

EUROWEEK 2020

International Hellenic University
Greece, Kavala
May 4 – 8, 2020

Specification of topic:

SUSTAINABLE VALUE CREATION FOR THE FUTURE: CAN YOU HEAR THE ECO?

A growing interest towards sustainability has gathered momentum in the recent time due to global financial crisis, spikes in the prices of energy and material resources, mega mergers, global warming, diminishing social systems and global corporate scandals (Charan, 2009; Laszlo and Zhexembayeva, 2011). However, despite an overall increase in consciousness and efforts to pursuit of sustainability, the general scenario appears to be one of increasing commitments by a small group of supporters, rather than the emergence of a renovated mass culture (Renukappa et al., 2012). Most definitions of sustainability principles focus on the “triple bottom line” concept, where organisations simultaneously consider their economic, social and environmental sustainability performance. Firms need to improve social and human welfare and reduce their ecological footprint for sustainable value creation besides achieving organizational objectives (Sharma, 2003).

At the same businesses have enormous power, resources, networks, knowledge and skills. If all of that was harnessed towards creating a sustainable future, ending poverty, hunger and war, there is no limit to what could be achieved. With the changing expectations of consumers, employees and regulators, being best in the world is no longer enough. Businesses are now also expected to be best for the world: to be socially and environmentally responsible, sustainable and ethical.

Therefore, Euroweek’s 2020 topic is related to the scientific fields of Corporate Social Responsibility, Environmental Sustainability, Business Ethics and Responsible Leadership.

The last sentence of Euroweek’s topic 2020 (can you hear the eco?) is effectively a pun. A deliberate confusion of similar words or phrases for rhetorical effect between eco (prefix – connected with the environment) and echo (noun - a sound or sounds caused by the reflection of sound waves from a surface back to the listener – This is parallel to the global “screaming” for action about sustainability without any immediate response, reflecting from a “wall” back to the listener).

Refences

1. Charan, R. (2009), *Leadership in the Era of Economic Uncertainty: The New Rules for Getting the Right Things Done in Different Times*, McGraw-Hill, Chicago, IL.
2. Renukappa, S., Egbu, C., Akintoye, A. and Goulding, J. (2012), A critical reflection on sustainability within the industrial sectors, *Construction Innovation*, Vol. 12 No. 3, 2012, pp. 317-334.

3. Laszlo, C. and Zhexembayeva, N. (2011), *Embedded Sustainability: The Next Big Competitive Advantage*, Greenleaf Publications, Sheffield.

4. Sharma, S. (2003), "Research in corporate sustainability: what really matters?", in Sharma, S. and Starik, M. (Eds), *Research in Corporate Sustainability: The Evolving Theory and Practice of Organizations in the Natural Environment*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, pp. 1-29.

