



# Greener Broadcasting

creating a positive environmental impact



Environmental sustainability at the BBC: our strategy

## TOPICS

## PAGE

Introduction from Tony Hall, Director General	03
Strategy & targets at a glance	04 - 05
Why this matters to the BBC	06
Achievements so far	07 - 08
The strategy:	09
Ourselves	10 - 13
Our industry	14 - 17
Our audience	18 - 20
Appendix	21

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# CONTENTS

# Creating a positive environmental impact

**Introduction by Tony Hall,**  
Director General, BBC

It is a testament to the power of television that the scenes of plastic piling up in our oceans, seen by millions of viewers on Blue Planet II, has kick started a national conversation on the harm caused by single-use plastics. I'm proud that the BBC played a part in starting that conversation and am delighted that we now have a chance to prove our commitment to creating a sustainable world, for today and for the future.

The potential for the whole media sector to play a positive role in finding solutions to the world's environmental challenges - such as climate change, increasing waste and biodiversity loss - is vast. We can tackle our own environmental impacts and use our creativity to inspire and inform audiences. And, as a publicly-funded organisation, the BBC has a particular duty to ensure we are doing everything we can to keep our environmental impact to a minimum.

Blue Planet II and our new "Plastics Watch" initiative shows that, through our programmes and content, the BBC can be a force for social good. In time, we want our environmental impact to be positive too. We want, above all, to be a model for sustainable broadcasting.

Our new sustainability strategy seeks to address our impact in three key areas: our operations; our role within the wider production and broadcasting industry; and our relationship with our audiences. We are confident that focusing our work in these three areas will bring about a wide-ranging and coherent approach to environmental sustainability in all aspects of the BBC's creative life. And, from this, additional benefits will follow: reducing energy consumption and waste saves money which will enable us to spend more money on programmes and content. Sustainability, therefore, provides us with an opportunity to innovate and develop more creative, flexible ways of working and to reach audiences who care deeply about this issue.

The strategy acknowledges that our programmes and content can help inform our audiences about the changing world and the actions they can take to reduce their own environmental impact. This is not about promoting a particular ideology or political viewpoint; it is a critical aspect of our mission to inform.

Our plan is ambitious in scope and future-facing, covering the duration of the BBC's Charter period up to 2028. It is supported by targets and measures to reduce our environmental impacts including a "science-based" target for carbon reduction which matches the UK's overall climate obligations. It will be continually reviewed to ensure it is delivering maximum benefit to the environment, to our production teams and to licence fee payers.

The strategy will be managed by the BBC Sustainability team but its success relies entirely on the engagement and support of everyone at the BBC. From our most senior leaders to our most junior colleagues, creating a sustainable BBC is everyone's responsibility and the environmental benefits will be shared by everyone too.

# Greener Broadcasting:

Our strategy & targets at a glance



## What do we want to achieve?

A positive environmental impact.

## Why does this matter?

Making and distributing programmes and content has an environmental impact.

Environmental issues affect us all and as a publicly funded organisation we have a responsibility to act to limit our impact. Our audience expect us to lead the way.

## How will we do it?

By making sustainability all of our business, working to deliver:

- **Efficient, low impact operations and a thriving sustainable workforce. We will:**
  - Cut our carbon emissions by 24% by 2022 in line with a science based reduction target
  - Buy renewable energy
  - Operate buildings and technology efficiently
  - Provide training for staff, creating environmental consciousness across the workforce
- **A sustainable broadcast industry. We will partner with others to:**
  - Measure and model our industry's environmental impact and collaborate to reduce it
  - Achieve sustainable certification for more of our content
  - Collectively stimulate demand for sustainable products and services
  - Drive innovation in sustainable technology
- **Inspiration and information to our audience, helping them to lead more sustainable lives. We will:**
  - Provide content to educate and inspire positive change
  - Share information about our own performance to enhance trust in the BBC

# Measures

Our strategy is underpinned by the following targets and measures, to be achieved by 2022 from the baseline year 2015/16:

## By 2022



CO<sub>2</sub>e

Reduce 24%



Energy

Reduce 10%



Waste

Recycle 75%  
Reduce 10%  
Zero Waste to landfill  
No single use plastic



Programmes

100% Calculation  
25% Production Carbon  
Albert Certified



Smarter Travel

Responsible Travel Policies

Progress against these targets will be published in our Annual Report and Accounts. They will also be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant. Further goals for the second half of the charter period will be issued in 2022.

