



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



The role of business

More people globally are expected to join the middle class over the next two decades. These socioeconomic and demographic changes are good for individual prosperity but will increase demand for already constrained natural resources. Societies need to find just and equitable ways to meet individual needs and aspirations within the ecological limits of the planet. Sustainable practices in the production phase of products and services will not provide sufficient responses to meet science-based emissions reduction targets, natural resource constraints or the growing demand for basic needs such as food, water and sanitation, and access to energy. Furthermore, demand for materials will likely outpace efficiency gains in supply chains as well as overwhelm already stretched ecosystem services. Consumption patterns need to be made sustainable, particularly lifestyles in industrialized societies, and reduce their ecological footprint to allow for the regeneration of natural resources on which human life and biodiversity depend.

It is in the interest of business to find new solutions that enable sustainable consumption and production patterns. A better understanding of environmental and social impacts of products and services is needed, both of product life cycles and how these are affected by use within lifestyles. Identifying “hot spots” within the value chain where interventions have the greatest potential to improve the environmental and social impact of the system as a whole is a crucial first step. Business can use its innovative power to then design appropriate solutions that can both enable and inspire individuals to lead more sustainable lifestyles, reducing impacts and improving well-being.

Key business themes addressed by this SDG

- Sustainable sourcing
- Resource efficiency of products and services
- Materials recycling
- Procurement practices
- Product and service information and labeling

Examples of key business actions and solutions

The below examples are non-exhaustive and some may be more relevant to certain industries than to others.

- Implement product portfolio analysis tools to understand environmental and social footprint of products within lifestyles as well as production. Innovation must align products and applications to appropriately address sustainability megatrends.
- Develop innovative business models such as moving from selling products to selling services, to retain ownership of the products and help close the materials loop.
- Enable sustainable consumption by developing innovative solutions can reduce energy need in usage and educate consumers about these benefits.
- Reduce manufacturing impacts by substituting virgin raw materials in products with post-consumer materials through recycling and upcycling.
- Apply modular design, so products’ constituent parts will be easily separated and either re-used without further processing, or easily recycled near the point of disposal.
- Significantly reduce waste and ensure that any unavoidable waste is utilized to the fullest degree (e.g. organic waste as fuel or fertilizer).



Examples of key business indicators

- CDP's Water Questionnaire, W1.2c: Water consumption: for the reporting year, please provide total water consumption data, across your operations
- CEO Water Mandate's Corporate Water Disclosure Guidelines: Water performance in the value chain
- GRI G4 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, G4-EN2: Percentage of materials used that are recycled input materials
- GRI G4 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, G4-EN27: Extent of impact mitigation of environmental impacts of products and services
- GRI G4 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, G4-EN28: Percentage of products sold and their packaging materials that are reclaimed by category

The complete overview of business indicators can be found at www.sdgcompass.org

Examples of key business tools

- Think.Eat.Save Guidance version 1.0
- Impact Reporting & Investment Standards (IRIS)
- Global Protocol on Packaging Sustainability 2.0
- Food Loss and Waste Protocol
- Eco-Synergy
- Corporate Ecosystem Services Review

The complete overview of business tools can be found at www.sdgcompass.org

The SDG targets

12.1 Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programs on sustainable consumption and production (10YFP), all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries

12.2 By 2030, achieve sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources

12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer level, and reduce food losses along production and supply chains including post-harvest losses

12.4 By 2020, achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle in accordance with agreed international frameworks and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment

12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse

12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and trans-national companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle

12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable in accordance with national policies and priorities

12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature

12.a Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacities to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production

12.b Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products

12.c Rationalize inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities

