

The Sustainable Development Goals

‘Every Australian’s business’
A guide for employees



Global Compact
Network Australia





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FOREWORD



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a shared blueprint to achieve a better, more just and sustainable world for all, where 'no one is left behind'.

In September 2015, all 193 Member States convened at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in New York, which culminated in the historic adoption of the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

These goals are a call to action, to develop innovative solutions to some of the world's most complex societal and environmental challenges: fight inequality, tackle climate change, support responsible production and consumption practices and drive more innovative partnership models that aim to achieve these Global Goals.

We know that the pathway to sustainable development will require unprecedented efforts and collaboration by all sectors of society. Businesses play a crucial role in forging this path.

This call to action corresponds with changing societal expectations. Investors, business customers and other stakeholders are now seeking to connect a business' financial performance to its social and environmental impact. In response, businesses are incorporating sustainability performance measures into business reporting to reflect the true value of and risks to their business. The SDGs provide a framework to enable this process.

Many businesses (both corporate and SMEs) across Australia have already started to integrate responsible business principles and the SDGs into their strategies and operations. Despite this progress, there are still opportunities for greater collaboration across sectors and a need for far greater transparency and public disclosure on progress against the SDGs.

Whilst the ethical drivers for ensuring that we embed the SDGs are obvious, the value to business is also evident. There is increasing pressure from investors to understand how business is leveraging the long-term value and benefits created as a result of embedding the SDGs in its strategies and operations. This includes leveraging the estimated \$US12 trillion worth of savings and revenue that can be harnessed through engagement and alignment with the SDGs by 2030 (Business & Sustainable Development Commission 2017).

With the growing realisation in the alignment between purpose and profit, the SDGs provide the direction and inspiration for businesses. They can tackle existing and future risks and challenges in a manner that contributes to societal goals.

At the heart of Australia's values is this notion of a 'fair go' for all. The SDGs provide this – they allow for business to actively participate in the creation of a better, more just and sustainable world that provides the opportunity to unlock opportunities, create new markets, drive innovation and create long-term, transformational change that delivers longer-term benefits for people and planet.

The Global Compact Network Australia (GCNA) is committed to being a leading catalyst for this transformation, and we welcome you to join us in aligning your strategy and operations to the UN Global Compact (UNGC) Ten Principles on human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.

Kylie Porter

*Executive Director of the
Global Compact Network Australia*

UN GLOBAL COMPACT

The world's largest corporate sustainability initiative calling companies to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and take actions that advance societal goals.

Launched in 2000 by then Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, the United Nations (UN) Global Compact is a call to companies to align their strategies and operations with the Ten Principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take actions that advance societal goals – using the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the lighthouse. The Global Compact is the world's largest voluntary corporate sustainability initiative. We are a leadership platform for development, implementation, disclosure, and innovation in responsible and sustainable corporate policies and practices. We work alongside companies anywhere along the path to sustainable development— from beginners to the most advanced leaders.

The multi-year strategy of the **UN Global Compact (UNGC)** is to drive business awareness and action in support of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The SDGs outline 17 universal goals that set a roadmap to 2030 on issues such as tackling climate change, enabling gender equity and managing human rights risks through supply chains. The SDGs are pushing companies to reassess long-term strategic directions to ensure that they are managing material risk and will continue to thrive in an ever changing landscape.

No matter how large or small, and regardless of their industry, all companies can contribute to the SDGs. While the scale and scope of the Global Goals is unprecedented, the fundamental ways that business can contribute remain unchanged.

The UN Global Compact asks companies to first do business responsibly and then pursue opportunities to solve societal challenges through business innovation and collaboration.

Global challenges – ranging from climate change, water and food crises, to poverty, conflict and inequality – are in need of solutions that the private sector can deliver, representing a large and growing market for business innovation.

In the rush to transform business models and systems for the future, integrity and values will have a huge role to play.

The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact

The Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact are derived from: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.



HUMAN RIGHTS

- 1 Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- 2 make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.



LABOUR

- 3 Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- 4 the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- 5 the effective abolition of child labour; and
- 6 the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



ENVIRONMENT

- 7 Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- 8 undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- 9 encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

