



United Nations
Global Compact

The UN Global Compact-Accenture CEO Study 2021
Special Edition

CLIMATE LEADERSHIP IN THE ELEVENTH HOUR

accenture

STAKEHOLDERS ARE INCREASINGLY FOCUSED ON SUPERIOR SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE



PURPOSE DRIVES PURCHASE AMONG CONSUMERS GLOBALLY

66% of consumers plan to make more sustainable or ethical purchases over the next 6 months¹



LEADERS EXPECT THE PRESSURE AND OPPORTUNITY TO GROW

73% of CEOs expect the pressure and opportunity to act on sustainability demands to grow significantly over the next three years²



EMPLOYEES PREFER RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

70% of employees at large US companies said they were more likely to choose to work at a company with a strong environmental agenda³



INVESTORS VALUE SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Investors are the 3rd most influential stakeholder group on CEO sustainability management, up from 8th in 2016⁴



SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATE WITH PURPOSEFUL BRANDS

8,000+ suppliers globally participate in the CDP Supply Chain Program, and disclose, measure and act on their environmental impact⁵

¹ Accenture (2021): [Life Reimagined](#); ² UN Global Compact-Accenture (2021): [Leadership Briefing from the UN Global Compact](#); ³ Fast Company (2019): [Most millennials would take a pay cut to work at an environmentally responsible company](#); ⁴ UN Global Compact-Accenture (2021): [Climate Leadership in the Eleventh Hour](#); ⁵ CDP (2020): [Transparency to Transformation: A Chain Reaction](#)

THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT-ACCENTURE CEO STUDY DATES BACK TO 2007



Research Projects

Shaping the New Rules of Competition, Triennial CEO Study on Sustainability	A New Era of Sustainability, Triennial CEO study on Sustainability	Architects for a Better World, Triennial CEO study on Sustainability	Investor Study, Insights from PRI Signatories ----- Consumer Study on Sustainability, with Havas Media	A Call to Climate Action, Special Edition CEO Study	Agenda 2020: A Window of Opportunity, Triennial CEO Study on Sustainability	Towards Global Partnerships Report of the Secretary-General ----- Transforming Partnerships for the SDGs	UNGC Progress Report 2018 Partner ----- UNGC India-Accenture CEO Study: Insights from Indian Business	UNGC Progress Report 2019 Partner ----- A Decade to Deliver: A Call to Business Action, Triennial CEO Study on Sustainability	UNGC Progress Report 2020 Data Visualization	Special Edition CEO Study: Climate Leadership in the Eleventh Hour
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Strategic Support

Partnerships
Office project

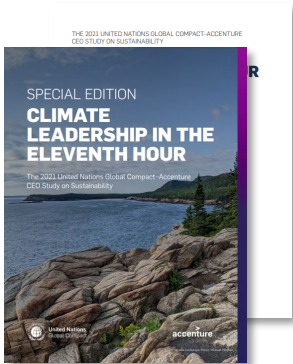
UN Global
Compact 2020
Global Strategy

UN Global
Compact Digital
Strategy

Executive
Management
Team Strategic
Review and Board
Paper

SDG
Ambition lead
implementation
partner, with SAP

WE ENGAGED A RECORD NUMBER OF CEOs ACROSS REGIONS, INDUSTRIES, AND COMPANY SIZES



1230+

CEOs ENGAGED

110+

IN-DEPTH ONE-TO-ONE INTERVIEW

113

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED


21

UNIQUE INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVES

Global Companies Interviewed



KEY FINDINGS

The background of the slide is a photograph of a serene landscape. In the foreground, a calm body of water reflects the sky and the mountains. Several icebergs are visible in the water. In the middle ground, there are rugged mountains with patches of snow. The sky is a deep blue, suggesting dusk or dawn. The overall mood is peaceful and majestic.

