

BREAKOUT SESSION: FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

This session explored the journey towards becoming a future-proof business as set out in the WBCSD's new published [Future-Proof Business Guide](#). This report articulates a pathway for the evolution of corporate practice to refocus company purpose and performance towards the delivery of balanced environmental, social and economic value. Part of this journey will be a shift in resource relationships within the business – from a dominant extractive approach to one of stewardship and long-term resource management.

Circular economy has a huge role to play in this transformation and we explored the launch of [The business case for circular buildings](#) report which offers an example of transformational thinking in practice, in combination with the already published [Circular Transition Indicators v2.0](#).

The session was hosted and moderated by **Jonathan Gill** from **Unilever** and highlights of the two reports were presented by **Sarah Bostwick Stromoski** from **Philip Morris International** (Future Proof Business guide) and by **Roy Antink** from **Stora Enso** (Business case for circular buildings).

A panel discussion followed and was joined by **Achim Hupperts** of **DSM** to discuss the strategic need for corporate sustainable transition, the practical challenges of defining and implementing meaningful change and the specific role and benefits of circular thinking, with a specific focus on the building and construction sector.

THE KEY TAKEAWAYS

OPPORTUNITIES/SOLUTIONS:

The Future Proof Business Guide contains both conceptual content to drive change but also the maturity assessment tools to allow companies to assess where their practice is now and to identify their ambition for progressing, across a wide range of corporate aspects.

That the business case for circular buildings gives a clear picture of why and how circular thinking brings both business and sustainability benefits across the environmental, social and economic spheres, but also a range of tools, guidance and techniques for putting the theory into practice.

That Circular Transition Indicators 2.0 present a transparent framework that supports business in their transition to the circular economy.

CHALLENGES:

Corporate transition requires both clarity of purpose and strategic choice to navigate a complex future with the rigor of operational implementation to embed change withing business practice and performance.

Circularity in practice requires holistic thinking, from the inception and design of processes, systems and construction projects to the ability to record and retain product and component information and materials registers.

The recognition that sustainability presents significant opportunity for innovation, but this has to be backed up by clear investment intention and delivery and that the evolution of truly sustainable product portfolios take time.

That turning round established businesses take time, but that the debate has moved on from “what should we do to drive efficiency through sustainability?” to “what does our business need to enable us to be resilient, create value over the long term and continue to attract the capital we need?”.

More information:

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