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The Principles of Sustainable Acquisition

What it *is* – and What *isn't*

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Preamble to the U.S. Constitution

.... in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare...

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

“The Congress, ... declares that it is the continuing policy of the Federal Government... to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans.”

What is sustainable development?

The Brundtland Commission, “Our Common Future”

(1987): “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

It contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and,
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.”

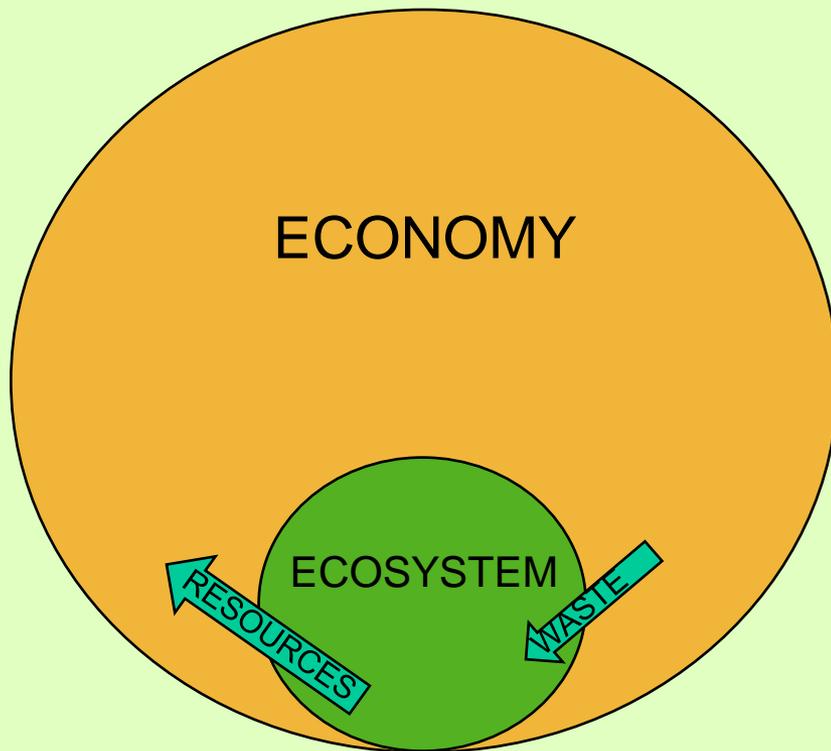
World Business Council for Sustainable Development (ca. 1997)

"Sustainable development involves the simultaneous pursuit of economic prosperity, environmental quality and social equity. Companies aiming for sustainability need to perform not against a single, financial bottom line, but against [this] triple bottom line."

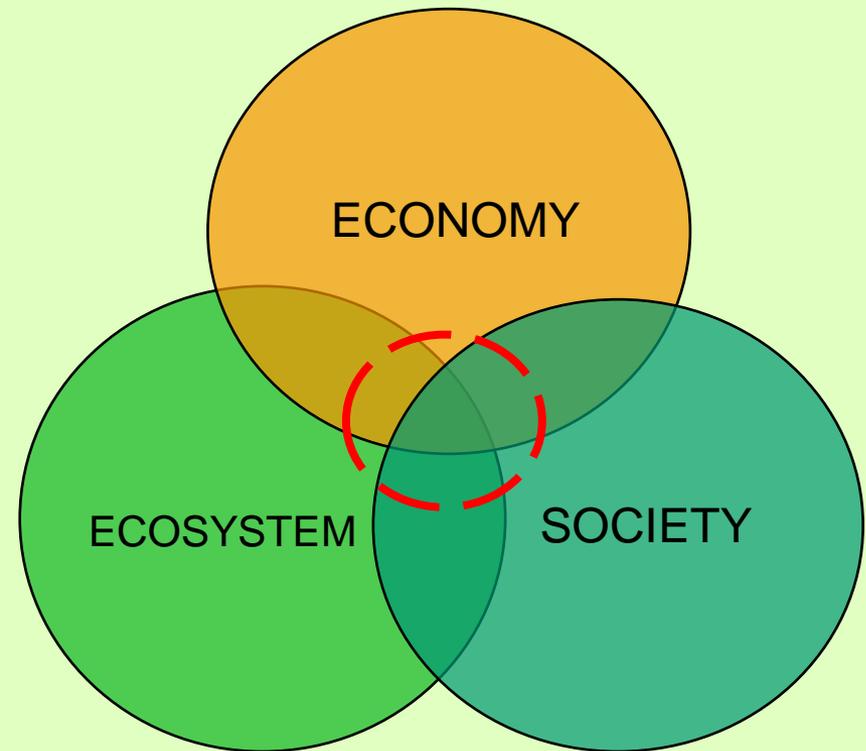


Traditional Economics

The environment is a subset of the economy.



