IS SUSTAINABILITY STILL POSSIBLE?

More and more businesses declare that they're environmentally friendly, ecologically conscious, and sustainable. Ecofriendly signs have become a seal of approval that a product is good for the environment, yet many questions remain unanswered. Still, many believe that it's better to choose something with a seal of approval than without one.

Interestingly, corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs often are publicity-oriented than truly providing social values for stakeholders. In today's business world, "sustainable" and "CSR" seem to have become overused and it's hard to separate hype

Even with a population of 7 billion, greenhouse gas emissions and natural resource consumption must be decreased considerably to be able to reach a "sustainable" level. Analysts

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from reality. According to Ecological Footprint's calculations, the world's population currently consumes 1.5 times global capacity. The earth is now being asked to sustain 7 billion people. It took 200,000 years to reach a population of 1 billion in the 1800s. Scarcity has definitely taken center stage in the larger scheme of things: by mid-century the world's population would reach nine billion. The world is unlikely to cope with the exponential loss.

have begun to see a state of emergency has arrived. In regions where ongoing violence and extreme poverty are rampant, "sustainability" seems a distant goal. Whether Indonesia has fallen into this category remains to be seen. University of Indonesia Public Policy scholar Andrinof Chaniago has offered a solution to Jakarta's overpopulation: moving the capital city to Kalimantan.

As we currently live in the so-called anthropocene era—an informal geologic chronological term

that serves to mark the evidence and extent of human activities that have had a significant global impact on global ecosystems—we bear the highest responsibility to ensure that our species and nature are well managed and maintained. Corporations, naturally, bear some, if not larger, part of the blame for all these perilous changes in the environment now and in the future.

According to analysts' consensus as presented by Johan Rockstorm of Stockholm Resilience Center and his team, seven quantifiable critical planetary boundaries are climate change, stratospheric ozone, ocean acidification, nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, biodiversity loss, land use change, and freshwater use. Incremental tweaking might not be sufficient to safeguard the earth from further deterioration—radical innovations are the answer.

At least three major shifts of awareness must be adopted immediately. First, the linear exploitation of nature must be stopped immediately. Second, innovations should focus on potentially raising the quality of life for all humanity. Thus, large-scale high-tech innovations in IT, nanotechnology, biotechnology, and energy systems must seriously consider this requirement. Third, destructive paths must be replaced by non-destructive and nurtured with self-replacement paths. Business executive must rise to this challenge now unless they want to see a global collapse of the "sustainable" environment. ⑥

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