**CEOS ARE UNEQUIVOCALLY CALLING
FOR GOVERNMENTS TO STEP UP
SUPPORT FOR 2030 AND 2050 TARGETS
AND PROVIDE REGULATORY CLARITY**

TO MAKE THE MOST IMPACT, CEOS SAY POLICY MAKERS MUST TAKE CRITICAL ACTIONS

Only 18% of CEOs say governments and policymakers have given them the clarity needed to meet their sustainability goals

CEOs are asking for five critical policy actions:



Align Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) on the pathway to limit global temperature rise to a 1.5° warming trajectory



Enhance global cooperation on carbon pricing mechanisms aligned with the Paris Agreement



Meet and exceed the USD 100 billion commitment in climate financing goal for the Global South



Establish common standards for biodiversity protection and pathways for nature-based solutions



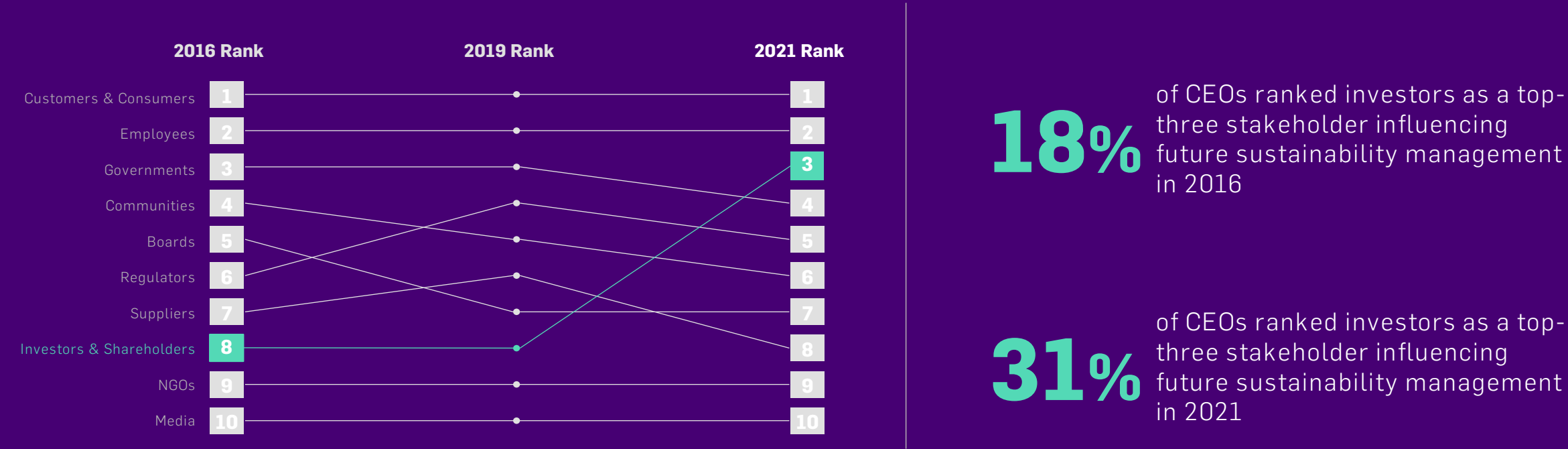
Increase business engagement in climate policy formation for collaborative climate action

An aerial night photograph of a densely populated city, likely in East Asia, showing a mix of low-rise and high-rise buildings with many windows illuminated. The city is set against a backdrop of hills and a dark sky. The text is overlaid in the center-left area.

INVESTOR INFLUENCE HAS RISEN SHARPLY OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS

CEOS FEEL PRESSURE BUILDING FROM INVESTORS AND CAPITAL MARKETS, INCENTIVIZING MORE RAPID CLIMATE ACTION

CEOs ranked investors as the 3rd most influential stakeholder on future sustainability management in 2021, up from 8th in 2016





**CEOS ARE ALREADY EXPERIENCING
SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTION FROM THE
PHYSICAL IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

CEOS SAY SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTION IS THE TOP PHYSICAL RISK TO THEIR BUSINESSES, YET FEW ARE PLANNING FOR EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

Half of CEOs (49%) surveyed globally – and 63% of CEOs of the largest companies in Europe and North America – see extreme-weather induced supply chain disruptions as a risk.