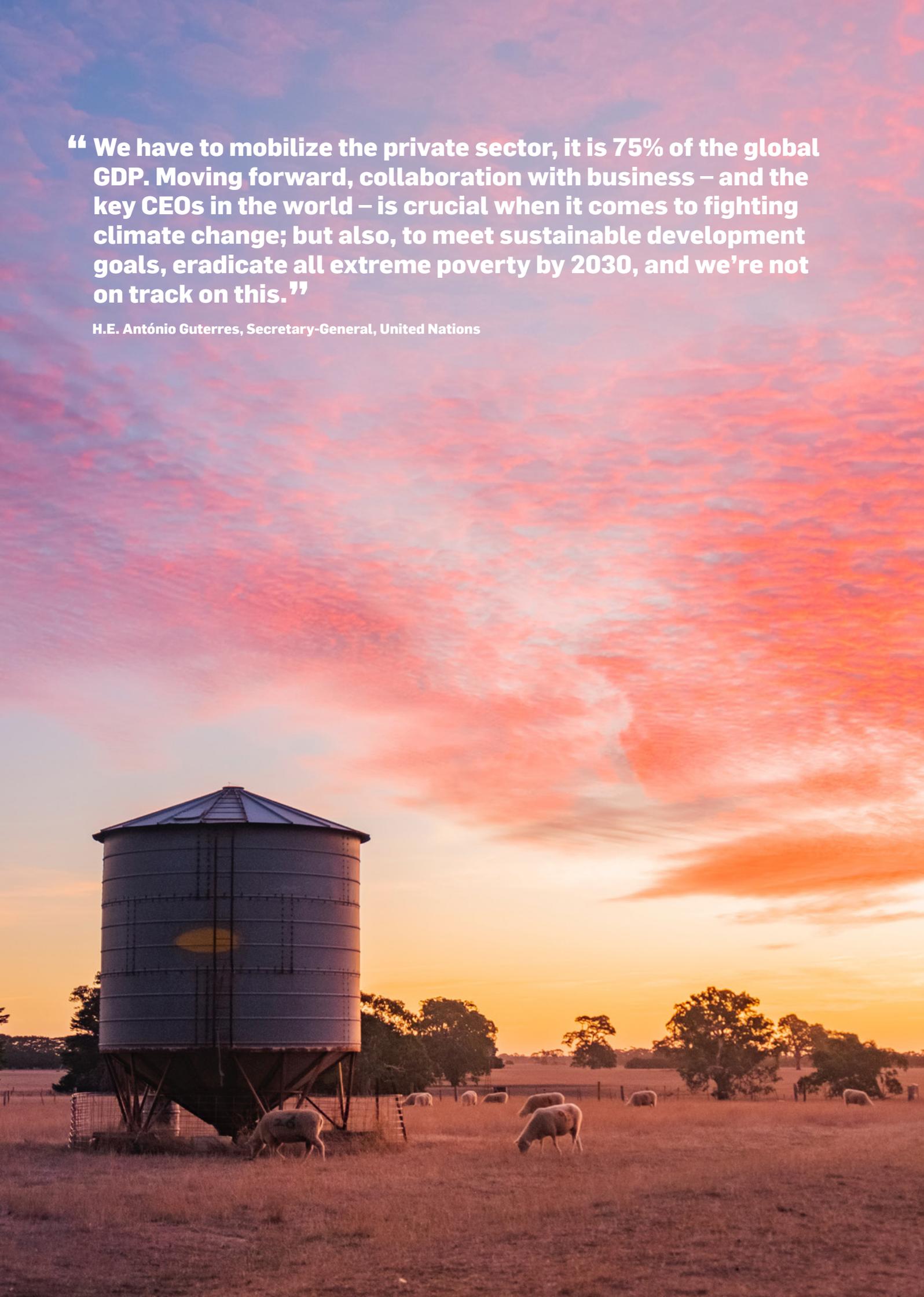


ANTI-CORRUPTION

- 10 Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

“ We have to mobilize the private sector, it is 75% of the global GDP. Moving forward, collaboration with business – and the key CEOs in the world – is crucial when it comes to fighting climate change; but also, to meet sustainable development goals, eradicate all extreme poverty by 2030, and we’re not on track on this.”

H.E. António Guterres, Secretary-General, United Nations



Global Compact Network Australia

Grounded in promoting responsible business practices, the Global Compact Network Australia (GCNA) is the Australian business-led initiative of the UN Global Compact. We work alongside leading companies and guide businesses on how uniting profit and responsibility can be at the core of their business by advancing the Ten Principles and ensuring that contribution to social and environmental investment drives long-term business success.



Global Compact Network Australia

<http://www.unglobalcompact.org.au>

“ Sustainable development is more than a goal. It is our responsibility to our planet and future generations ”

**H.E. António Guterres, Secretary-General,
United Nations.**

Engaging with the UN Global Compact

WHO HAS SIGNED UP TO THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT?

- **10,000 COMPANIES**
- **162 COUNTRIES**
- **65,000 PUBLIC REPORTS**
on progress aligned to the SDGs

WHERE DO I START?

For companies wanting to advance the SDG agenda, the job starts by acting responsibly – incorporating the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact widely into strategies and operations, and understanding that good practices or innovation in one area cannot make up for doing harm in another.

To sign up visit:

<http://www.unglobalcompact.org.au/membership/how-to-join>



A guide for all Australian employees

Regardless of the business or organisation you work for, its size or its industry, this guide provides practical knowledge, tools and skills for employees of all Australian businesses to better understand how the work you do links to the SDGs and the critical role you play in driving responsible action in the communities where you live and work.

This guide brings together insights and experience from many individuals working in Australian companies that are leading in their commitments and actions to drive responsible and sustainable action and accountability within their workplaces.

This guide will provide you with:

- better understanding of the SDGs and how they help to frame discussions about the major social and environmental issues affecting our communities and give businesses and their employees a globally recognised and endorsed set of goals to better frame what they are doing to act responsibly at work, at home and in the broader community.
- practical tools and examples to support you to have agency and voice the issues you are passionate about and be part of influencing and shaping how your workplace and your local community act responsibly and actively take part in contributing to achieving the SDGs.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the multi-stakeholder approach to the development of this guide. The information within this guide has been made possible through the coordination of the Global Compact Network Australia, funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the research and insights of Think Impact who authored the guide and the generous time and insights shared from a broad range of Australian businesses who took part in a series of workshops and interviews.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following companies who shared their experiences on the major drivers, current commitments, challenges and solutions to developing sustainable business commitments, structures and practices as well as their practical tips and advice on best practice to align business with the SDGs.



“ I’m hopeful. With the groundswell of support from the next generation, the cumulative impact of companies and their sustainability goals – we’ll be amazed by the impact.”

Marc Doyle, Chief Executive Officer, DuPont Company

ABOUT THE SDGs

The SDGs break down the world's greatest challenges into 17 global goals and targets to provide a road map for how we collectively take action to achieve them.

