent journalism has been known for its ‘watchdog’ role in democratic societies, and for WBA, the media is a key stakeholder in our Theory of Change. Coverage of company benchmark performance in influential media publications – focusing on both the laggards and the leaders – can serve as a powerful change agent, catalysing, incentivising and inspiring companies to act and improve their policies and practices.

WBA’s media presence in 2022 increased significantly, driven by two factors: we strengthened our voice in influential global publications, such as Forbes, Politico, Reuters, The Financial Times and The Guardian as our benchmarks gained greater recognition, and at the same time, high-performing companies in our benchmarks also used media to showcase their progress using WBA data.

Our media highlights for 2022 included an article written by our EU Policy team, published on Euroactiv, a pan-European news website specialised in EU policies. The article was positively received and helped highlight how

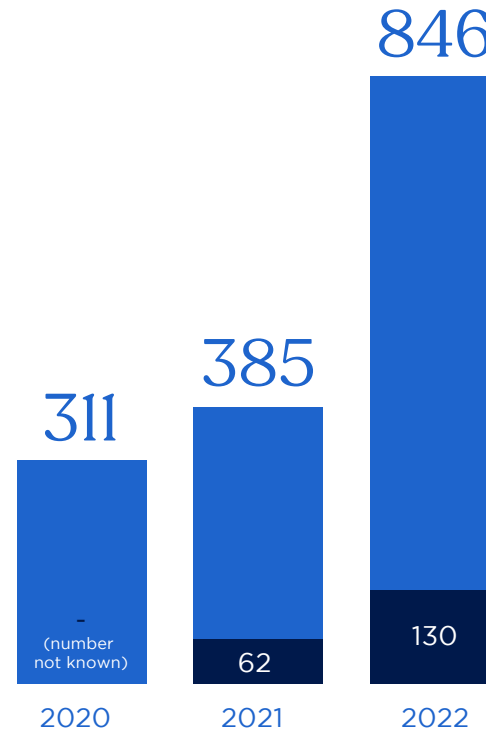
business representatives and policymakers perceive WBA's role as 'the honest broker'. Another article, published on Politico, helped our Engagement team gain traction on social media, generating further opportunities to expand our reach through invitations to high-profile events as an expert speaker.

We were also encouraged by the increase in coverage in the global south, which aligns with our goal of generating more global coverage. Higher quality and broader media coverage increases WBA's credibility as an accountability mechanism for the private sector.

Media mentions

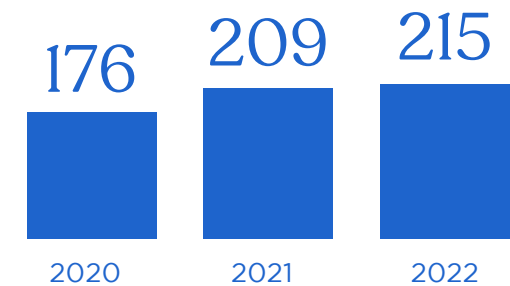
significantly increased

- Number of media mentions of WBA and/or WBA benchmarks
- ...of which were in the global south



Number of top tier media mentions

of WBA and/or WBA benchmarks in news outlets





Uniting stakeholders
to drive action

Intro

To invoke the systemic transformation needed to achieve the SDGs, a wide variety of actors must work together across scales, in diverse contexts, and over time. To drive cross-sector, collaborative action based on data and evidence provided by WBA benchmarks, WBA has established Collective Impact Coalitions (CICs). These CICs, comprised of WBA Allies, aim to collectively hold companies to account and bring about change. Their key functions are to:

Prioritise: Identify key issues based on WBA research and engagement.

Mobilise: Convene Allies, set ambition, determine roles and responsibilities.

Execute: Take action, partner with leaders, hold laggards to account.

Our current CICs are focused on WBA's social, food and agriculture and digital systems workstreams. In this section we report on two of our CICs' progress.



The Collective Impact Coalition for Digital Inclusion

Digital technology companies have a clear responsibility to ensure an inclusive and trustworthy digital transformation which harnesses the power of technology responsibly and for all. Our 2021 Digital Inclusion Benchmark revealed that 130 of the most influential digital technology companies were lacking commitments to ethical AI principles. In September 2022, WBA launched the Collective Impact Coalition for Digital Inclusion (Digital CIC), to help drive such commitments. The Digital CIC was launched at a round-table side event of the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA77) and comprises 32 institutional investors and financial institutions and 12 other stakeholders.

As a first step, WBA sent a letter to the 130 companies found to be lacking commitments in our benchmark, asking them to promote a more inclusive and trustworthy digital economy and sustainable society. Seven

companies, including Twitter, Baidu, and Palantir responded immediately, explaining their position and actions on ethics in AI.

The Digital CIC investors then took the engagement further with the digital technology companies in their portfolios, yielding some positive results. Out of the 41 companies contacted by the CIC investors, 25 responded, with 20 stating that they recognise that ethics in AI is an important subject and that they are open to engaging with WBA and the investors to improve their performance. In particular, PayPal stated its willingness to increase transparency and disclosure on AI ethics in its next global impact report, and Bytedance is assembling a Working Group on ethical AI, and the relevant CIC investor plans to engage with the group once it is established. Other companies such as Intel, Palantir and Tele2 have committed to discussing the topic internally following the investors' engagement. Five companies

“As investors, it is important to understand the risks and opportunities of the development and use of AI if we are to support digital inclusion among portfolio companies. By helping lead a global investor effort to embed the integration of ethical principles into corporate practice, we increase investors' awareness and understanding of AI applications, promote global best practices, and support an ecosystem that fosters digital inclusion. WBA's multi-stakeholder approach enriches our ability to promote ethical AI. We are grateful to have witnessed an openness to engagement among companies on this critical topic since we launched this initiative in mid-2022.”



