



Agulhas Impact Report

February 2025 – January 2026

Agulhas
Applied Knowledge

Contents

- 01** Who we are
- 02** What we do
- 03** Reporting on our commitments and impact areas
- 04** How we create impact for our clients: our impact stories



Who we are



Agulhas works with organisations that want to learn, adapt and make a bigger difference. By combining evidence, insight and strategy, we help partners respond to complex challenges with greater confidence, clarity and impact.

Agulhas Applied Knowledge is an employee-owned research and strategy consultancy working on some of the world's most complex challenges. Founded in 2003, with an international team based in London and Nairobi, Agulhas supports international cooperation by helping clients turn evidence, insight and experience into practical action. Since becoming a Certified B Corporation in 2023, that work has been shaped by a clear commitment to create value not only for clients, but also for people, communities and the planet.

Agulhas' principles

Our principles guide everything we do, from our work with clients to our internal governance and strategy.



Commitment

We will continue to work to harness knowledge and learning for sustainable development.



Effectiveness

We will strive to deliver the best quality work we can in the areas where we can use our skills to make the greatest impact. We will continually look for ways to do better: individually; together; and with clients, contractors and communities.



Openness

We will share ideas and good practice. We will raise concerns quickly and deal with them fairly.



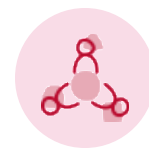
Integrity

We will conduct ourselves in a way of which we can be proud. We will be honest with each other, our clients and ourselves. We will provide challenge where it is needed and praise where it is due.



Respect

We will treat each other and our clients, communities and supply chain with respect. We will take the time to listen to others, look for the best in people and strive to empower others to be their best.



Equity

We will be mindful of power imbalances in everything we do. Our approach will continuously evolve, recognising our collective responsibility to unlearn biases and re-learn what it means to be equitable, inclusive and just.

What we do

By enabling organisations to make the most of what they know, Agulhas supports sharper decisions, stronger performance and greater impact. Whether through evaluation, learning, strategy or advisory engagements, we concentrate on generating insight that is robust, pertinent and usable in practice. Evidence alone is not the objective; what matters is helping partners put it to work in ways that drive tangible, constructive change. Through close collaboration, Agulhas shapes solutions tailored to the needs of each organisation.



Monitoring, evaluation and learning



Agulhas delivers monitoring, evaluation and learning services that help clients understand what is working, what is changing and where they can do better. Drawing on a strong mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, our teams design MEL frameworks, systems and reviews that generate robust evidence and actionable findings. The result is sharper strategy, stronger accountability and more continuous learning in the delivery of policy and programming.

Knowledge and learning



Agulhas works alongside our clients to turn evidence into reflection, learning and improved practice. Through workshops, collaborative sense-making, tailored knowledge products and immersive training, the team helps organisations build their confidence and capability, not just collect information. Equity, anti-racism and gender equality are built into this work, so that learning strengthens both effectiveness and fairness.

Our training offer includes blended, learner-focused training for government departments and other institutions, incorporating state-of-the-art digital learning management systems with facilitated, highly interactive and learner-led online and in-person sessions. Course participants return to their roles with increased skills, awareness and confidence.

Strategy and policy



Agulhas supports governments, multilaterals, foundations and other partners to navigate complexity and make better strategic choices. Combining technical expertise with politically informed analysis, our specialist teams help clients apply knowledge to their own context, priorities and constraints. That means developing strategy and policy advice that is thoughtful, practical and grounded in how change really happens. Thinking and working politically is a core speciality at Agulhas, harnessing our accumulated knowledge and learning over several decades.

A word from our Interim Managing Director

2025 has continued to ask a lot of our sector. Ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, Sudan and Gaza have deepened humanitarian need, while wildfires and heatwaves have brought the realities of climate change into sharper, more immediate focus. Combined with ongoing cuts to aid budgets, these pressures have added real urgency to the work that we do, while simultaneously unsettling longstanding programmes and partnerships built up over years.

I'm incredibly proud of how our team has responded, both in the quality of the work delivered this year, and in the adaptability and commitment shown throughout. This showed up in how we delivered for long-standing clients such as the Multilateral Performance Network (MOPAN) and the UK's Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI), as well as for new clients including the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG) and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). That resilience and commitment sits at the core of Agulhas and the work that we do.

This is also a moment of change at Agulhas HQ as we say goodbye to our outgoing CEO, Lauren Pett, who has led the company with real dedication over the past three years. Our interim Leadership Team is now focused on strengthening the systems and ways of working that will set us up well for the years ahead. We will share more on this next year. For now, I am delighted to share our progress in this, our fourth annual impact report.

Gemma Norrington-Davies, Interim Managing Director



**Petra, Jordan, with the
Global Green Growth
Institute (GGGI), 2025*

Our Trustees

A word from our Trustees



This has been my third year as Employee Trustee, and once again I've been reminded how vital community in the workplace is during times of pressures in the sector. Our COF structures have maintained spaces for colleagues who care deeply about the work we do to come together, support one another and keep Agulhas's values at the heart of how we operate. A key step in the evolution of our COF has been to expand the employee trustee role from one person to two, and I have been delighted to have Mazvita join me in this role.



Having been part of Agulhas from before it became employee-owned five years ago, I've appreciated watching the organisation grow and adapt in meaningful ways. The past few years have been challenging for our sector, but the COF has remained a steady anchor for Agulhas, offering colleagues a space to grapple with questions facing the sector and to contribute ideas that shape how we respond as a company.

As I reflect on this impact report, I am proud to note not only the impact of our projects but also the ongoing effort to live out our principles and commitments, including equity, that define us.



As a founder and director, this has been a year of watching Agulhas evolve further. Leadership responsibilities have continued to transition beyond the founder-directors to a broader group of colleagues. We've strengthened employee representation on the Employee Ownership Trust board, held our fourth annual Strategy Day, and pushed further on the standards we hold ourselves to as set out in our B Impact score, our commitment to the UN Global Compact, and in our Carbon Reduction Plan. Keeping and building on those commitments in the face of the complex challenges facing the world and our sector remains important to all at Agulhas.