“Triple Bottom Line”



Traditional Economics

ENVIRONMENTAL AND RESOURCE ECONOMICS

- Look at the lifecycle of our economic activities,
- Monetize ecosystem benefits and costs of environmental problems,
- Use taxation and other market-based mechanisms to correct externalities

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

- Difficult to price environmental goods and services
- Impossible to price human lives

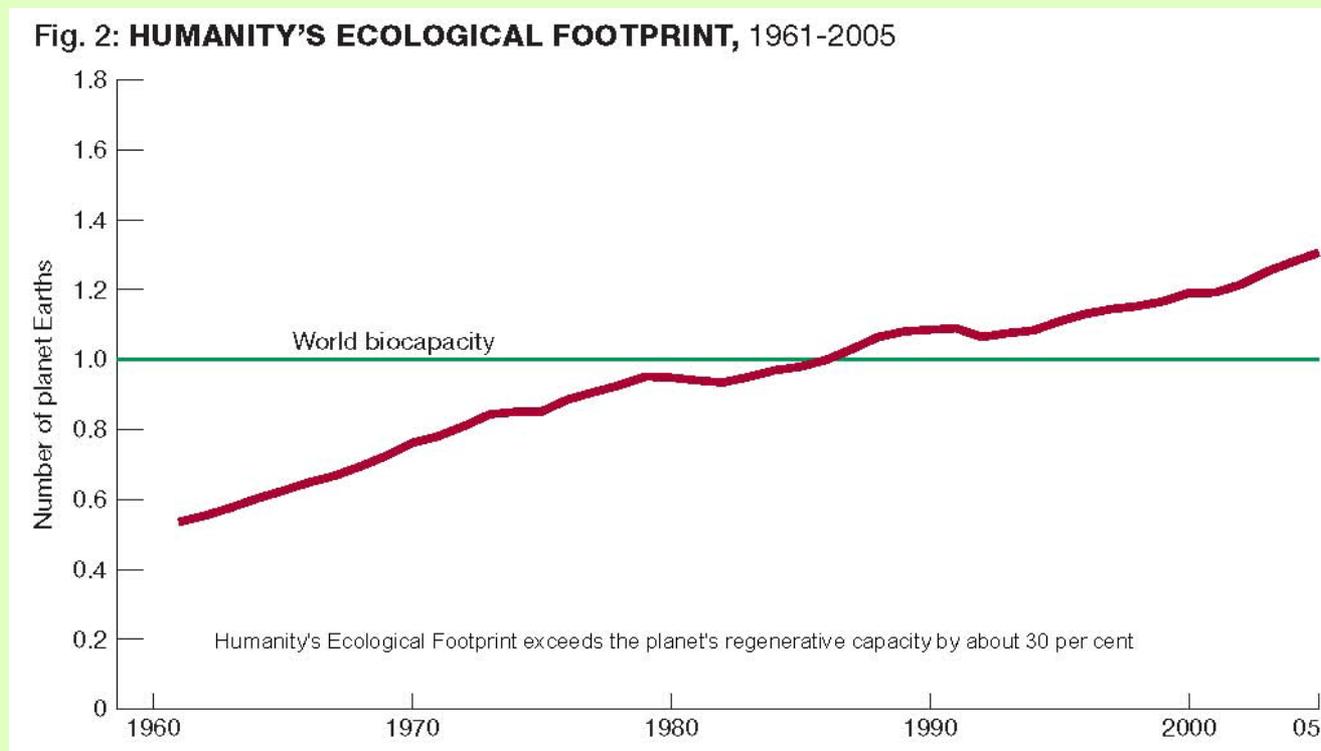
DISCOUNTING

- Systematically devalues future assets.
- Assumes perpetual economic growth.
- Appropriate for financial and investment considerations.



Where are we today?

RESOURCE CONSUMPTION



“Living Planet Report 2008”
 WWF–World Wide Fund For Nature

Where are we today?

UNJUST DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES

- The poorest 2.3 billion (36%) get less than 3%
- The richest 1 billion (15.6%) get more than 80% (of which the U.S. (4.7%) consumes 41%)
- The middle 3.1 billion (48.4%) get 17%.



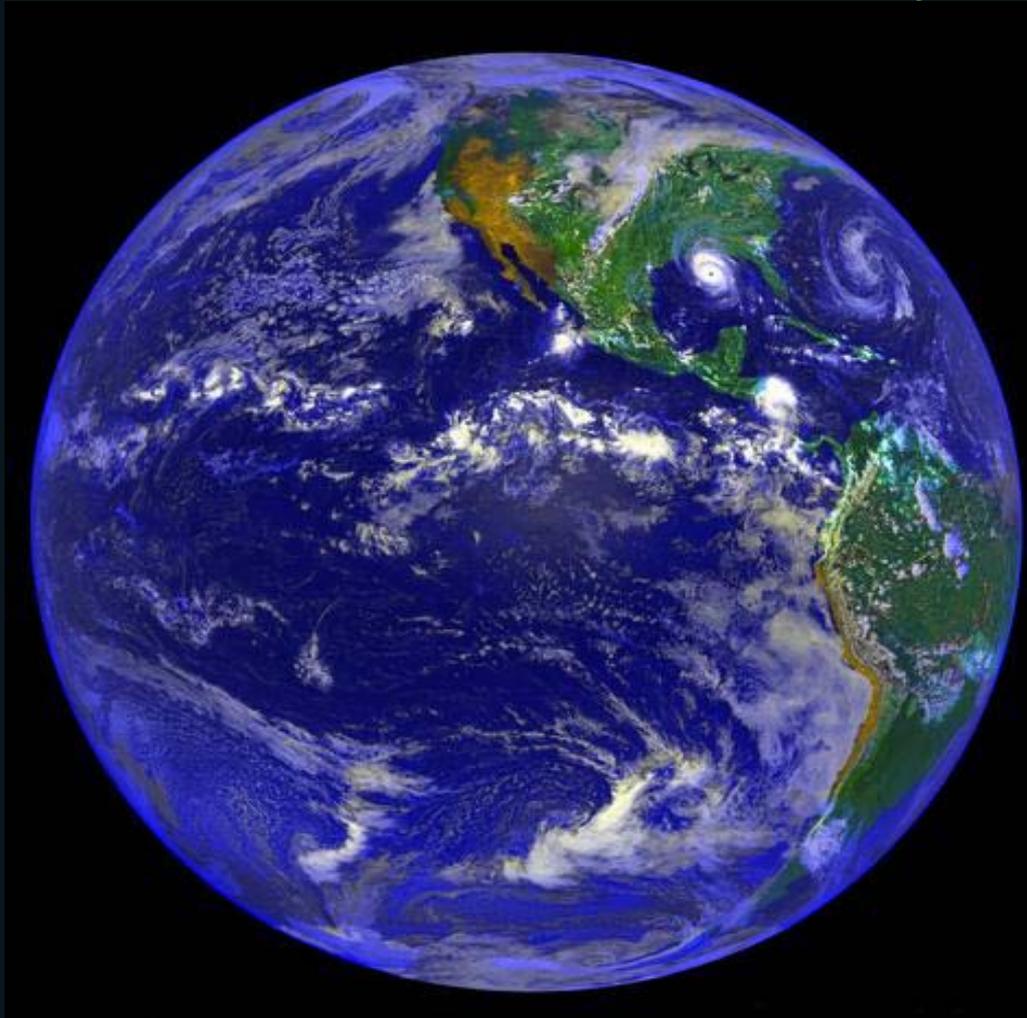
CLIMATE CHANGE

Between 1970 and 2004, GHG emissions due to human activities increased 70%

TOXIFICATION

In 2007, 253,000 Tons of Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxic chemicals were released in the U.S.

Our world is a closed system



What does Sustainable mean?

Sustain (*verb*)- to prolong: lengthen or extend in duration or space.

Sustainable (*adj*) - capable of being sustained.

1. Consumption of renewable resources at a rate below their regeneration rate or carrying capacity,
2. Consumption of non-renewable resources at a rate below that at which they can be replaced by renewable substitutes,
3. Waste generation at rates below the ecosphere's assimilative capacity, and,
4. Maintaining critical ecosystems that provide essential life support.