# Why does this matter

Making and distributing programmes and content has an environmental impact. It requires energy to heat, light and cool our buildings and power equipment used both in our own buildings and throughout our supply chain. We need to travel to locations to film. Our cameras, lights and computers are made of raw materials which need to be mined, manufactured and transported. And we use materials in numerous ways including the creation of sets, props and costumes, potentially creating waste that needs to be disposed of. All of these activities, and many more, need to be carefully managed to ensure our negative impact is as low as possible. By the end of the Charter period in 2028, our ambition is that the BBC will create a positive environmental impact, giving back more than we take.

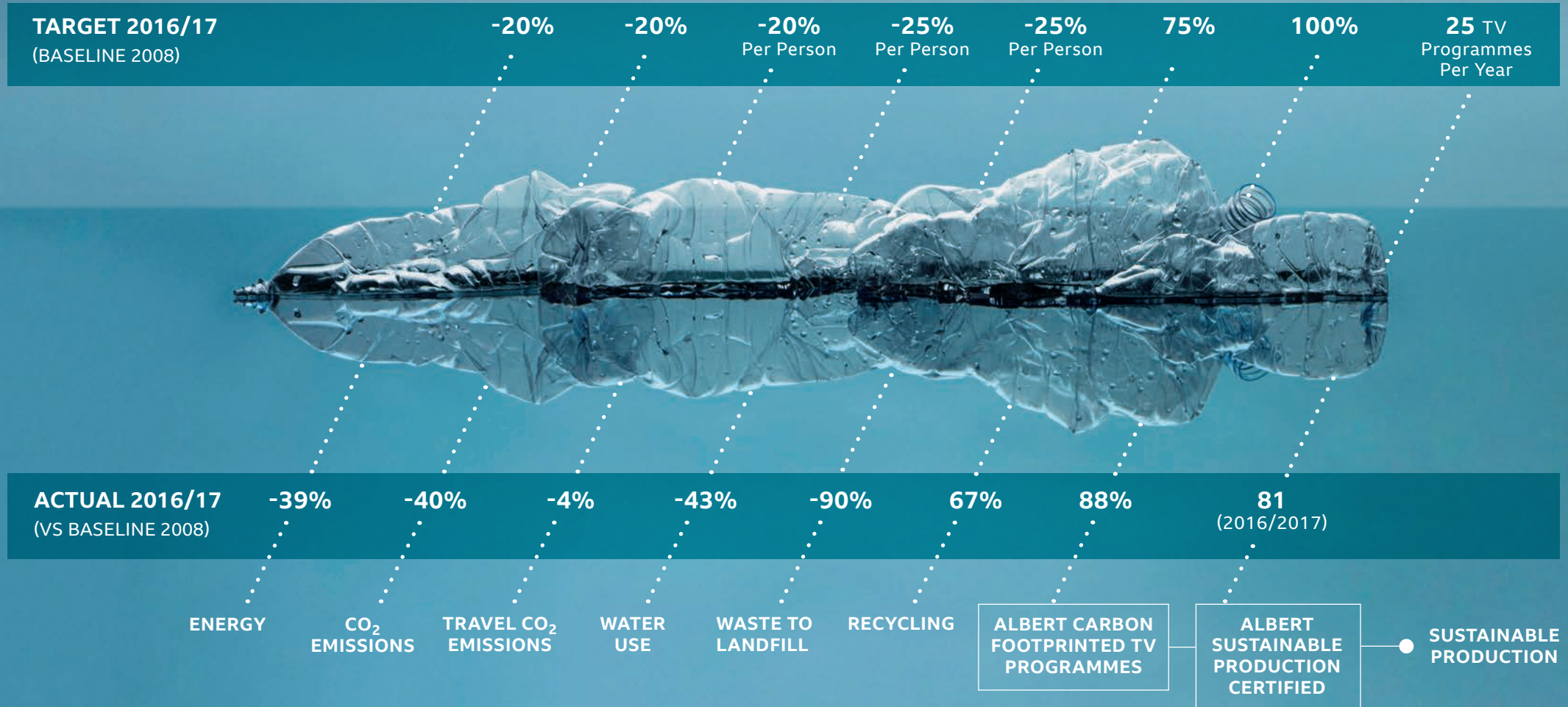
As with all other companies, any environmental impact caused by the BBC does not only affect the organisation. We all share the benefits and downsides of how we treat our environment. This is particularly relevant to the BBC as we are funded by our audiences through the licence fee. It is our responsibility to limit activities which may indirectly cause harm.