As Agulhas continues to evolve it is heartening to see how the values of the business underpin the interactions across colleagues and teams internally, and externally with clients and on the impactful projects on which they work. Alongside this, despite working within challenging environments, the focus on long-term sustainability of the business for collective benefit has been at the core of decision making and the focus for the future.

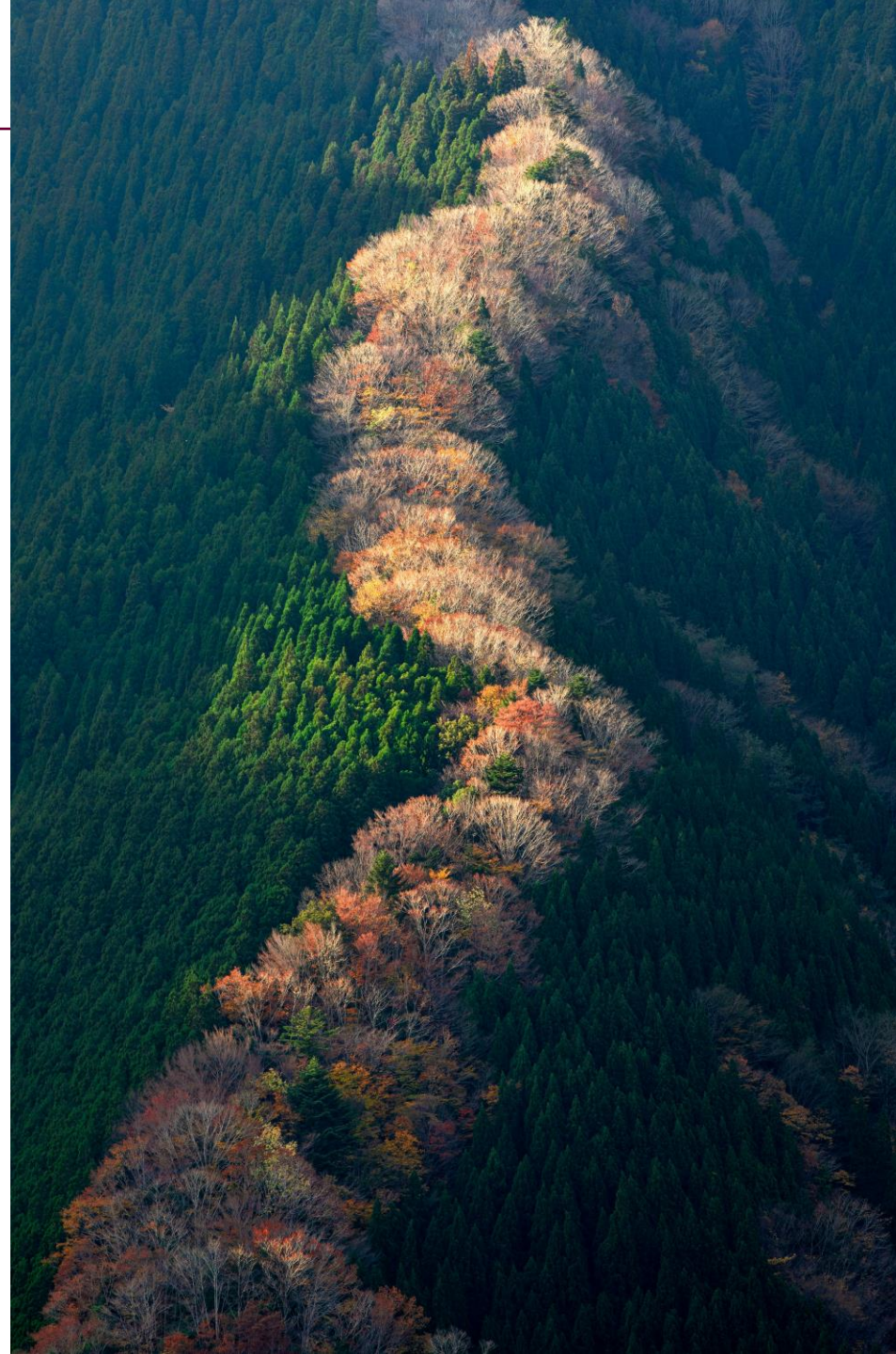
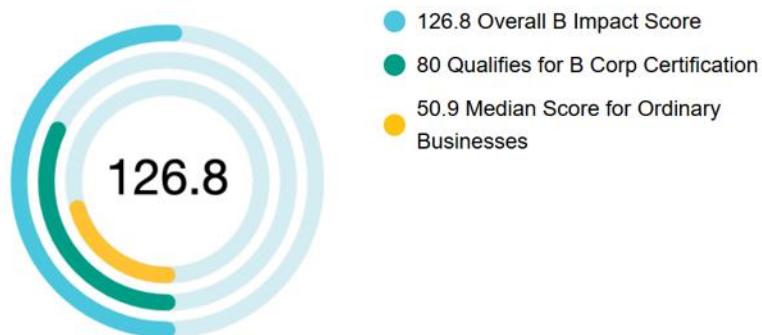
Commitments to driving impact globally

