



# RETHINKING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Graham Miller

Professor of Sustainability in Business,  
University of Surrey

[g.miller@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:g.miller@surrey.ac.uk)

# THREE TYPES OF LEARNING



Learn Something New



Change your Mind



Change yourself

# REFLECTIONS

What did I learn from the session?

What questions did it raise for me?

What will I do differently when I return to my organisation?

## SESSION OBJECTIVES

- To review the progress made over the last 12 months
- To understand the scale of the climate challenge in front of us
- To question the potential of carbon offsets as a fix for tourism
- To consider Regenerative Tourism as an advance on Sustainable Tourism
- To introduce Transformational Experiences as the basis for our learning

# GLASGOW DECLARATION CLIMATE ACTION IN TOURISM

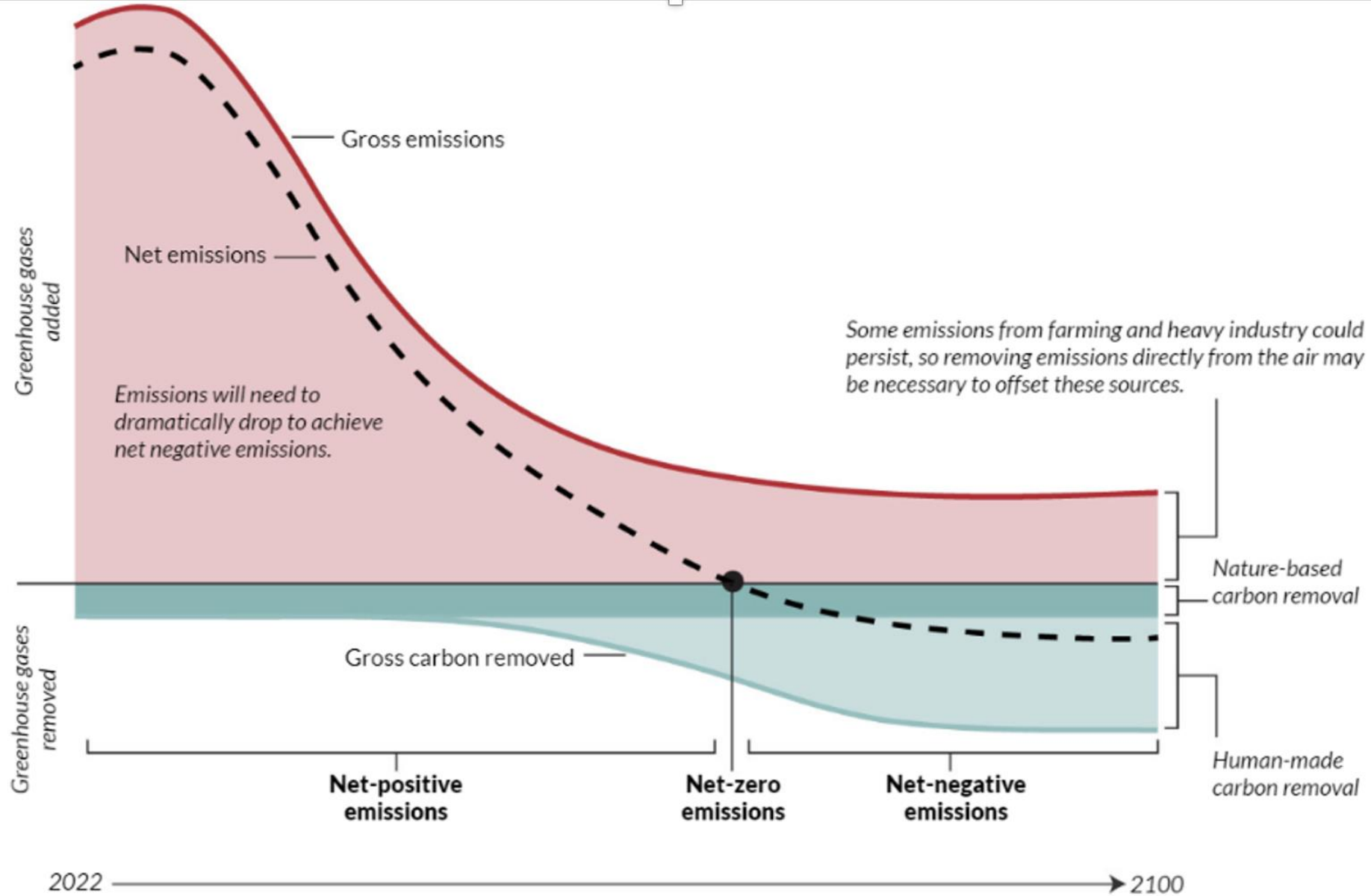
- **Measure:** Measure and disclose all travel-related emissions.
- **Decarbonise:** Set and deliver science-based targets to accelerate tourism's decarbonisation.
- **Regenerate:** Restore and protect ecosystems, supporting nature's ability to draw down carbon, as well as safeguarding biodiversity, food security, and water supply.
- **Collaborate:** Share evidence of risks and solutions with all stakeholders and customers, and work together to ensure that plans are as effective and coordinated as possible.
- **Finance:** Ensure that sufficient resource, budget and capacity is dedicated to meeting the objectives outlined in the climate plans.

