

The Net-Zero challenge for tourism enterprises

Authors: Anita Conefrey* (anita.conefrey@research.atu.ie) (ATU Sligo), Dr James Hanrahan (ATU Sligo), Dr Domhnall Melly (ATU Sligo), Dr John Carty (ATU Galway), Dr Conor McTiernan (ATU Donegal) & Dr Deirdre Bryne (ATU Sligo).

Thank you to the tourism enterprises that participated in this study, which captured major variations in climate action and decarbonisation practices being implemented at a national level in the Republic of Ireland. As you are aware, Ireland is obliged to reach emission targets by 2030 and Net-Zero emissions before 2050. Additionally, all organisations are now required to report their environmental and social impacts - under the new EU 'Corporate Sustainability Reporting' directive established in 2022. Hence, this research identified the level of skills and training required to transition the Irish tourism industry towards Net-Zero emissions. The preliminary results are outlined below to aid tourism enterprises in making evidence-informed decisions on climate action and the areas that need to be upskilled and trained for a decarbonised world.



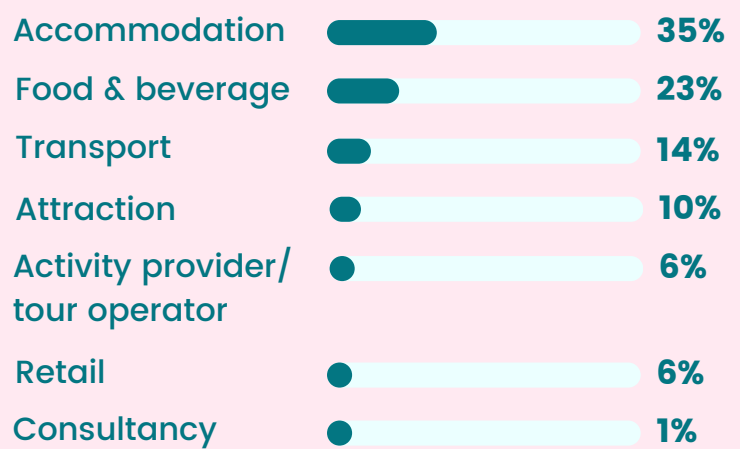
When tourism enterprises meet the Net-Zero challenge they become resource efficient, reduce operating costs and increase profits, which enables them to actively support communities and destinations. However, this transition requires direct financial investment, as the burden of decarbonising tourism cannot be placed entirely on the enterprises, especially after a difficult time with COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine. For enterprises to transition smoothly towards Net-Zero emissions, there needs to be significant support and training opportunities in place like there are for other industries.

Sample of tourism enterprises that participated

Participants position in enterprise



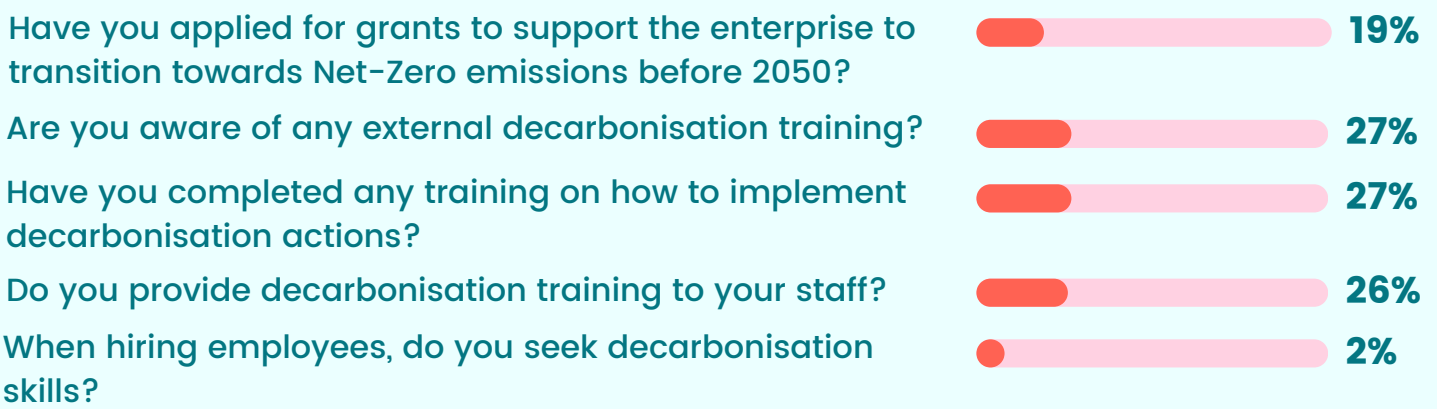
Stakeholder group represented



Basic level of climate action literacy



Decarbonisation support, training & skills



Top 3 skills that you believe are required in your enterprise to support decarbonisation

Climate action/ sustainability awareness & literacy

Training, education & experience in decarbonisation practices

Environmental/ waste management experience



Does your enterprise currently have a decarbonisation action plan?



75% do not have a decarbonisation action plan



14% are implementing some decarbonisation actions but they are not embedded in a plan



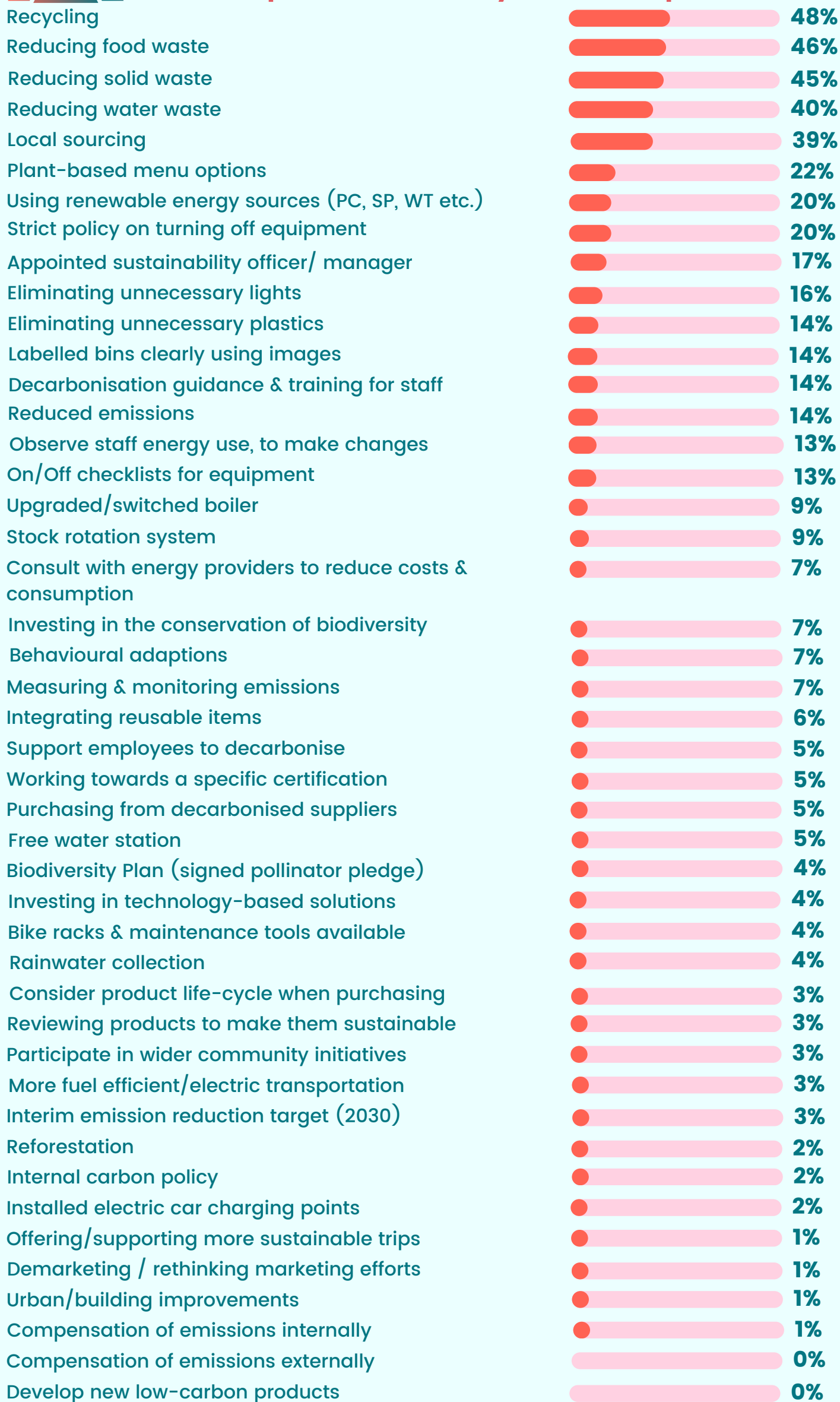
8% do not know



3% have a decarbonisation action plan



What decarbonisation actions have you implemented in your enterprise?



Do you engage your visitors in any of the following decarbonisation initiatives?



Barriers faced when transitioning towards Net-Zero