Lauren Compere
Managing Director/Head of
Stewardship & Engagement,
Boston Common Management

responded that they are not willing to engage, and that AI is not relevant to their work.

In general, we are encouraged by the response, and we look forward to assessing future progress in our benchmark and providing recommendations to help digital technology companies play a greater role fostering digital inclusion.

“The main aim of the Digital CIC is to increase the number of companies that evidence rigorous and public commitments to the development and deployment of ethical AI. Along the way, we hope we will also raise levels of understanding and discussion about the issues, as this will benefit companies, investors and all of our customers. Raising the questions with companies is a great way for us to help achieve this success: we hope and believe that if companies know that their shareholders care, they will inevitably pay more attention to the issues and responsibilities of ethical AI.”



Christine Brueschke
Sustainable Investing Portfolio
Advisor & Analyst, Fidelity
International

The Collective Impact Coalition for a Just Transition

Notable progress was also made with our Collective Impact Coalition for a Just Transition in 2022. The Just Transition CIC was created to help tackle the systemic lack of action by oil and gas companies in identifying, preparing for and mitigating the social impacts of their low-carbon strategies, as demonstrated by our 2021 Oil and Gas Benchmark. The results of the benchmark showed that 98 out of the 100 most influential oil and gas companies are failing to prepare for the impacts of their low-carbon strategies.

It is imperative that these companies engage in social dialogue with workers, unions, local authorities and other stakeholders to understand the impact decarbonisation will have on the estimated 11 million workers set to lose their jobs, and the communities that have become reliant on the oil and gas industry, as well as to develop and implement plans with robust and measurable targets to ensure that their fundamental rights are respected.

The Just Transition CIC [launched its first action in May 2022](#), a personalised letter to the oil and gas companies assessed in our benchmark, requesting that they take the crucial first steps to ensure that workers and communities are not left behind in any plans to shift from extracting fossil fuels to new business models. Eighteen companies responded directly to the investor group. Two investors, Newton IM and Ninety One, representing a combined GBP 243.3 billion in assets under management, led the coordinated effort, which also saw collaboration with The Climate Action 100+ network and additional signatories supporting the letter.

These important first actions of the Just Transition CIC were covered in an exclusive with Responsible Investor (RI), a UK-based financial magazine. The story was their most read for that week, and led to further coverage in financial trades, such

as Investment and Pensions Europe and Banking Exchange, and the Financial Times (Sustainable Views). This media coverage helps to shine a light on the change needed in the industry and the CIC's role as an accountability mechanism to monitor companies' performance in this key area.



Evolution of
our Alliance

Our Alliance represents a network of over 340 organisations working at global, regional and local levels to shape the private sector's contributions to achieving the SDGs. Echoing the true spirit of SDG17 – Partnerships for the Goals – the multi-stakeholder Alliance is committed to driving systemic progress towards the SDGs through cross-sector partnerships and collective actions.

Total number of Allies

as of 31 December 2022





↑ Participants at our Allies Assembly in June.

WBA gained 52 new Allies in 2022, taking the total to 342, of which 55 are based in lower-income countries. The largest group of Allies remains civil society organisations, with the second largest being consultancies. As we move ahead, we will continue to prioritise a balanced growth of stakeholder groups and regional representation (organisations from Asia, Africa and Latin America) within the Alliance.

Our role within the Alliance continues to evolve in step with the growth in members. We believe WBA can create the greatest impact when we help facilitate intra-Alliance exchanges, partnerships and action, and focus on community building to drive change. To help achieve this, we developed several Alliance initiatives and organised various events in 2022:

- We developed the Alliance Bulletin – a monthly email newsletter which provides a platform for Allies to share relevant updates, news or events with the entire community. Our first two editions contained more than 20 inputs from Allies.

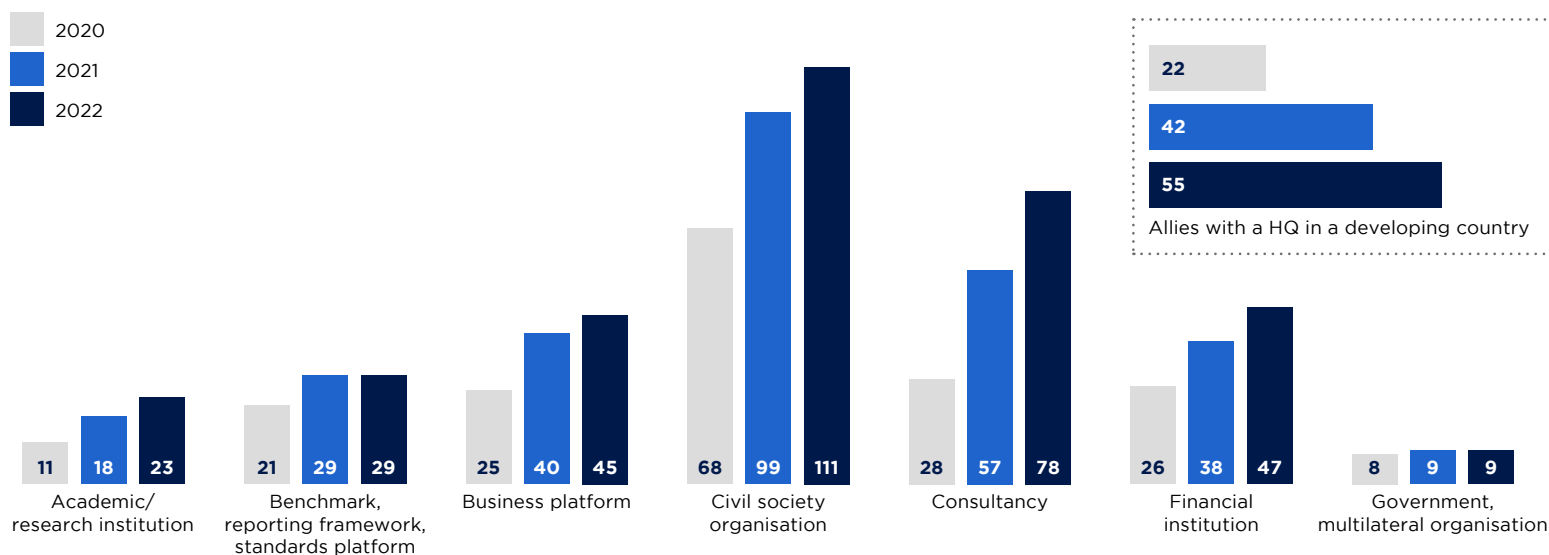
- We organised interactive, pre-launch communications of our benchmark outcomes and pre-briefing sessions for COP27, COP15 and the UN Business and Human Rights Forum. These sessions provided an informal and interactive space for Allies to exchange key messages, co-create engagement agendas, and take a collaborative approach to these topics. They also provided WBA with an opportunity to present the findings