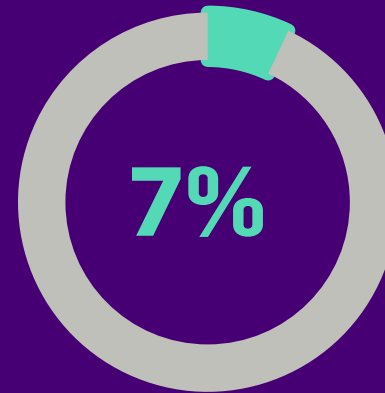
Supply chain interruptions due to extreme weather events



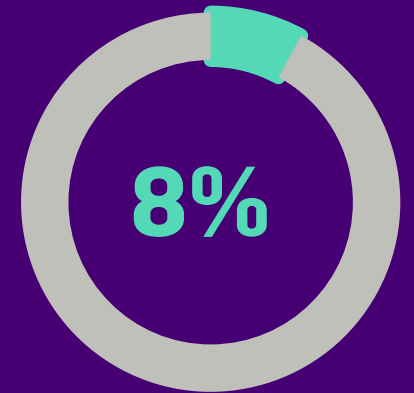
Negative health impacts across the workforce



Operating challenges due to physical impacts on assets (e.g., heat waves, storm surges)



of CEOs say they have advanced maturity on early-warning systems for preparedness to climate-risk events



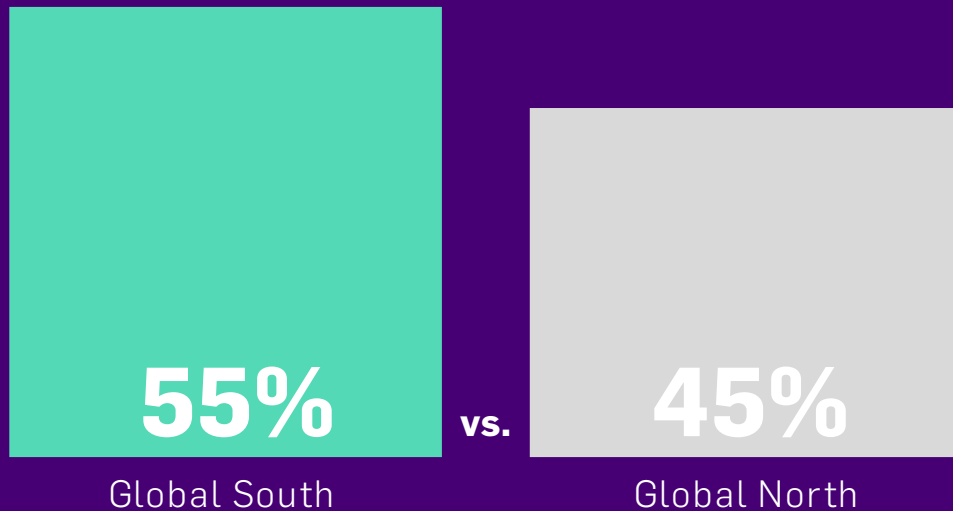
of CEOs say they have advanced maturity on scenario analysis to identify physical and transition risks