## GLASGOW DECLARATION CONTD.

The Declaration is asking its signatories to commit to:

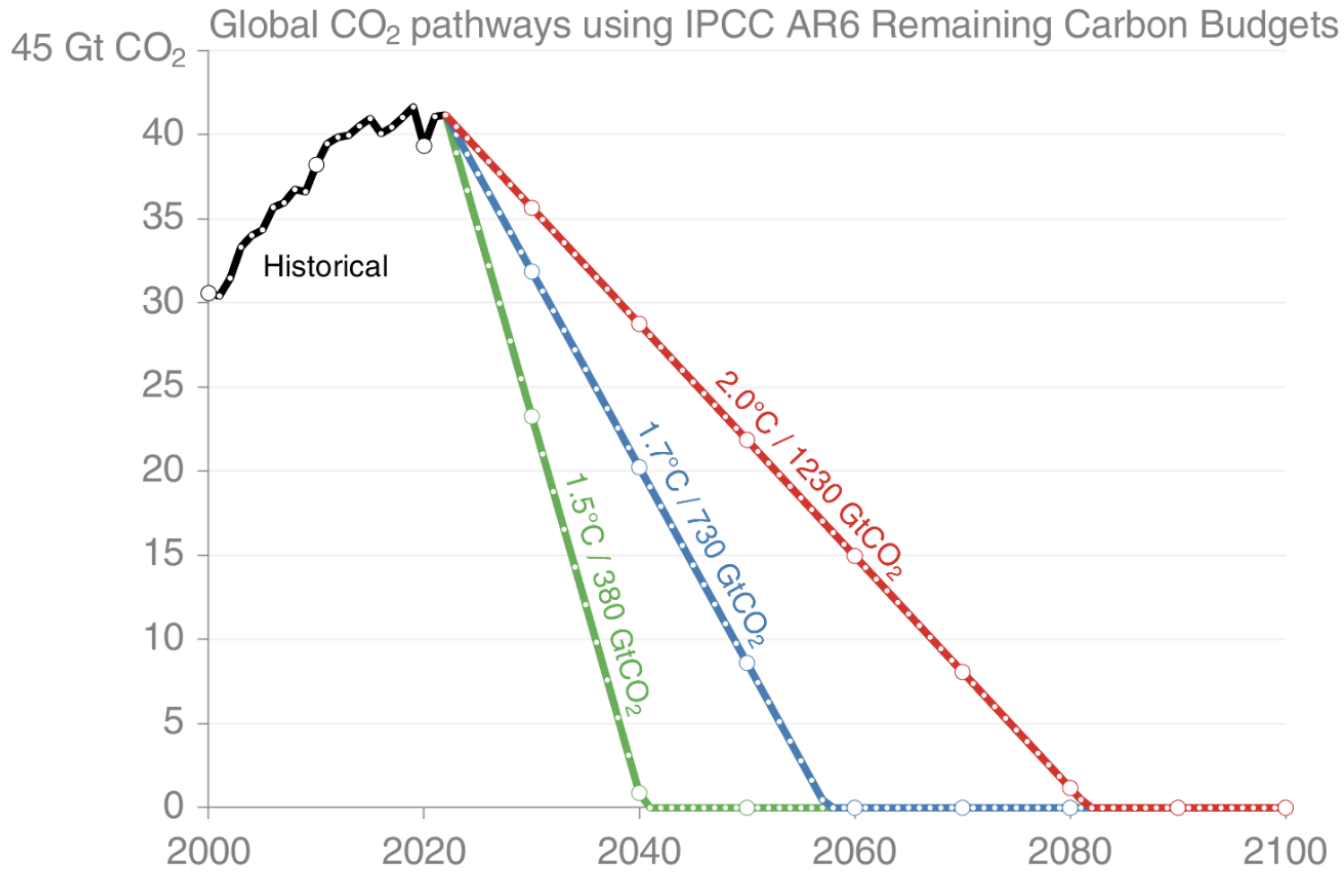
- Halve emissions by 2030 and reach Net Zero as soon as possible before 2050
- Deliver climate action plans within 12 months from becoming a signatory
- Align plans with the five pathways of the Declaration (Measure, Decarbonize, Regenerate, Collaborate, Finance)
- Report publicly on an annual basis on progress against targets
- Work in a collaborative spirit, sharing good practices and solutions