of our benchmarks (in advance, under embargo) in a constructive way. These briefings were very well received – Allies actively participated and shared their own narratives which sparked more engagement between Allies on shared objectives.

- We organised an Alliance Action Forum during UNGA77, where Allies worked together to identify concrete pathways to put corporate accountability into action within the multilateral system.

- We held the annual Allies Assembly in South Africa, which focused on community building and co-creation, with Allies stepping in to participate at every level. The Assembly helped us gain concrete insights into different stakeholder expectations and their data needs, it helped identify ways of framing communications to increase impact, and identified different ways in which this community could continue to collectively prioritise accountability mechanisms for business in this ‘decade of action’.

↓ Growth of the Alliance



Total number of allies:

342
in 2022

290
in 2021

187
in 2020



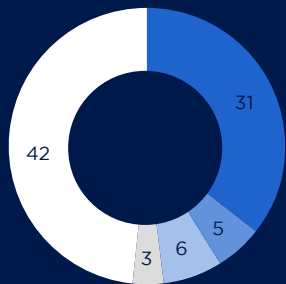
People, culture
and governance

Intro

WBA's 87 staff members are based in 21 countries across the globe. In total, 43 people joined the organisation in 2022 and 20 people moved on to new opportunities.

Number of employees

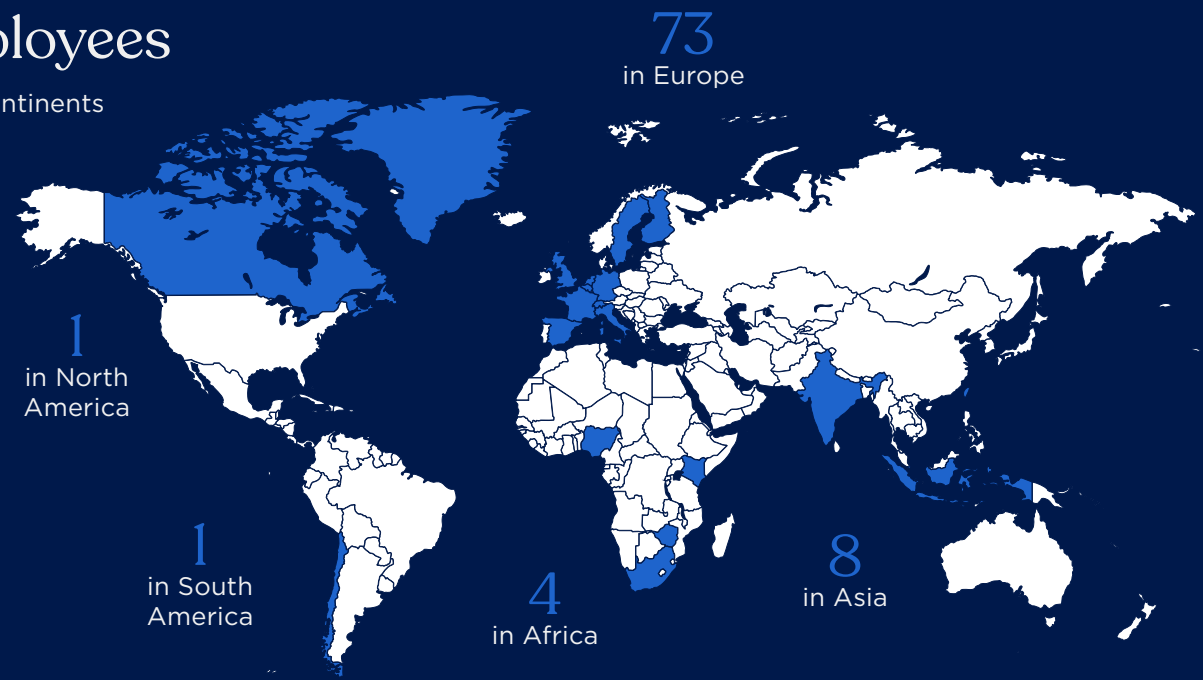
by department



- Engagement & Communications
- Executive Directors
- Finance & Operations
- Impact, Learning & Development
- Research & Digitalisation

Distribution of employees

across the continents



Developing a culture of support and inclusivity, and strengthening our finances

I was appointed as Finance and Operations Director in 2022, which was both daunting and exciting – daunting because I understand the responsibility and commitment required for the role, and equally exciting, as this role would allow me to strategically contribute to the success of the organisation, through my lens and perspective.

From the very start, it was important to me to ensure the whole team understands the significant role they each play in the success of the organisation. Trust and support are vital in maintaining a culture of open communication and collaboration, and these elements form the solid foundation which will help us to drive progress as an organisation.

