

The Montreal Collaboration Framework

Introduction

The CEO Roundtable, convened in partnership with Hydro-Québec and the Energy Efficiency Movement (EEM) during the International Energy Agency's (IEA) 11th Annual Global Conference on Energy Efficiency, in June 2026 in Montreal. The roundtable brought together senior leaders from industry, finance, government, and international organisations.

The Montreal Collaboration Framework's aim is to accelerate implementation and collaboration between industry, policy maker's and financial institutions to double the rate of energy efficiency progress by 2030.

Building on outcomes from previous IEA Global Energy Efficiency Conferences, it shifts the focus from ambition to delivery.¹ While earlier efforts established priorities and momentum, this Framework is designed to move from commitment and pilots to coordinated deployment, bankable project pipelines, and system level implementation. Its core value lies in simplifying how key actors must act simultaneously and in coordination to overcome fragmentations, reduce risk, and accelerate progress at scale.

The outcome reflects the discussions held during the CEO roundtable and does not necessarily represent the official views of the IEA or its member countries.

Global context and purpose

Despite increasing ambition, implementation of energy efficiency remains slow and uneven. Policies, technologies and corporate commitments are advancing, but deployment is not yet aligned with the scale required to meet energy security, competitiveness, and affordability as well as decarbonisation. The global energy crisis has further underscored the need to close this gap, highlighting the critical role of energy efficiency in strengthening resilience, stabilising costs, and enhancing energy security.

Global energy efficiency improvement has averaged around 1.3-1.8% per year since 2019, significantly below the rate required to meet the COP28 target of over 4% annually by 2030.² This gap is particularly evident in industry, which accounts for nearly 40% of global final energy use, yet energy intensity improvements have fallen to under 0.5% per year since 2019, compared to almost 2% in the previous decade, undermining overall progress.³

Significant energy efficiency opportunities exist across industrial processes such as high-temperature heat, steam generation and electrification. At the same time, industrial actors face mounting pressure from volatile energy prices, intensifying global competition and growing expectations for measurable climate performance.⁴ Although cost-effective solutions are widely available, progress is constrained by fragmented implementation, financing barriers, policy uncertainty, and weak coordination between stakeholders.⁵ The result is a persistent gap between potential and realized impact.

Implementation at the core

The Montreal Collaboration Framework represents an important step toward transforming ambition into action. By fostering deep collaboration among industry leaders, financial institutions, and policymakers, it provides a clear collaborative framework to accelerate energy efficiency at the scale and speed required to meet global energy, economy, and decarbonization goals. The Framework's success will depend on collective commitment, action and implementation.

¹ See previous Outcome documents: [Brussels CEO Four-Point Action Plan](#); [Nairobi Business Leaders' Action Plan](#); [Versailles 10x10 Actions](#)

² International Energy Agency. Energy Efficiency 2025. Paris: IEA; 2025. Available from: [Energy Efficiency 2025](#)

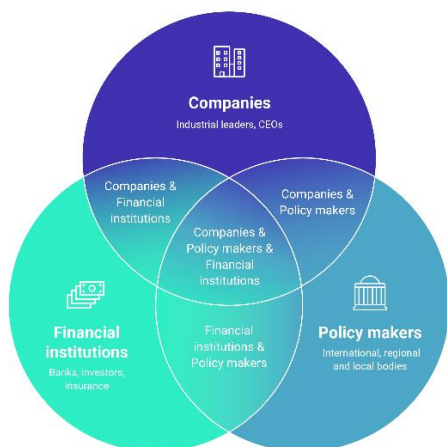
³ International Energy Agency. Energy Efficiency 2025. Paris: IEA; 2025. Executive summary. [Executive Summary](#)

⁴ International Energy Agency. World Energy Outlook 2025. Paris: IEA; 2025. Executive summary, [Executive Summary](#)

⁵ Energy Efficiency Movement. Investment readiness 2026. [Investment readiness](#).

The Montreal Collaboration Framework: a coordination model for delivery

The Montreal Collaboration Framework sets out a system wide approach to accelerate energy efficiency by aligning the roles of key actors:



Companies drive implementation by scaling energy efficiency across operations, assets, and value chains.

Financial institutions unlock investment by developing solutions that reduce risk and enable bankable pipelines.

Policy makers provide enabling conditions through stable, predictable frameworks.

Progress depends on simultaneous and coordinated action from all three actors. The private sector is ready to accelerate energy efficiency. Achieving this at scale will require strong public-private collaboration and targeted policy support to remove barriers and enable faster implementation. By visualizing the intersections in this framework, we can develop and drive joint implementation activities at speed and scale.

The first step in this framework is to identify the actions for industry to drive implementation and the enabling factors that financial institutions and policy makers can provide.

Companies: from pilots to scale implementation

The IEA highlights that scaling energy efficiency across industry, buildings and transport would require investment to increase to around USD 1.9 trillion annually by 2030, reflecting the large volume of available measures that remain.⁶

To capture this potential, the companies must move beyond isolated initiatives toward scaled implementation.