# NET AND GROSS EMISSIONS



# Remaining carbon budget

Global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions must reach net zero to limit global warming. Reaching net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2050 would require a decrease of about 1.4 GtCO<sub>2</sub> each year, comparable to the COVID-related 2020 fall.

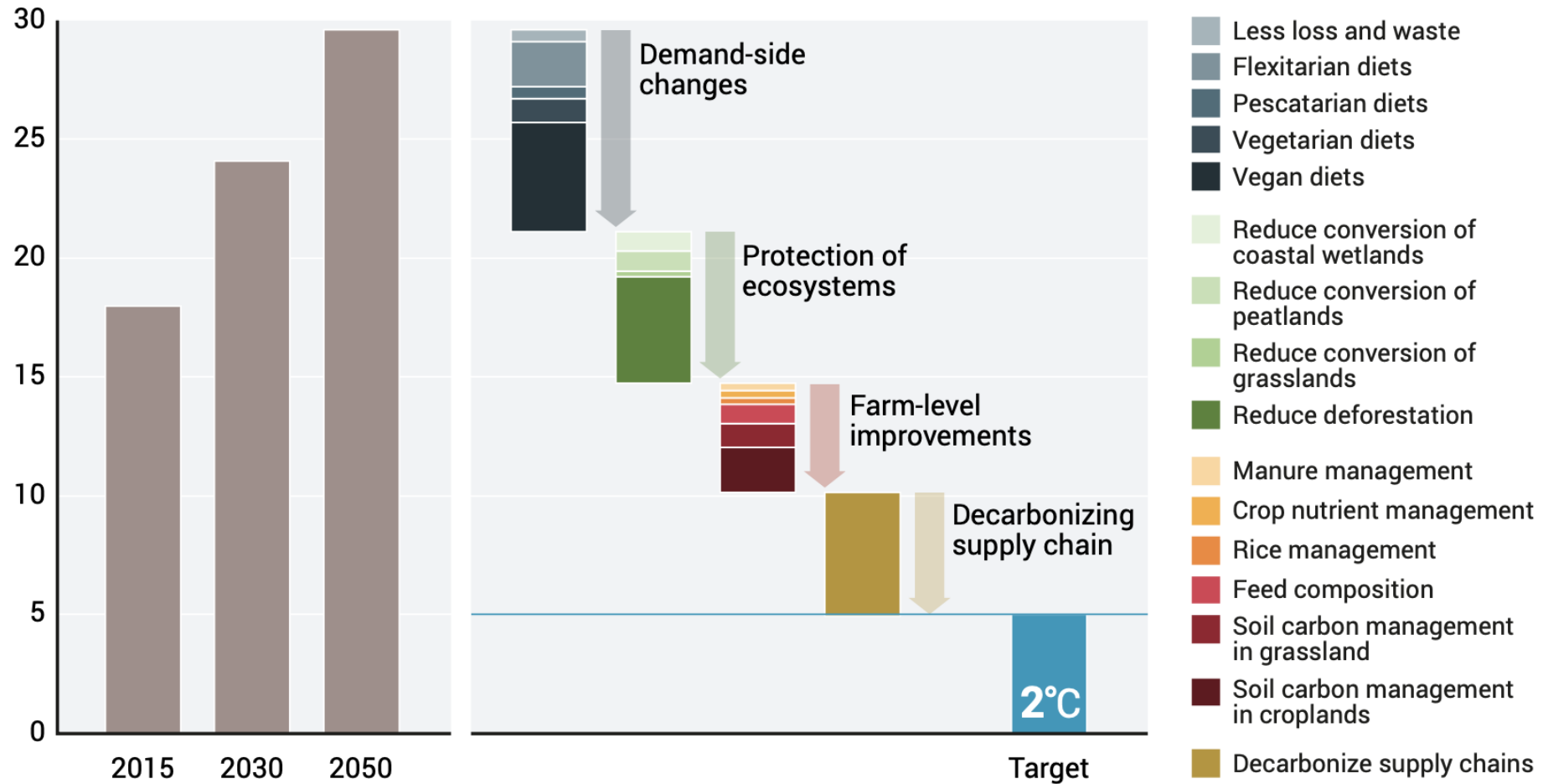




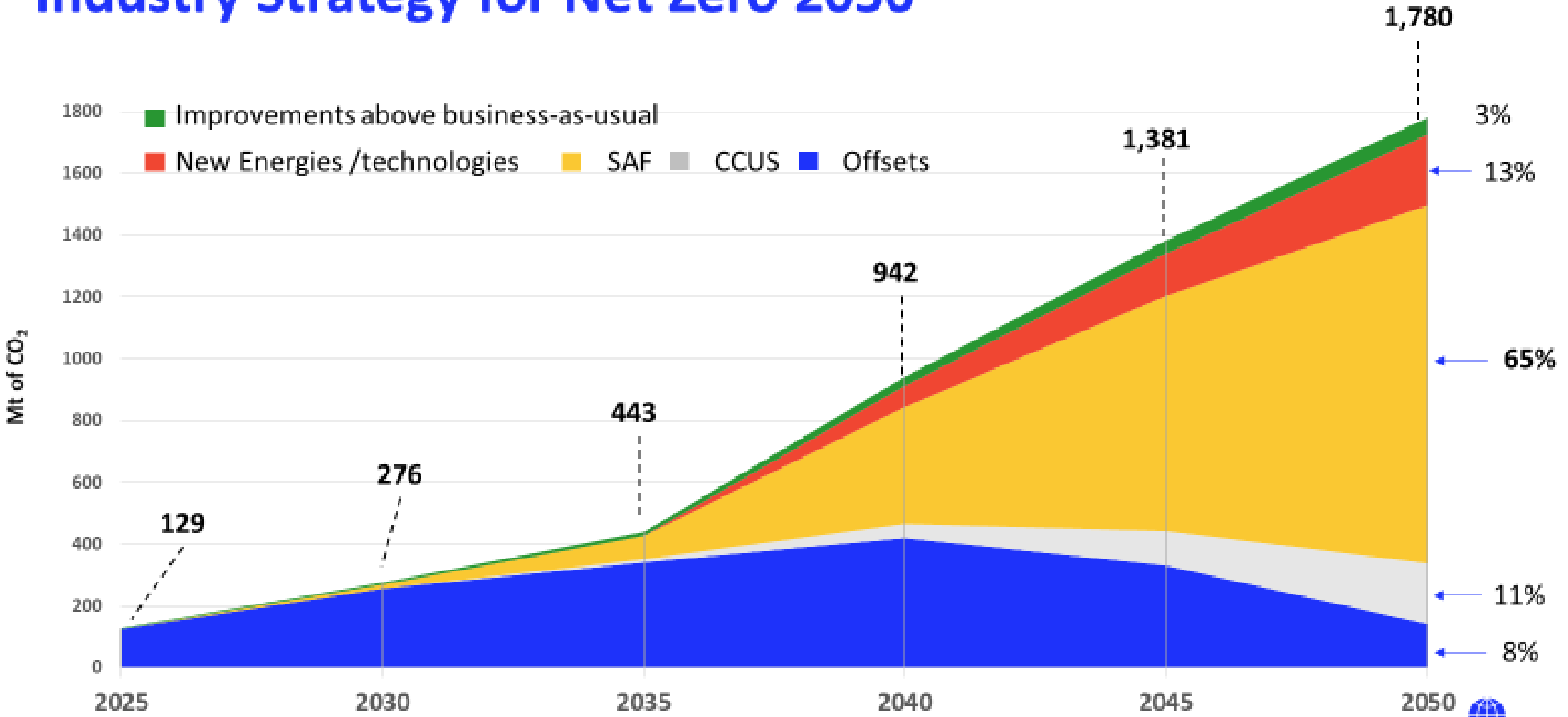
# COP15

- Conserve and manage over 30% of the world's land, coastal areas and oceans.
- Restore 30% of terrestrial and marine ecosystems
- Halve global food waste
- Promise of significant public and private flows of funding
- Requiring transnational companies to monitor, assess, and transparently disclose risks and impacts on biodiversity through their operations, portfolios, supply and value chains