In my role, I look forward to adding value to how people experience WBA, both internally and externally, engaging with and supporting

our Supervisory Board and providing insightful People and Financial reports to assist in strategic decision making, as well as meaningfully contributing towards the inclusivity of our culture. To better understand the relatively high turnover of staff in 2022, we are developing ways to monitor staff members' morale, and have enriched our exit conversations to ensure we learn from each staff members' experience.

Going into 2023, one of our focus points from a finance and funding perspective is to ensure we have the funds to continue our daily operations without dips and troughs, and we will achieve that by building and maintaining our Continuity Reserve. We will do this in a number of ways, including by using some of our institutional funds in the instance of low-to-no funding gaps; negotiating better terms in grant



Charmaine Nagel
Finance &
Operations Director

agreements, especially relating to returning any unutilised funds in earmarked grants; and in securing more institutional funding.

The further I step into this role, the more I learn. I'm embracing this process fully and I'm excited for the future developments at WBA.

Creating a new Impact, Learning and Development team

An important step we took in 2022 was laying the foundation for our new Impact, Learning and Development team at WBA. To truly scale and strengthen our work, we need to think more deliberately about the outcomes and impact of what we do, and we need a clearer focus on understanding what works and what doesn't. By combining the learnings of our external impacts with our internal learning and development work, we can ensure that as well as measuring our impact, we are also learning from it. Both as organisation as individuals. Through this new team we can anchor and centralise WBA's work on both our Theory of Change and on our Results Management Framework. We believe this will enable a more agile approach, allowing us to adapt to external changes while optimising our resources.

We also strengthened our reporting and oversight in 2022 with our quarterly impact reports and an increased quality of data for our Results Management Framework. There is a lot more to do in terms of integrating learnings into our work, but this reporting and oversight was a great step forward.

A further highlight was our project measuring and evaluating the supply chain impact of keystone companies in East Africa and South and South-east Asia, supported by the IKEA Foundation. We are grateful that the IKEA Foundation challenged us throughout the funding proposal period and we are happy with how we adapted the organisation as a result. Our next steps will involve harnessing these learnings across our work in 2023 with the new Impact, Learning and Development team.



Gonnie Been

Impact, Learning and
Development Director

Integrating a new People Management System and global payroll

Ensuring equality, inclusion and a supportive working culture at WBA is a critical focus for us, especially as we grow. This year we implemented a new People Management System to support our work in various areas including hiring, onboarding, compensation and culture building. The automation



↑ [Team Learning Week in October.](#)

provided by the software helps us streamline our daily people management tasks, while the data analysis and tracking tool helps WBA improve our hiring process, from job posting to offer letters. The system also helps create a more inclusive employee journey from the hiring process to onboarding, and empowers WBA staff to take a more active role in managing their personal data and in

operational tasks, for example tracking their time off and uploading personal documents and Commitment Setting Cycle documents.

We also migrated our payroll to a cloud-based solution in 2022, which specialises in managing payroll for a global workforce and provides greater transparency for each individual staff member.

Team Learning Week

Our entire team got the chance to meet in person during our first Team Learning Week in Amersfoort, the Netherlands in October. The opportunity to connect with colleagues face-to-face is something rare for our colleagues that are based outside of Amsterdam or London, and equally for teams spread across multiple locations. Therefore, we organised a week dedicated to connection and learning, with the intention to make it an annual event.

The programme included institutional meetings and individual team meetings, heartfelt conversations, teambuilding activities and time for reflection and socialising, including a Cultural Evening to learn more about each other's cuisines, cultural outfits, music and dance. During the week, WBA staff also had the opportunity to meet and engage with the chair of our Supervisory Board, Paul Druckman, and to hear from our directors, including those that have been newly appointed in their roles. The new Impact, Learning and Development function at WBA was also introduced during the event.

Staff reflections on our values



Namit Agarwa

Social Transformation Lead

"Be aspirational"

Working at WBA has provided me with valuable learning opportunities that have helped me grow both personally and professionally. WBA sets high aspirations as an organisation, and this has helped me in setting ambitious goals for my personal and professional development. In 2022, I transitioned from role of Asia Policy Lead to the Social Transformation Lead, taking on bigger challenges and accountabilities.

Achieving aspirational goals often requires collaboration and teamwork. The significance of working effectively with others to achieve shared goals has grown tremendously for me. WBA's TEAL culture (characterised by self-managed teams, intuitive reasoning and decentralised decision-making) has enabled me to think more creatively, to develop new ideas and continuously improve to help achieve the goals.



Chamaine Nagel

Finance & Operations Director

"Stay independent"

Our value to "Stay Independent" has allowed our team to embrace our independent ways of working and thinking, which has enhanced our approach to problem solving and contributes towards us keeping up with the agility of the organisation.

I personally enjoy being independent within WBA as it aids me to apply my mind in every situation, work in ways that best suit me, and drives me to learn more about myself, the organisation and those around me, and thus promotes my sense of purpose within the organisation.



Nadia van der Schyff
Communications &
Digital Media Manager

"Be inclusive"

Working for WBA has been a positive learning experience for me in many ways. We live in a changing world, and many organisations speak about change but often look at it outwardly, wanting to change the world and alleviate toxicity without looking inward. It's refreshing to work for an organisation that lives by its values, by working to

change internally as well as facilitate change externally. WBA acknowledges that change is required if inclusivity is to be ingrained into the very core of companies. Change can be hard and sometimes uncomfortable but it's so wonderful working for an organisation that commits to having to difficult conversations in order to drive change.