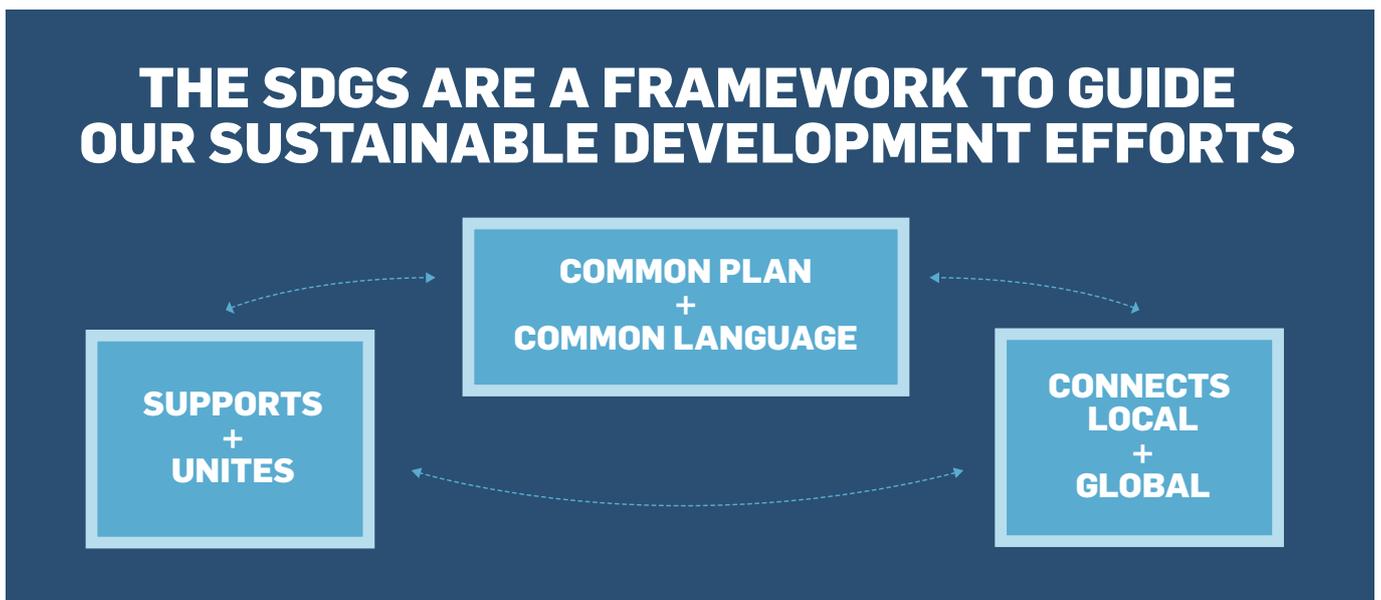
Governments around the world have signed up to the Global Goals and they have the responsibility to report national progress against each of the SDGs. However, when it comes to seeing what progress is happening, Governments look to business to see what action is taking place.

Each and every one of us has a responsibility to voice the social and environmental issues that are affecting our society and to drive change in how our workplaces and communities take action to address them.

Achieving the SDGs is going to require every business, regardless of size, and its employees to play an active part in making the world a better place for all of us.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS?

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** was agreed by 193 Member States at The United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September 2015, including Australia, and culminated in the 17 clear goals to reach by 2030. The Goals apply equally to Australia and Australians as they do internationally.



Find out how Australian organisations are doing their part to help Australia meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

<https://sdgs.org.au>

THE SDGs ARE GOOD FOR BUSINESS AND PEOPLE

Creating value for people by aligning with the SDGs

The expectations that people bring to their workplace in the 21st century have changed. Employees are seeking greater alignment on mission, purpose and work-life balance, and expect to be considered as critical stakeholders in the businesses in which they work. Organisations that can respond to these expectations will remain relevant and competitive and be more successful.

Businesses that make a commitment to embedding sustainability are more likely to be creating a positive culture and engaging their people. People want to work for an organisation that has a meaningful and strategic purpose. They will seek to align that purpose with their day-to-day work, as well as their personal values. Businesses that can enable this alignment are positioning themselves to realise long term benefits for employees by supporting responsible business practices and capturing some of the opportunities to live in a more equitable world. Employees will feel connected to this commitment and part of a broader effort to create positive change. They will be proud of where they work and be advocates for the business.

The SDGs provide a blueprint for businesses that want to engage their people to strive for future success as a team. Aligning business practice and purpose with the SDGs is much more than an 'altruistic' or ethical thing to do, it provides an opportunity to engage people on the journey and to design solutions together that will help shape the business's agenda.

Using the SDGs as the lens to manage sustainability impacts can provide value for employees in three key areas:

- **Working with a purpose:** most employees express a desire for fulfilling work.
 - Working with a sense of purpose allows employees to connect with their work and their company.
 - Working with a sense of purpose boosts employee motivation, productivity, morale and overall job satisfaction.
- **Impact on organisational culture:** corporate sustainability is underpinned by principles such as transparency, accountability, resilience and collaboration.
 - Embedding these principles into the way an organisation operates is likely to directly impact its culture in a positive way.
 - Creating a great place to work will impact employee satisfaction, productivity and ultimately, business success.
- **Encouraging innovation:** empowering employees to have influence in the business will also empower them to think differently, innovate and achieve greater things.
 - The SDGs are good for business because they are pushing companies and their people to produce new ideas, provide better solutions and pioneer new products.
 - This process of innovation has the potential to unlock trillions of dollars.

“ The key to creating a vibrant and sustainable company is to find ways to get all employees, from top executives to assembly workers, personally engaged in day-to-day corporate sustainability efforts. ”

Paul Polman, former CEO, Unilever

“ The Global Goals are not just a nice thing to do—they are a path to a prosperous world. ”

Alan Jope, CEO, Unilever

IMPACT2030 is a business-led initiative that, in collaboration with the United Nations and the wider community, is focused on the collective impact that employees make through workplace volunteering and taking action on social issues in communities where they live and work.

The Australian chapter is aimed at helping Australian businesses understand the collective impact of their employee volunteer programmes to advance the SDGs, or in other words, joining forces to make a bigger impact.

“ A lot of employees may not be aware of the SDGs, but people need the opportunity to know about them. You don't know what you don't know. We owe it to people to let them know about one of the biggest, most united global movements of our time, set to change the world to be better for generations to come. I lead Corporate Social Responsibility in a company of 1700 people in Australia, these are all smart, caring people who are curious to know more about how they can contribute to making a real difference into the future. It is surprising how many people want to know about the bigger picture.”

Leigh Simmonds, Chair of the Australian IMPACT2030 Council, from Pfizer Australia

Aligning business culture, commitments, policies, structures and actions with the SDGs creates a platform for the people who work within the business to engage and feel empowered to collaborate, innovate and succeed. Being an employer of choice creates great value for the business and its people.

