

Leading a Sustainable Enterprise-Leveraging Insight and Information to Act

IBM Institute for Business Value

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Objective:

This survey gauges how much effort are business leaders, across the globe, putting in to collect information to create sustainable and environment friendly businesses and what kind of information is being used. The survey also mentions certain companies and their achievements towards a sustainable business objective.

Methods Used:

224 Business Leaders surveyed worldwide in 2009. Leaders were surveyed about their companies' ethical labor standards, product composition, sustainable procurement (ethical/environmental), waste, carbon, energy & water management, product lifecycle.

Key Findings:

- 60% believe that Corporate Social Responsibility has increased in importance over the past year. 6% believe that it is less important.
- More than two-thirds of organizations focus on CSR as part of an integrated business strategy to grow new revenue streams and control costs.
- Outperforming organizations are far better at casting a wide net for information across their system. They also collect information that is relevant to understanding and meeting the performance challenges of operating in a sustainable manner.
- Four in ten of the business leaders surveyed reported that they had increased the amount of information collected about their operations.
- Three out of ten organizations surveyed don't ask their suppliers for any information in any of the eight categories of the survey.
- 43% ask for ethical labor standards, 31% ask for sustainable procurement information.
- Two-thirds admit that not enough information is collected by them to understand their customers or their CSR concerns. 37% respondents have yet to collect any information regarding the same.
- According to region, more than half of Western European business leaders said their companies understand their customers' CSR expectations while the number is slightly lower for North America. One in ten understood the same in the Asia-Pacific region.

Conclusion:

Organizations that seek to adopt a sustainable approach to business face decisions imposed by finite resource constraints. At the same time, there is information that is rapidly growing that can be used to organizations' advantage. To succeed, organizations should consider identifying information

gaps and analysis needs, align their objectives with those of stakeholders and then prioritize and assess leading practices and benchmarks.

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