Will Disney
Impact Researcher

"Make it Simple"

Since joining WBA, I have always been interested in the question: What impact are we having in the ecosystem we operate in? While there are many different ways to approach this question, the reality is that it comes down to answering three simple questions: Are SDG2000 companies changing their behaviour as a result of our work? How are stakeholders using our work to influence their engagement with SDG2000 companies? And how do we measure this? As this report highlights, 2022 saw many examples of WBA answering these

questions and it has been great to see the organisation's influence grow since I joined two years ago. Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement in how we capture and measure WBA's impact consistently and how this is presented to the outside world. I look forward to working in the new Impact, Learning and Development team to make it simpler for colleagues and external audiences to understand the value of our work.

Our board

The WBA Supervisory Board oversees the strategic decisions and long-term ambition of WBA. The board comprises members with diverse experience and expertise across business, government and civil society from the developed and developing world to help further support WBA as an agent for systems change.



Paul Druckman
Chair of WBA Supervisory Board



Joyce Cacho
President, Adinura Advisory Services



Bukola Jejeloye
Managing Director, Offline Diplomat



Victoria Marquez-Mees
Managing Director, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)



Elizabeth Cousens
CEO, UN Foundation



Lysa John
Secretary-General, CIVICUS



Diane Holdorf
Executive Vice President, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)



Jan Mattsson
CEO, M-Trust Leadership



Mark Kramer
Senior Lecturer, Harvard Business School, and Founder and Managing Director, FSG



Anthony Cheung
Managing Director ESG, Polymer Capital and Board Governor & Green Finance Convenor, Friends of the Earth (HK)

Our ambassadors

Our Ambassadors work with WBA to advocate for transformation and systems change, using their unique platforms and leadership to inspire, progress and mobilise the global community.



Cherie Blair CBE, QC
Chair, Omnia Strategy



Sharan Burrow
General Secretary,
International Trade Union
Confederation



Kathy Calvin
Board member, UN
Foundation



Richard Curtis
Writer, Director,
Co-Founder of Red Nose
Day and UN Sustainable
Development Goals Advocate



Jane Diplock
International Company
Director



Steve Howard
Secretary General, The
Global Foundation



Veronica Olazabal
Chief Impact and
Evaluation Officer, The
BHP Foundation



Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim
President of the
Association for Indigenous
Women and Peoples of
Chad (AFPAT)



Olumide Idowu
Co-Founder and CEO,
International Climate
Change Development
Initiative



Erika Karp
Executive Managing
Director and Chief Impact
Officer, Pathstone



Wadzi Katsidzira
 Founder and Managing
 Director, Taumba Advisory



Prof Mervyn King SC
 Senior Counsel and former
 Judge of the Supreme
 Court of South Africa



Wim Leereveld
 Founder, Access to
 Medicine Foundation



Lisa MacCallum
 Founder and Chief
 Strategist, Inspired
 Companies



Josien Piek
 Partner, Haven Green
 Capital Partners



Paul Polman
 Business leader,
 Campaigner and Co-author
 of "Net Positive"



Dr. Gunhild A. Stordalen
 Founder and Executive
 Chair, EAT



Hendrik du Toit
 Chief Executive Officer,
 Ninety One



Jonny Wates
 Owner and Director, Wates
 Group



Steve Waygood
 Chief Responsible
 Investment Officer,
 Aviva Investors



Derek Wilkinson
 Partner and Head of
 Washington Office,
 Odgers Berndtson



Robert W. van Zwieten
 Chief Executive Officer,
 The Serendra Group LLC

Our finances

We are constantly looking for ways in which we can produce insightful financial reports by remaining agile and innovative, in step with the growth and evolution of WBA. We are currently in the process of implementing the annual budgeting and quarterly forecasting processes that were initiated in mid-2021, and we have already seen improvements resulting from the new processes. For example, transformation leads now think differently about their activities, there has been an increase in collaborative efforts, and the quarterly Resource Allocation meetings have helped ensure that everyone has the necessary insights to make strategic and informed decisions at a decentralised level. We have also created and implemented our Liquidity Matrix which allows us to track our cash levels throughout the year, proving quite instrumental in our internal decision-making processes.

We were pleased to have continued our relationship with funders such as Porticus, Climate Arc, Ford Foundation, Generation Foundation, Global Commons Alliance,

IKEA Foundation, the David and Lucille Packard Foundation and the Walton Family Foundation which enable our methodologies and benchmark rankings to be a free and public good, and support our mission of building a movement to measure and incentivise business impact towards a sustainable future that works for everyone. We were grateful for the financial support from the governments of the Netherlands (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality), the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Danish MoFA) and France (ADEME) as well as the European Commission (DEVCO).

In total, we secured EUR 9,645,774 in funding in 2022, a 26% increase on 2021, with 66% of the funds coming from public donors (governments) and 34% from private donors (foundations).

WBA's expenses in 2022 increased by 7% compared to 2021, with a noticeable 28% increase in organisational support compared to the previous year, which is mostly attributed to one-off expenses incurred during our Amsterdam office move, as well as our organisation-wide Learning Week. There was also a 12% increase in our outreach and communications expenses, largely due to in-person events resuming once COVID-19 travel restrictions were lifted. Our staff costs and costs for our data platform and research partners increased by 6% and 3% respectively, compared to 2021.

Looking forward, 2023 will be an exciting year as we progress on our path of continuous improvement. We remain committed to working smarter and consistently seeking out innovative ways to achieve our objectives. By 2024, we aim to generate approximately 75% of WBA's funding through governments and foundations and approximately 25% of funding being transformation-specific, provided by one or two funders per transformation.