- The SDGs provide a common language for business to align towards innovative market opportunities and incorporate responsible and sustainable corporate policies and practices into their business.
- Achieving the SDGs is estimated to unlock **\$12 trillion in new market opportunities** by 2030 (Business Commission for Sustainable Development).
- The Decade to Deliver report found that **consumers (53%) and employees (44%) are among the top stakeholders** that CEOs recognise will be most influential in how they manage sustainability over the next five years (Accenture UNGC 2019).
- In a survey of more than **1400 executives, more than 90% said that culture was important**, with almost as many saying culture was in the top five factors that their company values (Duke Fuqua School of Business, 2015).
- 92% of executives surveyed believe that improving their business culture would improve the financial value of the company, yet **only 15% said their firm's corporate culture was where it needed to be** (Duke Fuqua School of Business 2015).
- According to **The Business Case for Purpose**, 58 percent of companies that prioritised purpose achieved 10 percent or more revenue growth over 10 years (EY 2016).
- **Procurement in Australia is estimated to be worth \$600 billion**, and social procurement (choosing to purchase a social outcome when buying goods or services) is rapidly on the rise. (Social Traders, 2019).
- By 2021 its estimated there will be **\$105 million in trade between buyers and certified social enterprises**. (Social Traders, 2019).

“ You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say, we will never forgive you.”

Greta Thunberg, climate activist



Responsible businesses empower their people

Working for a business that acts responsibly and engages its employees in shaping how it creates positive impacts for people and the planet builds a workplace culture of pride where people feel valued in how their work is making a contribution to something larger.

Companies that are clear and transparent in sharing their corporate purpose and how this aligns to the SDGs will build trust with their employees as a company that acts responsibly, ethically and sustainably. The key is to make sustainability personally relevant to employees such that business decisions

at every level of the company are conducted through a sustainability lens. This will instil a sense of passion and urgency in employees to look to the SDGs as a tool to make sustainability part of their day-to-day jobs.

Acting responsibly helps businesses to find new ways of doing things; to empower employees to innovate and create new investment opportunities, explore new markets and products and build a culture of transparency and shared responsibility.

The SDGs create the fertile ground for businesses of the future to:



Why now?

- The SDGs are **our collective responsibility to achieve and everyone who makes up a business has a role to play**. We have a decade left to achieve the SDG targets.
- **Trust is critical to the future success of business** and the SDGs provide a framework to demonstrate accountability and transparency, and to empower employees to engage with and contribute to building and enhancing trust.
- Viable businesses of the future need to **challenge traditional thinking and embrace the collective responsibility** of a whole-of-business approach to contribute to creating a better world through the SDGs.
- **Influencing change also happens at the individual level**. As an employee your passion and commitment to contribute to positive change can be leveraged most effectively when your personal values and workplace values align. If you're committed to acting responsibly, this can cause a ripple effect and influence how you and others act at work and at home.

The importance of trust

To build trust, companies are looking to better articulate and embed their societal purpose. In the UN Global Compact's 2019 The Decade to Deliver report, a CEO of a 100-plus-year-old Fortune 500 brand, spoke of the increasing pressure to clearly communicate its value to society, and how this inspired a bottom-up process to refresh the company's central purpose, especially among young employees. In response, the company designed a framework that redefined a shared vision and strategic direction for the brand, drawing inspiration from and linking to the SDGs.

The role of employees

At work, action and impact don't just come from the leadership team, they come from a whole-of-workplace commitment to change behaviours and practices.

That's why the businesses that are the most successful in taking action to improve social and environmental issues encourage, support and value the input of their employees and build a culture of shared responsibility.

CEOs are recognising that employees are becoming one of the most important influencers in how they will manage sustainability over the next five years. Employees have the power to create a ripple effect of change in how we act responsibly at work, at home and in our communities.

In the UN Global Compact's 2019 **The Decade to Deliver report**, CEOs especially emphasized the role of younger generations in holding their employers to higher standards and demanding purpose-driven careers. Sustainability has become a key driver of recruitment and retention, especially with younger generations.

“ Young people are looking at a company's approach to sustainability while deciding on which companies to work for.”

T V Narendran, CEO and Managing Director of Tata Steel Limited

The business you work for is not just a participant in the SDGs – you and your colleagues have the potential to be drivers and amplifiers of positive sustainable action in the workplace. You play a critical role in how your organisation is making a meaningful contribution to global sustainability and influencing its suppliers, customers and local community.

Although governments create policy that influences how businesses operate, it is businesses and their employees, the people within them, that really impact the choices we make to change our behaviours and shift to responsible ways of how we work and live.



“ Instilling sustainability in each employee has a ripple effect on their actions outside the workplace.”

Julie-May Ellingson, Chief Executive Officer, Cape Town International Convention Centre

The Good Life Goals

Not everyone will understand or feel the need to embrace the language of the SDGs in the same way, but everyone can take action and contribute to making their actions in the workplace and in their home lives more sustainable.

The Good Life Goals provide a simple way to help you translate the SDGs into practical action you can take at a personal and local level. The Good Life Goals focus on our shared ability, desire and opportunity to take action at work, at home and in our communities.

The Good Life Goals are personal actions that everyone can take to help support the Sustainable Development Goals.

<https://www.goodlifegoals.org>



WHAT EMPLOYEES TOLD US MOTIVATES THEM AND THEIR BUSINESS TO ACT RESPONSIBLY



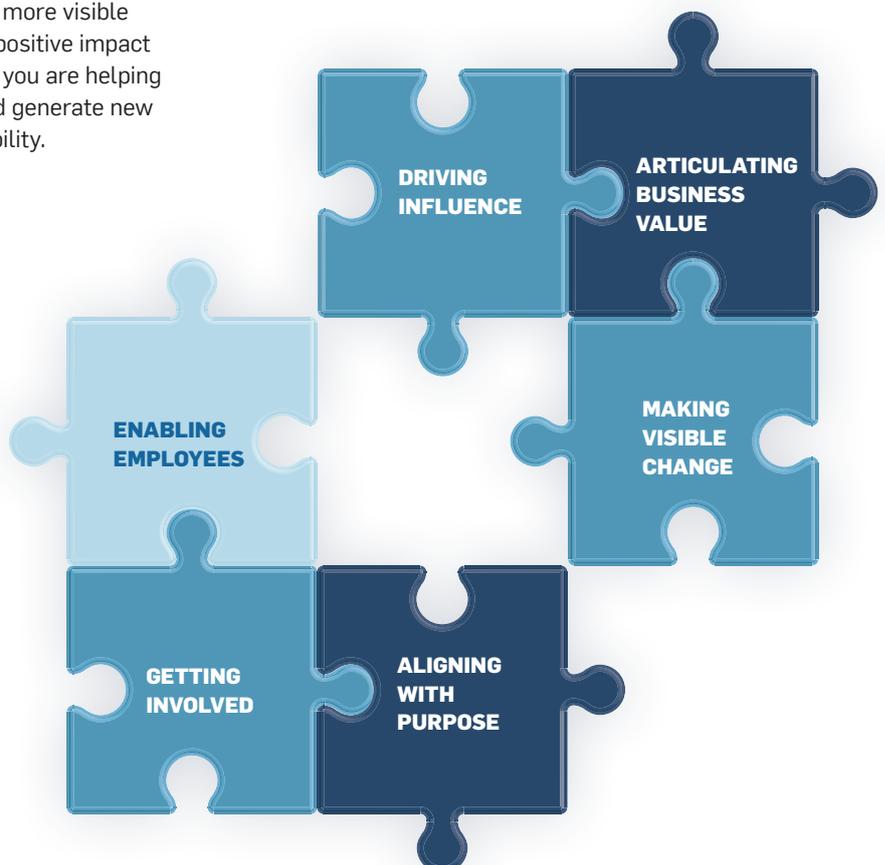
“ It has been made clear to everyone that we are living in a climate emergency. Sustainability is no longer a nice to have, but they are decisions which define the quality of life for everyone on this planet for the next 125 years.”

