

DEFINING CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITY STILL A KEY CHALLENGE FOR COMPANIES

Some argue companies may not be doing enough. But is that a problem with terminology?

It has been widely reported that companies are increasingly aware of social and environmental factors affecting their business. However, what companies are doing in terms of sustainability varies greatly. While many companies are creating and implementing sustainability plans, there is some criticism over what some are claiming as sustainability policies. For one thing, they are misnamed, says a [recent Economist article](#). “These are efficiency policies, not sustainability ones. Companies ought to want

to save energy or cut waste anyway, regardless of the impact on the environment”. Some progressive companies are setting targets not only for themselves but for the people it works with and sells to.

Simultaneously, corporate sustainability reporting has taken off in recent years. Companies have volunteered to disclose anything from emissions reductions to human capital practices. But some argue that by separating sustainability reporting from business activity reporting, it marginalizes sustainability and further obscures the meaning.

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LEAKED IPCC REPORT SENT TO GOV'TS INCLUDES STERN WARNING ABOUT AFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Draft report highlights dangers of rising temperatures and warns about irreversible damage

The 127-page final draft of the latest [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) report was sent to governments earlier this week. The leaked report warns that “the effects of global warming already are felt across all the continents and oceans and further emissions will increase the likelihood of severe, pervasive

and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems.” Additionally, the draft report paper is doubtful that countries will be able to limit global warming to the agreed goal of 2 degrees Celsius. Additionally, “[economic losses](#) for a warming level of 2.5 degrees Celsius (4.5 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels may reach 2 percent of global income, according to the panel, which acknowledged existing estimates are ‘incomplete,’ and the calculation has ‘limitations.’”

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RECENT WIN FOR GMO COMPANIES; LABELING IS STILL CONTROVERSIAL

A few recent wins for GMO supporters: A new law on the Hawaiian island of Kauai that would have required [large agricultural companies](#) to disclose pesticide use and genetically modified (GMO) crop plantings has been overturned. The ruling reveals that state regulations override local regulations on GMO and therefore these local requirements are invalid. It would have mandated the establishment of buffer zones around schools, homes and hospitals to protect people from exposure to pesticides used on the crops.

Meanwhile some of the most liberal groups in America are now opposing mandatory GMO labeling. Mainstream American media outlets, such as the New York Times and the [Boston Globe](#) have recently published articles arguing that GMO products are not more risky to consumers.

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IEA REPORTS A SLOWDOWN IN RENEWABLES MARKET GLOBALLY

Global slowdown triggered by political uncertainty and grid integration risks

The global capacity for clean energy investment will still rise to USD 1.61 trillion by 2020. But the International Energy Agency (IEA) recently predicted a USD 20 billion drop in yearly new clean energy funding by the decade's end, bringing it down to USD 230 billion. In its first

investment outlook, the agency's 2014 medium-term forecast for renewable electricity generation predicts "annual 5.4% growth rates to total 7,310 TWh by 2020 – a 0.6% drop on last year's forecast. The new 2018 estimation is for only total 5,505 TWh, compared to last year's 6,850 TWh."

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STAT OF THE WEEK

Researchers have found more than 500 bubbling methane vents on the seafloor off the US East Coast. The scientists say there could be about **30,000** of these hidden methane vents worldwide. And we used to blame it all on the cows!

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ARCHITECTS MAKE NEW 'NET-ZERO' BUILDING COMMITMENT

Net-zero buildings will be the norm by 2050 says International Union of Architects

At last week's annual World Congress, architects from across the world unanimously adopted the [2050 Imperative](#), which commits architects and designers to 100 percent net-zero energy design and construction by that year. Up until now,

[Architecture 2030](#) asked architects to commit to reducing building emissions by 50% by the year 2030. The 2050 Imperative says, "recognizing the architects' central role in planning and designing the built environment, and the need to reduce carbon emissions to zero by 2050 and provide equal access to shelter."

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BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Think one 12 oz. cup of coffee takes 12 oz. of water to make? Think again. Over 100 gallons of water is needed to grow the coffee beans for one 12 oz. cup.

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