Both our own research and that of external organisations suggest the environment is an issue which our audiences care about. There is an expectation that organisations should do all they can to minimise their environmental impact and we need to respond to, and deliver on, that expectation. As the Director General highlights in his introduction, doing so will bring additional benefits including cost savings, efficiency and innovation. These actions will benefit current and future generations.



# What have we achieved so far?

The BBC has had a sustainability strategy since 2008, accompanied by environmental targets which covered the previous Charter period. The table below summarises our achievements against these targets:



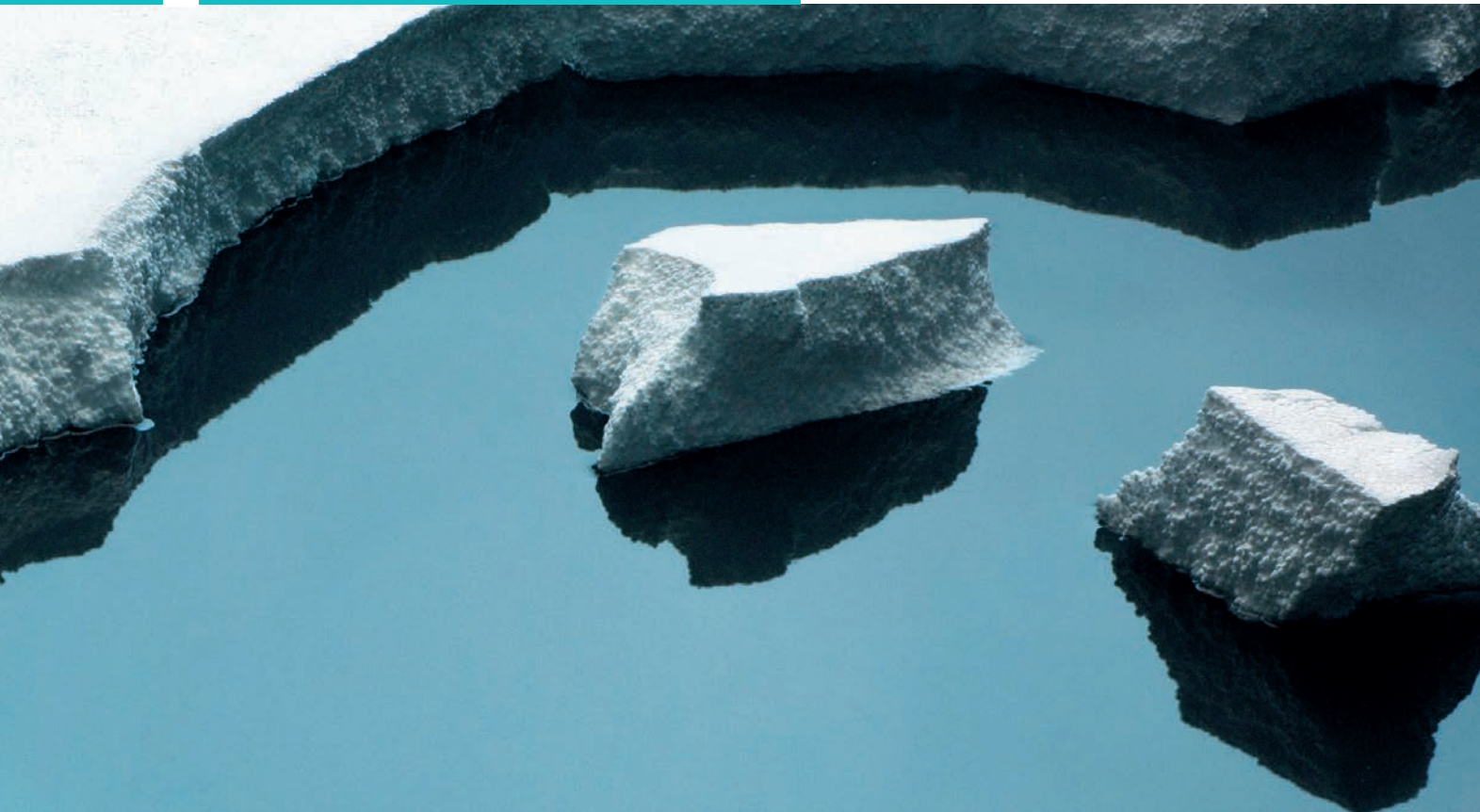
# We are proud

...of our progress and have reached almost all of our targets, reducing carbon emissions from our buildings and technology by over 180,000 tonnes cumulatively from 2008 to 2017. Our property strategy and in particular the closure of Television Centre in 2013 played a very significant part in contributing to our efficiency agenda and reducing our environmental impact. With few building closures planned, we will need to work even harder to maximise efficiency of the remaining estate to drive down energy and water consumption and waste production.