Four areas are key:

1. **Bundled projects to energy efficiency portfolios**
 - Bundling measures into larger portfolios, across equipment, processes, and systems, to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and make projects more attractive for financing.
2. **Embed energy efficiency at the strategic level**
 - Elevating energy efficiency to board-level decision-making ensures it is treated as a core driver of competitiveness, resilience, and performance.
 - Setting measurable targets and KPIs across operations and supply chains, ensuring continuous improvement.
 - Use energy efficiency as an appealing business value proposition.
3. **Set clear standards and enhance transparency**
 - Clear technical standards, procurement signals, and performance expectations to accelerate adoption across value chains and reduce complexity.
 - Apply the “*Energy-Efficiency-First*” principle to ensure new investments, especially in emerging markets to secure processes are optimized from the start.
4. **Cross-value chain collaboration to unlock capital**
 - Engaging in cross-value chain collaboration to scale system solutions, with the inclusion of SMEs.
 - Implement blended finance models and public-private mechanisms to accelerate bankable project pipelines.

⁶ International Energy Agency. Tracking energy efficiency investment progress. Paris: IEA; 2024. [Tracking energy efficiency investment progress](#)

Financial institutions: enabling investment at scale

The financial sector plays a critical role in turning energy efficiency potential into bankable projects. To unlock scale, reduce risk, and mobilize capital, the following enabling actions are essential:

1. Develop tailored financial products for energy efficiency

- Expand energy efficiency financing, including loans and leasing solutions tailored to industrial, building and infrastructure upgrades across different countries, regions and markets.
- Scale on-bill and pay-as-you-save financing and aligned repayment schedules with realized energy savings.
- Design instruments that reflect shorter payback periods and lower lifecycle risk compared to conventional capex investments, with the inclusion of SMEs needs.

2. Strengthen risk-mitigation mechanisms and MRV frameworks⁷

- Deploy guarantees and blended finance structures to de-risk early investment and crowd in private capital.
- Expand the use of performance risk insurance to cover delivery and savings uncertainty.
- Adopt standardised Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) protocols, supported by digital monitoring tools.

3. Enable aggregation, standardization, and performance-based financing models

- Aggregate smaller projects into portfolios to reduce transaction costs and improve risk diversification.
- Standardize contracts, performance metrics, and documentation across projects and sectors.
- Scale Energy Service Company (ESCO/ESCO) and performance-based business models, including shared-savings and guaranteed-savings contracts.

4. Mobilize capital through green finance instruments

- Expand the issuance and use of green bonds and sustainability-linked loans with clear energy efficiency targets.
- Systematically integrate energy efficiency criteria into ESG-aligned lending and investment decisions.
- Strengthen transparency on impacts to ensure credibility and comparability of efficiency investments.

Policy makers: enabling conditions for delivery

Policymakers play a critical enabling role by shaping the environment in which investments are made. Their impact lies in creating stable and predictable conditions that reduce uncertainty and support long-term planning.

Four key enablers include:

1. Provide clear and consistent policy signals that support investment

- Integrate energy efficiency and electrification into national net-zero strategies to manage rising energy demand and ensure a coherent, system-wide energy transition. Put the *“Energy-Efficiency-First”* principle at the forefront.
- Leverage Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to raise energy efficiency ambition and deliver the certainty needed to unlock long-term private investment.

2. Elevate energy efficiency as a strategic priority across energy, industrial, security and climate policy

- Elevate energy efficiency consistently in policy and public discourse to highlight its direct impact on energy security, affordability and competitiveness, as well as decarbonization.
- Communicate clear, measurable benefits and returns to reposition energy efficiency as a strategic investment priority for both public and private actors.
- Enable cross-sector collaboration and knowledge exchange.

⁷ MRV (Measurement, Reporting and Verification) is a framework used to ensure the accurate tracking, transparent reporting and independent verification of data.

3. Enable collaboration across sectors and stakeholders

- Mobilise cross-sector partnerships among financial institutions, industry (including SMEs), standardisation bodies, and insurers to co-develop financing solutions and risk-sharing mechanisms.
- Embed early and continuous public-private dialogue in regulatory design to ensure policies are ambitious, practical, and flexible enough to support innovation.
- Scale and replicate proven policy approaches at local, regional and national levels to build momentum, drive convergence, and accelerate progress toward global energy efficiency goals.

4. Use public instruments, incentives and partnerships to catalyse private investment

- Strengthen transparent partnership frameworks to enable efficient capital allocation and optimize risk distribution.
- Leverage public procurement as a strategic tool to set market standards, de-risk innovation, and drive demand for high-efficiency solutions at scale.
- Create scalable demand through public-sector leadership by applying total cost of ownership criteria, allocating dedicated retrofit funding, utilizing waste heat in district heating, and expanding performance-based contracting in public buildings.

Conclusion

The Montreal Collaboration Framework calls for coordinated action by companies, financial institutions, and governments to accelerate the large-scale deployment of energy efficiency and double the global rate of progress by 2030.

In practical terms:

- Companies: Deploy and invest.
- Financial institutions: Finance and derisk.
- Governments: Enable and stabilise.

By working together, these three actors can transform energy efficiency into a powerful driver of competitiveness, energy security, and decarbonization.