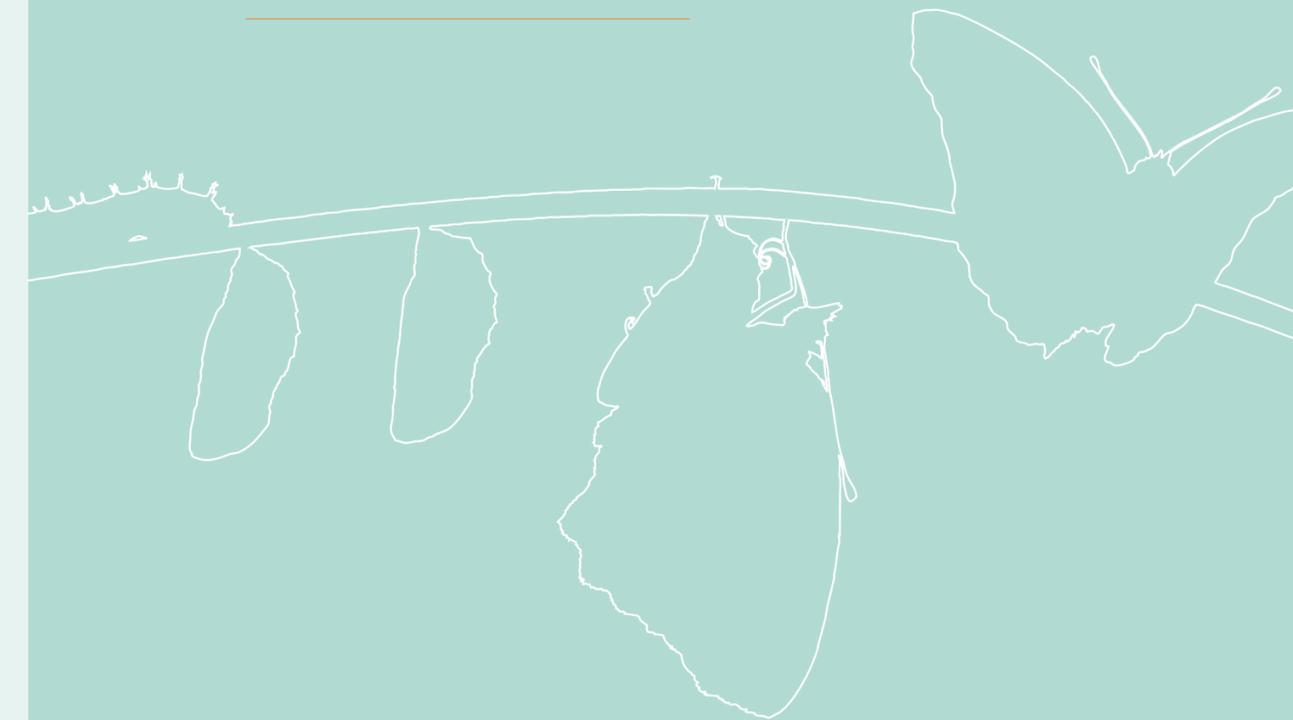


Sustainability in practice: 9 lessons, tips and suggestions

1. Make a list of existing initiatives (if any), such as the use of sustainability frameworks and standards and employee projects.
2. Define the sustainability strategy. Make sure it's aligned with and integrated in the company's dominant strategy (cost reduction, customer value, innovation) and identify the impact, risk and opportunities.
3. Link sustainability to the company's key values and DNA. This can be achieved by:
 - Looking at how much sustainability fits in with existing key values
 - Adding sustainability as a key value.
4. When implementing the sustainability strategy, select and focus on priorities and make sure that you get those right.
5. Formulate goals based on the priorities and define concrete milestones and performance indicators. That way you can monitor and evaluate progress. Regularly review these sustainability goals and the approach taken.
6. Ensure support for sustainability inside as well as outside the organization. You can do this by:
 - Communicating and starting a conversation with customers, suppliers and stakeholders why sustainability is important to the company.
 - Demonstrating senior management support for sustainability.
 - Organizing community projects (preferably connected to your core business).
7. Create an environment in which your organization and employees can learn about sustainability and its implementation. Organize internal trainings where you discuss and explain:
 - Why the company has attention for sustainability.
 - What the main priorities are.
 - How sustainability is organized.
 - How employees can contribute.
 - Sustainability dilemmas between people, planet and profit.
8. Ensure a balance between a central direction and local initiatives:
 - A central direction ensures efficient decision-making on the strategic level and coordination of activities.
 - Local initiatives ensure a practical translation of sustainability to the different departments and functions, an increased level of support and involvement, and input for improvement from within the organization. Starting small and locally is an option. Later on, the initiatives can be brought together through an overall policy.
9. Sustainability should become part of your organization's culture and behavior. This takes times and requires patience. Emphasize it constantly and integrate it in your HR, employee objectives and remuneration schemes.

Sustainable change

The state and face
of sustainable business
in Belgium



The full report as well as the case studies are available at:
www.antwerpmanagementschool.be/sustainablechange

Contact:

Eva Geluk
Sustainable Transformation Lab