Our buildings are only part of the story, however. The BBC exists to make programmes and content and over the past few years we introduced the concept of “sustainable production”, making it a day-to-day part of the production process. More than 2000 productions at the BBC have used our production carbon calculator to quantify their emissions and over 200 have carried the “albert” logo onscreen, meaning they have taken measurable action to reduce their environmental impact. We have also worked with a number of external partners to create training courses specifically designed to raise awareness of the climate impacts of broadcasting and production and the steps that can be taken to tackle them.

We have shared all these initiatives through our partnership with the BAFTA albert consortium, a world-leading group of broadcasters and independent production companies working together to develop and promote environmental sustainability within the UK TV industry.

Our new strategy re-iterates our commitment to continuing the work done so far, while significantly expanding our intended scope and achievement.





# Introducing the new strategy

The strategy covers the current Charter period, from 2017 to 2028. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it stays relevant and challenging. Many individual actions/ambitions sit within it, divided into the following areas:

## OURSELVES

Creating conditions for sustainable working



- What we value
- How we run our buildings
- How we work



## OUR INDUSTRY

Partnering with others to build a sustainable creative sector



- Broadcast technology & delivery
- Sustainable production
- Sustainable supply chain



## OUR AUDIENCE

Inspiring sustainable living



- Inform and inspire change through content
- Sharing our own story



We believe following this plan will enable us to create a positive environmental impact. Over the following pages we describe in more detail what each of these areas means for the BBC, what we aim to achieve over the course of the Charter and some of the steps we will take.

# Ourselves:

Creating conditions for sustainable working



## Our aim:

**Sustainability is at the heart of how the BBC operates and makes decisions. Informed and engaged colleagues work in low-carbon, efficient environments, using minimum resources, producing minimum waste and travelling only when necessary.**

Our work in this area divides into three categories:  
what we value, how we run our buildings and how we work.

# 01. What we value:

**Our aim:** Sustainability is integral to the BBC's values and the behaviour of all who work for it. Staff receive training to act as advocates for change.

Over the course of the Charter we will achieve this by:

- Ensuring accountability for the strategy rests with senior managers
- Setting bespoke goals for BBC divisions to help deliver the strategy
- Engaging staff via a range of internal communication channels, including 'Simpler Smarter Greener', to inform and inspire
- Integrating sustainability as a core BBC value, running through all processes and informing decisions
- Providing a variety of opportunities for new joiners and existing staff to learn about environmental issues, with the goal of all BBC workers being adequately informed by 2022.



# 02. How we run our buildings

**Our aim:** BBC work spaces and operations are energy efficient, low carbon and enhance creativity and health.

Over the course of the Charter we will achieve this by:

- Setting a science-based carbon reduction target to align our strategy with the international agreement to limit the global average temperature rise to no more than two degrees celsius.
- Buying 100% renewable electricity and low-carbon gas; generating our own energy where possible
- Reducing our energy consumption by 10% by 2022 and further through the Charter period through improvements in the efficiency of our buildings and technology
- Reducing our waste by 10% by 2022, aiming for third party “zero waste to landfill” certification and increasing recycling rates
- Cutting single use plastics with the aim of removing them completely from our operations by 2020. We have begun with consumables and will continue to address this within other areas of the supply chain as contracts are renewed over time.
- Improving water management, focusing on maintaining consumption at best practice levels in our more modern/prestige office buildings, and investing in water efficiency measures where cost effective in our older sites
- Analysing our buildings’ vulnerability to climate change and developing a response plan
- Creating green spaces on all new sites and enhancing biodiversity on our existing estate



# 03. How we work:

**Our aim:** BBC staff always act responsibly to reduce our environmental impacts. We use our creativity to find innovative ways of working.

Over the course of the Charter we will achieve this by:

- Ensuring all our programmes are made with the minimum environmental impact and are certified for their achievements. We will target the most carbon-intensive productions first.
- Selecting and using technology in a way that reduces environmental impacts and enables sustainable behaviour
- Continually seeking to reduce carbon from our travel and promoting more sustainable alternatives, for example by providing communication systems for staff which reduce the need to travel
- Improving the fuel efficiency of our vehicle fleet and introducing electric vehicles
- Strengthening our sustainable procurement practices, ensuring sustainability criteria are included in the procurement process for all our suppliers
- Understanding the carbon “hotspots” in our supply chain and taking steps to reduce them
- Exploring options for an internal carbon accounting system





# Our industry:

Partnering with others to build  
a sustainable creative sector

# Our aim:

**We share, collaborate and contribute to a more sustainable broadcasting industry – positioning broadcasting as an exemplar to others.**

Our work in this area divides into three categories: sustainable broadcast technology and delivery; sustainable production; sustainable supply chain.