Christiana Figueres, Former United Nations Climate Change Head

TAKING ACTION IN THE WORKPLACE

Action on the SDGs in the workplace can take on many shapes and forms. Yet when you look across business, regardless of size or industry, six key themes emerge:

- **Aligning with purpose** Everyone is motivated when they feel good about where they work and the responsible actions their work is contributing to.
 - For example, companies that can create the sense of working towards a higher purpose by aligning the personal values of those that work there with the best interests of the business benefit from having a highly engaged and productive workforce – it makes you proud to play a part in bringing positive change through the company you work for.
- **Enabling employees** to take action by creating a culture that encourages and rewards people being proactive and innovative. A company should clearly articulate its corporate purpose, and then give employees a way to take part in delivering on that purpose.
 - For example, when the business supports you to feel empowered to develop initiatives to create solutions to issues affecting the local communities where you live and work.
- **Making change visible** It is essential for businesses to provide a framework that supports sustainability, but that also give you the flexibility to experiment and innovate to create change.
 - For example, once the business becomes more visible about its efforts and you start to see the positive impact on social and environmental investments you are helping to create, it inspires you to stay active and generate new ideas for other ways to improve sustainability.
- **Driving influence by sharing stories and engaging with others**
 - For example, sharing your lived experiences of taking part in initiatives to do good for social and environmental issues when you're outside of work can influence others to think about how their workplace could be doing more.
- **Getting involved in the design of policies and programs to respond to SDG commitments**
 - For example, evolve existing policies and programs and/or develop new ones so they are aligned to the SDGs. It's becoming common practice for Australian businesses to implement new policy ideas to make the business more sustainable and more equitable, such as diversity and inclusion, gender equality and recycling to be championed by employees.
- **Articulating the value that your sustainable actions create for the business**
 - For example, the value of investing in 'drink tap' as a campaign if you are a water company focused on goals around health and wellbeing or upholding principles of equality to build a culture of staff retention, customer and employee satisfaction and drive revenue is good for people and good for business.



CASE STUDY – OFFICEWORKS: POSITIVE DIFFERENCE PLAN



Officeworks is committed to helping make bigger things happen for its customers, team, the community and stakeholders. Part of one of Australia's largest listed companies, Wesfarmers, Officeworks operates 167 stores across Australia, employing 8,000 team members across the country, including more than 7,000 people working in retail stores.

Officeworks is focused on operating a responsible and sustainable business that supports the communities where its customers, team and stakeholders live and work. **The Positive Difference Plan** is Officeworks' long-term sustainability strategy that demonstrates its commitment to supporting the aspirations of team members and communities, source products in sustainable and responsible ways and reduce its operational impact on the environment.

The plan's three priority areas: Environment, Responsible Sourcing, and People map to SDGs 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13 and 15.

Alexandra Staley, General Manager Corporate Affairs, spoke about the shift towards integrating sustainability into the company's broader strategy and the growing drive to meet customer and employee expectations of the business in this area.

“ While we have regulatory requirements that we need to comply with, we are aware of what our customers and employees expect of us in this area. Officeworks' Positive Difference Plan is embedded across the business and provides a framework for all team members to understand the company's commitment to making a positive difference. Sustainability targets are part of the business' annual targets.”

Craig Booth, Area Manager NSW, oversees a mix of regional and city stores, and has been with the business for six years. Craig talked to us about the shift in company culture to be more visible about the contribution they make to sustainability:

“ In the past we didn't go around beating our chest about things that we do; we were quite humble. But through a shift in management and culture we now as a company, as a team, see there's an opportunity to do more to let our communities know all the great things that we do and help our customers contribute to that, to help them make more sustainable choices.”

As an area manager, Craig knows that stores' leadership teams are key to driving team member engagement for the company's sustainability initiatives. He said, it's about ensuring that the team understand the 'why' – and in many instances, the human element – of what they are doing. For example, in communicating the results of the annual Back to School appeal, which supports The Smith Family, “we talk in terms of the number of students we sponsor rather than money we have raised,” Craig said.

“ On the weekend when I'm going to a BBQ with friends, I'm proud to talk about the kinds of initiatives that Officeworks supports. Having a young family, our Back to School initiative pulls at my heart strings. When you see kids going to school with plastic bags instead of a backpack it shows me what a real difference we can make. The things that we do in that space, sponsoring over a thousand children through the Back to School Appeal, that makes a huge difference to the lives of the kids and the families we're helping; it's a great story and great thing that we can and do for our community and I'm really proud to be part of a business that is doing this.”

“ While we have regulatory requirements that we need to comply with, we are aware of what our customers and employees expect of us in this area. Officeworks' Positive Difference Plan is embedded across the business and provides a framework for all team members to understand the company's commitment to making a positive difference. Sustainability targets are part of the business' annual targets.”



