

Global Business Alliance for the Environment High Level Dinner “Innovative & Sustainable Business Solutions”

High Level Dinner Report

March 12, 2019

Delegates Dining Room, UN Environment, Nairobi
Reception 6:30 pm; Dinner 7:30 pm



Featured Speakers

- Master of Ceremony: Norine Kennedy, Vice President, United States Council of International Business
- Mr. Sim Kiisler, Minister of Environment, Estonia, and UNEA President
- Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis, Director of Governance Affairs, UNEP
- Mr. Martin Kayser, Vice President of Chemical Safety, BASF
- Mr. Tip O'Neill, CEO, International Raw Materials

Key Themes and Discussion Points

During the evening, the 80 guests – including Ambassadors, Ministers of the Environment, Country Representatives, NGO representatives, UN & UN Environment agency employees, and private sector delegation members – discussed means to create innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production.



Each table was guided by a facilitator, who enabled lively discussions through which attendees collaboratively identified concrete ways to incorporate and leverage the expertise and resources of business (such as knowledge sharing, innovation, long-term investments, data usage, and more) to develop policy frameworks and partnerships that effectively create positive impact towards the SDGs. As reported by the rapporteurs seated at each table, the following common priorities emerged as ways to achieve sustainable consumption and production:

Facilitate Knowledge Sharing & Shorten the Value Chain

- Support the capacity of business, small and large, to make changes to their production through training, pilot programmes, new models, and frameworks for digital agriculture to share knowledge

- Organize ways for SMEs to access credit, finance, and investment in communal goods, e.g.: cold chain, grain silos, power
- Get specific consumer brands more engaged
- Use technology to shorten value chains, connecting producers more directly to consumers for more informed purchasing and greater dialogue
- Use more scientific evidence to develop policies
- Involve the private sector for collaborations with universities and professional training services

Pursue Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Business

- Business: Create new business models through supply chains, data management, partnerships and technology
- Country: Develop instruments to support circular economy, such as incentives, alliances, information transparency, and digitalization of country economies
- Partnerships: Commit to multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships with the private sector

Invest in Women and Youth Empowerment

- Improve availability and quality of vocational and technical training
- Invest in education, with a focus on women and girls
- Enhance existing local initiatives (e.g., solar energy stoves)

Commit to Action Plans (such as)

- Incentivize environmentally friendly solutions, e.g., free parking for electric cars
- Prioritize solutions that recognize the human point of view; in other words, the healthier people are, the more job security people will have
- Insist on transparency for business & supply chains, as well as use of data to inform purchasing decisions
- Drive the establishment of public-private partnerships
- Champion policies to sustainably manage single-use plastic
- Support solutions to more easily enable and provide financial incentives
- Prioritize integrated solutions, such as farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing and extension models
- Encourage governments to invest in rural connectivity
- Develop sound waste management and recycling infrastructure

Main Conclusions

The primary takeaway from the 2019 High Level Dinner at UNEA4 was that there is a clear desire for collaboration and partnerships. These can range from partnerships between governments and businesses to stimulate innovation to collaborations between businesses and farmers to find the appropriate way to share and transmit knowledge. In addition, the need to partner with universities

to enhance education and skills is vital to bring more individuals to the business, especially youth. Other recurring themes were the need for transparency on production, content, supply chains, as well as the need for more reliable data. Getting the numbers right and being able to quantitatively inform purchasing decisions are key to addressing environmental challenges and achieving sustainable consumption. Finally, digital technology was another common theme, with an emphasis on how its use would help in sharing knowledge. It is vital for collaborations and partnerships to exist in order to build a culture of innovation that supports the solutions and change needed for sustainable approaches to be effectively implemented.

We would like to thank the sponsor of this event, the Global Business Alliance for the Environment, for their generous support.

