



**Business  
for the  
Environment**  
Global Summit 2009



## **The Green Imperative**

*from the B4E Summit, Paris, 22-23 April 2009*

The global economic downturn has exposed the extent to which markets and societies are increasingly interconnected and interdependent. We, the participants of the B4E Summit 2009, recognize that the economic, environmental and social challenges and risks we face demand a new level of leadership and cooperation. We are confident that by exercising such leadership, restoring trust and by working together we have the opportunity to put our global economy, our markets and lifestyles, our livelihoods and security, and, ultimately, our planet on a sustainable path. We emphasize the following:

- Agreement on a new global climate regime is urgent, offering all countries the opportunity to unlock the potential for sustainable, green innovation and job creation that exist as we head towards the low-carbon society. We call on Governments to complete a comprehensive and successful COP-15.
- We call on Governments to promote global integration, based on fundamental principles of non-discrimination in trade and investment, so that we can more efficiently disseminate clean technologies globally.
- We call on Governments to provide appropriate regulatory and incentive structures to encourage more sustainable consumption and production, and send the right market signals for business to act.
- Now is the time to remove uncertainties, enable green investments to flow, and build scalable public-private partnerships that can leapfrog in terms of technological innovation.
- Capturing the global crisis requires recovery plans that provide for drastically expanded investment in clean technologies and sustainable infrastructure systems, building the Green Economy with transformative improvements that avoid lock-in in high carbon and resource inefficient systems.
- For business, we need increased transparency, a stronger ethical orientation and an expanded risk paradigm that includes not only traditional business and financial factors, but also relevant extra-financial issues in the environmental, social and governance realms.
- We need new due diligence requirements that strike a fair balance between the needs of shareholders and other stakeholders, including future generations.
- We need to shift from a product to a services perspective, applying life cycle approaches that support cradle-to-cradle strategies in business along all value chains and using ecosystem services sustainably.

- We need to shift from the tyranny of “short-termism” to a longer-term orientation of value creation, as embodied in the UN Global Compact.
- We need broad-based use of sustainable procurement and criteria that are both green and decent in the management of our supply chains.
- We need reporting and accountability systems which combine internationally recognized financial and sustainability standards to mainstream forward-looking approaches.
- We recognize the importance of promoting small business development and social entrepreneurship in the making of truly sustainable enterprises.
- We underscore the importance of revamping business education and training in order to properly nurture and develop the leaders and managers of tomorrow.

We offer our energy and commitment to work with Government and society, to jointly take leadership, ownership and accountability for our contribution as responsible citizens, consumers and leaders. This implies our engagement from local to global level, including cooperation with UNEP and others in the UN facilitated process on sustainable consumption and production leading to a 2012 World Summit.

We, the participants of the B4E Summit 2009, underline the need for business to take its part - along with Government, the research community and other societal partners - in creating a more sustainable world and drive the way towards the sustainable, green and responsible enterprise. We call on all stakeholders to work together in order to achieve these aims.