Balance Sheet as at December 31, 2022

(after appropriation of result)

ASSETS	Note	12/31/2022		12/31/2021	
		EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR
Non-current assets					
Financial fixed assets	4		87,272		42,344
Current assets					
Receivables, prepayments and accrued income	5		1,881,558		870,373
Cash and cash equivalents			2,682,183		953,067
			4,651,013		1,865,785

EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	Note	12/31/2022		12/31/2021	
		EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR
Equity					
Continuity reserve	6	87,272	81,448	42,344	158,996
Current liabilities	7				
Accounts payables		120,074		166,365	
Taxes and social security contributions	8	14,916		34,697	
Deferred income	9	3,535,757		857,900	
Other debts and accruals	10	898,819		647,828	
			4,569,565		1,706,789
			4,651,013		1,865,785

Statement of Income and Expenses

for the Month ended December 31, 2022

Income	Note	Budget 2022 EUR	Results 2022 EUR	Results 2021 EUR	Budget 2022 EUR
Grants and subsidies	12	11,776,994	8,856,979	7,669,858	11,776,994
Donations			10,445	37,660	
Financial income		-	-3,567	-5,179	-
Exchange differences		-	-25,083	36,594	-
Total income		11,776,994	8,838,775	7,738,934	11,776,994
Expenses					
Salaries and wages	13	6,301,058	4,965,288	4,809,914	6,301,058
Social security and pension contributions	14	1,185,575	671,369	648,296	1,185,575
Other personnel expenses	15	516,585	422,068	283,812	516,585
Outreach and communication expenses	16	771,500	483,759	432,966	771,500
Data platform and research partners expenses	17	2,481,276	1,893,229	1,820,038	2,481,276
Operation support expenses	18	521,000	479,601	362,965	521,000
Total expenses		11,776,994	8,915,315	8,357,991	11,776,994
Net result		-	-76,539.9	-619,057	
Distribution of net result					
Addition to continuity reserve					

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. General information

1.1 Activities

Stichting World Benchmarking Alliance Foundation (the 'Foundation'), with a statutory seat in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, is a foundation ('stichting') incorporated according to Dutch law. The Foundation's registered office is Prins Hendrikkade 25, 1012 TM Amsterdam. The Foundation is registered with the Chamber of Commerce under 53744993 (RSIN No. 850999765).

The organisation was established with the intention of build a movement to measure and incentivise business impact towards a sustainable future that works for everyone, through its governance structure that is transparent and lean and by assessing, measuring and ranking 2000 of the world's most influential companies to their contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Foundation seeks to generate a movement around increasing the private sector's impact towards a sustainable future for

all. The Foundation has set out to develop transformative benchmarks that aim to encourage industries and companies to enhance their contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) closest to their core business. By comparing companies' performance on the SDGs, while providing stakeholders and the wider public with free and accessible research and benchmarks.

The Foundation was established on October 13, 2011 and its first accounting period ended on December 31, 2012. Thereafter, the Foundation has reported its figures on a calendar-year basis (12 months). The current reporting period covers the period from January 1 to December 31, 2022.

1.2 Going concern

The continuity reserve of the Foundation amounts to EUR 81.448 as at December 31, 2022.

The budget for next year is for a major part already covered by grant agreements with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DMFA), the European Commission (DG-DEVCO), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Danish MoFA) and

the IKEA Foundation. Additional grants are being requested from various funders in order to ensure continuity for the publication of benchmarks.

The continuity of the Foundation depends to a significant extent on the willingness of funding organisations to continue these financing facilities. On this basis, the accounting principles applied to the valuation of assets and liabilities and the determination of results in these financial statements are based on the assumption of continuity of the Foundation.

1.3 Estimates

In applying the principles and policies for drawing up the financial statements, the management of the Foundation sometimes needs to make estimates and judgments that may be essential to the amounts disclosed in the financial statements. To provide the transparency required under Book 2, article 362, paragraph 1 of the Dutch Civil Code, the nature of these estimates and judgments, including related assumptions, is disclosed where necessary in the notes to the relevant financial statement item.

2. Accounting policies for the balance sheet

2.1 General information

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Guideline for Annual Reporting 640 'Non-profit Institutions' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board.

Assets and liabilities are generally valued at historical cost or at fair value at the time of acquisition. If no specific valuation principle has been stated, valuation is at historical cost. In the balance sheet, statement of income and expenses, references are made to the notes.

2.2 Prior-year comparison

The accounting policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented. The comparable figures for past years have been adjusted for comparison/presentation purposes.

2.3 Foreign currencies

2.3.1 Functional currency

The financial statements are presented in Euros (€), which is the functional and presentation currency of the Foundation.

Items included in the financial statements of the Foundation are measured using the currency of the primary economic environment in which the respective Foundation operates (the functional currency).

2.3.2 Transactions, assets and liabilities

Foreign currency transactions in the reporting period are translated into the functional currency using the exchange rates stated in OANDA prevailing on the dates of the transactions.

Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into the functional currency at the rate of exchange prevailing on the balance sheet date. Foreign exchange gains and losses resulting from the settlement of such transactions and from the translation at year-end exchange rates are recognised in the statement of income and expenses.

Translation differences on non-monetary assets held at cost are recognised using the exchange rates prevailing on the dates of the transactions.

2.4 Financial fixed assets

Financial fixed assets like deposits are valued at historical cost or manufacturing price. Impairment losses are deducted from amortised cost and expensed in the statement of income and expenses.

2.5 Receivables, prepayments and accrued income

Trade receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost. If payment of the receivable is postponed under an extended payment deadline, fair value is measured on the basis of the discounted value of the expected revenues. Interest gains are recognised using the effective interest method. When a trade receivable is uncollectible, it is written off against the allowance account for trade receivables.

2.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include bank balances and deposits held at call with maturities of less than 12 months. Cash and cash equivalents are valued at nominal value.

2.7 Current liabilities

Liabilities are initially recognised at fair value, net of transaction costs incurred. Liabilities are subsequently stated at amortised cost, being the amount received taking into account any premium or discount, less transaction costs.

Any difference between the proceeds (net of transaction costs) and the redemption value is recognised as interest in the income statement over the period of the liabilities using the effective interest method.