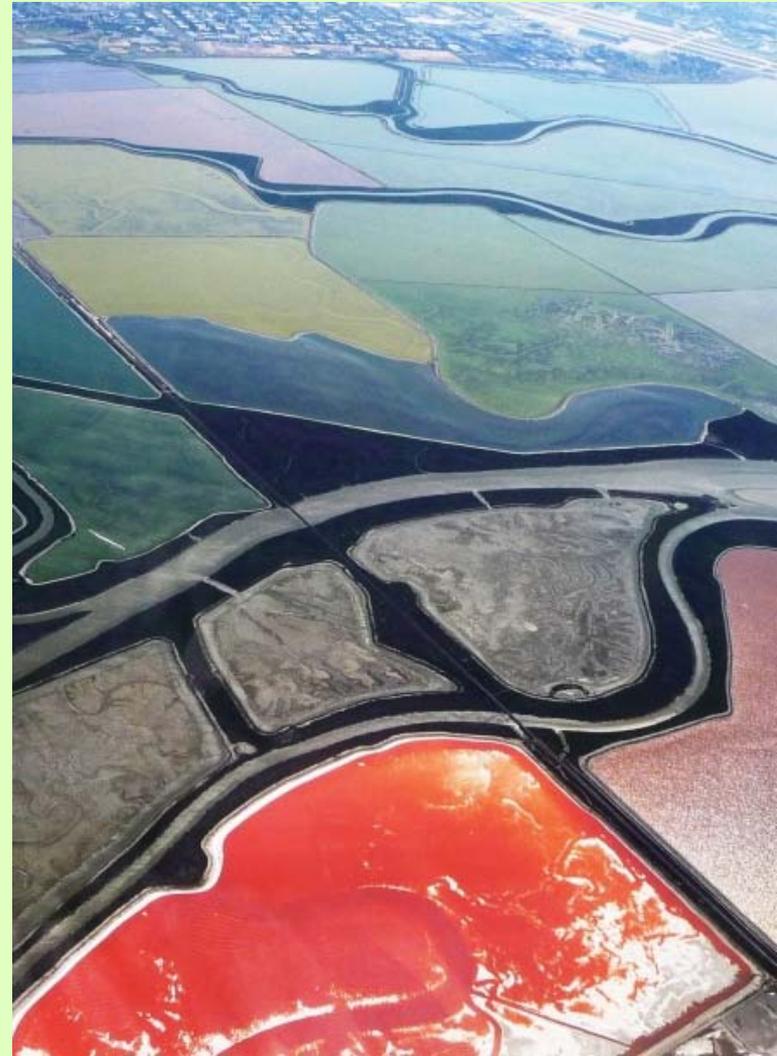
What does a sustainable world look like?

AN EQUITABLY SUSTAINABLE WORLD:

- Has a just distribution of resources that allows people to live with dignity.

AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE WORLD:

- Maintains critical ecosystems that provide essential life support,
- Reduces or eliminates generation of toxics,
- Uses non-renewable resources at rates below that at which they can be replaced by renewable substitutes,
- consumes renewable resources at rates below their regeneration rate, and
- Generates all wastes at levels below the ecosphere's assimilative capacity.



