

## Executive Summary

Overall, participants agree that a sustainable approach in the developing world simply makes good business sense and that *sustainability* - maximizing economic value-added as well as societal and environmental value-added - is not just about protecting value, but about creating value. There is consensus among companies that a need exists to broaden the focus on corporate responsibility beyond solely business to include other stakeholder groups – at home and abroad. There is also consensus that any unilateral Canadian legislation would not be the best means of contributing to sustainable development at this time. There are differing opinions in terms of what kind of organized approach makes the most sense to promote sustainable practices, or how to best strike the balance between the desire for independent market-led innovation and the need for application of external pressures beyond the market to influence marginal players.

With respect to competitive advantage regarding sustainable practices in the global marketplace, there is agreement that Canadian companies are currently well positioned, albeit in an increasingly competitive environment. Canadian companies highlight their perceived 'lack of an agenda' as a key advantage as compared to their American or European counterparts. In addition, a high willingness to engage with stakeholders is supported by a generally high quality of Canadian engagement with stakeholders. Concern for reputation is a key motivator that keeps Canadian companies ahead of the competition as well as a strong willingness to transfer, to share, and to promote Canadian practices with local stakeholders.

### Key Recommendations - Government to Support Business

#### Provide a framework to model and reward positive business contribution:

- Encourage a policy of engagement by companies
- Promote the business case for sustainability
- Encourage the development of stakeholder management systems
- Encourage the development of sustainability management systems
- Encourage focus on maximizing the net sustainable value-added
- Encourage accountability and transparency
- Promote use of international codes
- Leverage Team Canada missions

### Key Recommendations - Government to Support Government

#### Promote and educate domestic and foreign government players:

- Level the playing field – accelerate the laggards
- Work to influence international organizations
- Build on Canadian reputation by encouraging sustainable practices
- Track Canadian competitiveness in terms of sustainability practices
- Provide training
- Consult across sectors

### Key Recommendations - Government to Support NGO's

#### Support capacity development and accountability of the NGO sector

- Promote accountability, joint responsibility, and stakeholder prioritization
- Identify gaps in accountability
- Work with NGO's to develop management frameworks and expertise
- Promote Business – NGO dialogues and collaborative efforts