We asked Craig about the language that is used among team members when talking about making a positive difference. He laughed and said that today was the first time he's heard the term SDGs, sharing that the language of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are not something many employees would be familiar with, however:

“ That doesn't take away from the fact that at a team level we talk passionately about the great things we do as a business and how we're making a real difference to the communities we live and work in. ”

Ultimately, Craig's role is about driving engagement with the team to better understand how the company is making a positive difference and to encourage them to actively be involved – and his advice on how to get your team engaged?

“ Have a bit of fun with it. ”

He referred to the most recent in store initiative Round Up to Make a Difference and how success was linked to the individual teams taking ownership of how they went about their fundraising. Round Up is an annual campaign, run in the month of June, where customers can round up the value of their purchase to the nearest dollar, or make a donation, to support local community groups.

Craig said:

“ This year our General Manager Store Operations and Business, Daniel Tollenaere took the shackles off and said, 'your store should do what you want to do and choose where you want to make a difference'; he allowed us to do our own thing and have fun with it. ”

” This transfer of ownership, giving store teams a chance to vote for what was going to make a difference in their local community was instrumental in engaging team members, raising awareness, and helping teams to understand and feel passionate about the 'Why' behind the initiative. And the fundraising efforts led to several unexpected benefits and opportunities for us to further engage with the community. Several stores' leadership teams were invited by local community groups to go and see how the money they raised is making a difference. ”

Another initiative Craig spoke about was Officeworks' Restoring Australia planting days.

“ I'm not an environmentalist in the traditional sense, but I certainly care about the environment, and our Restoring Australia initiative, where we plant two trees for every one our customers use, is a great way to physically get involved and spend time with your team actually making a difference with your own hands. ”

Bhavin Patel, Store Manager of Officeworks in East Perth spoke to us about the links between what happens in the workplace and what happens in people's lives at home.

“ The initiatives we take on at work are having a positive influence on people's home lives: I know not only in my own life but for several of our team, the way we do things at work has had an impact on how people are acting at home, for example our store's efforts around recycling have had a huge impact on how our team is talking about how they approach recycling at home. ”

So, what does it mean to work for a company that is committed to making a positive difference?

“ I know that I work for a company who are above average when it comes to our recycling efforts and that makes me proud. I've got two kids, and I want them to have a cleaner and better world to grow up in. In the few years when I left Officeworks, I worked for a company that didn't do very much in the sustainability space even though they had the resources to do more. Now that I'm back at Officeworks I know that I'm with the right kind of company where my values align to the kinds of practical things we do as a business to make a positive difference. ”

“ I was raised in a family where we were always taught to be the best that we could regardless of what that was. But also with an understanding that we had opportunities that other people didn't. And part of the deal of being given these opportunities is you have a duty to give back. I want to make this country a better place for myself, my friends, my family, my nephews and nieces.”

Karen Mundine, CEO of Reconciliation Australia



MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Be strategic

- Avoid the trap of trying to do everything. More is not always better. The company you work for might be doing a lot of good in lots of areas, but perhaps you can make a bigger impact by concentrating your efforts where you can make a bigger difference. Think about what really aligns to the purpose and values of your workplace and link your social and environmental initiatives to this.
- All employees can play a significant role in helping their companies decide where they can make the biggest impact in their local community. Voicing the issues that matter to you help you to engage with the positive actions your workplace is taking, and ultimately more engaged employees means bigger impact.
- It takes time for change to flow; remember it's not about trying to change the world on one day of the year, it's about a sustainable commitment to sustainability.

Collaborate and innovate

- Investigate who else is also trying to make a positive contribution to the same social and environmental issues as you and see if there are opportunities to partner up. Build partnerships by working with people inside and outside of your workplace to harness the collective impact of your efforts.
- Talk to your colleagues and managers about local community organisations you know where there might be an opportunity to work together to make a positive impact.
- There is no one-size-fits-all model, and no one has the perfect answer, but there is always an opportunity for businesses and their employees to try something new, to test new ways of measuring how you are creating impact.

Measure your impact

- Being part of contributing to global solutions can feel enormous and challenging. Remember, you're not the only team of employees trying to do good in the workplace and in your daily lives.
- Measure what you can through the initiatives you are taking part in and make sure this is captured and shared across the organisation.
- It can be difficult to measure social and environmental impact so ask for help when you need it. Sometimes just documenting the stories that you and your colleagues experience getting involved in sustainability initiatives is one of the most powerful ways to share the impact that is being created.