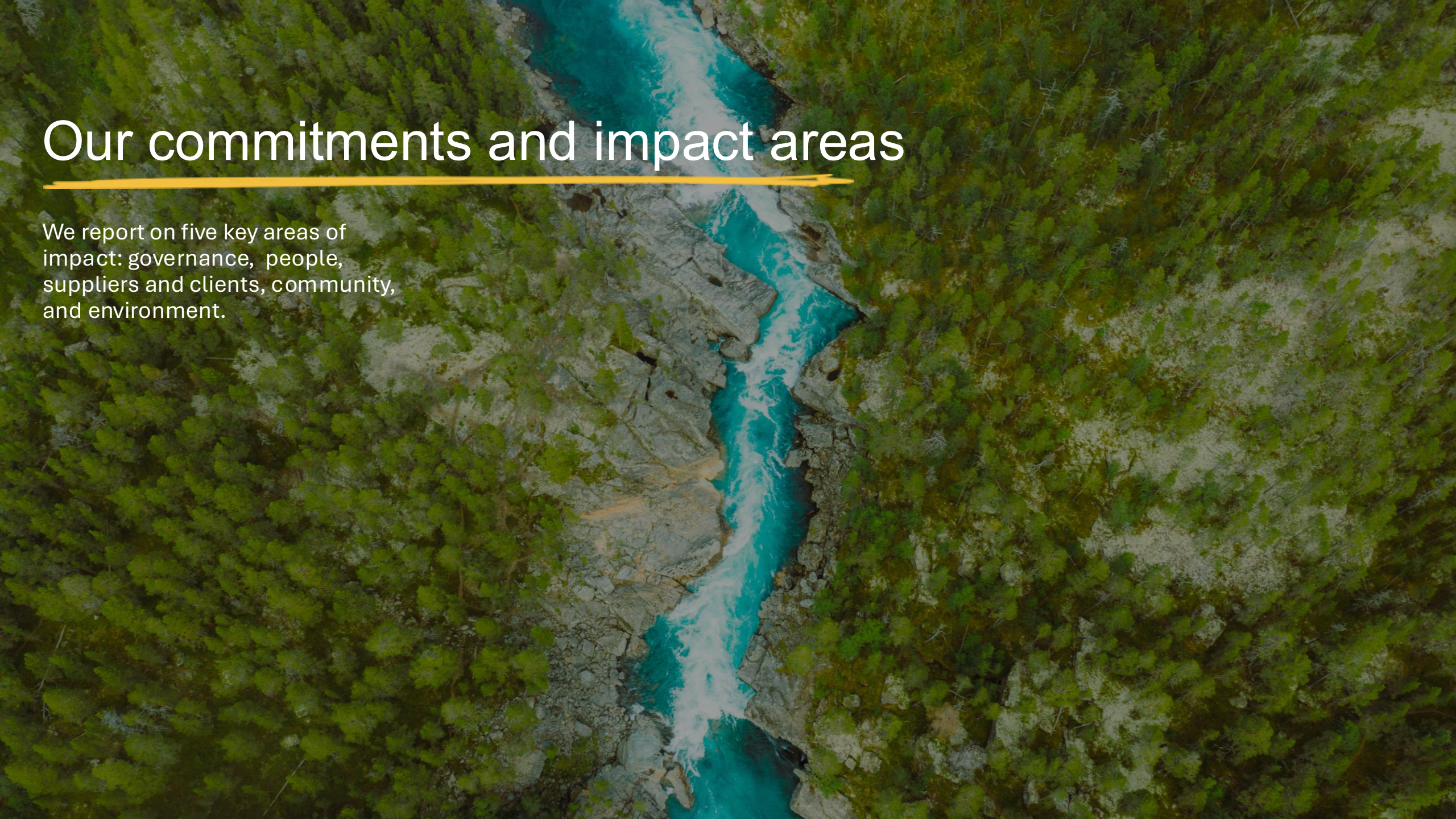
As part of our commitment to continuous improvement and long-term organisational sustainability, Agulhas has been a certified B Corporation since 2023. The certification followed a rigorous, employee-led process that began in 2021 and was strongly backed through the Employee Ownership Co-Owners Forum, reflecting a shared commitment to building a business that creates value. Certified B Corporations are known leaders in the global movement for an inclusive, equitable and regenerative economy.

Agulhas achieved an initial B Impact Assessment score of 126.4, substantially above both the 80-point threshold for certification and the 50-point median score for businesses in our category. This was a significant milestone for the firm and a strong external validation of the standards, systems and culture that shape how Agulhas operates.

Being a B Corp provides Agulhas with a practical framework for tracking progress and strengthening performance across the key areas of the B Impact Assessment. The sections that follow set out progress to date and priorities for the year ahead, helping Agulhas maintain high standards while identifying further opportunities to deepen our social and environmental impact.

This commitment is reinforced by Agulhas's active participation in the UN Global Compact, a voluntary initiative that asks businesses to align their strategies and operations with ten principles covering human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Together, these frameworks support Agulhas's ambition to operate as a responsible, values-driven business and to contribute to a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable economy.





Our commitments and impact areas

We report on five key areas of impact: governance, people, suppliers and clients, community, and environment.

Governance

Agulhas is an employee-owned company, run with a long-term view of what is best for its people, its partners and the wider world. Employee ownership is not only a governance model; it is part of how Agulhas seeks to build accountability, shared responsibility and a strong organisational culture.

A central part of this model is the Co-Owners Forum (COF), which provides all staff with an opportunity to help shape the company's operations and strategic direction. The forum also creates a structured space for staff input on wellbeing, the working environment and ways to strengthen job satisfaction and shared ownership across the business.

Agulhas is committed to high standards of integrity in its own operations and across the relationships through which it works. This includes a strict zero-tolerance approach to corruption, supported by anti-corruption and whistleblowing policies published on the company website, and a broader commitment to fairness and justice across its value chain, including suppliers, clients, communities and other business relationships.



- 1. Top 2-3 thematic areas for Agulhas to strengthen and/or develop
- 2. Top 2-3 services/products for Agulhas to strengthen and/or develop
- 3. Who and How best to go about winning new work
- WILD CARD: other themes, services, products, anything else?



2025/26 progress

During 2025/26, Agulhas continued to strengthen its governance arrangements and broaden participation in leadership and oversight. A new Employee Representative was elected to the Employee Ownership Trust board, and the company agreed to add a second Employee Representative role, with staggered two-year terms designed to support continuity, peer learning and smoother handovers between representatives.

Leadership responsibilities were also further transitioned beyond the founder-directors to a broader group of Agulhas colleagues, combining longstanding institutional knowledge with newer perspectives from staff who joined more recently. In September 2025, Agulhas held its fourth annual Strategy Day, creating space for colleagues to reflect together, strengthen skills and align around priorities for the year ahead.

2026/27 commitments

- Continue to strengthen employee voice and participation through the Co-Owners Forum and Employee Ownership Trust structures.
- Embed the updated employee representation model to ensure continuity, learning and effective handover between representatives.
- Support the evolving Leadership Team to provide inclusive, effective and values-led stewardship of the organisation.
- Maintain high standards of integrity, transparency and accountability across operations and business relationships.



People

As a research and consulting firm, Agulhas's entire business model depends on its greatest asset – its people. The company's aim is to create an enjoyable working environment that enables staff and associates to thrive, and to build careers anchored in purpose, professionalism and shared values.