All donor payments received by the Foundation for activities that have not been performed yet are presented as 'deferred income' under current liabilities.

3 Accounting policies for the statement of income and expenses

3.1 General information

The result is determined as the difference between total income and total expenses. Income and expenses are recognised in the statement of income and expenses in the period that they are realised.

3.2 Grants and subsidies

Grants and subsidies are recognised as income when there is reasonable assurance that they will be received and that the Foundation will comply with the conditions associated with these contributions. Grants and subsidies that compensate the Foundation for expenses incurred are recognised as income on a systematic basis in the same periods in which the expenses are recognised.

3.3 Financial income

Interest income is recognised on a time-weighted basis, taking into account the effective interest rate of the assets concerned.

3.4 Exchange differences

Exchange differences arising upon the settlement or conversion of monetary items are recognised in the statement of income and expenses in the period that they arise.

3.5 Expenses

Development costs for the benchmarks created by the Foundation are recognised as expenses, since no future benefits are expected.

The Foundation is the owner of the intellectual property rights of the benchmarks. These rights are internally developed and on that basis not capitalised (in accordance with Dutch law).

3.6 Employee benefits

Salaries and wages, social security and pension contributions and other personnel expenses are reported in the statement of income and expenses based on the terms of employment, where they are due to employees.

3.7 Financial expenses

Interest and similar expenses paid are recognised on a time-weighted basis, taking into account the effective interest rate of the liabilities concerned. When recognising interest and similar expenses paid, allowance is made for transaction costs on loans received as part of the calculation of effective interest.

3.8 Taxes

The Foundation is exempt from both income taxes and VAT. For services purchased outside of the EU yet consumed in the Netherlands, the reverse charge mechanism applies. The Foundation must then self-assess and pay VAT on these services.

4. Financial fixed assets

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Guarantee deposits intended for housing	16,819	39,519
Deposit	70,453	2,825
	87,272	39,519

5. Receivables, prepayments and accrued income

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Agence de la transition écologique [ADEME]	711,676	224,999
Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	672,300	195,458
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	270,001	270,001
Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [GAC]	151,993	
Prepayments	57,449	160,477
Other receivables	18,141	19,439
	1,881,558	870,372

6. Equity

Continuity reserve

Movements in the Foundation's continuity reserve can be broken down as follows:

Balance as at January 1, 2022	158,996	776,269
Movements		
ATSF Liquidation balance	-1,008	1,782
Result for the year	-76,540	-619,057
Balance as at December 31, 2022	81,448	158,994

The Foundation's financial position is sufficient to ensure continuity.

Though sufficient funding is secured, these donor commitments are not irrevocable. For this reason, the Foundation maintains a continuity reserve. The continuity reserve has been drawn up to cover risks in the short-term and to ensure that the Foundation can meet its obligations in the future.

7. Current liabilities

All current liabilities are due in less than one year. The fair value of the current liabilities approximates the book value due to their short-term character.

8. Taxes and social security contributions

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Wage tax	14,916	34,697

9. Deferred income

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Ikea Foundation [XPF programme - Core support]	1,500,000	
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	785,755	562,566
Ikea Foundation [Incentivising food system transformation]	640,002	
Generation Foundation	257,079	
Walton Family Foundation	199,516	21,234
Rockefeller Foundation [Climate Arc]	153,405	
Packard Foundation		36,718
Ford Foundation		129,514
Porticus		107,867
	3,535,757	857,900

The Foundation allocated the grant arrangements based on the costs as budgeted in the funding proposals for each funder and recognised it as income (grants and subsidies) for the period to which it is related.

10. Other debts and accruals

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Accrued vacation days	157,838	101,356
Accrued vacation allowance	110,541	94,394
Accrued auditor's fees	21,937	5,845
Accrued Expenses	600,588	440,132
Accrued social sec. contr. holiday allowance	7,915	6,099
Interim account net wages	-	
	898,819	647,827

Accrued Expenses, include amounts owed to our suppliers

11. Commitments and contingent liabilities

The Foundation has an office rent obligation of EUR 5.571,76 per month for the Netherlands with Stadsgoed Amsterdam B.V. until June 30, 2025, which can be terminated with eight month's notice. The Foundation also has an office rent obligation of GBP 6.720,00 with LABS Worldwide Ltd. until March 30, 2023, which can be terminated with three months' notice.

12. Grants and subsidies

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2,214,245	1,680,474
Rockefeller Foundation [Climate Arc]	1,346,595	730,972
Ikea Foundation [XPF programme - Core support]	1,000,000	
Agence de la transition écologique [ADEME]	1,011,677	469,349
Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	672,300	436,853
Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [GAC]	614,176	
Ikea Foundation [Incentivising food system transformation]	567,071	706,796
Ford Foundation	361,242	43,062
Dutch Ministry of Agriculture Nature and Food Quality	246,540	347,560
Packard Foundation	211,617	210,629
Generaton Foundation	137,508	
European Commission [DG-DEVCO]	133,122	518,821
Rockefeller Foundation [Global Commons Alliance]	125,718	
Porticus	107,868	1,207,981
Walton Family Foundation	107,301	282,418
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit [GIZ] GmbH		48,319
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency		-36,513
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs [DMFA - ATSI]		87,000
Children Investment Fund Foundation [CIFF]		663,109
Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office [FCDO]		273,029
	8,856,979	7,669,858

The Foundation allocated the grant arrangements based on the costs as budgeted in the funding proposals for each funder and recognised it as income (grants and subsidies) for the period to which it is related.