Communicate

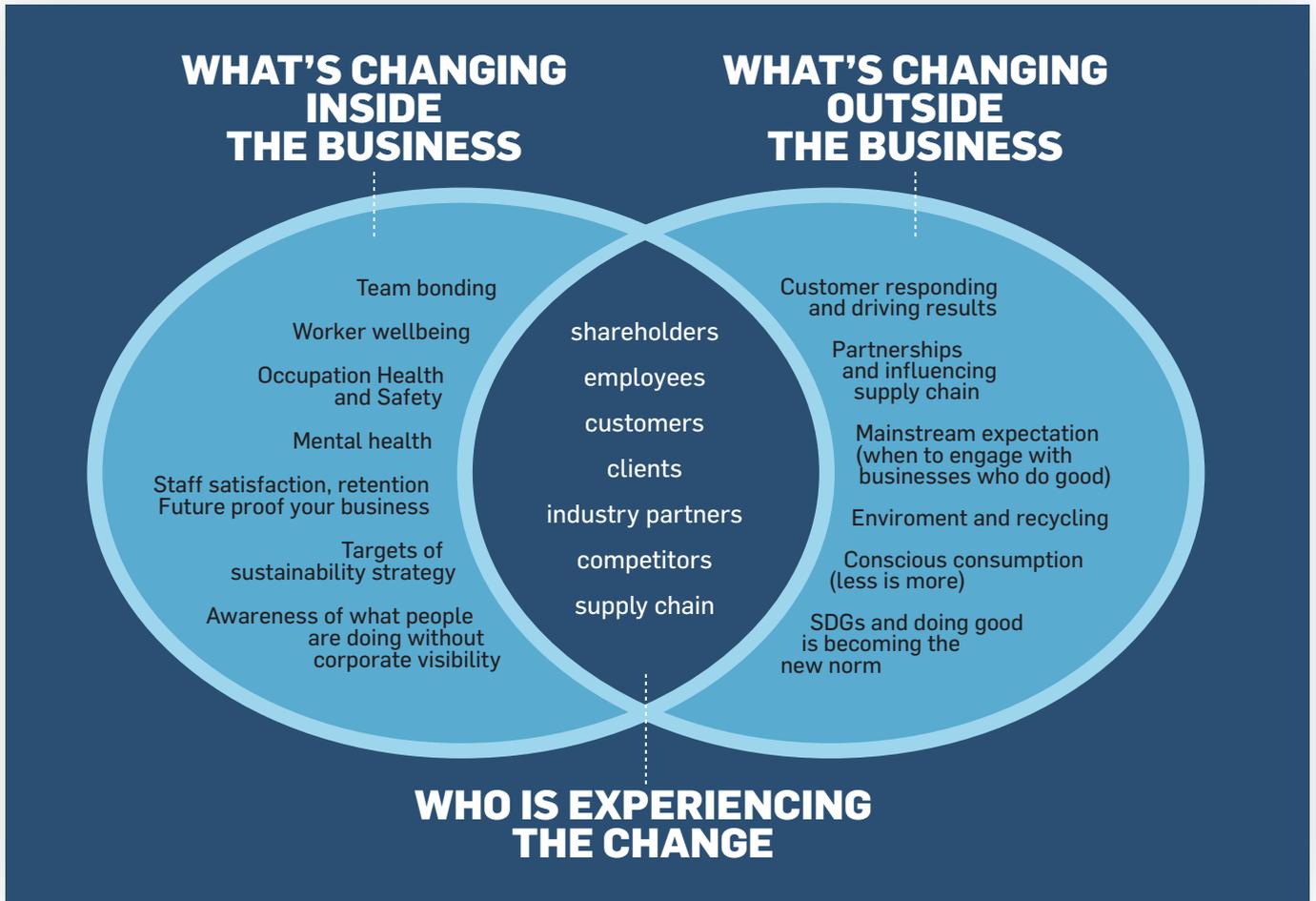
- Talk about what sustainability and 'doing good' means for you, your colleagues and your workplace in your own language that holds meaning for you. Don't feel pressured to have to speak in 'sustainability' or SDG language for your actions to have a real impact.
- Make it relevant. Give meaning to your initiatives by giving them a local context. Remember you're trying to make the global framework of the SDGs relevant for you, the people you work with and the communities you live in.

“ With less than 4,000 days remaining until the 2030 target, leaders are not content with current progress and calling for their sectors and peers to step-up and turn commitment into action. The scale of the challenge is unprecedented and requires all stakeholders, including governments, policymakers, business leaders, investors, shareholders, civil society and academia, to work together to accelerate change.”

Lise Lingo, Executive Director and CEO of the United Nations Global Compact

SEEING THE CHANGE

When your workplace decides to invest in sustainability, in making a positive difference, in generating social impact, where does this change occur?



“ The SDGs reflect an optimism about humankind’s shared future and a recognition that each person has a role to play in the co-creation of that future. ”

Chris Jarvis, Founder of the global IMPACT2030 initiative

IMPACT2030 is a global social movement committed to better understanding and harnessing the collective impact of employee volunteering.

TAKE ACTION

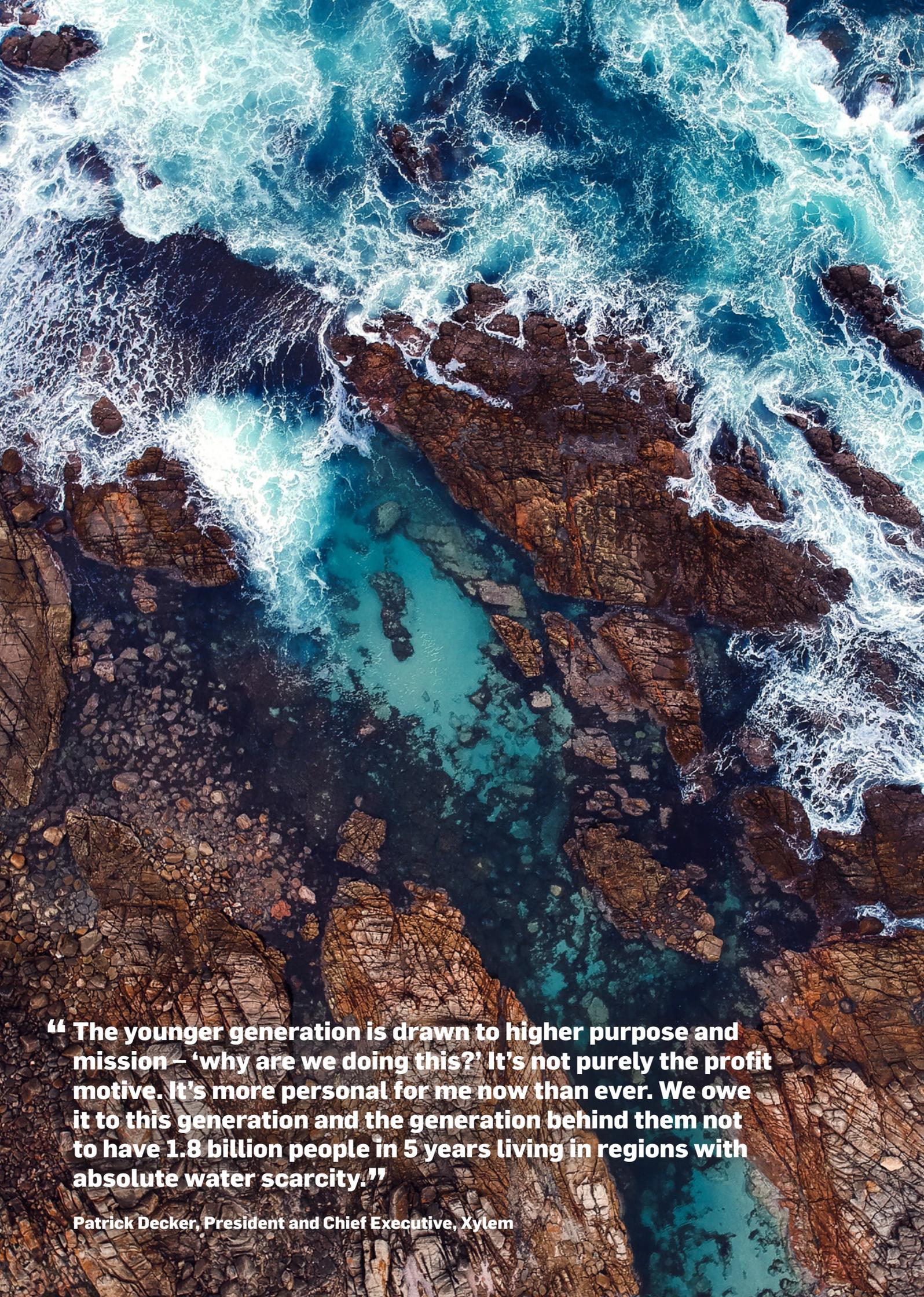
- **Get focused.** Determine **what's most important and aligned** to your workplace and choose the SDGs that best align. Drive real change where you can make the **biggest impact**.
- **Get familiar with your sustainability strategy.** What is the core purpose of the business you work for and what is the business responsible for? How do your sustainability commitments align? How is this integrated into all of the initiatives that employees can engage with?
- **Develop your own language that have meaning and value for you and your workplace. Own it, make it part of your culture.** What's going to inspire and encourage you and your teams to engage? What's going to make sense to you and your colleagues, your culture, your industry. Develop your own examples of real world, lived experience about how you're making a positive difference. Celebrate the people that are doing things and share these stories.
- Talk with your managers so you understand how you will **measure and communicate** your **impact and map your contribution to the SDGs**.
- **Put it into action. Set realistic timeframes and targets.** Avoid not taking action out of fear that the challenges we are facing are too big. Consider the urgency to make the world a better place and realise you have a powerful ability to make a meaningful contribution.
- **Build on your impact** (the change you create) over time. Develop **short, medium- and long-term indicators and targets** so you can build on your social impact.