Agulhas has been a London Living Wage accredited employer since 2018 and is fully committed to upholding high standards of labour rights and decent work. This commitment applies both to our own workforce and to the suppliers and partners with whom we work.

Agulhas takes a diversity-positive approach to recruitment, reflected in our international, diverse and female-led workforce. As an Employee-Owned company, our staff have a direct voice in shaping how Agulhas supports health, wellbeing and workforce culture, including through wellness and mental health initiatives championed by the Health & Wellbeing Working Group.

Looking ahead to 2026/27, Agulhas will continue to strengthen how it supports and develops its people.





2025/26 progress

In 2025/26, Agulhas continued to invest in staff wellbeing, learning and professional development. Training for all staff on the use of Agulhas' Health and Wellbeing policies was completed in May 2025, and additional skills development was supported through training on informal skills such as Project Management in April 2025.

A series of all-staff 'Lunch and Learn' sessions were held, including several led by junior staff to build confidence and encourage peer learning. These included:

- Using Microsoft Teams and Data security (Apr 2025)
- Ethics, safeguarding and ICAI protocols (Feb 2025)
- Building Personal Resilience Training for analysts and managers
- Handling project management like a Pro
- Political economy analysis training.

A new internship scheme was also launched, providing entry-level opportunities for early career professionals to join the Agulhas team.

2026/27 commitments

- Expand the programme of Lunch and Learn sessions, with contributions from both junior and senior staff, to encourage knowledge sharing, peer learning, and upskilling across the company's areas of expertise.
- Review and provide management responses to the twice yearly all staff survey, working to address staff feedback and translate it into concrete actions to improve wellbeing, learning and day-to-day working practices.

Suppliers and clients

Agulhas's impact depends on the quality of our relationships with clients, suppliers and partners, especially those outside the Global North. Our aim is to build partnerships that are equitable, based on trust and mutual understanding, and that recognise the value of locally led insight and leadership.

Since 2021, we have run a client and partner satisfaction survey to understand stakeholders' views of our work and relationships. This feedback helps us to identify what is working well and where we can improve, reinforcing a culture of learning and accountability to those we serve.

Agulhas works closely with clients, meeting regularly, listening carefully and adapting to their needs rather than offering 'off the shelf' solutions. This collaborative approach supports better social and environmental outcomes for the communities, governments and other stakeholders that our clients serve.

Looking ahead to 2026/27, Agulhas will continue to deepen and broaden its partnerships with clients, suppliers and networks.





2025/26 progress

In 2025/26, Agulhas continued to strengthen its networks and practice through shared learning with partners and clients.

In June 2025, we hosted a session during Glocal Evaluation Week on ‘[Inclusive peace in a new world: how can monitoring, evaluation and learning evolve to enable lasting change?](#)’, bringing together partners from across the conflict and peacebuilding ecosystem. The event formed part of a global knowledge-sharing initiative where evaluators from different sectors and regions explore how evidence can improve people’s lives.

In November 2025, Agulhas hosted a ‘[Future of aid](#)’ event in London, convening contributors from across our network, including those working on conflict in the Sudan, UK and international charities, and multilateral reform. Local partners, fellows and clients were invited, and the event was recorded to share learning beyond the room.

Agulhas works with local and regional partners to ensure evaluations are genuinely grounded in country realities, for example by collaborating with in-country teams in Ethiopia and Indonesia as part of our recent work with the World Resources Institute, so that findings reflect locally led perspectives and practical experience.

2026/27 commitments

- Continue to strengthen and diversify the Agulhas partner network, with particular attention to long-term, equitable relationships with organisations and consultants outside the Global North.
- Continue to run and refine the client and partner satisfaction survey, using feedback to improve how Agulhas works and collaborates with its clients, suppliers and partners.

Community

Our work is driven by clear principles and a shared commitment to supporting international cooperation on global challenges. Through both the work we do and the way we operate, we seek to uphold human rights, justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and to work with partners who share these principles of responsible business and respect for human rights.

Although our work is predominantly international in nature, we also contribute to our local community. This includes ongoing financial and volunteer support to a number of charities and social enterprises in Hackney and Islington.

Employee-owned and staff-led working groups, such as the Unlearning Group and the Active Citizenship Working Group, create space for colleagues to connect and contribute to social issues they care about. These groups help Agulhas turn values into practical action and encourage staff to explore and challenge their own assumptions and roles in wider systems.

In 2026/27 we will focus our community commitments on time, skills and relationships, maintaining core support where possible, while deepening contributions that align with Agulhas's values and expertise.





2025/26 progress

The Active Citizenship Working Group published three newsletters, highlighting local volunteering opportunities, charity events and ways for staff to get involved, and members attended several events in person.

Active Citizenship Working Group members participated in community-focused events, including the Happy Baby Community Spring Party to learn about its new Mentorship Programme and Employability Pathway, the Refugee Employment Summit, and the Shared Horizon's Futures Workshop.

The Agulhas Book Club met four times to discuss books and stories that explore global justice, identity and lived experience, including:

- [*Cobalt Red: How the Blood of the Congo Powers Our Lives*](#) by Siddharth Kara
- [*Palace Walk*](#) by Naguib Mahfouz
- [*How to Say Babylon*](#) by Safiya Sinclair
- [*Persepolis*](#) by Marjane Satrapi.

Agulhas also committed to [no longer publishing content on 'X' \(formerly Twitter\)](#), concluding that being active on the platform no longer reflected our standards or commitments to community and public discourse. We have retained our handle to prevent misuse of our identity but now focus our external communications on [LinkedIn](#) and [BlueSky](#).

2026/27 commitments

- Explore new forms and scales of volunteering and community involvement that fit staff capacity and community needs.
- Continue to support initiatives such as the Hoxton Trust Garden that strengthen connections between Agulhas, its neighbours and local organisations.
- Continue to use staff-led groups like the Active Citizenship Working Group and the Unlearning Group to generate ideas, share opportunities and support colleagues to act on issues they care about.

Environment

Agulhas's Climate Hub is an expert group within the company that specialises in evaluation, strategic advice and policy development on climate, sustainability and just transition. Our aim is to help clients navigate complex climate challenges while upholding strong standards on environmental integrity and social justice.