## GHG emissions (GtCO<sub>2</sub>e)

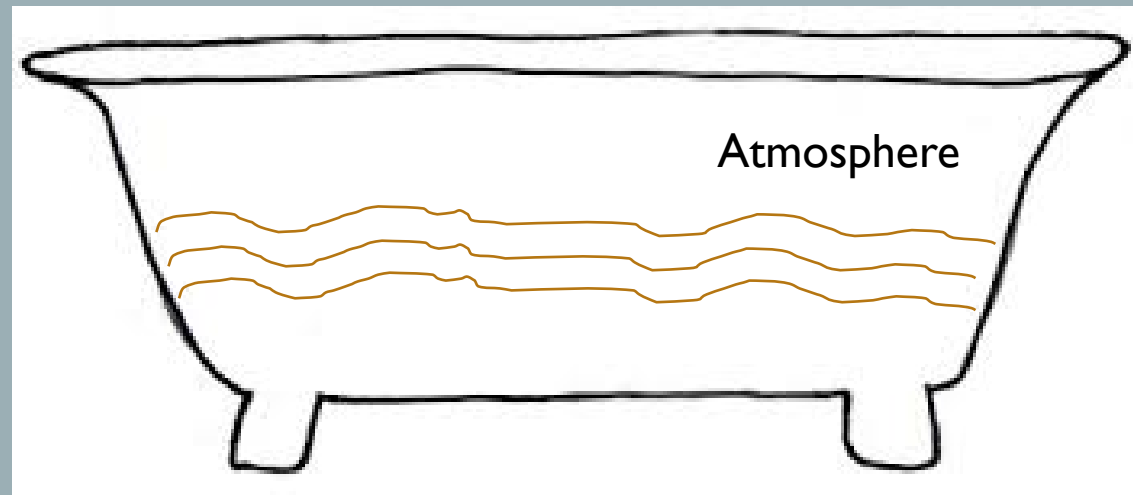
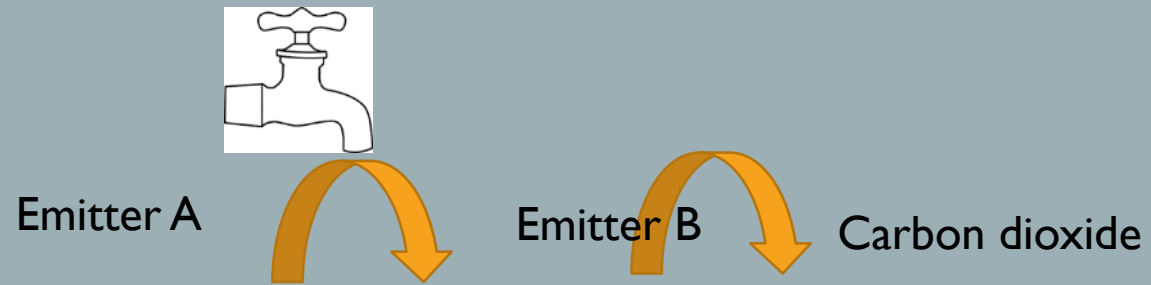