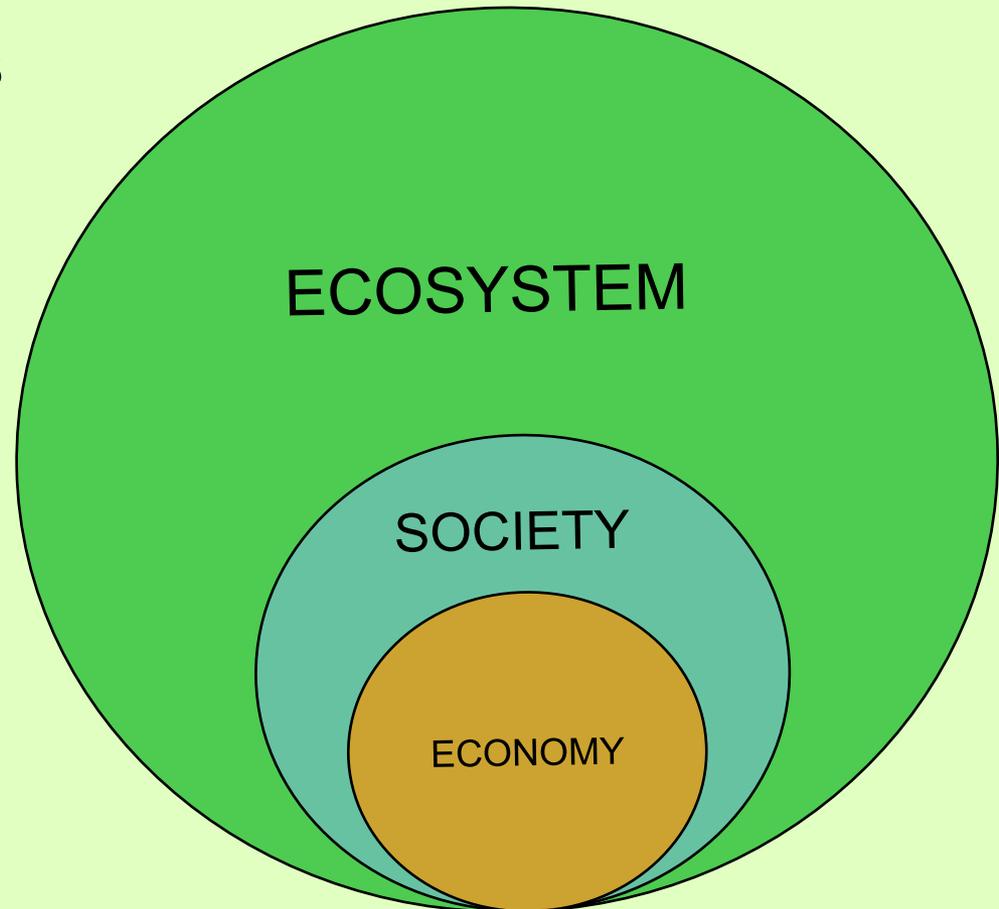
The New Sustainable Paradigm

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

The economy exists within the environment as a construct of society

PRINCIPLES

- Sustainable Scale
- Just Distribution
- Efficient Allocation



Operationalizing principles of sustainability

SUSTAINABLE SCALE

- Natural Resources Conservation
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction
- Pollution Prevention

JUST DISTRIBUTION

- Wage Rates and Occupational Safety Standards
- Use of Mandatory Sources & Socially And Economically Disadvantaged Small Businesses
- Environmental Justice

