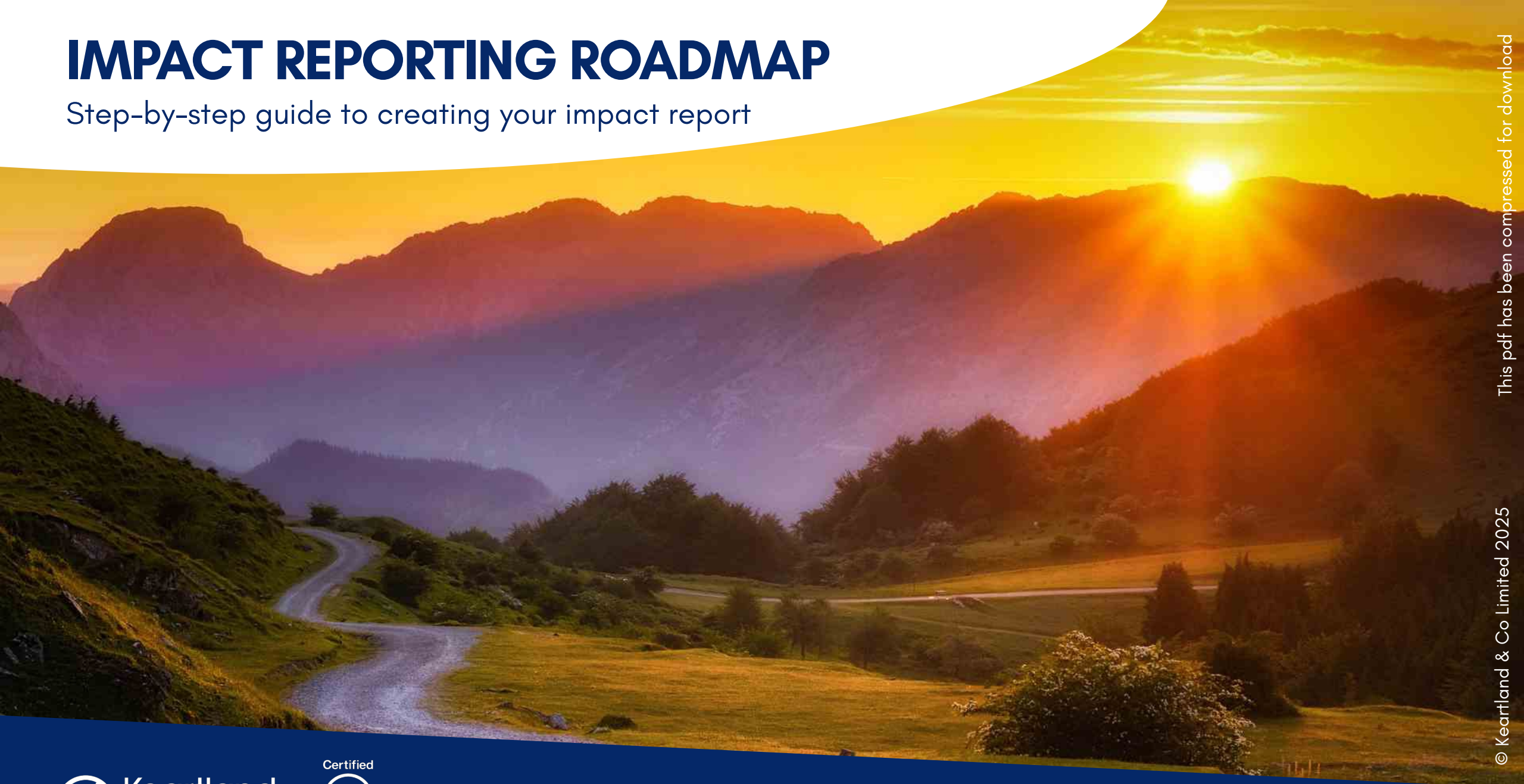


IMPACT REPORTING ROADMAP

Step-by-step guide to creating your impact report



If **you're sitting down to write the impact report** for your business (maybe for the first time) and don't know:

Where to start

OR

How to structure it

OR

What data to include

Then **this Impact Reporting Roadmap is for you.**

The business leaders we work with are often overwhelmed and confused. They don't have any experience in writing an impact report. They don't know what to put in it or how deep to go. They're getting themselves tied up in knots and can't see the wood for the trees. They're worried about saying the wrong thing (greenwashing).

This roadmap is designed to **give you clarity.**

Using my 15+ years experience of working in impact-focused businesses and reporting on impact, I will walk you through the steps you need to take to create your impact report.



Hannah Kearthland

Outsourced Chief Impact Officer &
Founder of Kearthland & Co, a certified B Corp™

Impact reporting roadmap

Places you might find quantitative data

Finance system
Expense claims
Utility bills
Waste contractor
Carbon calculations
HR database
CRM database

Top tips

You might find it helpful to divide the report up between different people so you each draft different sections

There might be existing content you can re-use – e.g. wording from your website or from internal updates

If you're finding one section difficult, just leave it and move onto the next one!