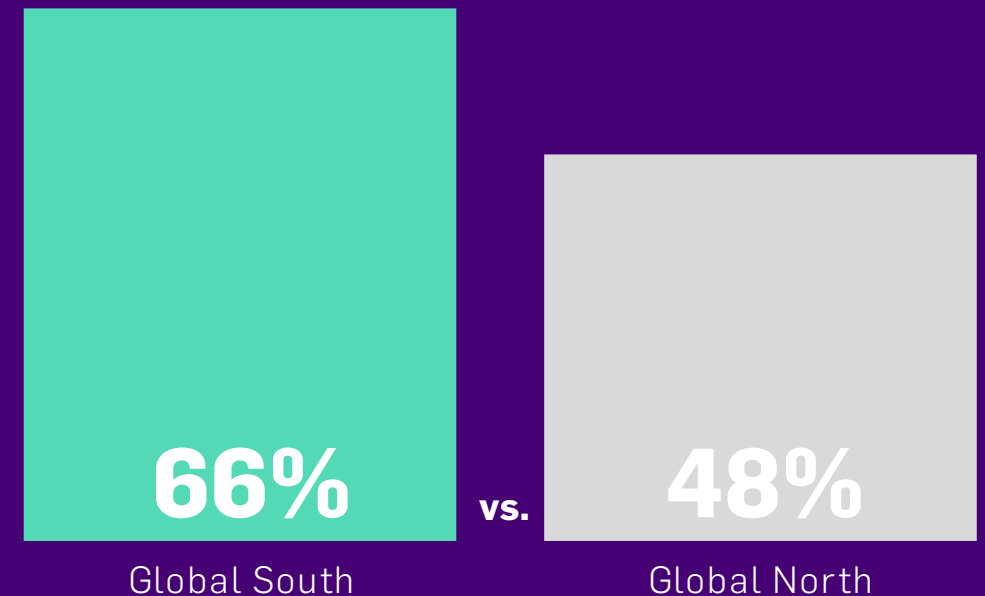
**CEOS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH SAY THEY
NEED CAPITAL, KNOWLEDGE AND
TECHNOLOGY TO ACCELERATE CLIMATE
ACTION, OR ELSE WE RISK THE ENTIRE
CLIMATE AGENDA**

CEOS SAY MORE CAPITAL MUST BE CHanneled INTO THE GREEN INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND ENERGY TRANSITION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

The cost of capital and risk profile of green infrastructure is still high in the Global South and CEOs say it's a barrier to their sustainability efforts.



of CEOs cite a lack of financial resources as a top barrier to implementing their sustainability strategy



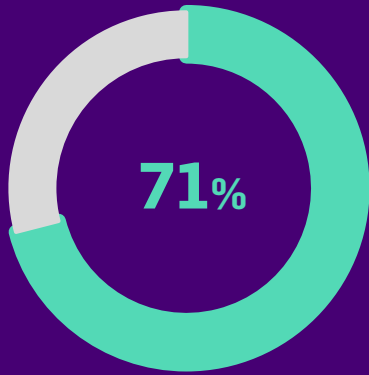
of CEOs cite affordability of available technology as a top barrier to implementing their sustainability strategy

A photograph of a wind farm at dusk or dawn. Several wind turbines are visible in the foreground and middle ground, silhouetted against a soft, hazy sky. The ground is dark and appears to be a field. The overall mood is serene and focused on renewable energy.

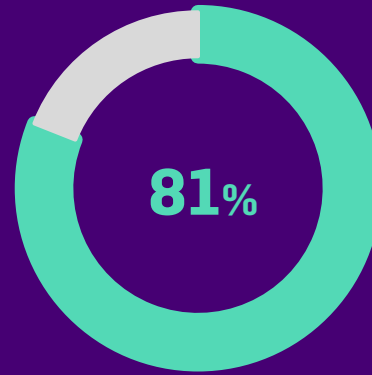
**THE TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS
MODELS CEOS NEED TO ADDRESS THE
CLIMATE CRISIS ARE AVAILABILE, AND
THE CAPITAL IS WAITING ON THE SIDE-
LINES**

CEOS ARE REALIZING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES FROM SUSTAINABILITY, BUT SYSTEMATIC CHANGE IS REQUIRED NOW TO ACHIEVE A 1.5°C WORLD