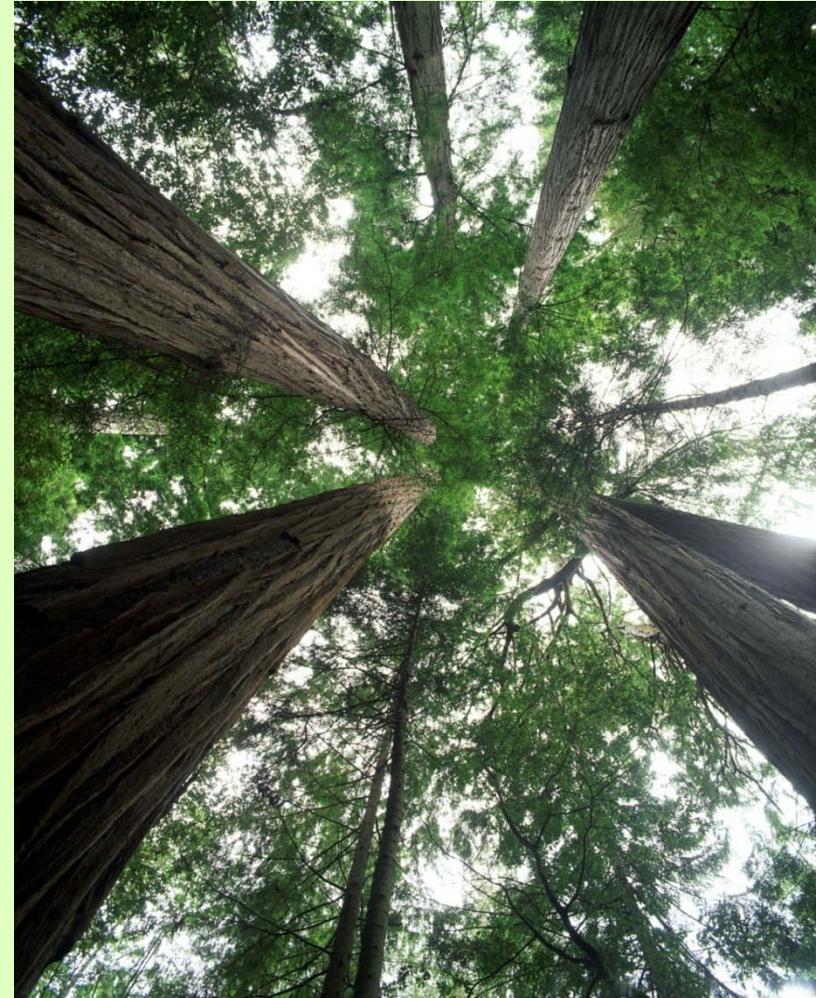
EFFICIENT ALLOCATION

- Closed-World Cost Benefit, Life Cycle Cost, and Life Cycle Analysis
- Closed-World Discounting



Operationalizing sustainability in the Government

- Change the way we talk about sustainability
 - it is either sustainable, or it is not
- Eliminate add-on “green” programs
- Find alternatives to consuming natural resources and generating waste
- Know what you are buying:
 - Who made it?
 - What’s in it?
 - Where does it go when no longer needed?
- Share the government’s vision and favor suppliers who support that vision
- Work with customers to facilitate achievement of their sustainability goals



Operationalizing sustainability in our Products

1. Is this product the best solution to my problem?
2. What does the product manufacturer put back into the community?
3. What is the company doing to lessen the environmental impact of the product?
4. When this product wears out what happens?
5. What level of environmental accountability is required of suppliers?



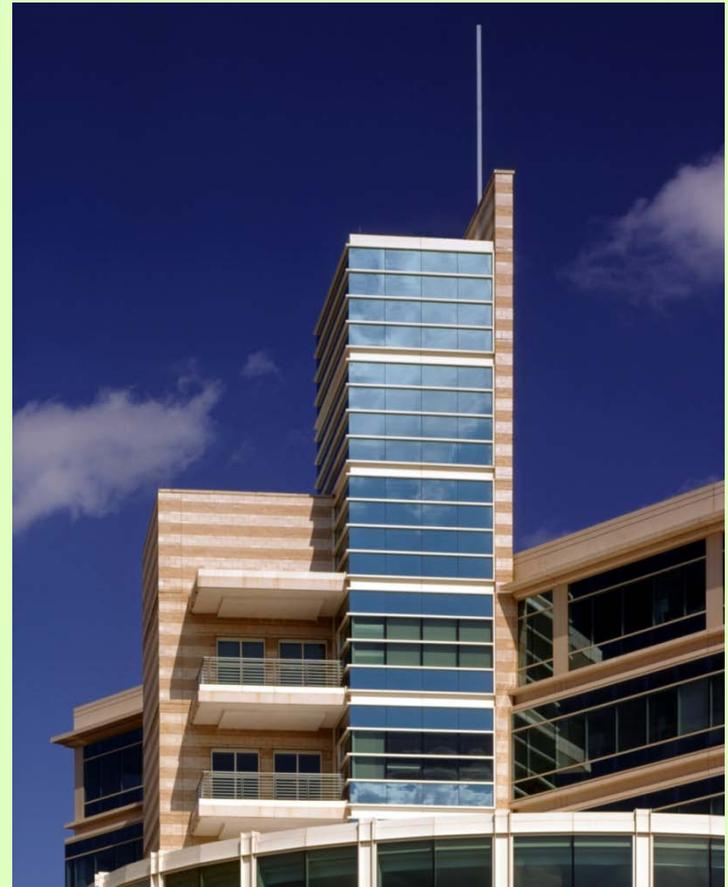
Operationalizing sustainability in our Services