# 01. Broadcast technology & delivery

**Our aim:** To reduce the impact of broadcast technology through industry collaboration. Sustainability is embedded within decisions about broadcast technology and delivery.

Over the course of the Charter we will achieve this by:

- Leading the pan-industry group From Lens to Screen, sharing best practice
- Developing and sharing a model of the environmental impact of the broadcast chain
- Creating and implementing common standards for the use and procurement of technology
- Contributing to the evaluation of existing and future broadcast technologies and sharing the results
- Exploring and implementing “closed loop” principles for broadcast technology
- Collaborating with manufacturers to produce more sustainable equipment



# 02. Sustainable production

**Our aim:** All productions have a positive impact on the people and places involved in their creation.

Over the course of the Charter we will achieve this by:

- Playing a leading role in the BAFTA albert Consortium, nurturing and promoting national and international collaboration
- Mandating carbon calculation for all programmes commissioned by BBC Content using the albert calculator
- Increasing year-on-year the number of productions achieving albert certification for their sustainability achievements
- Continuing to contribute to the development of environmental tools and methodologies for use by productions
- Training and supporting production teams both at the BBC and outside of it
- Conducting research to create a “sustainability rating” scheme for programme content





# 03. Sustainable supply chain

**Our aim:** Increase demand for more sustainable products and services for our sector, by working collaboratively with others

Over the course of the Charter we will achieve this by:

- Developing a pan-industry policy on sustainable procurement for production and broadcast resources
- Communicating with suppliers through workshops, events and any other means to learn from others and showcase best practice to ourselves and the rest of the industry



# Our audience:

Inspiring sustainable living



# Our aim:

**Our audiences understand and trust the BBC's contribution to a sustainable world and are informed and inspired about the contribution they can make as individuals.**

Our work in this area falls into two categories: sharing the BBC's sustainability story to enhance trust in the BBC and building on our mission to inform, inspiring change through our content.

# 01. Sharing the BBC's story:

**Our aim:** our audience is aware of, and trusts, the BBC's sustainability activities

Over the course of the Charter we will achieve this by:

- Regular communication of our actions and progress through all relevant channels



# 02. Inspiring change through our content

**Our aim:** our audiences are well informed about environmental issues and are inspired to take action to reduce their own impacts and create positive change

Over the course of the Charter we will achieve this by:

- Reflecting environmental issues and their relevance to the audience's lives in all aspects of the BBC's activities, including programmes, online content and events
- Training editorial teams on what they need to know
- Collaborating with other content providers to ensure consistency of themes and portrayal



## What is sustainability – and why does this strategy focus on the environment?

There are numerous definitions of sustainability but they share a common goal of enabling societies to fulfil their own needs without compromising the needs of future generations. Sustainability is usually seen as having three “pillars”: environmental, social and financial. An activity is said to be sustainable when it is within global environmental limits, financially affordable and socially beneficial.

This strategy focuses on the environmental aspect of sustainability. We do this because we believe the social and financial aspects are already within the purpose and culture of the BBC. We are publicly funded and constantly seeking to ensure our finances are secure and managed for the greatest benefit to licence fee payers. Our programmes and content seeks to inform, educate and entertain, enhancing public life and creating social benefit. The environmental aspect of sustainability is the most recent and least familiar “pillar” at the BBC and thus the one which requires the most attention, within the context of this strategy, to create a truly sustainable BBC.

## What about the Sustainable Development Goals?

In 2015 members of the United Nations adopted 17 goals to “end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all”. Each goal has targets to be achieved over the next 12 years. Several of the goals have a strong environmental focus and we hope that this strategy will contribute to achieving them. Specifically, this strategy can support environmental goals, most notably goal 13 (climate action), also contributing to goals 14 (life below water), 15 (life on land) and 12 (sustainable production and consumption). Beyond the environmental goals, we believe that many of the BBC’s activities, programmes and content indirectly contribute to some of the other, non-environmental sustainability goals for example goal 3 (good health and well-being) and goal 4 (quality education).