Agulhas seeks to live by the standards we endorse. We are committed to integrating environmental considerations into our own operations and into relationships with suppliers and clients, recognising that our contribution to a sustainable future starts with our own actions, even with a relatively small direct footprint. In 2026, Agulhas published a [Carbon Reduction Plan](#) that goes beyond minimum reporting requirements and sets out a pathway for reducing emissions.

Guided by the Co-Owners Forum, the Operations Team has taken a proactive stance on embedding environmental commitments across core Agulhas functions and policies. Revised environmental guidance has made sustainability part of everyday practice, through measures such as food waste, paper and plastic recycling, and encouraging the uptake of the Cycle to Work scheme.

Looking ahead, Agulhas will focus on consolidating and deepening climate action in ways that align with our size and resources.





2025/26 progress

In 2025/26, Agulhas strengthened its environmental management and climate commitments. Agulhas published a [Carbon Reduction Plan](#) that sets out actions and targets beyond the requirements of existing contracts. We also adopted the Equipose carbon calculator to measure Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions in a way that is tailored to small and medium-sized enterprises.

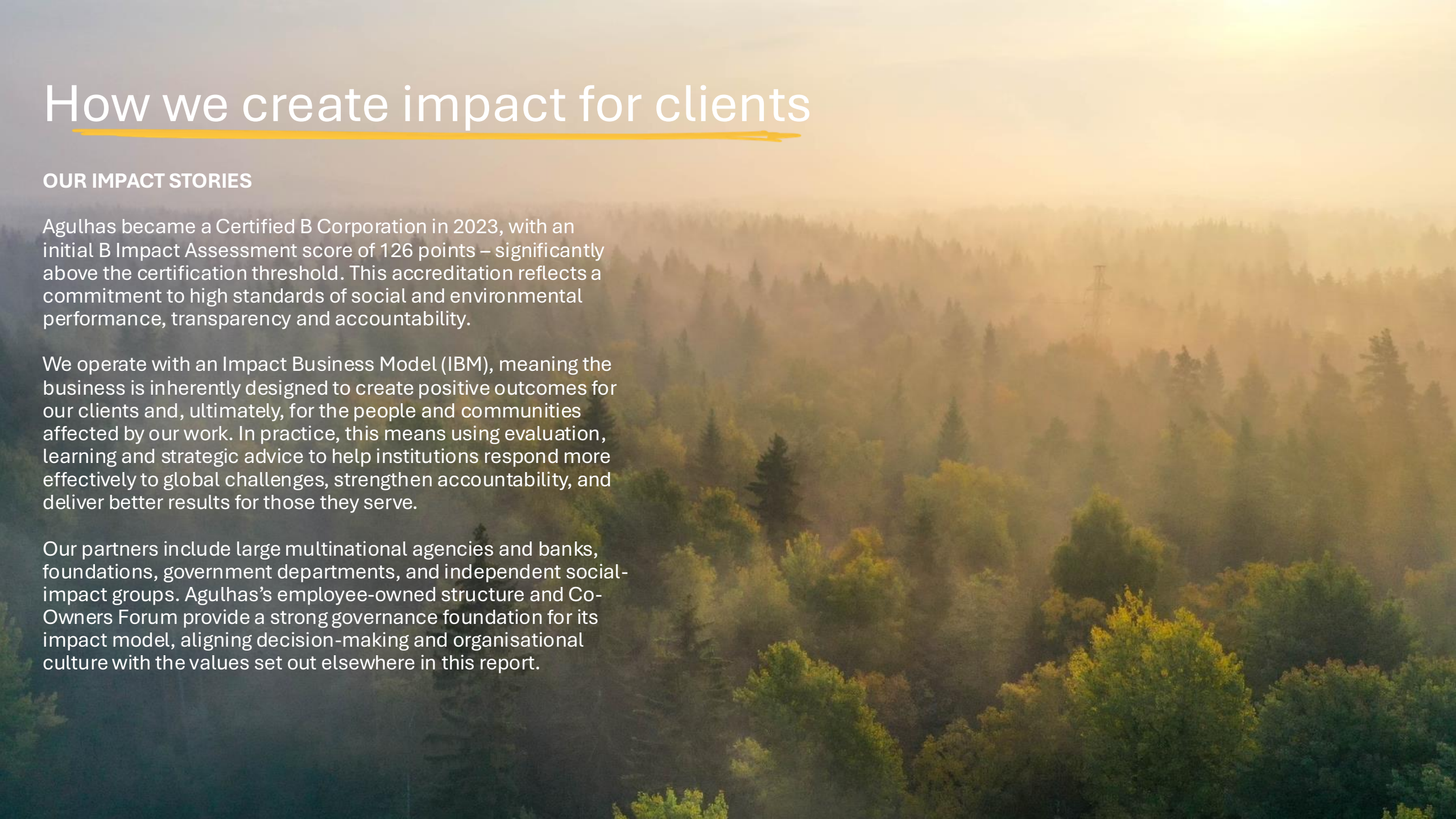
Agulhas continued to report annually to the SME Climate Hub as part of our SME Climate Commitments and journey to net-zero by 2050.

We delivered assignments remotely wherever feasible, reducing the need for carbon-intensive air travel and supporting clients to lower the footprint of their evaluation and research activities.

Through [Earthly](#), we supported three nature-based projects, including agroforestry in Kenya, peatland protection in Indonesia, and regenerative farming in India – contributing to climate mitigation and co-benefits for ecosystems and communities. Via Earthly, we invested the equivalent of 110 tonnes of CO₂ in 2025 and helped protect or restore 66,885m² of land to date.

2026/27 commitments

- Continue to report annually on our carbon emissions to the SME Climate Hub as part of our journey towards net-zero by 2050, using the data to inform practical reduction measures.
- Maintain a preference for remote and lower-carbon ways of working where feasible, especially for international assignments, and work with clients to design evaluation and research activities that minimise unnecessary travel.
- Sustain support via Earthly, contributing to meaningful nature-based solutions.



How we create impact for clients

OUR IMPACT STORIES

Agulhas became a Certified B Corporation in 2023, with an initial B Impact Assessment score of 126 points – significantly above the certification threshold. This accreditation reflects a commitment to high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency and accountability.

