



GCNA launches Sustainable Development Leadership Group to drive business engagement in sustainable development and SDGs

14 August 2015, Sydney

The Global Compact Network Australia, with the support and engagement of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, has today launched the **GCNA Sustainable Development Leadership Group** to drive business engagement in sustainable development and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The GCNA's new Sustainable Development Leadership Group (**SDLG**) – being advised by a Steering Committee of business representatives and sustainability experts – will provide a platform for business and stakeholders to engage in learning, dialogue and action around sustainable development and the SDGs, the business case for sustainable development and how business can embed sustainable development in their strategies, align their goals with global priorities and communicate impact.

The SDLG will also provide an interface between business and DFAT, supporting the implementation of the Australian Government's new aid policy, which emphasises private sector engagement and development.

2015 is a watershed year for the global sustainable development agenda. In September, the UN will launch the Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) which will set global development priorities to 2030 and apply to both developing and developed countries (replacing the Millennium Development Goals which expire this year). The SDGs are wide ranging, covering poverty, climate change, gender equality, water, education, sustainable cities and infrastructure, food security, sustainable production and consumption – among other issues.

As the world's primary source of economic activity, business has a central role to play in this new global sustainable development agenda. The SDGs present a historic opportunity for business to align their strategies and activities with global priorities, producing outcomes that benefit society and the economy – and drive business success.

Sustainable Development Leadership Group Steering Committee

- Megan Christensen, Group Manager Corporate Sustainability, Oil Search and Director, GCNA (SDLG Steering Committee and Leadership Group Chair)
- Catherine Hunter, Head of Corporate Citizenship, KPMG and Chair, GCNA
- Sam Mostyn, President, ACFID and Non-Executive Director
- Kate Chaney, Sustainability Manager - Corporate Affairs, Wesfarmers
- James Ensor, Group Senior Manager Social Policy, BHP Billiton
- Larry Jackson, CEO, Paperforce
- Jane Nash, Head of Corporate Sustainability and Financial Inclusion, ANZ Bank
- Armineh Mardirossian, Head of Corporate Responsibility, Woolworths
- Michael Parks, General Manager - Governance, Integration and Reporting, Chief Sustainability Office, Telstra
- Lucy Roberts, General Manager - Sustainable Development, Glencore Australia
- Simon Cramp, Director - Private Sector Development, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Alice Cope, Executive Manager, Global Compact Network Australia

Upcoming activities

The GCNA will be convening a number of Sustainable Development Leadership Group forums and events, starting with:

- CEO Roundtable with the Foreign Minister, Hon. Julie Bishop MP for GCNA corporate members (31 August)
- Australian launch of the SDG Compass – a guide for business action to advance the SDGs (event details coming soon)



Further background

What are the SDGs?

The Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) are a set of 17 global goals, supported by targets and indicators, to be adopted by UN member states in September 2015. The SDGs will apply to developed and developing countries, and will shape global development priorities to 2030.

The SDGs will replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were agreed by governments in 2000 and will expire at the end of 2015. Find out more about the SDGs [here](#).

What do the SDGs have to do with business?

Strong markets and strong societies go hand in hand, and as the world's primary source of economic activity, business has a central role to play in achieving the SDGs.

The SDGs present a historic opportunity for business to align their strategies and activities with global priorities, producing outcomes that benefit society and the economy—and drive business success. Indeed, it is unmet economic, environmental and social needs that are propelling this new agenda, creating new market opportunities for businesses to meet these needs with sustainable products and innovative business models.

There are significant opportunities for business to engage with this agenda domestically and internationally, including through core business activities, value chain initiatives and community investment. The UN Global Compact's [Post-2015 Business Engagement Architecture](#) sets out the main building blocks to scale up and enhance corporate sustainability as an effective contribution to sustainable development.

There is also significant alignment with the Australian Federal Government's new aid policy - *Australian aid: promoting prosperity, increasing stability, reducing poverty* - which includes a focus on promoting economic growth and private sector development, and engaging the private sector as partners in delivering development outcomes.

How can I get involved and learn more?

The GCNA's Sustainable Development Leadership Group will be offering a number of engagement opportunities over the coming months. Stay tuned!

About the Global Compact Network Australia

The Global Compact Network Australia (GCNA) is the Australian business-led network of the United Nations Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative. The UN Global Compact is a call to companies everywhere to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and take actions that advance societal goals including sustainable development. In Australia, the GCNA brings together over 60 Australian signatories to the UN Global Compact, including a number of Australia's leading companies, non-profits and universities, to advance corporate sustainability and the private sector's contribution to sustainable development. (www.unglobalcompact.org.au)

Contact

Alice Cope
Executive Manager
Global Compact Network Australia

+61 408 843 548
alice.cope@unglobalcompact.org.au