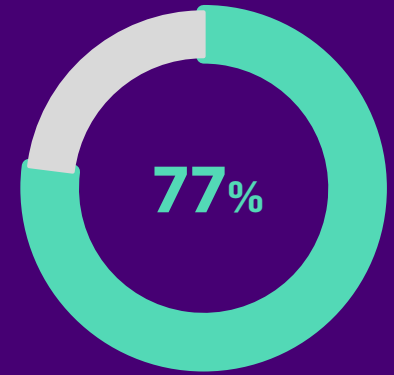
Globally, 65% of CEOs have begun transitioning to net zero business models, but almost half of these CEOs (45%) describe their efforts in this area as only “basic.”



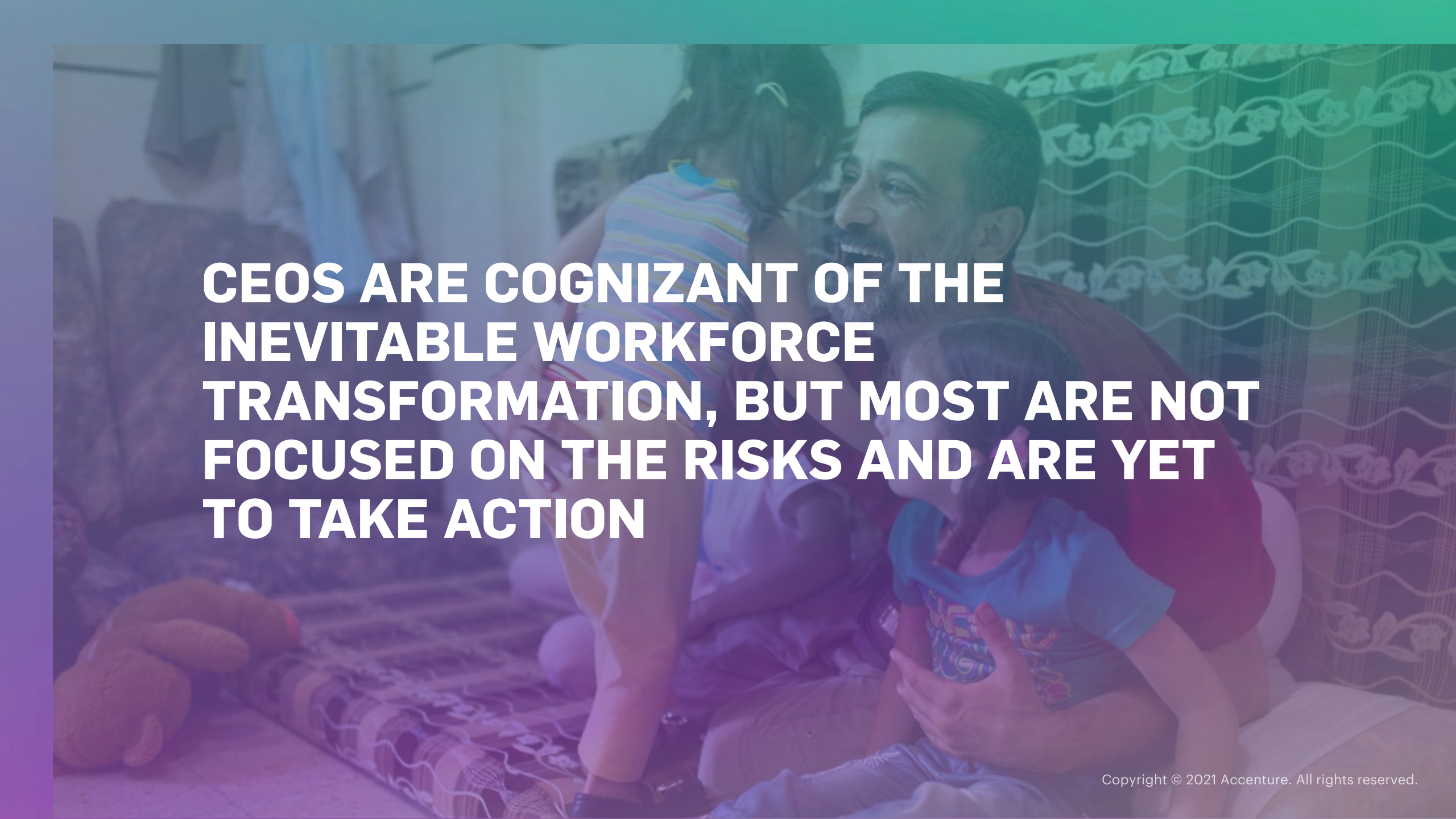
of CEOs are leveraging technology to collect and manage organization-wide ESG data



