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Promoting Sustainable Consumption through Retailers

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Sustainable Development, a long-term issue

If we go on with current production and consumption patterns, Two planets needed by 2050
Promoting Sustainability: A Challenge for All

“Our biggest challenge in this new century is to take an idea that seems abstract - sustainable development - and turn it into a daily reality for all the world’s people.”

Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General
**UNEP DTIE Objectives**

- Support Government initiatives
- Facilitate Industry Cooperation
- Build Public awareness
Retail Sector: Some Figures

- Worldwide retail sales estimated at USD 7 trillion in 2000 (GDP: USD 30 trillion)
- The top 200 largest retailers account for 30% of worldwide demand
- The money spent on household consumption worldwide increased by 68% between 1980 and 1998
- Retail trade in Europe employs 15% of the European workforce (3 million companies and 15 million workers)
“They care about the world (and they shop too)”

*NY Times*
Some Drivers for Change

- Pressure from society
- Food safety and quality
- Internal cost reductions
- Transparent and efficient supply chain

Ensuring customer loyalty in the long run
Can Sustainability Sell?

… or are consumers going to buy sustainability?
What Consumers Say

According to numerous surveys most consumers are ready to buy sustainable, green, socially responsible… products and services.
...and the Reality

- Retail prices are still the key concern for most consumers in developed countries
- Fair trade products account for very small market shares in Europe
- Buying habits are changing … but very slowly
How Can Sustainability Sell?

- Help suppliers comply with sustainable requirements
- Design and promote sustainable products & services
- Communicate to customers through transparent and reliable information
  - Show to customers more than green assets
  - Appeal first on an emotional level

Demonstrate leadership to facilitate change
What Opportunities for Retailers?

- New markets through an improved understanding of consumer needs
- New products through the application of new technologies
- Greater investor confidence
- Increased loyalty of customers
… But be careful of greenwashing!
Carrefour’s Campaign 2004
Arrêtons de consommer plus pour consommer mieux.
MIEUX CONSOMMER, C'EST URGENT.

Carrefour
Carrefour’s Campaign 2004 (3)
“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to ruin it.”

Warren Buffet
The Retail Community: Being Leader with UNEP

Objectives of the UNEP’s Retail Forum

Engage the retail sector in the promotion of sustainable development through four different channels:

- internal green-housekeeping: energy, water, chemicals, packaging and waste, transport, etc.
- influencing suppliers: activities in supply chain management on issues such as child labour, organic food, fair trade, labour conditions, etc.
- influencing consumers: advertising and promotional activities, information and labelling, facilities for recycling and other services, etc.
- reporting on environmental and social issues to shareholders and investors.
UNEP Activities

• Can Sustainability Sell + SCP Resource Kit on SCP
• International meeting on retail and sustainable development
• Shopping for a Better World
• Study on retailers’ communication to promote SC
• Pilot project in Asia or Maghreb to help retailers comply with sustainable requirements
For more information:

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