We operate with an Impact Business Model (IBM), meaning the business is inherently designed to create positive outcomes for our clients and, ultimately, for the people and communities affected by our work. In practice, this means using evaluation, learning and strategic advice to help institutions respond more effectively to global challenges, strengthen accountability, and deliver better results for those they serve.

Our partners include large multinational agencies and banks, foundations, government departments, and independent social-impact groups. Agulhas's employee-owned structure and Co-Owners Forum provide a strong governance foundation for its impact model, aligning decision-making and organisational culture with the values set out elsewhere in this report.

Impact story: Horizon Dialogues in Nepal

Agulhas was trusted by the British Embassy Kathmandu and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to design and run the 'Horizon Dialogue series', aimed at strengthening partnerships and collaboration across the development community in Nepal. Over three events, the series brought together academics, government officials, Embassy staff, and members of local and marginalised communities, including women and young people.

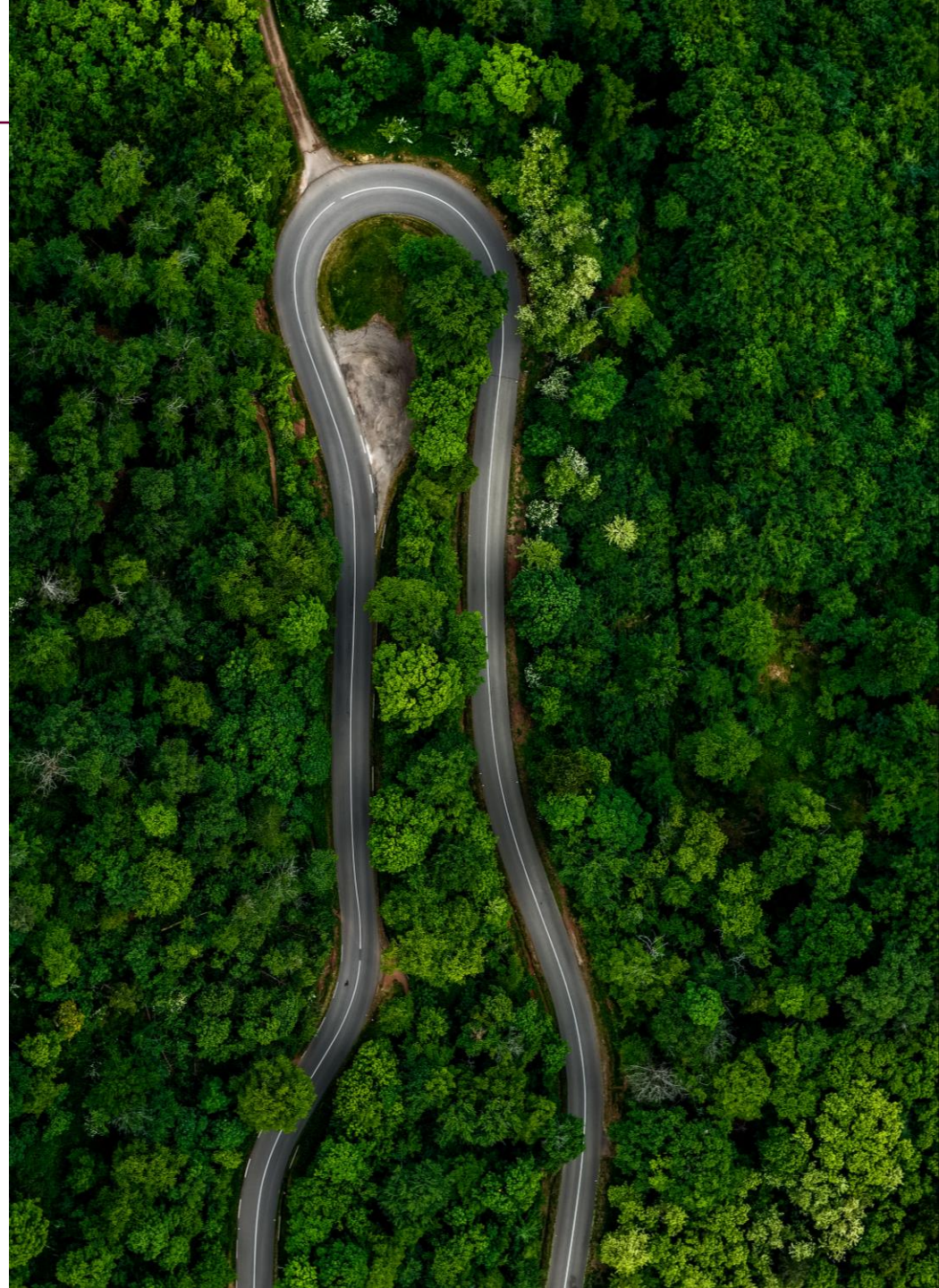
The first Horizon event convened academics to explore the issues Nepal will face in the coming years – a rare and forward-looking conversation hosted by the FCDO. Connections forged at this event were designed to be longstanding, helping to ensure that future risks and opportunities are considered in a cohesive way and can feed into more holistic, future-focused programming.

The second event, FCDO's first dialogue held outside Kathmandu, focused on migration and displacement. Hosted in a regional location, with transport organised for participants, it enabled provincial communities to take part in person, including Dalit women, some of whom had never previously spoken in front of a group or directly to donors. Participants worked together to draft policy briefs tailored to the Nepali context, providing inclusive learning resources for FCDO teams and implementing

partners. The dialogue also helped triangulate recent census data, checking whether the stories told by the numbers matched lived realities and surfacing vital nuance from hard-to-reach communities.

The final Horizon dialogue brought FCDO together with partners to discuss recent protests in Nepal. The convening fostered relationships between organisations working in similar spaces, encouraging the sharing of knowledge, political economy analyses and plans to reduce duplication and improve alignment in programming. A young female Nepali leader was invited to ensure youth perspectives on the protests were heard in a neutral setting, giving FCDO access to a group it had previously struggled to engage.

The Horizon series has strengthened relationships across the portfolio, made interactions between FCDO staff and suppliers easier and more collaborative, and encouraged a more holistic view of the Nepal country portfolio – from community level to programme and strategy. The approach was innovative for FCDO, centring the voices of marginalised groups and using inclusive dialogue to generate practical resources and better-informed decisions.





