



Policy Brief

Establishing a Net Zero Principles Framework to support public policy making

Summary

- Delivering Net Zero requires pathways that are not only technically, but economically, socially and politically feasible.
- To aid the identification of feasible pathways, CEP has developed a Net Zero Principles Framework (NZPF). The framework sets out key questions and challenges that must be addressed in identifying, designing and considering the nature and aim of public support and policy intervention for any Net Zero action.
- Questions around ‘who pays and who gains’ set out in this framework align with the objectives of the HM Treasury Net Zero Review, where attention is focused on understanding how the costs of achieving Net Zero emissions are distributed and the benefits returned, the fiscal impacts, risks of competitiveness effects and the impacts of decarbonisation across the whole economy.
- Through development of the NZPF a number of fundamental ‘Net Zero Principles’ have emerged. These should be considered by policymakers when applying the NZPF to different policy actions. They include:
 1. Understanding who really pays and gains
 2. Identifying pathways that deliver growing and equitable prosperity
 3. Enabling actions that can deliver near term economic returns
 4. Avoiding outcomes that involve ‘off-shoring’ of emissions, jobs and GDP
 5. Understanding that Net Zero is a societal and public policy challenge



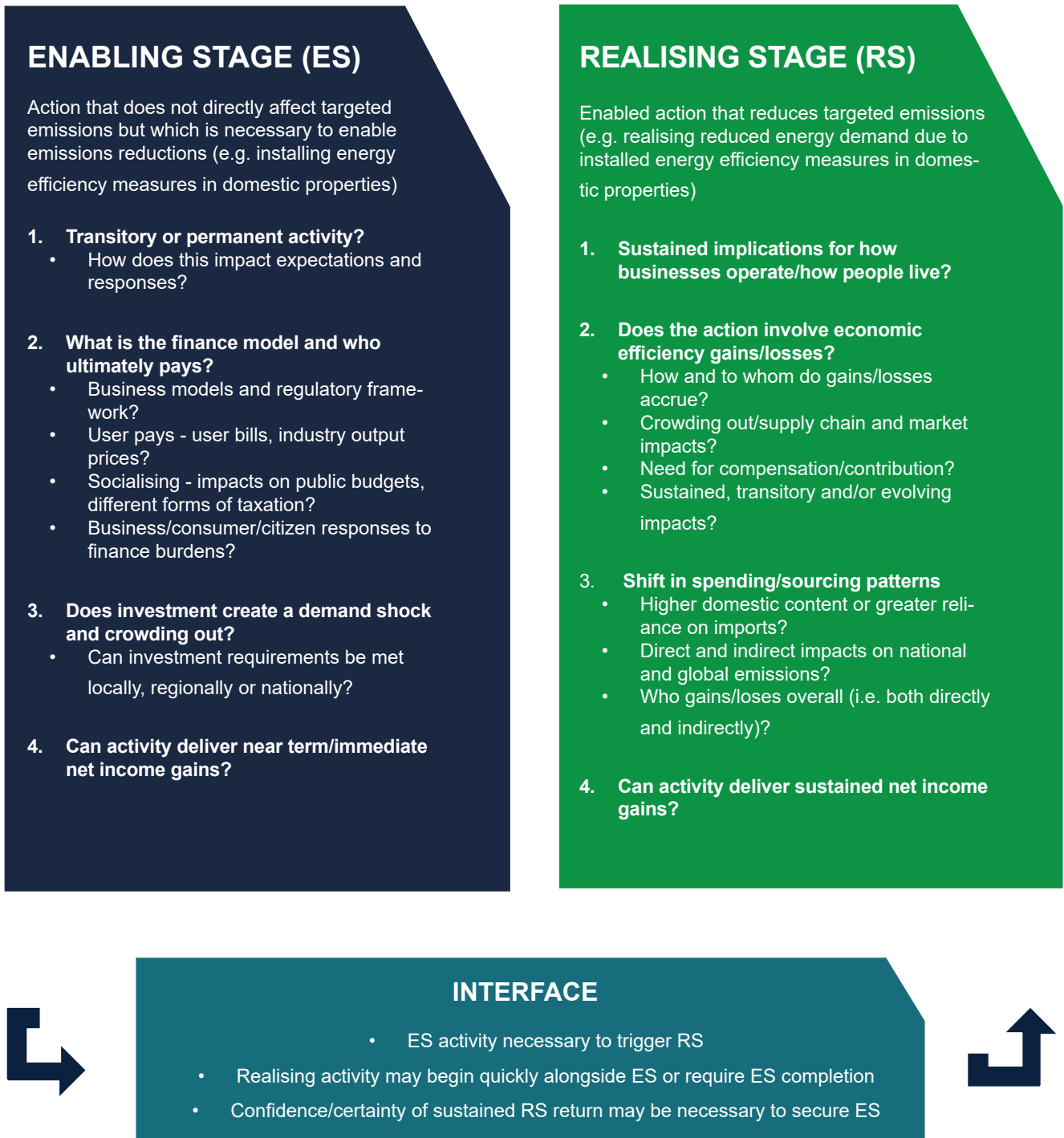
The framework sets out key questions and challenges that must be addressed in identifying, designing and considering the nature and aim of public support and policy intervention for any net zero action”

Setting the foundations for a Net Zero Principles Framework

- One of the key challenges for Net Zero is the need to understand what the policy, political economy and societal consequences of any decarbonisation action or ‘pathway’ may be. If negative, these give rise to the ‘barriers’ which are often cited as preventing deployment of technically feasible decarbonisation solutions.
- Our proposition for a **NZPF to support policy analysis and development** involves recognising and asking key questions around two interacting ‘**enabling**’ and ‘**realising**’ stages. The enabling stage does not directly affect targeted emissions but is necessary to realise emissions reductions. The realising stage represents enabled actions that reduces targeted emissions. (See Figure 1 for general framework and Figure 2 for an example of the framework applied to energy efficiency).
- The NZPF can be used to **identify and understand the consequences of actions** across these two stages. This can help **establish solutions that can deliver politically and socially acceptable outcomes** and enable an accelerated Net Zero transition .



Figure 1 - Net Zero Principles Framework



Net Zero Principles

In setting this initial framing of the NZPF, we have applied five key Net Zero Principles that need to be considered by Governments, regulators and industry when developing and deploying Net Zero policy and practice:



Further reading

- HM Treasury Interim Net Zero Review. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/net-zero-review-interim-report>
- A wider description of the Net Zero Principles Framework and its application to a specific Net Zero action (CCUS) is set out in the viewpoint paper 'The need for a Net Zero Principles Framework to support public policy at local, regional and national levels' published in the Local Economy Journal in January 2021 and is available to download at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269094220984742>
- The first iteration of the Net Zero Principles Framework (developed through our work on several net zero policies) is described in the CEP policy brief 'A Net Zero Principles Framework: Fundamental Questions for Public Policy Analysis'. It is available to download at: <https://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/71580/>
- Further application of the Net Zero Principles Framework can be found in the joint report 'Laying the Foundations for a Net Zero Society: Principles and Infrastructure for a Climate Resilient and Economically Sustainable Recovery' by CEP and the Bellona Foundation. It is available to download here: <https://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/72953/>
- To learn more about the application of the Net Zero Principles Framework please contact CEP at: CEP@strath.ac.uk

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Annex. Figure 2 - Net Zero Principles Framework - energy efficiency

