



## Business and Industry



This section is for individuals and organizations that support, deliver, or provide environmental and sustainability education to business and industry groups.

### Outcomes

Business and industry will:

1. Assess the environmental impacts of their operations, and incorporate environmental considerations into all levels of decision-making

#### *Sample Indicators:*

- They perform regular sampling, monitoring, and testing to assess their impacts on the environment.
  - They conduct **life cycle analysis** of products to evaluate the environmental impacts.
  - They factor environmental costs and benefits into their business accounting.
  - They incorporate the **precautionary principle** into their operations to ensure progress and innovation without unnecessary risk to environmental or human health, both immediate and long term.
2. Establish long-term goals for integrated environmental performance, and strive for continual improvement

#### *Sample Indicators:*

- They draft and implement environmental policies that govern all aspects of their daily operations, products, services, and accountability.
  - They invest in research and development to improve the environmental effects of their practices, operations, and products.
2. Offer environmental education and training, and outline changes in practices for their employees



### ***Sample Indicators:***

- They provide E&SE opportunities for their employees.
- They provide employees and the local community with opportunities to share their environmental concerns and ideas for improvement.
- More workplaces participate in environmental and sustainability education, and change practices.

### 3. Protect and enhance their environment

### ***Sample Indicators:***

- They continually identify and adopt practices to reduce greenhouse gases through conservation, demand-side management, and alternative energy sources.
- They quantify their environmental releases and take measures to generate less waste and pollution.
- They promote the conservation of the natural habitat around their area of operation.
- They sponsor and support local community environmental projects.

### 4. Be accountable to the public with regards to environmental performance

### ***Sample Indicators:***

- They meet or exceed all government regulations, standards, and guidelines.
- They conduct regular third party environmental compliance and environmental management system audits.
- They publish their environmental performance data, including data on emissions and waste, in their annual report.
- They provide educational materials regarding their operations, environmental impacts, and progress towards ecological **sustainability**.

## **Needs**

### **Business and industry need:**

- Innovation, initiative, and market development for rethinking the design, production, and delivery of goods and services to reflect needs and significantly reduce environmental impacts
- Funding to create a level playing field for environmentally and socially beneficial business activities
- Incentives to promote **sustainability**, environmental accountability, and profitability
- Business lobbies that influence government to support **sustainability**
- Government assistance for motivating consumers to support companies whose products are more energy efficient, use less toxic materials, use renewable resources, and contain recycled materials
- Economic indicators that reflect **sustainability**: GDP (gross domestic product) is replaced by **GPI (genuine progress indicator)**



- Shareholder cooperatives that adhere to values of environmental responsibility
- Funding for environmental health programs within the business and industry sector

## Strategies

### *Programs, Projects, and Policies*

1. Conduct comprehensive studies to identify standardized data on all inputs and outputs associated with products—renewable and non-renewable resource use, energy, water, emissions, waste, and noise—and their potential environmental effects.
2. Calculate environmental costs of operations and introduce a participatory program for reduced environmental impacts (e.g., environmental management programs).
3. Establish programs to develop more cost efficient, environmentally responsible products that use reusable materials designed for disassembly or recycling, assess and phase out toxic chemicals, and minimize or eliminate packaging.
4. Create minimum standards for recycled content of products (e.g., raw materials, components, packaging, and containers).
5. Take responsibility for post-consumer waste collection and the sustainable disposal of products.
6. Educate staff on the advantages of practicing reduction whenever possible before recycling.
7. Provide training for employees to implement environmental management decisions.
8. Involve employees in workplace environmental projects (e.g., commute-to-work days).
9. Create projects that promote collaboration between businesses and the community to improve the surrounding environment.
10. Improve drainage and groundwater conservation around industrial plants by limiting the amount of pavement and increasing the use of porous materials for less runoff to sewers.

## Resources

1. Source and make available information on environmental audits, monitoring, and measurement tools (i.e., environmental management systems) for business and industry to improve environmental knowledge and performance.
2. Provide information on the services of organizations that specialize in helping businesses integrate **sustainability** into their core strategies, designs, staff training, and operations.
3. Adopt or develop environmental purchasing guidelines to guide sustainable, environmentally responsible resources, services, and purchasing choices.



## *Support*

1. Publicize information on sustainable management techniques and cost efficient, environmentally responsible products.
2. Provide incentives for promoting ecological **sustainability** in business, and for producing environmentally responsible products and services.
3. Make more grants and financial incentives available for research and development in the area of sustainable development.
4. Offer greenhouse gas tax breaks for companies using renewable energy.
5. Offer tax breaks for employees who use energy efficient transportation.
6. Create ad campaigns to promote awareness of green companies and their products.
7. Conduct market research on clients' environmental awareness and desired change in product manufacturing to protect the environment; publicize results.
8. Recognize and publicize environmentally responsible businesses and industries.
9. Establish socially responsible cooperatives where all employees have a voice in decision-making, and where **sustainability** shares priority with maximizing profits.
10. Provide opportunities for collaboration and partnerships among business and environmental, community, and health organizations.
11. Create projects that promote business and community collaboration to improve the surrounding environment.

*Please see Appendix 1 for a list of useful websites.*