Impact story: ICAI and international climate finance

Agulhas has supported the UK's independent aid watchdog, the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI), since its establishment in 2011. Over that time, Agulhas has helped ICAI generate high-quality, high-impact reviews that inform debates on UK development assistance at the highest level.

One area where this work has been particularly important is international climate finance (ICF). In early 2024, Agulhas led a review of [UK aid's international climate finance \(ICF\) commitments](#) for ICAI, assessing how the UK was meeting its pledge to provide £11.6 billion of ICF over the period 2021-2026. The review found that while the UK had not formally reneged on its 2019 commitment, most of the spending required to reach the target was scheduled for the final years, 2025 and 2026. It also highlighted that changes in how ICF-eligible expenditure was counted had moved the UK closer to its target without involving new spending, underscoring the importance of transparency in tracking climate finance.

A subsequent ICAI review on the [changing global context for development cooperation](#), published in 2026, noted that new international climate finance goals had been agreed but still fell far short of need. In this context, rigorous evaluation, reporting and learning on ICF has become even more critical, both to assess what is being delivered and to understand whether climate finance is reaching those who need it most.

ICAI's findings and recommendations carry weight in government and parliamentary debates. In 2024, the UK government accepted all four recommendations made in the ICF commitments review. In 2026, the government similarly accepted or partially accepted all recommendations from a 2025 review of [UK aid for energy transitions](#), assessing the effectiveness of the UK's support for clean energy transition in low- and middle-income countries. This included commitments to develop a clearer and more inclusive energy transition strategy, improve coordination across departments, and use funding more effectively through different channels. The review also urged improvements in tracking results and learning from energy transition programmes, clarification of the role of international partnerships and alliances, more realistic target setting, and clearer plans for attracting additional finance tailored to different country needs.

Agulhas' role throughout has been to help ICAI generate robust, independent analysis and clear, evidence-based recommendations on complex climate finance and energy issues. As the UK enters the final phase of its current ICF target, amid wider shifts in policy and a reduction in overall aid spending, this kind of scrutiny and learning remains essential to understanding what climate finance is achieving and how it can be improved.

Impact story: Realist review of Just Transition

Just transition describes the shift towards greener, more inclusive, and more resilient economies and societies, ensuring climate action also supports decent work, equity and social justice. Agulhas was commissioned by the International Labour Organization and Green Climate Fund to produce a learning paper that undertook the first realist review of global evidence on just transition interventions in developing countries, spanning energy, agriculture and food, infrastructure, and ecosystem services.

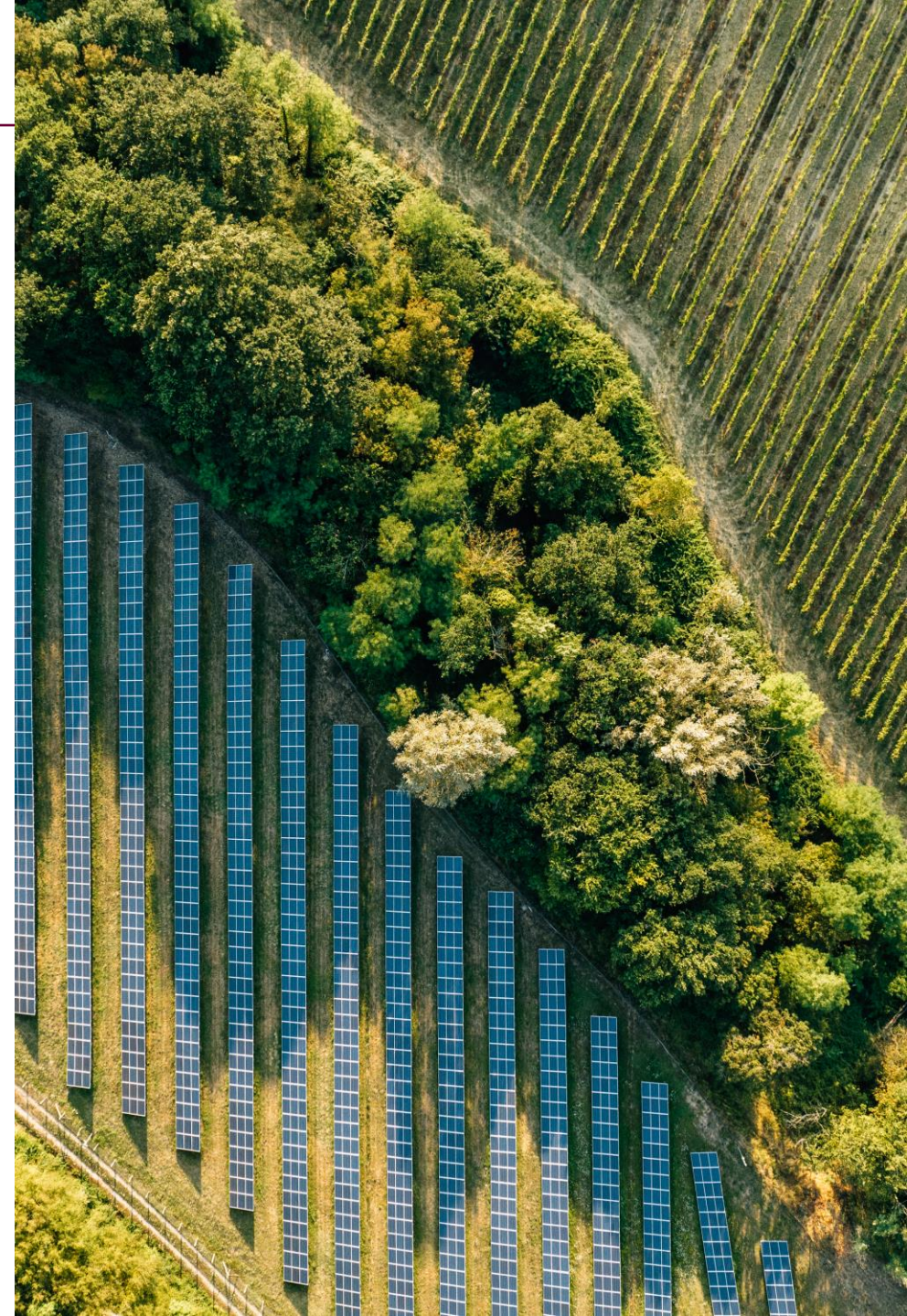
The review identified common enablers of successful just transition interventions, including robust funding and financing mechanisms, strong alignment with local needs and priorities, political will and ownership, and meaningful social dialogue and stakeholder engagement. It also highlighted common barriers across sectors, such as bureaucratic and legal obstacles, exclusion and unequal distribution of benefits, and gaps in technical skills that can be addressed through targeted support.

