



Working with small businesses to measure and reduce emissions

Race to 2030

Around 96% of Wellington businesses are small or medium-sized with fewer than 20 employees. Race to 2030 is helping small businesses make the most of a big opportunity to overcome barriers, reduce carbon emissions, and lead climate action.

Race to 2030 is a joint initiative by groups that focus on supporting businesses and enabling climate action. With support from the Climate and Sustainability Fund in 2022, the programme began as a pilot called the Sustainability Bootcamp ran by Wellington Chamber of Commerce. Building on the success of the Bootcamp in December 2024 the Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Climate Club, Greendeals Charitable Trust and GoZero social enterprise came together to collaborate on Race to 2030; helping small businesses in Pōneke | Wellington learn about the cause and effects of climate change and find ways to reduce emissions.

Participating businesses aim to reduce their emissions by five percent each year. Mike Anthony, facilitator of Race to 2030, says this target is set in line with guidance from the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Wellington City Council's Te Atakura – First to Zero climate action plan.

So far, 11 businesses from a range of industries receive free training and support as they measure their carbon footprint and track their progress in reducing emissions. With offerings from hospitality to fine jewellery, clothing, tourism, herbal medicine and bikes, each business has its own aims and challenges. Businesses taking part are based in the central city, and Mike Anthony says building local connections is an important part of Race to 2030.

“The idea of creating communities is deeply engrained in what we need to do in terms of providing real solutions to climate challenges ... so we decided to look around Cuba Street and Courtenay Place where there are lots of little, cool owner-operated businesses.” – Mike Anthony, Race to 2030

Race to 2030 begins with a workshop led by Climate Club, where small business owners dive deep into the science of climate change. They learn how human activity contributes to climate disruption, and what climate change means for people and places at a local, national and global scale. To understand their business's carbon footprint, participants use the free Cogo app. Race to 2030 then helps each business consider ways to reduce their emissions and start taking action. Check-ins help the business owners monitor progress and adjust their approach around any problems or priorities.



“We’re providing businesses an easy route to solutions that allow them to understand their footprint, understand their hotspots and learn some lessons about what they can do.” – Mike Anthony, Race to

2030

“A lot of small businesses are interested in climate action. They just don’t have a lot of time or resources to throw at it. So that’s why we’re doing this, and why it’s tailored to them. We need a whole of society response to what is a real emergency.” – Mike Anthony, *Race to 2030*

Climate action opportunities are shaped around the needs and context of each business. Mike Anthony says participants are supported to solve problems and build financial resilience as part of the process so they can be sustainable in every sense.

As part of efforts to reduce emissions, participants are making changes across different areas of business including how they source products, manage waste, deliver goods and travel. Depending on their aims and constraints, a small business’s climate action might involve switching suppliers to reduce the distance covered by orders, reducing air travel, increasing active transport and the use of electric vehicles, or composting food scraps instead of sending them to landfill. Business owners are encouraged to consider their impact on the natural environment and understand the overall result of any changes they make as part of emissions reduction activity.

“There is a need for every part of the economy to react, for all of us to be doing the bits that are feasible and within our reach if we are going to slow climate change down.” – Mike Anthony, *Race to 2030*

Race to 2030 advances the understanding and commitment to low-carbon practices among Wellington’s business community. It supports businesses to innovate toward zero carbon and circular economy solutions, creating ripple effects across supply chains and customer behaviour.

While one small business is not likely to create a large portion of Wellington’s carbon emissions, the city’s small businesses play a big part in New Zealand’s economy through connection to consumers, manufacturing and transport. Mike Anthony says small to medium-sized businesses can use their choices to influence change at a large scale.

By providing tools to measure emissions, track progress, and learn reduction strategies, we can empower local enterprises to grow sustainably and contribute to a low-carbon economy.

To learn more visit raceto2030.org