STEP 8: DESIGN & PUBLICATION

- Design the report
- Final sign off
- Put your report out in the world!

STEP 7: FINALISE CONTENT

- Agree the words and data that you'll include in the report

STEP 6: GET FEEDBACK

- Get feedback on your draft
- Make amendments

STEP 5: FILL IN THE GAPS

- Identify where additional case studies / testimonials / quantitative data is needed to back up what you've written
- Gather this information (where possible) and incorporate it in the report

STEP 4: FIRST DRAFT

- Write a first draft of the copy (i.e. the words)
- Fill in the gaps under the headings and sub-headings you created in Step 2

STEP 3: IDENTIFY DATA

- Identify existing relevant quantitative data that will help you tell your story
- Gather relevant case studies, testimonials and photos that will help bring your report to life

STEP 2: MAP THE STORY

- Choose a framework for structuring your report (e.g. the B Corp pillars or the pillars of your own impact strategy)
- Map out the overarching storyline – create your headings and sub-headings

STEP 1: PREPARATION

- Identify who needs to be involved (copywriting, data, design, review & sign off)
- Understand when the report needs to be completed / any ambitions in terms of publication date

Top tip

Identify which additional data it would be useful to have and create a plan to capture this for next year

While the process is simple, it's not always easy, especially if you haven't written an impact report before or haven't got someone you can ask for advice.

Here are **three common mistakes** we see businesses making and that you want to avoid...



MISTAKE #1: JUST TALK ABOUT THE POSITIVE STUFF

Businesses (and business leaders) love to talk about all the amazing things they've done ... and brush the mistakes under the carpet where they hope no one will notice them.

The problem is that this can easily result in the dreaded 'greenwashing'.

Your impact report should be open and honest, sharing the good bits as well as the not-so-good bits.

We help our clients avoid making this mistake by:

- Facilitating a kick-off workshop where we discuss what's happened during the year and how it will be reflected in the report.
- If we're writing the report for you, then our copywriter is a sustainability copywriting expert and has an excellent understanding of greenwashing guidance and legislation.
- If you're writing the report yourself, we review drafts of the report and highlight any areas where we feel you've not been entirely transparent. We also signpost to examples of what other businesses have done.

If you're afraid of making this mistake, read on to find out how we can support you





MISTAKE #2: DON'T INCLUDE THE RIGHT DATA

It's important to include data that backs up what you're saying.

It's easy to make the following mistakes:

- Miss out important data
- Don't disclose key information about data that is included – e.g. assumptions, missing data, dirty data, differences in how data was gathered year-on-year
- Use activity metrics rather than impact metrics

We help our clients avoid making this mistake by:

- Identifying what data is available and what can be obtained during the kick-off workshop.
- During the copywriting stage, we identify where data is missing, being presented in a confusing or ambiguous way, or where assumptions about data aren't clearly articulated. We carry out a second-pair-of-eyes review to be double sure.
- Providing advice on how to capture data in future so it's available for next year's report.

If you're afraid of making this mistake, read on to find out how we can support you



MISTAKE #3: DELEGATE THE IMPACT REPORT TO THE MARKETING TEAM

The right people need to be involved in writing your impact report, including senior people. Just like when you produce your annual report and accounts.

Your marketing team are brilliant at writing and designing stuff. But they probably don't have experience of reporting on impact.

You need to strike the right balance between positive, engaging storytelling and reporting on strategic intention and factual data.



We help our clients avoid making this mistake by:

- Helping them identify who needs to be involved in writing and reviewing the report.
- Our expert sustainability copywriter writing your report for you if you choose this option.
- Where you write the report yourself, we provide an external objective perspective when reviewing drafts of the report, identifying areas where creative license might be getting in the way of factual reporting and identifying areas where data is required to back up what's being said.

If you're afraid of making this mistake, read on to find out how we can support you



Now you know the steps you to take and the mistakes you need to avoid, you might be wondering how we can support you...

Our REPORT solution

Through our tried and tested REPORT solution, we can support you on your impact reporting journey using our proven six-step approach to support you every step of the way.

We will:

- **Help you map out the story you want to tell**
- **Provide the level of support you need** to create a great report and meet your deadlines
- **Deliver expert support and feedback throughout the copywriting process** – whether you choose to write the report yourself or ask us to do it for you
- Support you in **identifying the data you need** to tell your story effectively
- Ensure claims are evidence-based and **adhere to greenwashing guidelines** and legislation
- Bring in an experienced design team if required

More details [here](#).

If you're ready to dive in...

Set up a free

COMMUNICATE IMPACT CALL

If you're not quite ready to speak yet, read on to find out how else we can support you



If you're not quite ready to speak yet...

- Read my [Five Top Tips for Writing an Impact Report](#).
- Check out the reviews I've done of some well known impact reports [here](#).
- Connect with me on [LinkedIn](#) and ring my 🔔 so you're notified of my posts.
- [Sign up](#) to my monthly newsletter, Better Business Bites, which is full of tips on how to challenge the status quo and build a business that has a meaningful impact on people and the planet.

The journey to greater impact starts with a single step, take that step today!

