

Sustainability

As the world moves into the 21st century a different sense of economic sustainability has evolved. Environmental issues are increasingly becoming part of everyday business for leaders, challenging them to find ways to make sustainability an integral part of their business model.

Our objectives

The INSEAD Sustainability team studies the role of environmental and social issues in the wealth creation process. By developing cutting edge research and collaborating with industry partners and alumni networks, we help responsible leaders to develop sustainable business models.

Key objectives of the research group are to:

- Develop empirical research and relevant theory
- Bring more sustainability content into MBA and Executive programmes
- Develop outreach activities such as the INSEAD Alumni Energy Club

Our research

The INSEAD Sustainability research group is working to establish links between the:

- *Micro* level of analysis in organizations, products and processes through sustainability strategies
- *Meso* level in industries or organizational fields, through sustainable systems of production and consumption
- *Macro* levels in sustainable societies

“The ‘old growth engine’ of development depends on ever more intensive use of fossil energy at ever lower real prices, stimulating increased global demand both for energy itself and for material intensive industrial products. This is not sustainable. But what will replace it?”

**Robert Ayres, Professor Emeritus
INSEAD**

Sustainability strategies

At *micro* level, the level of firms, we look into how and when eco-investments pay off and generate competitive advantage. By analysing the rationales for strategic environmental management, we focus on a timely question for managers, academics and MBAs: “when does it pay to be green?”

Based on solid theoretical foundations and empirical research, our work intends to clarify the elements involved in the formation and implementation of sustainability strategies in firms. The output of our work helps managers to prioritize eco-investments, and transform them into sources of competitive advantage and new market spaces.

Sustainable systems of production and consumption

At the *meso* level, we aim to identify ways in which current industrial sectors could reverse 'rebound effects' of accumulated environmental impact, and eventually become sustainable. Our research focuses on:

- Mobility innovation, ways in which vehicle manufacturers can provide motorized mobility in a sustainable manner
- Closed-loop supply chains, recovering added value from returned products and extend the product's useful life

Sustainable societies

At the *macro* level, we seek to understand the productive role of natural resources and ecosystem services in the process of economic development. In particular, we seek to identify solutions where knowledge can be a substitute for resources, thereby reducing resource dependence and environmental impacts whilst creating wealth.

Besides the implications for business and industrial sectors, the results of this research can help policy makers define the market based or regulatory instruments to assist business and society co-evolve sustainably.

INSEAD Social Innovation Centre

Founded in 2007, the INSEAD Social Innovation Centre is an inclusive platform for cross-disciplinary research and engagement in the area of social innovation.

The Centre brings together a diverse group of leading INSEAD research teams focused on the innovation of business models and market-based mechanisms that deliver sustainable economic, environmental and social prosperity.

This research is disseminated in our educational programs and forms a basis for collaboration with alumni, companies, NGOs and other organizations, establishing an open community through which we can have a real impact.

Learn more at <http://www.insead.edu/isic>

For more information

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