Antwerp Management School
Eva.geluk@ams.ac.be

Sustainable change

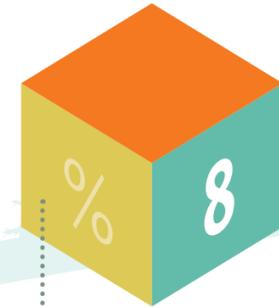
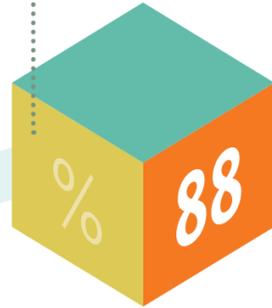
The state and face of sustainable business in Belgium

293 responses

49% Flanders
24% Wallonia
27% Brussels Capital Region

Attention for sustainability

48% | some attention for sustainability
40% | a lot of attention for sustainability



Perceives itself as a sustainability leader



Perceives itself in an advanced stage of sustainability



Perceives itself in a beginning stage of sustainability



Sustainability policy in place



Sustainability fully integrated in the business strategy



Sustainability = business strategy



Top-3 ecological activities:

78% energy reduction
72% waste reduction
42% re-use/recycling/circular economy



Top-3 social activities:

64% employee wellbeing
51% employability
44% diversity in cultural background



Top-3 effects of sustainability:

42% improved company image
41% cost reductions
34% increased employee engagement and pride



Top-5 motivations for sustainability:

50% ethical choice
37% cost saving
30% making the organization future proof
29% improving the image of the organization
28% increasing employee engagement and pride



Top-3 driving factors of sustainability:

(scores on a 10-point scale)
6.7 national and international sustainability standards
6.6 law and regulations
6.4 employee engagement



Stakeholder representing most important barrier for implementing sustainability:
internal: EMPLOYEES
external: SUPPLIERS, INVESTORS, FINANCIERS, CUSTOMERS



Impact of sustainability on strategic decision-making:

57% growing
36% same as now
7% decline



Can attention for sustainability within the company fade quickly?

(7 = totally agree)

4 Yes
3.7 Flemish companies
4.5 Walloon companies



1. Sustainability as ethical choice surfaces as main motivation for attention for sustainability, followed by reducing costs and future proofing the organization. Attracting new talent is hardly seen as important motivation.



Companies with attention for sustainability expect in the coming years:

50% somewhat more attention
20% much more attention
6% less attention



Companies that currently have no attention for sustainability:

62% expect more attention in the coming years
38% expect no attention in the coming years



Awareness of Sustainable Development Goals:

49% not aware
21% fully aware

2. Employees are seen as both main driving factor AND as main internal barrier for sustainability.

3. The sustainability commitment of companies is primarily inward-oriented on reducing operational costs and compliance oriented. It is least oriented towards product innovation and changing the business model.