“ To live is to choose. But to choose well, you must know who you are and what you stand for, where you want to go and why you want to get there.”

**Kofi Annan, United Nations
Secretary General 1997 – 2006**

- **Be part of empowering everyone you work with to take action and ownership of how your workplace is taking action towards the SDG.** The aim is to create shared action and accountability across the business. Encourage everyone to get involved and take responsibility for driving the initiatives they feel most passionate about. Talk to your managers and colleagues about developing sustainable actions that everyone in the business can get involved with and understand how these actions are working in support of one another. If you're a team leader, encourage and support your team to be proactive and engage with workplace initiatives to create social impact.
- **Take what you learn home.** Take the knowledge and tools you learn about sustainability at work home with you so you can continue to make a positive difference in other areas of your life.





“ The younger generation is drawn to higher purpose and mission – ‘why are we doing this?’ It’s not purely the profit motive. It’s more personal for me now than ever. We owe it to this generation and the generation behind them not to have 1.8 billion people in 5 years living in regions with absolute water scarcity.”

Patrick Decker, President and Chief Executive, Xylem

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING TOOLS

SDG Related Tools and Initiatives

- See if your workplace is a participant of the UN Global Compact and a member of the Global Compact Network Australia; if not, talk to your manager about being part of the initiative.
www.unglobalcompact.org.au/membership/how-to-join
- Talk with your colleagues and/or manager about sharing a case study of your social impact initiatives on the Australian SDG site: <https://sdgs.org.au>
- Review the tools and support available for Australian Businesses to 'Get Started' and better engage with the SDGs
<https://sdgs.org.au/about-us/resources/>
- Visit the SDG Academy to access open online courses and educational materials on sustainable development and the SDGs: <https://sdgacademy.org>
- Employees Teach the Global Goals: a volunteering toolkit designed to mobilise employee volunteers and inspire millions of young students about the Global Goals around the world. <https://www.impact2030.com/employeeteachsdgs>

Learn how the SDGs link to and impact specific industries:

– Financial Services

https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/SDGMatrix_FinancialSvcs.pdf

– Food, Beverage & Consumer Goods

https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/SDGMatrix-ConsumerGoods.pdf

– Climate Extract

https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/SDGMatrix-climate-extract.pdf

– Healthcare & Life Sciences

https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/SDGMatrix-Healthcare.pdf

– Industrial Manufacturing

https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/SDGMatrix-Manufacturing.pdf

– Transportation

https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/SDGMatrix_Transportation.pdf

– Energy, Natural Resources, Chemicals

https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/SDG-industry-matrix-enrc.pdf

Other business sustainability and social impact reporting guidance:

- Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards
www.globalreporting.org/standards/
- International Integrated Reporting <IR> Framework
<https://integratedreporting.org>
- Social Return on Investment (SROI)
<http://www.socialvalueuk.org/resources/sroi-guide/>
- AccountAbility five-part materiality test
<https://www.accountability.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Redefining-Materiality-2.pdf>
- SASB Materiality Map
<https://materiality.sasb.org/>
- Science based targets <https://sciencebasedtargets.org>
- Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) <https://www.fsb-tcfd.org>

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

About the authors

Think Impact

Think Impact is a highly experienced team of specialists in impact-led strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, impact measurement and sustainability reporting. We support organisations, business and government to understand the greatest contribution they can make to creating value and positive change. We provide consultancy services across strategic advisory roles, program design, management and evaluation, communication and training services to support organisations from all sectors to improve their future readiness, solve complex problems and develop new solutions. We work with our partners to **understand, communicate, and transform** the social and environmental impacts of their work into long term sustainable practice for purpose.

Our team is heavily committed to championing a new norm for business and industry, one where it's common practice to measure the environmental and human benefits of our work in the world. Our vision is about moving society towards a new prosperity, including helping businesses to transform their impact through finding new ways of working, investing and collaborating for collective impact is at the heart of our practice.

Think Impact is a certified BCorp (Benefit Corporation), a United Nations Global Compact participant and a GRI Community Member committed to making a positive difference in the world.



This guide was written and prepared by Amanda Nuttall, Alischa Ross and Stephanie Lightfoot from **Think Impact**

Image sources

Forest canopy trees: Angela Benito - Unsplash.com

Farm with sheep at sunset: Holger Link - Unsplash.com

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