

What does it take to turn climate action **into a business case?**

A strong climate case is not always a strong business case. **Here is how to put carbon, cost, risk and the cost of doing nothing into one decision leadership can actually make.**



By Anna Sandgren

Founder & CEO, Unibloom · with Dr Johnson Lau

THE GAP

Climate case. Not yet a business case.

Only 17% of companies disclose how climate transition shows up in financial planning.

THE BLIND SPOT

Doing nothing looks free.

The cost of inaction rarely makes it into the spreadsheet. It should.

THE SHIFT

One decision. Carbon + cost.

Give finance options it can compare, without a huge sustainability budget.

01 THE MEETING

Weeks of work. Three minutes on the agenda.

I have seen sustainability teams spend weeks preparing for a leadership meeting. They build the analysis, explain the emissions gap and create 20 slides on why the company needs to act. Then they get three minutes.

And leadership asks very different questions:

What will this cost?

What happens to our margins?

Are customers asking for it?

What risks do we reduce?

Do we have the resources?

Has anyone done it before?

Can we test it first?

What if we wait?



ANNA'S NOTE

"20 slides in 3 minutes is 9 seconds a slide. I have tried. Even I can't talk that fast."

Anna Sandgren, Founder & CEO, Unibloom

Many good climate initiatives get stuck here, even after a successful pilot. Not because the climate case is weak, but because it is presented apart from the wider business case.

5%

of companies disclosed how climate transition was reflected in financial planning in 2023

CDP

17%

in 2025. Progress, but climate ambition and financial planning still mostly sit apart.

CDP, Climate Transition Plans 2025

02 CARBON + COST

Put carbon and cost into **the same decision.**

Climate initiatives compete for the same investment and attention as everything else. The carbon reduction matters, but leadership also needs the investment, operating cost, commercial implications and risks.

FOOD COMPANY

Moving sourcing towards regenerative agriculture

A climate decision, and a sourcing and commercial one.

MANUFACTURER

Electrifying production

Emissions, capital investment, energy costs, savings and payback time.

PROCUREMENT

Switching to a lower-carbon ingredient

Higher cost today, but possibly lower sourcing risk and a stronger customer proposition.

43%

Suppliers are asked to cut emissions while purchasing is driven by price: 43% of suppliers who raised a specific issue pointed to cost, or said sustainability was not rewarded in purchasing decisions.

Scope 3 Peer Group,
Supplier Voice,
Sept 2026

The willingness to act may be there, but suppliers need confidence to invest. Longer-term agreements or clearer future demand can give it to them. That makes it a shared business decision.



LAB NOTES · DR JOHNSON LAU

“Two variables, one decision. Even I would call that a simple model.”

Chief Data Science Officer, Unibloom

The lowest-carbon option won't always be the lowest-cost option. The cheapest option today won't always be the best decision over time. A good business case doesn't remove those trade-offs. It makes them visible.

03 COST OF INACTION

What if doing nothing isn't the cheaper option?

We are good at calculating the cost of an investment. We are less disciplined about calculating the cost of inaction.

Picture a procurement team weighing a more expensive but more resilient sourcing option. The premium is visible immediately. The future cost of staying put, with more price volatility, supply disruption or reduced availability, is much harder to put in the spreadsheet. So doing nothing appears to cost zero. It doesn't.



LAB NOTES · DR JOHNSON LAU

"Doing nothing is also an experiment. It just has a very expensive control group."

Chief Data Science Officer, Unibloom

€28.3bn

estimated losses to EU agriculture from adverse weather, every year. Likely to rise significantly by 2050.

EIB & European Commission, 2025

\$1 → \$8

average potential return for every \$1 spent addressing physical climate risk. Up to \$21 in some cases.

CDP, The 2025 Disclosure Dividend

Those figures don't tell an individual company its own cost of inaction, and not every climate investment will return \$8. But they show that climate risk is financial risk, and that climate action isn't only a cost.

Don't just ask what it will cost to act. Ask what it could cost if we don't.

04 ACCESSIBILITY

A good business case shouldn't need **a huge sustainability budget.**

Building this analysis can itself take considerable time, expertise and money.

Climate data sits in one place, cost data in another and supplier information somewhere else again. Some of it is missing. Teams spend weeks collecting data, maintaining spreadsheets and modelling scenarios before they can even discuss the decision. Large organisations have sustainability teams, finance resources and advisers for this. Many smaller businesses don't.



LAB NOTES · DR JOHNSON LAU

"I love a good spreadsheet. I love it less on its fourteenth rebuild."

Chief Data Science Officer, Unibloom

The quality of a climate decision shouldn't depend on the size of the sustainability budget behind it. That means:

- 1 Automate the calculation work**
So nobody rebuilds the model every time something changes.
- 2 Make existing information easier to use**
Climate, cost and supplier data in one place.
- 3 Start with what you know**
Improve the analysis as better data arrives, instead of waiting for perfect information.



ANNA'S NOTE

"Affordability isn't about finding the cheapest climate solution. It's about making sure the cost of getting to a decision doesn't stop anyone acting."

Anna Sandgren, Founder & CEO, Unibloom

05 THE DECISION

Give finance something it can decide on.

Sustainability teams don't need to become finance departments. But climate initiatives need to be presented so finance and leadership can compare them with other business priorities.

INSTEAD OF SAYING

~~"This initiative will reduce our emissions by X tonnes."~~

SAY

"We have three options. Here is the carbon impact, investment and running cost, savings, commercial value and risk of each. And here is what could happen if we wait."

	OPTION A	OPTION B	OPTION C
Carbon impact	t CO ₂ e	t CO ₂ e	t CO ₂ e
Investment & running cost	€	€	€
Savings & commercial value	€	€	€
Risks	High / Med / Low	High / Med / Low	High / Med / Low
Cost of waiting	€	€	€



ASK THE SCIENTIST · DR JOHNSON LAU

"Three options with error bars beat one number said with great confidence."

Chief Data Science Officer, Unibloom

That doesn't mean the lowest-carbon option automatically wins. Nor should it. It means climate impact sits in the same decision as cost, risk and commercial value.

06 NEXT

It stops being a favour. It becomes a business decision.

Once carbon and cost share one decision, climate action stops being something the sustainability team has to persuade the business to support.

At Unibloom, this is the challenge we think about every day: making it easier to bring carbon and financial impact into the same decision, without months of analysis or a large sustainability budget. A climate transition plan only creates value when it helps the business decide what to do next.



ANNA'S NOTE

"My favourite leadership meeting is the one where nobody asks "why should we?" and everyone asks "which option?""

Anna Sandgren, Founder & CEO, Unibloom

Carbon + cost + risk + opportunity. One decision.

Unibloom brings climate and cost data into one shared plan for sustainability, sourcing, innovation, finance, sales and the CEO.

[Book a demo →](#)
[Try it for free →](#)
unibloom.world

Book a demo: calendly.com/anna-sandgren

Try it for free: ctp.unibloom.world/login

Sources

1. [CDP, Climate Transition Plans: 2025 Findings and Trends](#). Financial-planning disclosure rose from 5% (2023) to 17% (2025).
2. [EIB & European Commission, European agriculture faces growing climate risks](#). €28.3bn estimated annual losses.
3. [Apparel Impact Institute, The Cost of Inaction, 2026](#).
4. [CDP, The 2025 Disclosure Dividend](#). Up to \$8 return per \$1 on physical climate risk.
5. Scope 3 Peer Group, Supplier Voice, September 2026.