

SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT IS THE URGENCY?

A growing number of companies and people now believe that life on earth as known is unsustainable, unless immediate and meaningful actions are taken. The worldwide environment is changing rapidly; climate change is causing warming seas and the melting of the Polar ice caps is creating devastating extreme weather events impacting the future of worldwide companies. The awareness of negative worldwide environmental changes has increased in recent years. Everywhere there is the advertisement of products and services, international news, television all about environment changes and sustainability!



Why the sudden interest in sustainability and what is the effect on the Global Mobility Industry?

There are many recent examples of the actions responsible bodies are taking to drive sustainable practices. In 2021 Exxon had three board members removed in action started by a small investment fund to change the direction of the company to a more sustainable future. Shell was even taken to court in the Netherlands, which ruled by 2030 Shell must cut its CO2 emissions by forty five percent, compared to the 2019 levels.



Former Unilever CEO Paul Polman was quoted saying “if you cannot explain as a company what you are doing to make this a better world, you have no reason for being”.¹ He explained that the cost to a company of not acting in a sustainable way, is much higher than doing so. Ultimately if senior management does not take meaningful actions and deliver on them then the company can lose investors and face a falling share price.

¹ Bonini and Swartz, 2014; McKinsey Global Institute, 2020

This is an amazing and exciting opportunity to be involved in a topic that the whole company is or will be focused on. Let's start by looking at the Global Mobility Policy Suite which is full of high carbon travel and services such as household goods! Perhaps switching to a monetary allowance in lieu of shipping household items is the answer?

But what has the Global Mobility Team potentially just done....

Encourage employees to discard items in the home location and buy new items in the host location, this is not environmentally friendly and goes against the principals of the circular economy.

So, if sustainability action is taken, the Global Mobility Team need to build in ways to educate and influence the relocating employee to dispose or purchase items in an environmentally friendly way.

Sustainability is a fascinating area that deserves attention now as history shows that if there is no consideration of the actions within the wider ecosystem and understanding of the interdependences in the world, it will cause unintended consequences elsewhere, sometimes with catastrophic outcomes. However, employees must be encouraged and remember there are huge opportunities to save the worldwide environment and develop sustainable and profitable worldwide companies.



McKinsey Global Institute advised that "By addressing risks and seizing new commercial opportunities, conducting business sustainably has the potential to benefit a business's bottom line and to build in long-term resilience."

A great responsibility lies with a company to communicate with client partners on their intentions. For example, that the company will only buy services from a company that can demonstrate meaningful actions to drive sustainability in all areas including their supply chain. For client partners meaningful changes, even small ones, should be welcomed and applauded by the Global Mobility Team. Starting this journey as soon as possible is important to avoid the risk of the journey getting stalled with a level of complexity not anticipated.

Now is the time to act.

There is a wealth of information to help learn more from internal resources, external consultants, networking to groups such as the LinkedIn group; [Sustainability and ESG in the Global Mobility Industry](#). The group's primary goals are to share knowledge of the actions Global Mobility Professionals, client partners and experts

in wider Industries are taking to reduce their carbon footprint and drive sustainability. Let's conclude with the words of the United States of America Climate envoy John Kerry who said in July 2021:

“The struggle tackling global climate change is about protecting and preserving the fragile world we inherited for future generations.”

“There are 100 days to save the next 100 years.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Paul leads the Inspire Global Mobility Consultancy and has over twenty eight years' experience in the amazing world of Global Mobility. With a proven track record of success in senior management, account management, consultancy and business development Paul has followed his passion for sustainability that led him to start the Inspire Global Mobility consultancy.

Paul has a keen interest in discovering new and innovative approaches to Global Mobility, along with the value technology can achieve. Paul's extensive experience comes from working with multinational companies in a diverse range of industries, nationalities and cultures. Providing Paul with valuable knowledge, cultural awareness and life skills which he uses to consult with Global Mobility and Procurement stakeholders to understand their objectives and deliver long term strategic value.

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