Published in 2024, the paper filled a major evidence gap by focusing on non-Annex 1 countries, where most existing literature had previously centred on OECD and Annex I contexts. It drew deliberately on grey literature – including UN reports and publications from local partners – alongside academic sources, bringing in broader perspectives and more up-to-date,

contextually grounded evidence. This approach produced a more realistic, implementation-focused evidence base for decision makers and project implementers working on just transition in countries on the frontline of the climate crisis.

In 2025, the review generated further academic interest in a field where evidence outside OECD countries remains limited. It was reworked by the Green Climate Fund's Independent Evaluation Unit and published in the European Journal of Development Research as [*'Realist Review on Just Transition Towards Low Emission, Climate Resilient and More Inclusive Societies in Developing Countries'*](#), as an open-access article available to all. The work also inspired a second paper, [*'Trusted Evidence, Informed Policies, Higher Impact—Climate Evidence Reviews'*](#), reflecting on how better climate evidence can shape more effective policies.

Usage metrics for these publications, including downloads, views and citations, show that the learning paper has had a lasting impact well beyond its original purpose. It continues to serve as an essential knowledge and evidence resource for practitioners, policymakers and researchers working towards a just transition, especially in developing countries at the forefront of the climate crisis.



‘The Agulhas team have excellent multidisciplinary expertise to tackle complex subjects, their thoroughness has been remarkable, as has been their ability to solve unexpected challenges. They are a real pleasure to work with.’

International Labour Organisation (ILO)



Impact story: ‘The story of aid’ thought leadership series

Agulhas is made up of a team with a wealth of experience, and our people are our greatest asset. Working with colleagues, partners, friends and fellows, Agulhas has been contributing actively to the global conversation about the future of aid: from tracking the impact of funding cuts and the strain on global health architecture, to exploring shifts in multilateralism and the move from aid to trade as a dominant development paradigm.

Throughout the year, alongside our client work in research, policy and evaluation, Agulhas experts have shared insights through thought leadership pieces, blogs and multi-day conferences. These contributions have helped frame emerging debates, raise difficult questions and highlight what changing aid and development strategies mean in practice for programming, partnerships and accountability.

In June 2025, Agulhas hosted an online learning event, ‘Inclusive peace in a new world: how can monitoring, evaluation and learning evolve to enable lasting change?’, as part of Glocal Evaluation Week. This unique knowledge-sharing initiative connects a global community across sectors and regions, and Agulhas’s session brought together evaluators, implementers and donor policy experts from across the conflict, fragility and peacebuilding ecosystem. The discussion ensured a wide range of perspectives

were heard on how monitoring, evaluation and learning can support more inclusive and sustainable peace.

In November 2025, Agulhas convened an in-person event in London asking, ‘Is there a future of aid as we know it?’ Clients, partners, fellows, and others working across the sector joined an expert panel with representatives from Agulhas, Bond, and Shabaka. The panel challenged participants – and each other – to think about what a ‘beyond aid’ world looks like, exploring the impacts of funding cuts, opportunities for new funding models, the realities of multilateral reform, and the growing prominence of diaspora actors.

A series of blogs over the year extended this conversation, telling the story of the ‘place beyond aid’ as the consequence of a turbulent period in global aid funding and strategy continued to play out. These pieces examined the specific implications for UK aid, the reform of the global health architecture, and how new forms of development partnerships are changing what is done, how it is done, and what needs to be evaluated. Together, our events and written work demonstrate Agulhas’s role not just as a service provider, but as a thought partner helping to shape the future of aid and development.

Impact story: MOPAN assessments

MOPAN (the Multilateral Performance Network) is a group of donor governments that assesses multilateral organisations, shapes performance standards and champions learning and insight to strengthen development and humanitarian results. MOPAN's distinct methodology looks at how multilateral organisations perform across five key areas – strategy, operations, relationships, performance and results management – including how they integrate cross-cutting standards such as gender equality, safeguarding and ethics.

In 2022, working with MOPAN and Humanitarian Outcomes, Agulhas contributed to a cross-cutting study, *“Lessons in Multilateral Effectiveness: Rethinking Effective Humanitarian Organisations.”* The review found that MOPAN's existing performance indicators did not fully capture the realities of organisations working in humanitarian settings. In response, Agulhas worked closely with MOPAN to develop an adapted set of indicators better suited to humanitarian organisations and to actors operating at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

Since then, Agulhas and MOPAN's other research partners have applied this adapted framework to organisations whose mandates span crisis response, development and peacebuilding, where a more nuanced approach to performance and impact is needed. Agulhas

has used the framework in MOPAN assessments of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

MOPAN assessments typically attract strong donor and member engagement, both during the assessment process and at launch events. Organisations draw on the findings and recommendations – as well as their own management responses – to gain a more holistic view of their performance and to inform reforms at organisational and sector level. Across the humanitarian ecosystem, these assessments have been used to support strategic realignment, operational adjustments and greater accountability to affected populations.

By working in a highly consultative and collaborative way with the MOPAN team, Agulhas has helped ensure that the network's assessments generate genuinely insightful, useful and actionable evidence. The adapted humanitarian framework has underpinned a series of major assessments, giving donors and organisations a better basis for understanding effectiveness and driving improvements that extend well beyond the pages of individual reports.



‘The team were highly experienced in evaluating complex programmes, had great technical expertise in analysing data and qualitative feedback, and were incredibly proactive and took excellent initiative to strengthen our data sets and capture nuanced learnings and insights. Their case studies were truly outstanding and will really help us demonstrate the powerful human stories that sit behind the figures!’

Youth Negotiators Programme





Agulhas Impact Report

February 2025 – January 2026

Agulhas
Applied Knowledge