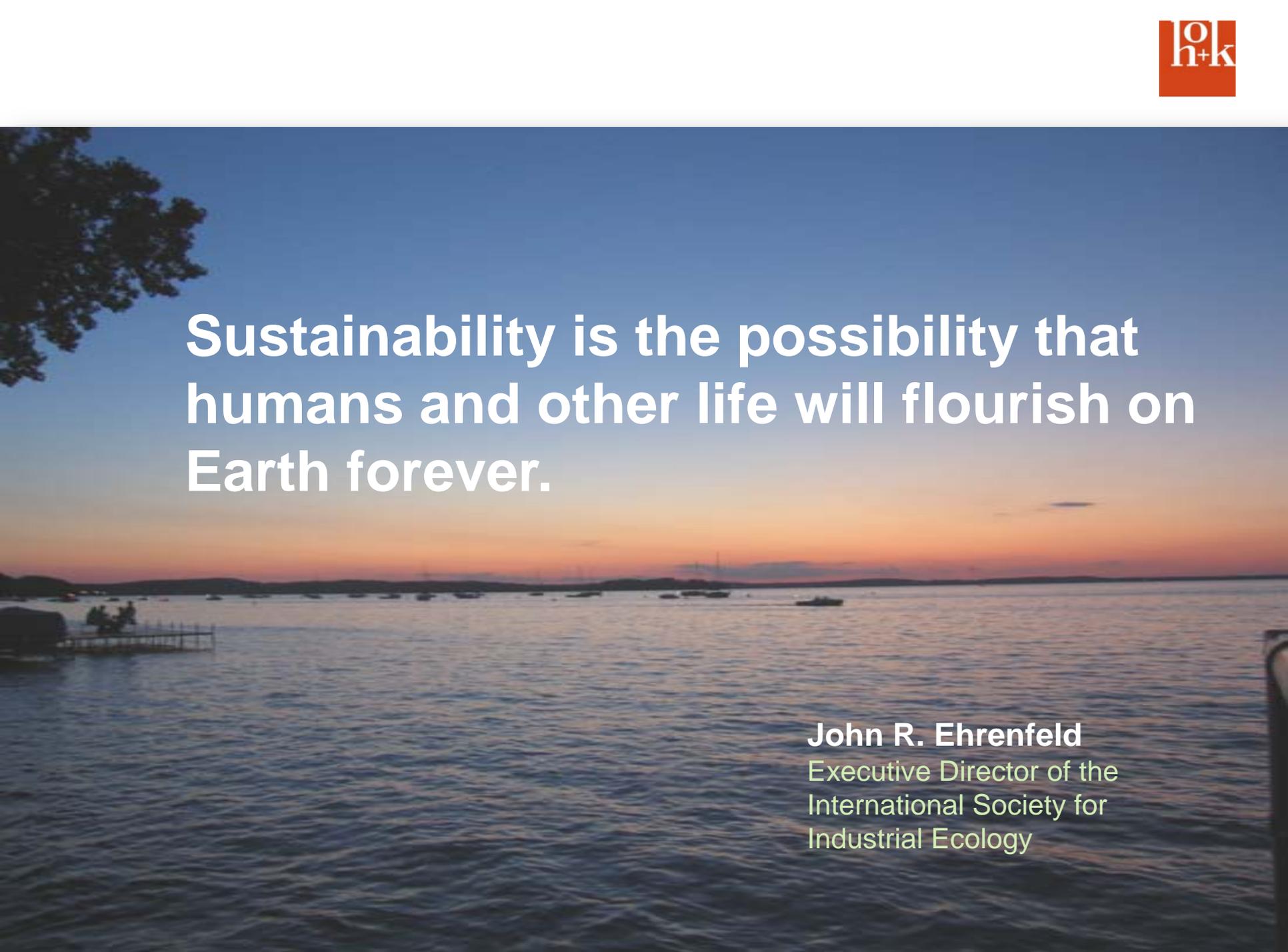
1. Do we need this service?
2. Does the company have an environmental policy or an EMS?
3. Where does the company stand on social equity?
4. Does the service replace the need for a product or other non-renewable resource?
5. Are there toxics used?



Operationalizing sustainability in our Facilities

1. Do we NEED a new building?
2. Do we have a life cycle plan?
3. Does it make more people flourish?
4. Will this project address the context appropriately?
5. How does the building minimize the use of non-renewable resources?



The background of the slide is a photograph of a sunset over a large body of water. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a bright orange and yellow near the horizon. The water is dark blue with gentle ripples. In the distance, there are silhouettes of land and several sailboats. On the left side, the dark silhouette of a tree branch is visible. In the bottom right corner, there is a small portion of a dark railing or structure.

**Sustainability is the possibility that
humans and other life will flourish on
Earth forever.**

John R. Ehrenfeld
Executive Director of the
International Society for
Industrial Ecology

The New Sustainable Frontier: Principles of Sustainable Development

APPENDICES

1. Operating Sustainably – Case Studies
2. Economic Decision-Making – An Outline of Ecological Economics
3. The State of the World
4. The Government Mandate for Sustainability

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