

Going Beyond the Horizon: A sustainable business means being here for the long term



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In a world of ever changing dynamics and issues, business leaders need to develop their thinking and challenge conventional models to ensure their business prospers by responding in the right way, and at the right time, to both the challenges of today's world and the emerging issues of the future.

With 70 terminals in 31 countries across six continents, and a team of 36,000 people, there is not only a responsibility at DP World to be a progressive business that does the right thing, but we also have a huge opportunity to be a leader of world trade through our size, scope and geographical reach and to make a lasting, positive, impact.

We believe that working in a sustainable way is essential to us building a strong business for our customers, our people and our society. Governments we deal with want it, our partners and customers too. This means being active in the long term in all our operations around the world, to drive best practice; always seeking to go further and do more.

This is why we have created 'Our World, Our Future' as our global programme to bring sustainability into every aspect of our work. To do that we have four key commitments:

- Protect our environment: by minimising impacts on our environment and by better managing natural resources and emissions.
- Invest in our people: by embracing diversity, encouraging personal development and providing employees with the tools to drive change.
- Ensure the highest safety standards: by looking after our people and striving for zero harm at work.
- Build a vibrant, secure and resilient society: through strategic investment in the issues that affect our people and our industry.

Our World, Our Future represents a collective responsibility across the whole of DP World to build a sustainable business, as well as reflecting a collective benefit for everyone that DP World works with and in the communities where we are located.

We have long been committed to this space but bringing it all together under the umbrella of Our World, Our Future helps us to focus our efforts. We measure our progress, publish our performance and look for ways to innovate and improve across all of our commitments. We are dedicated to sharing what we do with our customers, suppliers and partners to spread sustainable practice.

Our network needs a strategic approach with local flexibility, as we recognise that our global reach brings diversity. So rather than applying a uniform policy across the markets in which we operate, Our World, Our Future is a global approach, built from local actions. This approach provides consistency, yet enables each business unit to consider the action needed to provide the greatest benefit relevant to what they do and where they are.

The case is clear

Trade oils the wheels of the global economy. It involves long term investments and sustainable development takes time to integrate and build. It requires commitment, and yet the rewards are considerable – the advantage of reputational leadership, reduced costs, increased competitiveness, greater engagement with employees, improved resilience to systemic change and the opportunity to help frame wider opinion. Conversely, the costs of ignoring this are devastating, for all. There are growing examples of sustainability influencing procurement decisions and poor performance can have a massive impact on reputation, sales and ultimately share price.

It is widely predicted that the sector's operating context will alter significantly over the next 30 years. Cargos and markets are changing, and there are new challenges with the rapid march of innovation and technology and new trade patterns. Fuel costs are becoming less predictable, although technological advances offer the potential for radical improvements in efficiency. And commercial customers are coming under increased pressure to address sustainability concerns throughout their supply chains. With this in mind, business models need to adapt and recognise the responsibility to do so.

We are not alone in valuing a commitment to sustainability. Two thirds of global CEOs expect sustainability to transform their industry within this decade – and three quarters believe that embedding sustainability into core business will drive revenue growth and new opportunities. It is also more attractive to investors – Morgan Stanley found that 71% of individual investors are interested in sustainable investing.

We recognise that fully integrated sustainability does not happen overnight and it requires change – across systems, processes, people and behaviours. Typically, our agreements are long term investments on average over 40 years and we can build a legacy for generations. Sustainable development takes time to develop, integrate and build – to bring about long term sustained change that meets the needs of our communities – both today and in the future. So the aim of

our approach is to integrate responsible business practices into our daily activities and to constantly build on what we do.

Making our mark

While we have made progress we recognise that this is a continual journey of development. We need to understand what is important to our stakeholders to ensure our approach is both impactful and sustainable.

We know that creating shared value must be in partnership and we cannot work alone. Pressing global issues require business across all sectors to work together. Trade and logistics enablers, in partnership with customers and consumers, make that happen and the sector is in an ideal position to create awareness, drive behavioural change while, at the same time, drive efficiencies and competitiveness to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing society.

An example of the impact of partnership can be found in our work with United for Wildlife – this is an unprecedented collaboration, bringing together the world's leading wildlife organisations under a common purpose: to create a global movement to tackle the illegal wildlife trade. We have joined its 'Transport Taskforce', joining other businesses committed to promoting 'zero tolerance of the transport of illegal wildlife parts across borders'. The Taskforce has agreed to a series of commitments to make this happen. For us it means working with all our employees, as well as our customers and all our stakeholders to help end this trade entirely.

Our annual employee survey also shows high levels of understanding and support for our objectives, which is crucial as we rely on our workforce to help deliver on these ambitions. Building on a long established culture of volunteering, we created 'Global Volunteer Week', a week long focus every December in which we actively encourage everyone to engage with the community and to make a difference. In 2015, some 3,250 volunteer hours were contributed to our local communities, benefiting over 8,400 people. We saw a 30% increase in the number of programmes we delivered and more than doubled the number of people who personally benefited from our efforts.

Sustainability provides a compass that enables us to ensure our actions as a business are appropriate. This is fundamental if we really want to create change and opportunity. It should be the obligation of every business of every size in every location to build sustainability into the core of its business. Indeed, this is essential if you are serious about doing business for years to come.

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