

Sustainability made simple

Introduction

Items for discussion

Vision

To create a just and healthy society today, where everyone has the opportunity to thrive physically, mentally and economically - by empowering individuals and communities today and shaping a healthier and fairer tomorrow.

1. Who is Christine Glew
2. What is Sustainability
3. Climate change
4. Resource usage
5. Natural environment
6. How do we live in a sustainable world

Christine Glew

- 28 years industry experience (National grid / BBC)
- Sustainability successes in the Corporate environment
- Support for SMEs
- School climate ambassador
- Social Enterprise - podcasts accompanied by programme of events

Sustainability defined

Definition

"Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Brundtland definition of sustainability, from the 1987 UN report "Our Common Future,"

"How we live our lives today and the impact our choices have on the options available to us in the future.

In other words, if we deplete all our resources today, there won't be anything left for tomorrow."

Christine Glew, founder of Sustainability made simple



It's about how we care for **people**, the **planet**, and **finances** to ensure all three remain viable for future generations.

Climate change

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Caused **naturally**, for example, by changes in the sun's activity or large volcanic eruptions
And by **human** activity i.e. burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas

Burning fossil fuels generates greenhouse gas emissions that act like a blanket wrapped around the Earth, trapping the sun's heat and raising temperatures.

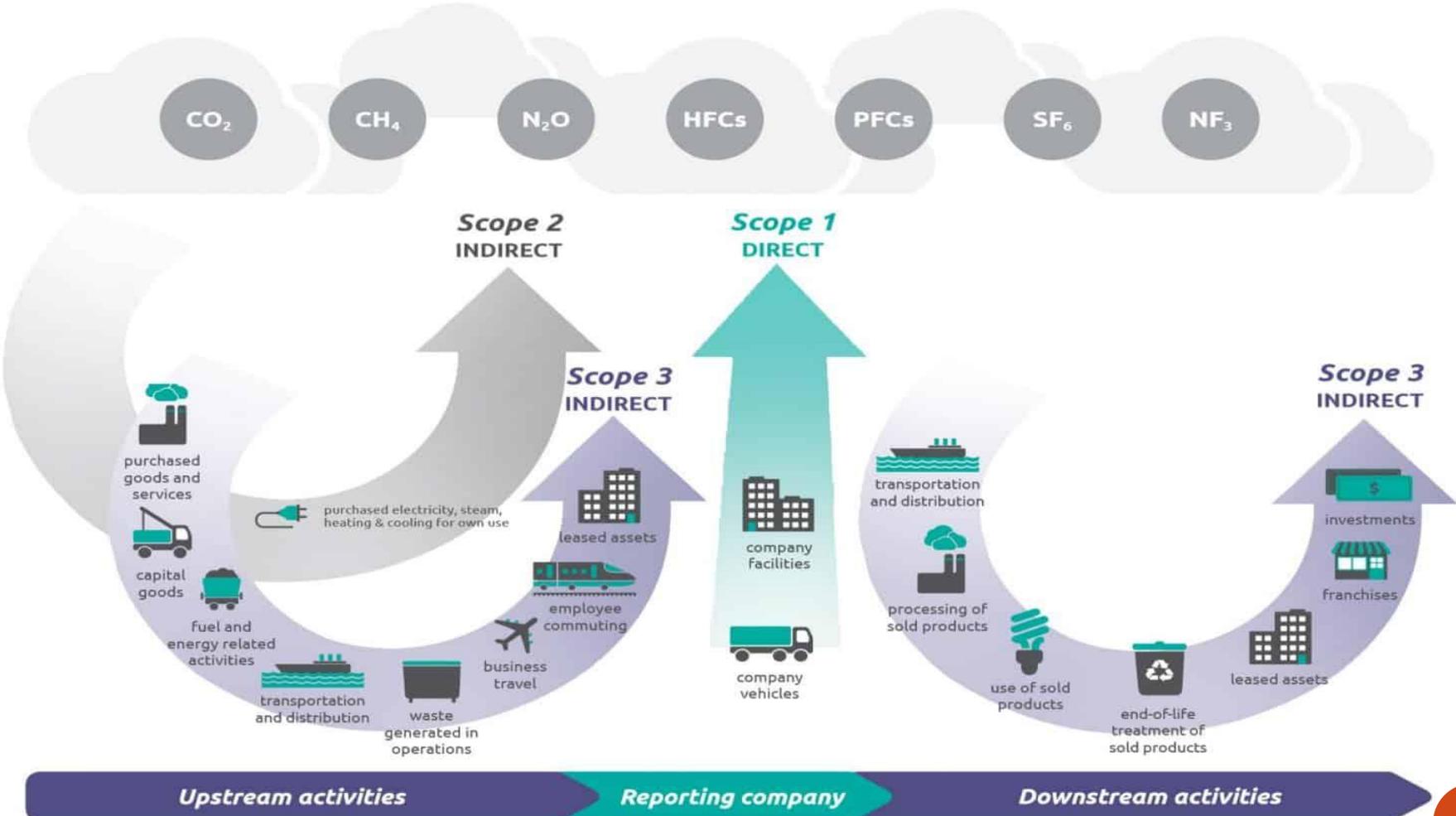
Causing melted glaciers and increasing sea levels

Main 2 gases being released are carbon dioxide and methane. (heating and agriculture)

Opposite side of the coin to climate change is nature loss

Increased by land clearing / cutting down forests / habitat loss

Green house gas (ghg) emissions



Climate change

Planetary Boundaries

Planetary Boundaries is a scientific framework defining nine critical Earth system processes that regulate Earth's stability. Crossing these boundaries increases the risk of triggering large-scale, irreversible environmental shifts.

