

## **Business Leaders Show Strong Confidence in Sustainable Growth Opportunities**

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND, January 20, 2015 /3BL Media/ - Business leaders globally have strong confidence in their own ability to turn sustainability challenges such as water scarcity and lock-in to fossil fuels into new business opportunities, particularly in the manufacturing and finance sectors in emerging economies. This is one of the key findings of the Global Opportunity Report launched today by DNV GL, UN Global Compact and Monday Morning Global Institute. The new report is based on a survey and consultations with more than 6,000 public and private sector leaders in over 21 countries.

“Businesses across the planet are not shying away from global risks such as climate change, and increasingly recognize the positive benefits of seizing the related opportunities. The report confirms that there has been a turning point, where private sectors are now a critical driver of sustainable development with emerging economies in the front seat,” says Georg Kell, Executive Director of UN Global Compact.

In addition to the 6,000 leaders surveyed, 200 experts from eight countries have shared insights and contributed to creating the Global Opportunity Report. The report identifies and ranks 15 sustainability opportunities according to public and private sector interest and potential impact on societies and business. With the new report, the partners aim to demonstrate how global sustainability challenges and risks can be seen as opportunities. The work provides an open innovation platform where stakeholders worldwide can explore and capture sustainability opportunities and solutions across risk domains and regions. Additionally, the report identifies more than 120 readily available solutions.

### **Water Innovation Leading Opportunity**

Asked about future prospects, business leaders see untapped and profitable opportunities especially in handling and providing solutions to address water scarcity and to promote green consumer choices. Overall, developments in water-efficient agriculture is the opportunity that inspires most confidence among the leaders. 37 per cent find this opportunity to have great benefits for society and consider their country to have great capacity to seize this opportunity.

“I believe one of the most clear signals in the survey is the confidence we see in our ability to address water scarcity. It is a grave problem that affects hundreds of millions of people globally and the competition for water is seen as a major obstacle to health, growth and prosperity. This finding also makes me optimistic that we’ll meet a global development goal to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all,” says Henrik O. Madsen, Group CEO and President of DNV GL, one of the partners of the network and report.

### **Green Consumer Choices Highly Favored**

Opportunities related to lock-in to fossil fuels also is assessed positively. The most favored opportunity here is green consumer choices. This includes innovations to change consumer behavior to increased uptake of renewable energy in households or a growing selection of consumer products made with the use of renewables.

### **Private Sector More Optimistic than Public Sector**

The public sector is expected to play an important role in realizing many of the opportunities described in the report, especially those that are regulation-oriented. Nevertheless, public sector respondents were consistently less optimistic than the private sector about how the opportunities can positively affect society and their capacity to pursue these opportunities.

“The report findings are encouraging and concerning at the same time,” says Erik Rasmussen, Founder of Monday Morning Global Institute. “The strong interest in pursuing sustainable business opportunities

in the private sector is very positive. Yet, the governmental sector seems to be more reluctant and not seeing the same opportunities. This is a pity. Governments can play an important role by issuing regulations that support both sustainability and business ventures. Business and governments must share visions and initiatives.”

However, the Global Opportunity Report indicates that this scenario is likely to change.

For leaders below 30 years of age, female leaders and leaders in emerging economies in Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and South America, regulated energy transition and smart water regulation are the top-ranking sustainability opportunities.

“I believe that one of the most interesting findings in the report is how young leaders under 30 years of age, people in emerging economies and also women embrace regulation as a strong tool for sustainable change. It is very likely that the decision makers of tomorrow will be found in these groups, and it gives us hope that we can see a stronger collaboration between the private and the public sector in the future,” says Henrik O. Madsen, Group CEO and President of DNV GL.

#### Manufacturing and Finance Sector Most Confident

Emerging economies are especially ready to pursue market opportunities associated with sustainability challenges. The report shows that the manufacturing sector – especially in China – is most confident in their ability to address sustainability barriers and deliver profits and prosperity in return.

#### China First, Europe Last

Regionally, China is the most optimistic in the survey with 48 percent showing great confidence in sustainability opportunities, followed by India with 44 percent and South America 37 percent. Europe is the least optimistic with only 23 percent, making it the most cautious region when it comes to belief in development associated with sustainability.

The Global Opportunity Report and the global survey will be conducted annually.

To follow the launch event in Zurich and to download the report, please visit <http://www.globalopportunitynetwork.org>

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#### About the Global Opportunity Network:

The Global Opportunity Network and Report are the products of collaboration between DNV GL, UN Global Compact and Monday Morning. As the partners behind this initiative, we share a vision of a safer and more sustainable world and wish to inspire collaboration and action towards making it a reality.

#### About the Partners

**DNV GL:** Driven by the purpose of safeguarding life, property and the environment, DNV GL enables organizations to advance the safety and sustainability of their business. Operating in more than 100 countries, our 16,000 professionals are dedicated to helping our customers in the maritime, oil & gas, energy and other industries to make the world safer, smarter and greener.

**Monday Morning** is Scandinavia’s largest independent innovation tank, having for 25 year worked on innovating societies. The core in the work is the ambition to identify new insights to build more resilient societies. Monday Morning Global Institute brings the experience with changing agendas and deep knowledge of innovating societies from Monday Morning to the global debate on sustainability.

UN Global Compact is a call to companies everywhere to voluntarily align their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anticorruption, and to take action in support of UN goals and issues. Launched in 2000, it is the largest corporate-sustainability initiative in the world—with more than 12,000 signatories from business and key stakeholder groups in 150 countries, and more than 80 local networks.

#### Resources

For more Information, please visit <http://www.globalopportunitynetwork.org>

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