13. Salaries and wages

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Gross salaries and wages	3,383,240	3,528,470
Vacation allowance	197,683	182,172
Vacation days	110,266	-6,060
Other salaries	1,274,099	1,105,331
	4,965,288	4,809,914

14. Social security and pension contributions

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Social security expenses	310,538	275,658
Pension expenses	360,831	372,638
	671,369	648,296

15. Other personnel expenses

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Untaxed expenses allowance	36,767	27,745
Untaxed expense allowance - Sweden	1,677	
Travel expenses (home-work)	10,765	39,524
Learning and Development	17,051	31,659
Employee Laptops and Accessories	34,110	60,579
Personal productivity tools	43,999	11,059
Illness absence insurance premium	125,770	52,523
Recruitment expenses	7,385	21,077
WKR Taxation Cost	441	
Training expenses - People development	303	
Other employee expenses	143,801	43,086
	422,068	287,251

16. Outreach and communication expenses

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Roundtables expenses - Travel	101,786	480
Roundtables expenses - Facilitator	-	6,146
Expert Review Committees travel expenses	625	108
Design	13,404	59,078
Editing	16,836	38,836
Translation	-	6,819
Earned Media	116,450	192,675
Publication tool /Website	90,834	106,894
Stakeholder relationships expenses - Travel	143,823	21,931
	483,759	432,966

17. Data platform and research partners expenses

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Research partners	585,104	209,052
Downstream partner [Carbon Disclosure Project]	1,025,337	1,174,385
Downstream partner [Food Foundation]		115,686
Technology	184,810	268,598
Hosting Support	5,679	5,635
Other consultancy expenses	92,298	46,682
	1,893,229	1,820,038

18. Operation support expenses

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Office Expenses	269,166	273,046
Financial Expenses	176,996	83,351
Operational Support Expenses	12,181	6,420
Supervisory board expenses	21,258	148
	479,601	362,965

19. Audit fees

The following audit fees were reported in the statement of income and expenses in the reporting period.

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Statutory audit of annual accounts	25,312	7,120
Other audit fees		
	25,312	7,120

20. Average number of employees

During the financial year, the average number of employees, based on full-time equivalents, was 57,77 (2021: 56,12).

21. Management Remuneration

During the reporting period of P1 - P12 , the Foundation paid EUR 646.341 as remuneration for the Executive Board (2021: EUR 656.691).

	12/31/2022 EUR	12/31/2021 EUR
Gross salaries and wages [including vacation allowance]	558,109	588,053
Social security charges	65,647	47,562
Pension contributions charges	22,585	21,076
	646,341	656,691

Amsterdam, March 25, 2022

Stichting World Benchmarking Alliance Foundation

The Executive Board

The Supervisory Board

Gerbrand Haverkamp

Executive Director

Paul Druckman

Chair (ad int.)



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To: the Board of Stichting World Benchmarking Alliance Foundation

A. Report on the audit of the financial statements 2022 included in the annual report 2022

Our opinion

We have audited the financial statements 2022 of Stichting World Benchmarking Alliance Foundation, based in Amsterdam.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of Stichting World Benchmarking Alliance Foundation as at 31 December 2022 and of its result for 2022 in accordance with the Guideline for annual reporting 640 'Not-for-profit organisations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board.

The financial statements comprise:

1. the Balance Sheet as at December 31, 2022;
2. the Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended December 31, 2022; and
3. the Notes to the Financial Statements comprising a summary of the accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for our opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Dutch law, including the Dutch Standards on Auditing. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report.

We are independent of Stichting World Benchmarking Alliance Foundation in accordance with the "Verordening inzake de onafhankelijkheid van accountants bij assurance-opdrachten" (VIO, Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, a regulation with respect to independence) and other relevant independence regulations in the Netherlands. Furthermore we have complied with the "Verordening gedrags- en beroepsregels accountants" (VGBA, Dutch Code of Ethics).

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

B. Report on the other information included in the annual report 2022

In addition to the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, the annual report contains other information that consists of:

- The information that is presented in the contents on page 2, like the message from the Executive Director, a governance chapter, of the annual report;
- Other information.

Based on the following procedures performed, we conclude that the other information:

- is consistent with the financial statements and does not contain material misstatements;
- contains the information as required by the Guideline for annual reporting 640 'Not-for-profit organisations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board.

We have read the other information. Based on our knowledge and understanding obtained through our audit of the financial statements or otherwise, we have considered whether the other information contains material misstatements.

By performing these procedures, we comply with the requirements of the Dutch Standard 720. The scope of the procedures performed is substantially less than the scope of those performed in our audit of the financial statements.

Management is responsible for the preparation of the Executive Board Report in accordance with the Guideline for annual reporting 640 'Not-for-profit organisations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board.



C. Description of responsibilities regarding the financial statements

Responsibilities of management for the financial statements

The board is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the Guideline for annual reporting 640 'Not-for-profit organisations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board. Furthermore, the board is responsible for such internal control as the board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

As part of the preparation of the financial statements, the board is responsible for assessing the foundation's ability to continue as a going concern. Based on the financial reporting framework mentioned, the board should prepare the financial statements using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The board should disclose events and circumstances that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern in the financial statements.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objective is to plan and perform the audit assignment in a manner that allows us to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence for our opinion.

Our audit has been performed with a high, but not absolute, level of assurance, which means we may not detect all material errors and fraud during our audit.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. The materiality affects the nature, timing and extent of our audit procedures and the evaluation of the effect of identified misstatements on our opinion.

We have exercised professional judgement and have maintained professional skepticism throughout the audit, in accordance with Dutch Standards on Auditing, ethical requirements and independence requirements. Our audit included among others:

- identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, designing and performing audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control;
- evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management;
- concluding on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting, and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a company to cease to continue as a going concern;
- evaluating the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures; and
- evaluating whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant findings in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Den Haag, March 30, 2023

JPA Van Noort Gassler & Co B.V.

Original signed by
H. Pot RA

The World Benchmarking Alliance is funded by



World Benchmarking Alliance

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