

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

There is growing discussion on what is sustainable business and what are the issues that are driving change in this area. The environmental movement has achieved significant awareness on the issue of climate change globally and there is increasing concern about the sustainability of current business practices. This change in awareness is enhanced with a more educated and wealthy population that is more prepared to make downshifting and sea change choices.

This is complimented by an increasing concern by the broader community there needs to be more community environmental responsibility generally. The recent Federal Election saw climate change as a significant issue, which is a first for Australia. In England there is a timetable for carbon neutral housing, and in Germany all electrical appliances are required to be returned to the manufacturers for recycling after their useful life.

These trends will require new policies and technologies to deal with future issues of community concern and environmental degradation. In a macro sense, there is a very real threat to world stability based on sustainable environmental practices. Not only are there predictions about rising sea levels and extreme climatic conditions, there are emerging issues of water and food shortages due to changing rainfall patterns, impacts on climate and biological systems.

These issues impact on what a business will do in the future, how it will behave, and what strategies it will use to adapt and survive in the future. Increasingly, sustainable business and employment practices will need to be part of a corporate culture to attract and retain staff. Lean Thinking will be the new way of operating a business and will be ingrained as part of the culture of business to reduce waste and improve environmental impact. Ideally, business should be adopting lean thinking now before it becomes the norm or even mandatory.

Topics include:

- Understand Environment and Ecological impacts of Human Activity
- Threats to Environment and Ecosystems
- Implications for Society and Business
- Future technologies and their implications
- Built Environments and transport
- Planning for a sustainable future
- Regulation and market forces
- Implications for business
- Developing a plan to sustainability
- Eliminating waste through Lean Approaches