1. Climate Change: Impact of greenhouse gases on global climate.
2. Biosphere Integrity (Biodiversity Loss): Rate of species extinction and ecosystem loss.
3. Biogeochemical Flows: Disruptions to Nitrogen and Phosphorus cycles from agriculture.
4. Land System Change: Conversion of forests and natural areas to other uses like cropland.
5. Freshwater use: Consumptive use of global freshwater resources.
6. Ocean Acidification: Changes in seawater chemistry due to CO₂ absorption.
7. Stratospheric Ozone Depleting: Thinning of the ozone layer.
8. Atmospheric Aerosol Loading: Increase of fine particles in the atmosphere.
9. Novel Entities: Introduction of new substances (chemicals, plastics, etc.) into the biosphere.

Climate change

5 capitals of sustainability

A framework for long-term well-being representing stocks like ecosystems, skills, trust, infrastructure, and money, all interconnected and essential for sustainable development.

Natural Capital: Ecosystems, clean air, water, biodiversity, land, and resources that sustain life.

Human Capital: People's health, knowledge, skills, creativity, and well-being.

Social Capital: Networks, relationships, trust, shared values, and strong communities that enable cooperation.

Manufactured Capital (or Physical Capital): Tools, buildings, roads, machines, and technology that support production.

Financial Capital: Money, stocks, bonds, and other financial assets that facilitate trade and investment.

Climate change - Net zero

Paris agreement and net zero targets and definition

UN Climate Change Conference (COP21 in Paris) reached a breakthrough on 12 December 2015: the historic Paris Agreement.

The Agreement is a legally binding international treaty.

Substantially reduce ghg emissions to hold global temperature increase to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°. In addition to continual monitoring and support money to underdeveloped countries.

Targets were set

Net zero - Putting as much CO₂ into the atmosphere as you take out

Carbon Neutral - Reducing as much as possible and then offsetting residual emissions

Offset - risk of greenwashing.

SBTi (Science Based Target initiate)

Transition plans which ensure your downward trajectory aligns to the science which ensure we get to 1.5

Resources - circular economy

Earth Overshoot Day marks the date when humanity's demand for ecological resources and services in a given year exceeds what Earth can regenerate in that year. In 2025, Earth Overshoot Day was 24th July. Therefore, borrowing from future years for the remainder of 2025.

Linear economy

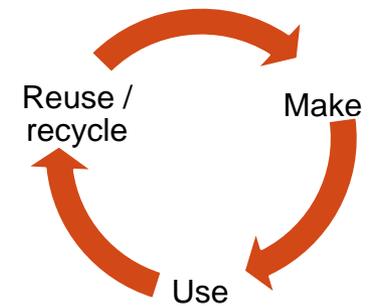
We typically use resources in a linear way



We often reuse, recycle, but we need to move towards a **circular economy** where we take the waste and put it back to the beginning of the process

Examples of the linear economy is fast fashion

Each year, we globally buy around 80 billion new items of clothing and in the UK 336,000 tonnes of clothes end up in landfills or being burned



Nature

Natural capital

Natural capital refers to the world's stock of natural resources—like soil, air, water, biodiversity, and minerals—that provide essential ecosystem services (benefits) to humans, supporting the economy and society, such as clean water, food, and pollination.

Assets: The physical elements, including forests, oceans, land, freshwater and all living organisms.

Services (Goods & Services): The benefits derived from these assets, such as:

Provisioning: Food, timber, fresh water.

Regulating: Climate regulation, water purification.

Cultural: Recreation, aesthetic value, spiritual enrichment (well being).

Supporting: Nutrient cycling, soil formation, pollination.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity, short for biological diversity, is simply the variety of all life on Earth—all the different plants, animals, fungi, and microorganisms, plus the ecosystems they form and the genetic differences within them. Think of it as the richness and variation of living things in a particular area, from genes to entire habitats, all working together in a complex web.

The biodiversity that we do know can be largely categorised into 4 types: genetic diversity, species diversity, ecosystem diversity, and functional diversity.

Companies are starting to value nature, by giving them a seat at the table.

Summary

Our children's future without us taking action today



How can I be more sustainable?

Know your carbon footprint



Our personal carbon footprint refers to the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions released as a result of our daily activities

For example, driving a petrol or diesel car, taking flights, or using gas heating all contribute to your footprint. So does the electricity you use — especially if it's generated from fossil fuels. Even the food you eat has an impact — eating a lot of red meat and dairy typically leads to higher emissions than a plant-based diet.

Buying new clothes, using disposable products, and the amount of waste we send to landfill all add up as well. Every choice we make has a carbon cost — and understanding this is the first step to reducing it.

Apply the hierarchy



Register with
Ethical consumer



Contact

If you have any questions or would like to share good practices please contact me

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