# Industry Strategy for Net Zero 2050

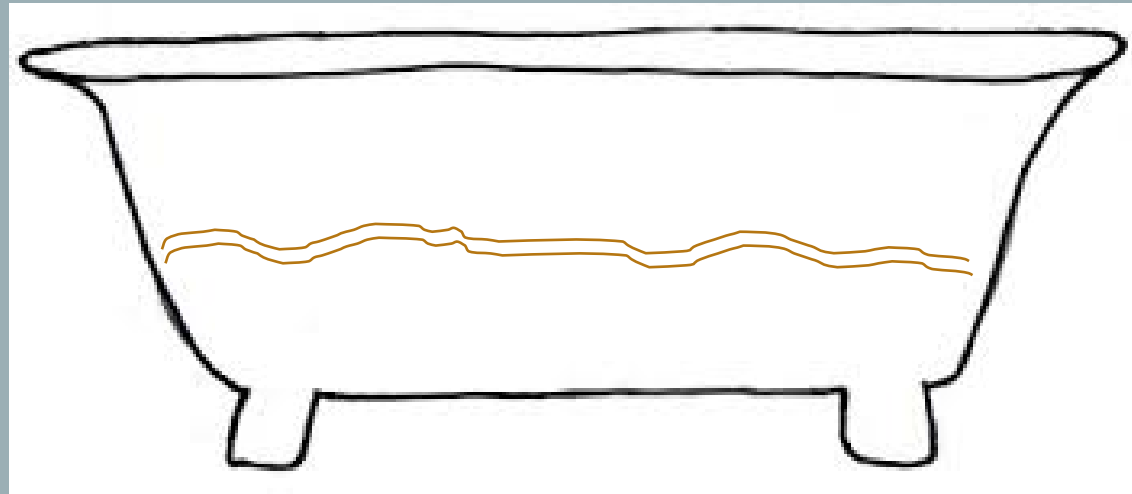


# CARBON OFFSETS

# CARBON EMISSIONS

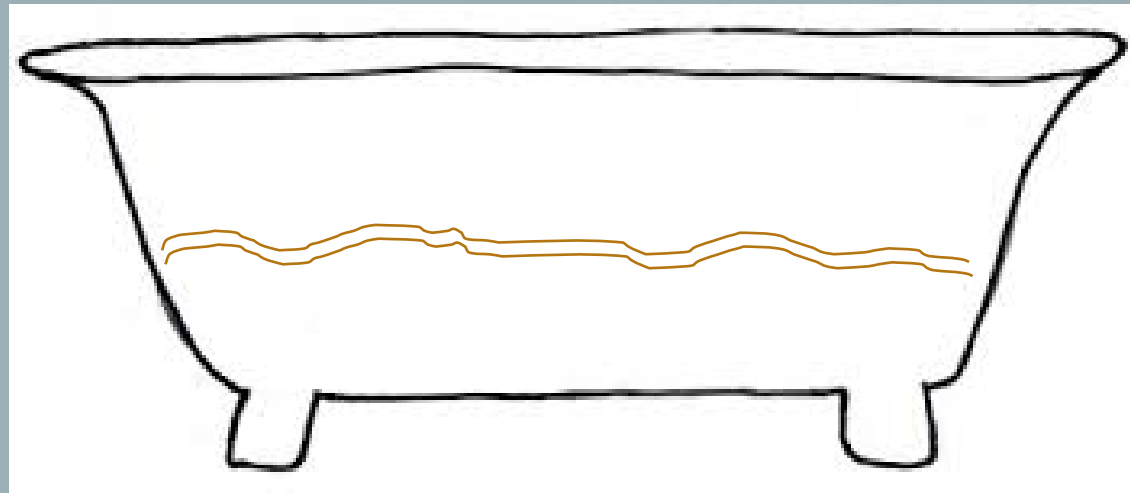
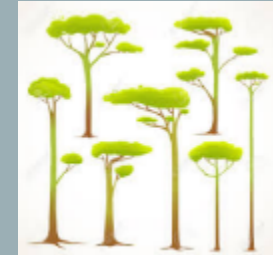