of CEOs say real-time track-and-trace of materials or goods will have a significant impact on sustainability in their industry in the next 5 years

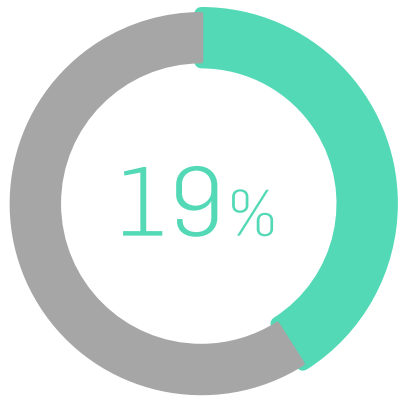


of CEOs are promoting sustainability-focused research and development

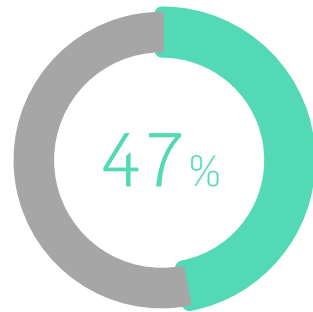
A photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, smiling warmly while holding a young child in a blue shirt. Another child in a striped shirt stands behind them. They are in a home environment with patterned curtains and a rug. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green and purple gradient.

**CEOS ARE COGNIZANT OF THE
INEVITABLE WORKFORCE
TRANSFORMATION, BUT MOST ARE NOT
FOCUSED ON THE RISKS AND ARE YET
TO TAKE ACTION**

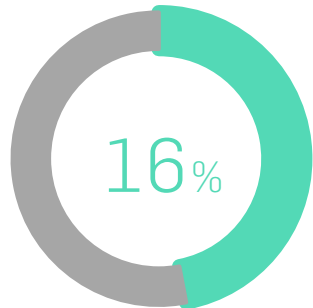
CEOS SAY THEY ARE YET TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO MITIGATE WORKFORCE DISRUPTION AND ENSURE A JUST TRANSITION



of CEOs consider widening social inequalities across the workforce to be a top risk



of CEOs are investing in green jobs to deliver on the Paris Agreement



of CEOs are at advanced maturity in investing in worker and union skills development

“

Upskilling the workforce is critically important to prepare for the level of change we are experiencing. If workers do not have the proper skills today, they may be left out of the labor market as soon as next year.

”

Clara Arpa
CEO
ARPA

10 Numbers that Matter from COP26 in Glasgow

While there is still significant work to be done, promising agreements took place at COP26 that will shape the future of the climate transition

\$130t

Will be mobilised by 450+ financial institutions by 2050

44

Countries will end coal by 2030 including the entire OECD

80

Countries will reduce methane by 30% by 2030

134

Heads of State will end deforestation by 2030

100

Companies will be nature-positive by 2030

\$100b

For the Global South

+14%

GHG emissions from pre-Covid levels

100

Partners from the mobility sector committed to end the sale of internal combustion engines by 2035

45GW

The scale of green hydrogen deployment by 2027

\$10b

In funding toward equitable energy transitions in developing economies

QUESTIONS