# CARBON OFFSET: AVOIDANCE CREDITS

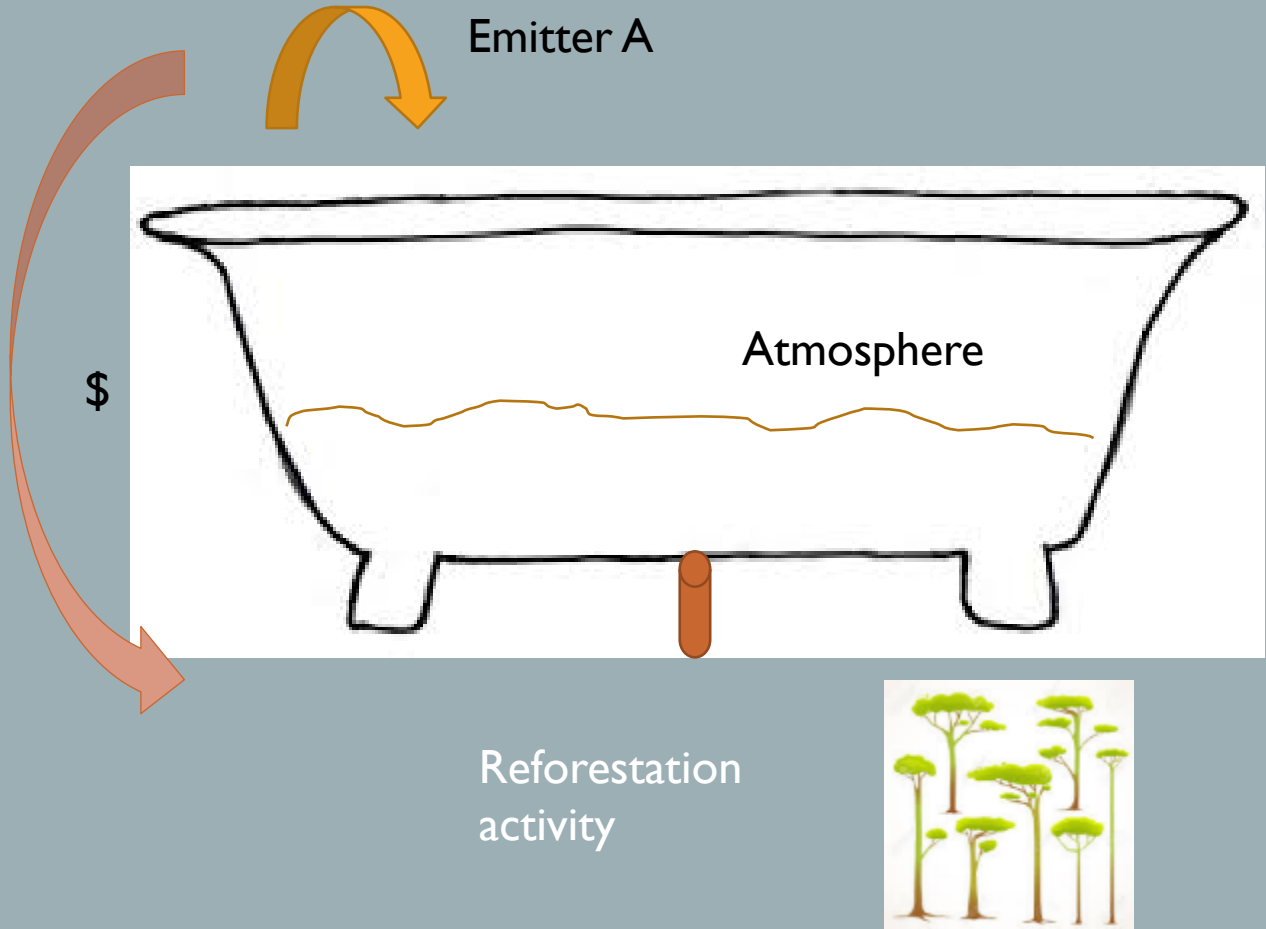


# CARBON OFFSET: REDD

REDUCING EMISSIONS FROM DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION



# INCREASING CARBON SINKS: REMOVAL CREDITS

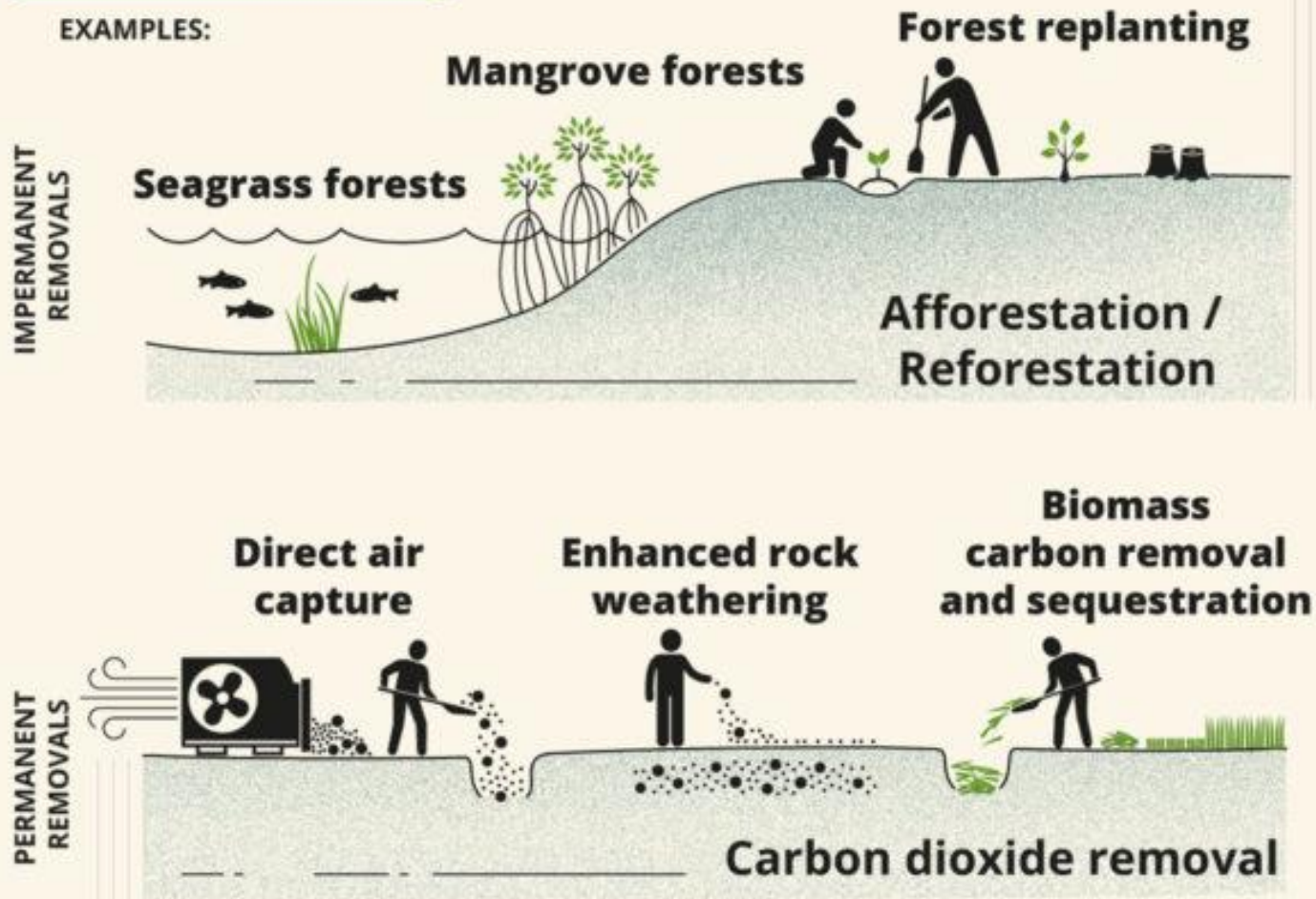




# Removals

← these are negative emissions

EXAMPLES:



# The Land Gap Report

**The total area of land needed to meet projected biological carbon removal in national climate pledges is almost 1.2 billion hectares – equivalent to current global cropland. Countries' climate pledges rely on unrealistic amounts of land-based carbon removal.**

**More than half of the total land area pledged for carbon removal – 633 million hectares – involves reforestation, putting potential pressure on ecosystems, food security and indigenous peoples' rights. Restoring degraded lands and ecosystems account for 551 million hectares pledged.**

**Evidence shows that indigenous peoples and local communities with secure land rights vastly outperform both governments and private landholders in preventing deforestation, conserving biodiversity, and producing food sustainably.**

**Agroecology promotes socioecological resilience by restoring ecosystem functions and services through biologically diverse agricultural and food systems, also a key approach to the realization of human rights in the context of climate change.**

The Land Gap Report (2022)  
<https://www.landgap.org/>

- 'Race to Zero' puts pressure on limited land resources, food prices, climate justice and indigenous land rights
- Offsets and current technology can't reduce emissions to the level necessary in the time available
- Need to reduce gross emissions



**MOVING BEYOND SUSTAINABILITY  
TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM**

# FROM EXTRACTION TO REGENERATION

Extractive	Sustainable	Restorative	Regenerative
Take	Do no harm	Repair	Self-renewal
Business-as-usual	Weak	Strong	Ideal

Focus of current approach is on:

- Technical solutions
- Efficiency
- Focus on parts of the system
- ‘Green growth’
- Humans ‘manage’ or control natural resources

Focus of future approach needs to be on:

- Invest in nature and system health, and do this collaboratively
- Understand systemic effects, including feedback loops, and keep learning
- Take a long-term perspective and understand the unique past, present and future of a place
- Increase human consciousness of being part of nature

# REFOREST EXAMPLE

